

There's no stopping istop

This bulletin aims to give stakeholders and interested parties a short update on the introduction of istop information and shopping kiosks across the UK. www.istopkiosks.co.uk

Labour Conference highlights

istop's appearance at the Labour Party Conference in Manchester in September was greeted with an excellent turnout of Minister and MP visits plus a great deal of interest from prospective commercial partners.

Prospects from as far afield as Australia, the British Virgin Islands and Bermuda expressed a strong interest in the istop kiosk technology and identified specific

ways in which the new dual-screen kiosk in particular could meet the needs of their respective community groups.



Ministerial interest

Introductions and photocalls with the Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP (pictured below), Secretary of State for Health, the Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport and the Rt Hon James Purnell, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (pictured above right) more than fulfilled the istop team's objectives for the week.

In total, 16 MPs and Ministers viewed the istop kiosk and were given a brief introduction to the mobile roadshow and an update on progress so far across the UK. Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, James Purnell MP



was enthusiastic, greeting MD Jon Savitt with 'so you are the people who are getting people jobs.' The new istop dual-screen kiosk attracted particularly strong interest. By combining a static touchscreen with a second screen for streaming government information campaigns or commercials, visitors were quick to see how flexible istop can be as a self-service multi-media communications platform. The facility to print out contact information and the durability of the kiosk housing also proved impressive and was commented on by many.

Following short briefings at Conference, istop now has a number of Ministerial meetings to prepare for. As explained in previous issues, istop's main ambition is to encourage Government and local authorities to put touchscreen kiosks at the heart of communities all over the UK. This will help ensure that all citizens have fair and equal access to information, not just those who use PCs at home or at work.

What are istop kiosks?

- istop is a stand-alone touchscreen information and shopping kiosk
- It offers a solution to **social and digital exclusion** by allowing people of all ages in rural and urban areas to have equal access to online services as the rest of the population
- Kiosks are sited in local shops and other community facilities
- istop kiosks help local and national government by providing local communities with **free, self-service** information and advice about health, housing, education, family, employment and benefit services. They also provide communities with extra shopping choice (healthcare, toys, gifts) and independent retailers with additional income
- The concept has the backing and involvement of JobcentrePlus, National Federation of SubPostmasters and the Rural Shops Alliance

Want to know more about istop?

see www.istopkiosks.co.uk

or call now on 0800 008 6727

New agreement with Mid Beds District Council

A busy period in the lead-up to the Manchester Conference also saw the signing of a new Contractual Agreement with Mid Beds District Council. Mid Beds approached istop earlier this year with the objective of sourcing a kiosk solution to deliver a range of communications to its diverse and largely rural community.

100 kiosks

istop will initially be piloted in 10 locations with the aim of 100 further kiosks throughout the District in 2009. The kiosks will be used to support the transition from Mid Beds to Central Bedfordshire following the announcement earlier this year that



Picture credit - Carla Watson
PicturesOfEngland.com

two new unitary councils will be set up in Bedfordshire to take on the services of the three existing districts and county council. As a result, the new Central Bedfordshire Authority will cover the Mid Beds and South Bedfordshire areas, whilst a separate unitary council

will be created for Bedford Borough. The new Central Bedfordshire unitary council officially comes into being on 1st April 2009.

Mid Beds is an attractive rural area with the growing, historic market towns of Ampthill, Filtwick, Sandy and Biggleswade and many picturesque villages. Mid Beds is also part of the Milton Keynes and South Northamptonshire national growth area and adjacent to the major urban settlements of Milton Keynes, Bedford and Luton. It is also at the heart of the Oxford to Cambridge Technology arc and has a population of around 132,200.

Jalal - paying off his student debt...

Jalal is a 20 year-old University student living away from home. He returned home from University in mid June 2008 and started to visit his local Post Office where he regularly used the istop kiosk to look for employment. Within one week of being home he

had printed off the job details for an agency called Prime Time Recruitment. He accepted their job offer and started work in the first week of July. Jalal has now returned to University, but the job he found has allowed him to pay off his student debts. In addition the

company have kept him on their books and have guaranteed him work during future University holidays. He now knows he can come home and go to work and pay off his next set of student debts. Jalal says,



"The istop kiosk is invaluable as I live only two minutes' walk from the Post Office where the istop kiosk is located. The nearest Job Centre is in Spennymoor, which is at least half an hour's bus ride away and it's costly on fares which I no longer have to pay. Using the kiosk drastically reduced the time it took me to find a job as I could visit it every day. It gained me employment, which quickly allowed me to pay off my student loans".

