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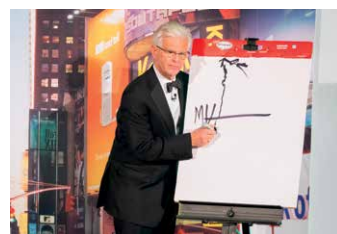
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What a thrill...

New York provided the thrilling setting to our first international conference, one we are planning to repeat in Bangkok – so make sure you are there!

The 200 who stepped off the plane in New York City were whisked off to the Intercontinental Hotel in the City's Times Square, in the heart of theatreland, designer shops and restaurants.

It was like stepping into an episode of Sex and the City on Manhattan Island: yellow cabs, steaming vents in the roads, endless traffic noises and the ever present traffic lights.

Our itinerary involved famous New York haunts such as Pacha's nightclub, helicopter flights and a yacht cruise complete with dining, up and down the Hudson River. We also enjoyed a private visit to the Empire State building and being serenaded by Broadway-quality waitressing staff at Ellen's Stardust Diner on Broadway itself.

Our hardworking staff were given every encouragement to let their hair down and the very talented US comedian Vic Henley, of Never Mind the Buzzcocks fame, had a big hand in ensuring they were laughing all the way.



Pictured right:
Times Square.

Above: The view from one of the Intercontinental Hotel bedroom windows.

Frank Sinatra had it spot on when he sang “New York, New York, so good they named it twice” – our visit to the Big Apple did not disappoint.

The city is home to 722 miles of subway track, Woody Allen, Robert de Niro and just a short trip from Hoboken in New Jersey, across the River Hudson, where old “blue eyes” himself was born.

We had a blast and next year it could be you coming with us to Bangkok for our second international conference.

But first, a big thank you to all of you in the Spicerhaart family who have made the Group so profitable.

In 2014, you helped increase our income by 9% to £112m. That includes a £7.5m increase in Estate Agency profits, £2.2m better than 2013; lettings income was over £23m, a doubling of its turnover in the past four years and a trebling of the profit, thanks to lettings MD Andrew Benn and his team. In Financial Services we banked £10m, that’s double the sum we banked in 2010.

Taking a bite of the Big Apple

And let’s not forget our Nexus team who took their millionth call in 2014 and delivered revenue of £25m, representing 23% of the Group’s total income.

But one of the achievements we can all be proud of is hitting the £1 million mark in fundraising since the launch of our charity Magic Moments, which sends children with life-limiting illnesses, and their families, to Disneyland Paris for the holiday of a lifetime.

Following the launch of our new strategy, Our Family Our Future, we’ve made giant strides, with huge investment into staff training and development in our branches and new technology. Our new websites will be launched shortly.

You are all winners, but this year, we announced the three top people in each awards’ category and the whole audience held their breath as the gold envelope was opened, in true Oscar’s style, to reveal the winner who received their award from the relevant divisional head as guest presenter. Congratulations to you all.



Opportunity knocks for you

Spicerhaart is the land of opportunity for focused, driven people, according to lettings MD Andrew Benn, who spoke at our glitzy conference.

He revealed that 28 Branch Managers were promoted from within the Group via the management preparation programme in 2014 and a further 18 area managers were appointed through our senior manager development programme.

“We are continuing to develop our strategy; Russell Jervis, Antony Lark and myself are getting back to the floor with our GBR ‘getting the basics right’ campaign; we have selected 15 pioneer branches to work closely with to review, develop and refine the Spicerhaart ways, starting, as the name would suggest with the basics,” he said.

“This year is off to a great start, over budget income in Jan at £1.82m and over budgeted profit by £162k, a position I am sure we can build on with the great teams we have in place and the implementation of our strategy moving forward,” he added.

Antony Lark, Financial Services MD, kept with the Big Apple theme and talked about the good apples, such as making the changes demanded by the new Mortgage Market Review as dictated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

He said the Mortgage Consultants team was bigger than ever with 13 gaining promotion last year. The team achieved an increase of 6% on gross mortgage volumes: “We increased legal income by 35% and saw total income increase by 8%.”



Andrew Benn.



Russell Jervis.

Antony Lark.



