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## No Breakdown in Communication

**A** one man crusade to help truckers in crisis has created a booming business.

Nationwide Transport Breakdown Services is one of the most successful companies of its kind in the country, thanks in no small part to the sophisticated digital telephone system in its Manchester based call centre.



The firm, which specialises in commercial vehicle breakdown services, was founded 19 years ago by Spencer Brown, who worked in the technical department of a transport refrigeration company.

He spotted a gap in the market that has been a boon to drivers and employers and has rationalised a chaotic method of summoning help when trucks and coaches broke down.

He was one man with a phone when he started in 1987, but he and son Stuart have since grown the Denton based business, which provides 24 hour breakdown services for commercial vehicles and coaches, they also provide a call handling service for other transport companies.

"What used to happen is a company based in London might ring an engineer in Newcastle if there was a breakdown. It was time consuming and messages weren't relayed properly. With us there's one point of contact and we make sure we get all the relevant information, get an engineer out and we sort out the invoicing.

"The call handling service is for anyone who doesn't want the engineer on call answering the phones and being disturbed unnecessarily in the middle of the night with anything trivial."

The father and son team recognised that the key to success was having the right phone system and thanks to local company Plum Communications they have combated the problems that give many call centres a bad name and won new contracts.

The digital Avaya IP Office System has meant that each client is allocated their own number which enables operators to answer calls in a client's company name.

It also logs calls, which enables NTBS to assess efficiency and schedule staff accordingly for busy periods.

### plum communications

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✦ Plum also gave staff Plantronics headsets, which makes it much easier to answer calls and work simultaneously on the computer.

They installed an impressive Oak Provoice system six months ago, which records conversations and has an instant playback and archiving facility.

It enables operators to check information given by a driver and helps with staff training and customer queries.

Stuart Brown said: "We had a situation recently where a customer claimed we had quoted an estimate of £300 for a repair, but when we played the call back our operator had told them it would be about £1,000.

"They couldn't argue with that and the bill was paid."

He adds: "Before, the phone system wasn't doing what we wanted it to, which was frustrating.

"Plum recabled our office and put in the new system which does everything we want and it's simple to use, which is important for staff.

"We like the fact that Plum is local and respond immediately to any screams for help, but they were also the most competitive price wise."

Peter Savic, lead consultant and founder of Oldham based Plum Communications says: "I'm pleased we have helped make a great local business even more effective."

"Before we put the new digital system in, each client had a separate line.

"Now all calls come through one line, but the individual company name comes up on screen and the operator can answer the call appropriately. They can also dial in and out on the client's own number.

"Calls are recorded and stored in the computer, which is helpful and the system is also very flexible.

"As NTBS continue to expand they can easily add new customers within seconds rather than going to the trouble and expense of getting a new telephone line installed.

Nationwide Transport Breakdown Services now handles 800 calls each day and is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"The latest phone system, especially the call logging, has helped us win two or three major contracts recently, which is great," says Stuart.

"It's also helped us fulfill my father's initial aim which was to give the very best service to the transport industry in the UK and Europe."

If you have a business which requires 24 hour answering services then call us and we will introduce you to the company.

## information

Nationwide Transport Breakdown Services were supplied with an Avaya Telephone System comprising

Category 5 cabling and patch cabinet installation  
IP Office 406 V2 System with ISDN30 Primary Rate Card  
16 port digital station telephone module  
IP Office Digital Display Telephone  
Voicemail, AI Office Call Logger, Oak Provoice Call Recorder, Remote Management

ISDN30 with Direct Dialling (DDI) and broadband services with router and firewall are installed and maintained by Plum Communications

User software includes Phone Manager and Call Status

A range of 0800 and 0845 numbers supplied by plum Communications are issued to clients to allow seamless redirection of their calls to the call answering centre

24 hour support is provided by Plum Communications

## Great North Run Update

As we went to press it was confirmed that Suzanne Cain, Customer Services Manager with Plum Communications had completed the half marathon run in Newcastle.



The company sponsored Suzanne for Charity Cancer Research. She was joined in the run by husband Martin, an accomplished athlete who recently ran in the Blackpool Marathon and won the Blackpool Triathlon event.