...And Dad gets a job too

Ibrahim Thompson was so impressed by his son's experience (Jalal) with the istop kiosk he decided to visit the Post Office for himself. As a 61 year-old retired teacher his pension is not paying him as much as he anticipated and his wife is about to be made redundant from her job which makes their financial situation uncomfortable.

He wanted a part time job, preferably locally, so he would not have to incur any travel expenses. He explains, "The journey to the Jobcentre was making me reluctant to look for employment".

However, after his son's success, Mr Thompson visited the Post Office and used the istop kiosk three to four times a week during September. As a result of locating a job on the kiosk he now works part time with Premier waste Management half a mile from his house. He says,

"This istop kiosk has been a lifeline for my family. I just popped into the Post Office and found a job... it is the best community project that I have seen in a long time."



Former Press Secretary to Tony Blair, Alastair Campbell, was interviewed at the istop stand during the Labour Party Conference.

New DVD and Website

We are delighted to announce that the new istop kiosk website has now been launched and can be viewed at www.istopkiosks.co.uk.

The website is now easier to navigate and much simpler to read. It has been designed to tell both the history of istop kiosks and to demonstrate the full range of benefits they deliver to a range of potential audiences, including local authorities, the third sector and business.

View DVD online

Users can also view our new DVD online. This five-minute film interviews those people whose lives have been changed by istop and reveals the true impact the kiosks are having at a local level. It also lays out istop's national ambitions and potential to deliver positive, material and measurable change.

If you are at all interested in finding out more about istop, we urge you to watch the DVD and then ask us if you need any more information.



Success stories

istop now has a large bank of testimonials from people who have used the istop kiosk to find a job and get themselves off benefit.

Many of these jobseekers' stories are extremely encouraging and, in one case, a father and son have both found themselves work thanks to using an istop kiosk. The benefits of our partnership with Jobcentre Plus in the North East are becoming clearer by the day. Comments such as...

"I can just pop over the road everyday to check job listings"

"It's so much easier and cheaper than getting on the bus into town"

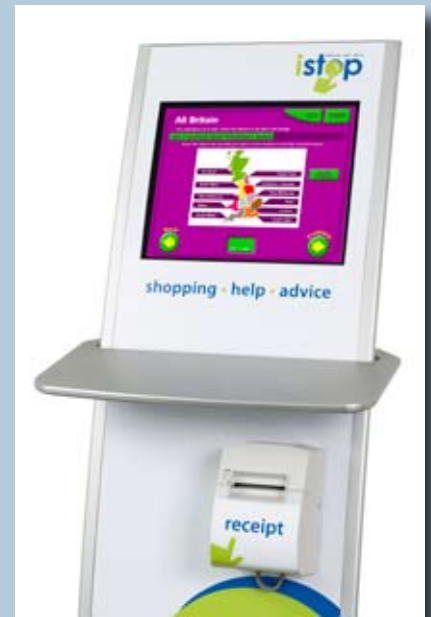
"I was amazed at how easy it was to use and print off the information. I visited the shop almost everyday to check for local jobs"

reinforce the value of having istop and JCP in the heart of local communities where they can be accessed at a time and place to suit the job-seekers themselves. This has a quantifiable, positive impact on the economy and on the number of jobless people, more so than ever in the current economic climate.

By helping people to get back to work sooner and allowing them to seek out information as frequently as they like, istop can genuinely demonstrate a considerable saving of time and money, not only to JCP but also to the country at large.

Kirsty's career change

20 year-old Kirsty has been working as a hairdresser in nearby Trimdon Village. The newsagent there has an istop kiosk, so Kirsty started visiting during her lunch break every day hoping to find a change of career. After about three weeks Kirsty printed off a vacancy for a care assistant in a local care home in Sedgfield. She was thrilled to be offered the job and started work on 14th October this year.



Press and publicity

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