Russell Jervis, Estate Agency MD, used the alphabet as a cue to the events of the past year – he talked about O standing for opportunity and the company being an opportunity for everyone to grow, R stood for Raving Fans, and M for market share, stressing that we have to keep our obsession with regards to growing market share.

But one of the most important was U: “The top performers of Spicerhaart. Thank you, the company needs you more than ever before to share your ideas, success and frustrations as we embark on our 26th year,” he said.

Top realtor trainer says “Go for it!”

He did not disappoint us in New York. He combined his experience in sales and management with a razor sharp wit and fast-paced delivery that had everyone on the edge of their seats.

He said: “The audience was responsive and engaging. It was a pleasure to address them...wish I had even more time with them.”

“The evening boat ride brought a fun, party atmosphere, and tons of positive compliments from the agents who attended the session earlier that day.

“I heard lots of questions on how to deal with commission objections, so that generated some interesting conversations. I hope to come over to the UK to answer them in more detail.”

His own favourite part of the conference? “Watching John Spence make his speech. What an excellent, polished, emotional presenter.”

The realtor expert gave us some great inspirational tips and we now plan to use them to ensure we remain at the top of our game. So in the spirit of David Knox “Go, go GO!”

Our aim is to be the best in the business and our quest to achieve Raving Fans is a target we continue to strive for on a daily basis.

So, to enhance our service, we invited top American real estate trainer David Knox to share his words of wisdom with us at the Intercontinental Hotel conference venue.

Over the past 27 years David has presented 3,000 seminars to half a million people in seven countries and helped estate agents to enhance their selling and negotiating skills with his timeless advice and rollercoaster energy.



Closing the gap for buyers and sellers



Above: David Knox.

Left: Emma Barber.

“Fantastic” and “Energetic” were just some of the adjectives used to describe David Knox’s high octane master class on achieving success.

Now his advice is being incorporated into the Group’s training programmes and Emma Barber, Head of Training, says it is to be rolled out throughout all the branches.

“The 200 people who saw him will have gone away with brilliant ideas. I’m really excited about it. It is really

refreshing and something that we need,” she said.

“The feedback I have had from people who saw his presentation at the conference is that he really struck a chord with lots of them.

“His approach was to strip things back to the basics, and ask the right questions because instead we sometimes get caught up asking the questions we think are important.

“He pointed out that sellers and buyers always have differing common

denominators: buyers want a deal and sellers want the best price, lowest fee and the best service.

“Our aim will be to close that gap. He gave us great tips on overcoming fee objections using value added selling, conversations openers, and finding the next person on the street who is going to put their house on the market.”

Footage of David Knox’s speech is going to be made available to Branch Managers as the training is rolled out.

No Spicerhaart conference would be the same without our Non-Executive Chairman John Spence CBE and his timely reminder of Our Family matters.

He effortlessly combines a dry wit with a serious message – not to lose sight of our core values: customer obsession, a high performance culture, reputation, continuous improvement, respect and independence through profitability.

We caught up with him back in the UK and he shared his thoughts about the trip itself: “I have an abiding

Our Family matters

memory of a brilliantly organised weekend populated by terrifically committed people who were thrilled by experiences, dedicated to the company and determined to have a great time.

“For me, the dinner cruise around Manhattan was fantastic, because it gave the opportunity to talk with so many people, while enjoying great food in a great environment.”

While he was looking forward to Bangkok he said: “I’m excited but a little scared, who knows what Paul will have up his sleeve!”



Above and right: John Spence.

Below: a view from the cruise.



You are the best



Jacqui White receiving the Chairman's Outstanding Achievement Award.



This year's winner of the Chairman's Outstanding Achievement Award went to someone who achieved amazing results, Jacqui White, Divisional Sales Director for the Metro Division.

Jacqui's customer obsession score within the division has seen 86% of customers recommending haart to others.

John Spence said Jacqui, who is in her 20th year working for the Group,

was “a lady who totally oozes the values we hold so dearly.”

He added: “So far in 2015, we have already seen her lead the offices under her control to 14% increase year on year on exchange income and the profits are already ahead of 2014.”

Having witnessed the Disney trip first hand in 2013, she is also a dedicated supporter of the work of Magic Moments and supports many of the fundraising events.

