

The Ergonomics Consortium

Ergonomics where it should be...Everywhere!

ISSUE 3 MAY 2009

'Fun-bags' are a serious business for Smart-e-pants.



*Junior Active Backpack
from Smart-e-pants.*

Smart-e-pants design and build backpacks that help kids and adults care for their backs when carrying the loads that we all find ourselves moving from place to place on a daily basis.

So much attention has been given to the ergonomic design and the anthropometrics of carrying that these bags are the only ones sponsored by the charity, BackCare.

Smart-e-pants is the brainchild of Ergonomist and Designer, Jim Tylour and is informed by his additional roles as a father and local school Governor.

Jim has been designing products and furniture for schools for over 15 years and this product incorporates features based on the information collected from kids, teachers and parents. For instance, these bags DO NOT have a cable port for MP3 players due to the safety issues raised when children wear headphones when walking to school. There is more information on this issue through the Smart-e-pants website links page.



www.smart-e-pants.co.uk

*Special curved bottom of
the Active Backpacks*

There is also lots of advice about carrying posture and weight limits for bags, to help kids and parents look after their backs.

Smart-e-pants is now a Supplier Member of the Ergonomics Consortium.

Website development given a usability boost.

As the website content has been developing in line with the expanding membership and additional services available, it has been necessary to take our own advice and look at the usability of the site.

The first 2 conflicts that the site encounters are these: that users will have very different reasons for visiting (as customers or members); and the need to explain what the Ergonomics Consortium does.

Work has started on the customer experience first. Research has concentrated on the searching and buying

behaviours of those looking for Consultancy Services and the results have developed as a streamlined and segregated process for Customers.

The identification of what Customers will find when they land on the site is tailored to the Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) terms used to identify each page and the Adwords campaigns set up to present the website to those searching for what it offers.

This also tackles problem number two - what does the Ergonomics Consortium do? By improving the accuracy

of the presentation of the site to users of the web, we are not wasting our campaign funds by being presented to those who are not in the market for Ergonomics consultancy, services or quality products with an ergonomic pedigree.

The site development has been helped enormously by constructive feedback from members and non-members alike. Our sincere thanks to all those involved.

Please send all comments to Nick Taylor via the website [Contact page](#).

Human Factors outside rail, oil and nuclear industries?



The Ergonomics Society membership has agreed to change its name to the 'Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors', in part because the public and business understanding of Ergonomics is not flexible enough to incorporate all the varied aspects or applications of our profession.

Sound-bites are the way that most of us receive (and unfortunately, often digest) the majority of news, views and opinion that we are exposed to daily. This newsletter is a prime example: headline, short copy and a picture or two, so you get

the message without having to read more than a couple of seconds worth of text.

As 'Ergonomics' has often been victim to translation as 'DSE and chairs' so 'Human Factors' is in danger of translation as 'rail, oil or nuclear industry' because the phrase is most often seen when advertising for jobs in these industries..

So much of the excellent work in inclusive design, system development, business and change management, software usability, equipment specification, instruction development, training needs analysis etc., etc. are lost to the wider markets.

At the Ergonomics Consortium, all of the aspects of ergonomics, human factors, psychology, design, engineering and associated factions are being presented to industry on a united

front and as a well-blended team. Most Consultancies are known for one specialism or another and this not only limits their business opportunities but further erodes the understanding of this variegated topic within the commercial world .

We are looking for more Consultants who specialise in all of these aspects of Ergonomics and Human Factors, so that we can better present the benefits of a multi-faceted approach to solving complex issues faced by industries at this difficult time.

[Contact us](#) through the website to register your interest and see what the benefits can be for you too.

Consultants' Conference - What do you think?

It is conference season and the benefits of attendance vary as much as the venues and programmes on offer.

The costs of attendance however do not vary as much and most fall into the category of 'significant investment'. This is particularly true when one adds up the time lost, travel, accommodation, and attendance at the annual dinner. These costs significantly effect the delegate lists and will usually result in good

representation from universities, large companies and sponsors.

What is missing is a whole stratum of professionals for whom the cost is prohibitive. These events are poorer for it and consequently have some difficulty attracting the attention of the industries to whom we are trying to sell our services.

The Ergonomics Consortium is proposing to run a Conference for Consultants and we are

very interested in your views as to who or what should be there and what cost would represent good value.

We need to hear from businesses, suppliers and consultants alike, so please take a couple of moments to complete the form on our website by following this link:

[Consultant Conference Opinions.](#)

We will put the results in the next newsletter and keep you up to date with progress.

This is supposed to be the funny bit.....

With equality in the workplace firmly established as a right, although still being fought for as a reality, many of us should be thankful that we don't live in the following places:

The state of Illinois, USA - All bachelors must be called Master (not Mister) by their female colleagues.

The state of Michigan, USA - A man legally owns his wife's hair, so she is not allowed to have it cut without his permission.

The city of Tucson, Arizona, USA - Women are not allowed to wear trousers.

Still, it's not all bad...

In Florida, USA - men may not be seen wearing any kind of strapless gown in public.