We will bring you a full interview and picture in our next newsletter.

If you would like to sponsor Suzanne, please call her at Plum Communications on 0161 633 7335 or email [suzannec@plumcom.co.uk](mailto:suzannec@plumcom.co.uk)

real-life experience to back up their studies and gives businesses access to fresh talent.

He said of his placement: "It has been brilliant. It has also been very challenging but I know it has been worth it.

"Not only have I improved upon the skills I came with but I have learned new things whilst being here. Peter Savic, the company's managing director, has been great with me. He left me to get on with the work but was always available when I needed him."

Peter Savic said: "Daniel has been a great asset to Plum Communications whilst he has been here. He has great ability and a bright future in the industry."

You can view the new ordering system at [www.plumcom.co.uk](http://www.plumcom.co.uk)

## Daniel Steps into New Career

A Davyhulme student has been celebrating a successful industry placement after contributing to his employer's new web-based ordering system.



Daniel Latter, 26, is three years into a four year BSc Honours software engineering degree at Manchester Metropolitan University, and has spent eight weeks working at Oldham's Plum Communications gaining further experience in the working environment.

He has been charged with developing a web-based orders system for customers. Previously, Plum Communications took orders by phone and email but thanks to Daniel's input they can now be collected via the website.

By the time Phase Two of the project has been implemented, it will be a fully automated process which links directly to suppliers' ordering systems.

Daniel was paired up with Plum Communications by the Shell Step scheme, which helps students get

### glossary

#### DDI

Direct Dialling Inwards

Used on digital circuits to allow incoming calls to be routed to an extension or group of extensions. A cost effective method to route calls to staff as the quantity of DDI numbers is independent of the number of channels.

#### CHANNEL

This is the smallest unit of delivery of a digital line and represents ability to make one call incoming or outgoing. Therefore eight channels would allow eight simultaneous calls.

#### IP

Internet Protocol

This is the main method of data network communication within a business and is how the internet (world wide web) works.

#### VOIP

Voice Over Internet Protocol

Voice calls carried over an IP circuit. Initially a niche service this is now becoming mainstream and allows businesses to communicate cost effectively and securely.



# plumoffers

## **8Mb ADSL Broadband only £19 per month**

Plum Customers can now purchase ADSL Broadband for just £19 per month plus VAT. Download speed is up to 8Mb depending upon distance from exchange and line quality.

This type of connections is intended for one or a few PCs. For larger locations we have an Office Service at £25 per month (plus VAT) which allows many PCs to share the same connection.

All Plum ADSL connections are provided with a static IP address, mail sending via SMTP and if required web space and email handling.

Plum also provide Domain registration and hosting and for customers on the move we provide web-mail which allows emails to be collected from the plum website.

Migration to the service is free and for a limited time the company is providing free activation subject to a minimum contract period.

To order email [sales@plumcom.co.uk](mailto:sales@plumcom.co.uk) or call 0161 633 7335.

## **Mobile Line Rental from £4 per month**

A wide range of handsets are available and full itemised billing is available through the on line service. High volume users can also benefit from special bundled tariffs. Full analysis of bills is available as part of the plum service.

A wide range of handsets are available and full itemised billing is available through the on line service. High volume users can also benefit from special bundled tariffs.

Single handsets can also be purchased on line from the Plum website [www.plumcom.co.uk](http://www.plumcom.co.uk).

## **Free Analysis and Advice**

Plum Communications is offering businesses a free review of their telephone services including analysis of current bills and survey of current equipment. These highly popular reviews have helped other businesses save several thousand pounds per annum and have provided advice on how to invest effectively in new technology.

For a free review of your bills and survey of your equipment please email [peters@plumcom.co.uk](mailto:peters@plumcom.co.uk).

## **Save 10% by buying on line from Plum Store**

Purchase goods online from the plumstore at [www.plumcom.co.uk](http://www.plumcom.co.uk) and save 10% (only when buying on-line).

Offer extended through October 2006.

For further information about any of the articles in this newsletter or to request additional paper copies please contact:

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