In 2014, Jacqui became unexpectedly ill whilst on holiday, which resulted in surgery, but that failed to hold her back.

Jacqui admitted: “The award caught me off guard. It was quite an emotional experience but a very proud moment to have the recognition.

“New York was an amazing experience and as a Divisional Sales Director I was proud to have so many of the Metro team accompanying me and the rest of the Group to the city.”



Vic's laughing natter

There was nothing boring, bland or beige about the entertainment at our awards ceremony.

This year we were lucky enough to have Alabama-born comedian Vic Henley to entertain our scores of high-fliers who had won the trip of a lifetime after a year's outstanding performance.

Vic, who lives in New York, is no stranger to audiences both sides of the pond since he has made regular appearances on well-known US stand-up comedy shows plus The Tonight show with Jay Leno and the David Letterman show.

Closer to home, he was a familiar face on BBC's Never Mind The Buzzcocks and They Think It's All Over.

After his side-splitting stand-up routine in New York, he got down to business as Master of Ceremonies of the awards that saw traditional categories rebranded to reflect the New York City theme such as The Big Apple Awards, The Golden Apple Awards, Empire State Building and The Wall Street Leagues, to name but a few.



I'm just saying...

Vic Henley was certainly entertaining and everyone enjoyed his witty style. We had a chat with some of the team from Bury St Edmunds haart about his performance.

Independent Mortgage and Protection Adviser Emma Parker said: "When they first introduced Vic, I didn't recognise his name, but as soon as they mentioned the TV programmes he had been on I knew he would be funny."

"He really exceeded my expectations, he was hilarious!"



Branch Manager Melanie Mills said: "I wasn't sure I was going to enjoy the performance as I hadn't heard of him, but he was absolutely brilliant and was an amazing compère for the awards."

Negotiator Adam Colley said: "He did a brilliant job with the 'Oscar-style' awards, he continued to make jokes and have fun with award winners walking up stage."

Melanie said: "When I went to collect my award he pointed to my dress and said 'I was going to wear that dress today', which was really funny."

Emma recalls: "The whole audience were laughing, everyone thought he was very funny, sometimes I don't think people were expecting him to come out with these things he did."

"His favourite line was 'I'm just saying' and it turned into a catchphrase for the rest of the trip, I could still hear people saying it on the way home."

"Throughout the whole thing everyone was laughing and enjoying themselves he was fantastic at keeping everyone's attention. I would 100% go and see him again."

