

## ROME in action . . . . . or Vorsprung Durch . . . ROME

“We have the technology!” Or more precisely, we have ROME – Remote Operations Management Education. Here are the latest updates and news from the ROME programme from around the UK.

### Operations Management Education in Yorkshire and the West Midlands

The ROME programme is currently benefiting individuals and companies across Yorkshire and the West Midlands. Upwards of 160 employees from over 80 SME companies aim to qualify for the new Certificate in Operations Management by October 2002. And the punch line is – it’s been absolutely free. The Institute has been able to provide this much needed training thanks to funding from the European Social Fund.

### Who are the Winners?

- ROME’s participants come from a range of operational and management roles – from Team Leaders and Shift Supervisors to Stock Controllers, Production Planners and Operations Managers.
- They hail from an equally diverse range of manufacturing environments – from precision engineering to traditional ‘Black Country metal bashing’.
- And from companies making everything from bathtubs to turbochargers and chemicals to coating mixes for fish fingers!

In many ways, ROME’s users and beneficiaries represent a cross section of British industry.

Meet, for example: Dave Bowen, who has just completed the ROME programme in Yorkshire.

When Dave Bowen first inserted the ROME CD in his computer last July, he was relatively new to the real-life challenges of manufacturing. As a graduate trainee at Bray Burners in Leeds, a manufacturer of gas burners for domestic heating, cooking and water heating appliances, he was ambitious enough to see the value of expanding his practical knowledge of operations management issues and techniques. Fortunately, Bray Burners felt the same commitment to continuous improvement through training and supported Dave’s participation in the ROME programme. Dave was recently promoted to Team Leader in the Tool Servicing Department.

**For information on how ROME can help your company or you personally improve your knowledge and understanding of operations management, visit the ROME pages on the IOM website at:**  
**[www.iomnet.org.uk/rome.htm](http://www.iomnet.org.uk/rome.htm),**  
**contact the Institute on 02476 692266 for a demo disk or email [rome@iomnet.org.uk](mailto:rome@iomnet.org.uk).**

## BOOTS : BEESTON, AIRDRIE AND ... ROMA?

For Boots Contract Manufacturing, all roads lead to Beeston, Airdrie and Roma – as Boots employees buckle down in earnest on the ROME distance learning programme.

Under the auspices of Mervyn Deighton (Toiletries Planning Manager at the Beeston site), BCM has 18 planning and supervisory staff from their Beeston and Airdrie plants studying for their Certificate in Operations Management qualification via ROME (see *Control* September 2001 for more information).

Through a site licence agreement with the IOM, Boots has installed the ROME programme on the company Intranet and made it accessible to its designated users via password on their desktop PCs, or at an alternative work station if they are moving about the site as part of their job. Users also have portable access to ROME, via their personal copies of the ROME programme, which they can use on either a laptop or their home PCs.

### They’re at the Post...

At each site, the programme began with a half-day kick-off session, which introduced users to:

- The objectives, subject matter and study methods of ROME.
- The ROME technology – How to navigate around the ROMETex virtual factory and ‘follow links’ to the course content in the interactive ROME Handbook.

And most importantly:

- Both individual and company objectives.
- In other words – Why were they doing ROME in the first place and what did they aim to achieve?

Then, based on the proven ROME pilot model which combined the ROME programme with a series of review tutorials, Mervyn is providing periodic face-to-face support sessions at each site, as the course progresses. His aim is to provide structured support that will “get the candidates to think about the (ROME course) topics and relate them to Boots’ situations”. In particular, the sections on Lean theory and practice are proving valuable, as BCM implements its Lean Manufacturing programme.

### Where are they Now?

The Boots group of ROME students has completed the first of the three main sections of the course, which provides an overview of The Business – including operations strategy, quality, performance measurement and cost. At present, they are studying the core second module, demand and supply chain management – dealing with such topics as customer focus, forecasting, adding value, inventory control, and planning and scheduling.

### What Lies Ahead?

Next comes the all-important third module containing Improvement Techniques – the investigative and operational tools that can make a real difference to individual and company performance.

Finally, there’s also the small matter of course assessment. This includes three workplace assignments and the final exam, with all candidates aiming to complete their Certificate in Operations Management by June this year. “*Buona fortuna!*”

Want to Go to ROME as well?