

Job Market

CAREER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING.....E5	KEY APPOINTMENTS.....E2-E4
CHILD CARE.....E5	MANAGEMENT.....E4
CONSTRUCTION & PROPERTY.....E5	OVERSEAS VACANCIES.....E7
EDUCATIONAL VACANCIES.....E5	PART-TIME VACANCIES.....E4
ENGINEERING & SCIENCE.....E4	RETAIL.....E6
HAIR & BEAUTY.....E5	SALES.....E7
HEALTH APPOINTMENTS.....E6	SITUATIONS VACANT.....E7-E8
HOSPITALITY & TOURISM.....E6	TRADES & SERVICES VACANCIES.....E4
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People On The Move

Anna Dowson



Law firm **Buddle Findlay** has promoted **Anna Dowson** to senior associate in its banking and finance team. Ms Dowson has experience advising syndicated and bilateral lending in both cross-border and domestic matters

Elaine McCaw



Elaine McCaw has been appointed non-executive chair of **Hobson Leavy Executive Search**. Ms McCaw is the former principal and co-founder of executive search firm **Bell McCaw Bampfylde**, and is now a professional director and consultant.

Grant Uridge



Insurance adviser and broking group **Plus 4 Insurance Solutions (Plus4)** has appointed **Grant Uridge** as board chairman. Mr Uridge, from Wellington, has held senior management roles with **FMG** and **Joseph Banks Trusts**.

People on the Move is a free service highlighting recent appointments.
For inclusion, email details and a photograph to: supplements@dompost.co.nz



For the record: Stephen Beighton is sales manager and a director of Desktop Imaging in Wellington, a company that specialises in converting records to digital formats. Photos: JOHN NICHOLSON

Stephen Beighton has been in sales and account management for 25 years, which has set up him perfectly for his current role.

A salesman who's always ready to break new ground

AS A teenager, every time Stephen Beighton went past a certain Dunedin car yard he'd feast his eyes on his dream car.

"It was this really fancy Ford Telstar, it was sitting up on the pedestal on the corner and I thought 'I so want that,'" he recalls.

At the time he'd just finished school and hadn't settled on any particular career path. "All I knew was that I wanted that fancy car and to afford a fancy car I figured I had to have a really good-paying job, so I thought sales - people can earn a really good income from being successful in sales, so that's what I did."

More than three decades later Mr Beighton is sales manager and one of four directors of Desktop Imaging in Wellington.

It's a multimillion-dollar business that specialises in converting paper or microform records to digital formats.

He heads all sales and marketing activities and is responsible for developing and managing business opportunities with new and existing customers nationwide.

"Our core service is the conversion of paper-based records to digital format, most commonly PDFs, and the driving force behind that is it makes records more accessible, prevents wear and tear on physical records and engages IT as a means of support and back-up," says Mr Beighton.

"Making records more accessible by digitising them means information can be accessed off-site, from anywhere at any time, and that is becoming more important."

He's recently noticed a rise in demand for such services, particularly since the Christchurch earthquakes.

His firm has helped a number of Christchurch companies recently - Christchurch City Council, Solid Energy, Opus International and the Companies Office, to name a few.

The Companies Office, which houses the second-largest register of New Zealand's company records, was severely affected by the February 22 quake, shutting it down for three weeks.

Without Desktop Imaging's services this could have been devastating for the organisation.

"Had we still been paper-based, the more than 150,000 company records we house would have been inaccessible to businesses for those three weeks," Companies Office group manager Justin Hygate said at the time.

"This information is crucial to every business transaction going on every day and without them big chunks of commerce would



have been significantly slowed or in some cases badly impacted."

Mr Beighton believes his 25 years' experience in account and sales management, including stints in the information services, postal and transport industries, has stood him in good stead for his current role.

"My background in terms of my knowledge and my experience is key to engaging with customers and being successful in winning work and ongoing relationships."

Records management is an industry Mr Beighton is a part of largely because of the motto he's lived by for most of his working life - "there's no gain without pain".

"If I've ever been scared to step into the unknown I've always come back to my favourite quote, I live by that motto and I always follow my gut instinct.

"Opportunities have just opened up before me, it's about taking a punt, life is a gamble and you've just got to back yourself all the way, every time."

His career began behind the counter at Dunedin's Intercity Coachlines as travel services officer.

From there he worked his way up to his first sales job as the firm's business agent and eventually saved up enough money to buy his "fancy car".

"It was a magnificent feeling when I finally got my really flash car and drove it off the

yard. Looking back it really was one of my first milestones," he says.

After Intercity he spent a large chunk of his career at New Zealand Post, first as account manager in Dunedin, then transferring to Palmerston North and later Wellington to become strategic account manager.

"NZ Post was great to work for, they put a lot of money into developing staff and I managed to complete a diploma in business studies extramurally at Massey University while I was there.

"That was a big achievement for me. Let's just say my education wasn't comprehensive, school wasn't for me."

Schooling aside, Mr Beighton eventually left NZ Post to take up a job in records management as business development manager and later national sales manager at Recall.

His biggest step was yet to come, though, leaving a perfectly well-paid job to go into business for himself.

"Through working in the records management industry I knew my fellow directors at Desktop Imaging and they approached me in the first instance about joining them as a director and sales manager.

"We had conversations over a good three to four months before I teamed up with them. I evaluated the situation for six months and then bought my share.

"It was a big step, there's a certain comfort when someone else pays your wages, you don't have to be too concerned where the money's coming from," he says. "But I guess I saw it as a natural progression. I was seeing a trend away from storing physical documents. It was quite clear the future was in the conversion of physical microfilm to digital format, and so I just followed my gut instinct."

Three years on Desktop Imaging has grown 30 per cent to 40 per cent, with staffing levels increasing from 30 to 53, a client base now in its hundreds and million-dollar-plus contracts.

"In terms of going into business there's always financial pressure and financial pains, it's whether you back yourself to overcome them and I have.

"We're on a successful path to grow the business now and I'm far better off both professionally and personally. Everything has fallen into place."

As for the flash cars, Mr Beighton admits to still having a few expensive hobbies, which also now include golf and thoroughbred racing.

On reflection he puts his success to date down to enjoying every job he's done and being confident.

"Twenty-five years of selling is some achievement, and you couldn't really do that unless you love what you're doing. Confidence too is vital, have you ever met a salesperson lacking in confidence?"

Pencil Sketch

- Name: Stephen Beighton.
- Inspired by: Sir Patrick Hogan.
- Favourite Movie: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Gran Torino*.
- Favourite Album: *The Best of David Bowie (1974)*.
- Favourite quote: "There are no gains without pains." - Benjamin Franklin.
- Favourite Website: Google.
- Favourite Food: Roast lamb.