Our Oscar's style winners

Estate Agency



Top Lister (Units Sold) **AND** (Sold £)
Kenneth Siddall, Rotherham



Top Negotiator (Exchanged £)
Rasik Bhudia



Top Negotiator (Exchanged Units)
Suzanne White, Barnsley



Top Negotiator (FS Sign Ups)
Giovanno Scippo, Shirehampton



Market Share Growth League Winner
Alex Lawrence, FJL Greenwich



Top Branch Raving Fans per Exchange
Stephen McDonald, Blaby



Chewton Rose Branch of the Year
Colchester, Chewton Rose



Wall Street League Winner
Shawn Meakins, Harlow



Central Park League Winner
Gary Scargill, Dagenham



Empire State Building League Winner
Jo Pennells, Norwich GT



Broadway League Winner
Peter Mervill, Rotherham



Fifth Avenue League Winner
Esta Wilson, Crystal Palace



Times Square League Winner
Michael Donnelly, Sutton



Madison Square Garden League Winner
Jodie Thomas, Llanishen



Top DSD (Profit per Office)
Mariel Roe, FJL



Top DSD (Biggest Swing)
Jacqui White, Metro



Top Branch on Legal Bankings
Mel Mills, Bury St Edmunds

Nexus & PMC



Top Negotiator
Andrew Regan,
Negotiator



Top Sales Negotiator
Lyn Carpenter, Sales
Negotiator



Top Lettings Negotiator
Sebastian Bastable-Aradia,
Lettings Negotiator



Top on Raving Fans
Sophie Hunt, Property Manager



Top on Sundry Income Points
Kirsty Nolan, Property Team Manager



Top on Occupied Unit Growth Points
Sian Taylor, Property Team Manager

Financial Services



Top Newcomer
Nikolaj Radojic



Top Broker 1st (Authorised 2013)
Chris Nelson



Top Broker 2nd (Authorised 2013)
Sam Hyslop, Exeter



Top Broker 2nd (Authorised pre 2013)
Nick Powell

Lettings



Blue League Winner
Emma Flowers, Negotiator, Loughborough



Green League Winner
Dhanvir Bilkhu, Negotiator, Earley



Yellow League Winner
Ashlea White, Negotiator, Nottingham



Orange League Winner
Ben Stagnell, Negotiator, Luton



Red League Winner
Jaswant Mann, Negotiator, Leicester



Indigo League Winner
Minder Virdee, Manager, Harborne



Blue League Winner
Harjit Sahota, Manager, Slough



Green League Winner
Samantha Powell, Manager, Plymouth



Yellow League Winner
Richard Hollingworth, Manager, Walthamstow



Orange League Winner
Musti Madar, Manager, Clapham Common



Red League Winner
Sharon Owen, Manager, Sheffield



Occupied Unit Growth League Winner
David Greenslade, Stratford



Market Share League Winner
Musti Madar, Clapham Common



Area Manager Rainbow League Winner
Sharon Owen, Sheffield

Golden Apple Awards



Top on Elite Profit
Bobby Andrews, Bow



DLD Rainbow League
Winner
Sat Basi, North



Top DSD (Total Profit) Mariel Roe, FJL



Mel Mills and the Team at Bury St Edmunds.



Top Broker 1st
(Authorised pre 2013)
Matt Tilbury



Top Financial Services
DSD
Paul McGrath

Manhattan memories



Everyone waited with great anticipation and bated breath to find out where the next international conference and awards would be held in 2016.

Alex Bryant, Senior Negotiator at Bury St Edmunds haart said: "We were given a few hints as to where it could be, as we were told the weather would be hot and the flight time was 10 hours.

"We were all shouting out place names trying to guess where we could get the chance to go, Las Vegas, Tokyo and Australia came up a few times. Everyone was on edge of their seats until the moment we were told."

When it was announced the conference would be held in the Thailand capital of Bangkok the crowd erupted.

Independent Mortgage and Protection Adviser at Bury St Edmunds haart, Emma Parker remembers the moment: "Imagine the atmosphere of an American baseball game or basketball match, that's pretty much what it was like. When everyone was in full swing and trying to make as much noise as possible with whistles, giant foam hands and paddle clappers it was amazing."

Bury St Edmunds haart Branch Manager Melanie Mills said: "Everyone was so excited when we found out, I'm not sure anyone could believe it. What a fantastic opportunity."

Emma said: "I was so excited to find out about Bangkok and it was a great touch having the ladies come out with the flower garlands for everyone.

"You could see that every single person was going to do all they could to be able to experience yet another amazing trip!"

The big reveal – Bangkok



Did you know...

1. The name Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, is known by locals as Krung Thep – translated as City of Angels. But this is just a short form of its real name, the longest city name in the world, since it is actually Krung Thep Mahanakhon Amon Rattanakosin Mahinthara Ayuthaya Mahadilok Phop Noppharat Ratchathani Burirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amon Piman Awatan Sathit Sakkathattiya Witsanukam Prasit.
2. Bangkok is the world's hottest city, according to the World Meteorological Organisation as it has an average mean temperature of 28 degrees Centigrade, which jumps to a steamy 34 degrees between the months of March and May.
3. Should you need to spend a penny, it's rare, but you might find three gender toilets, one for the gents, one for the ladies and a third for the transgender men, the Ladyboys. Thailand is one of the first countries in the world to cater for them in this way.
4. If you want to learn a bit of Thai, here's a headstart: Hello in Thai is "Sawatdee"; yes is "chai", no is "mai chai" and thank you is "khob khun".
5. Bangkok is home to the largest gold Buddha statue in the world. You'll find it in Chinatown, renowned as the largest Chinatown in the world. Yaowarat, as the locals call the area, is home to over a million ethnic Chinese people.



“One belongs to New York instantly,
one belongs to it as much in five
minutes as in five years.”

Tom Wolfe, author and journalist

