



# Q&A

Barry Neill,  
IT manager,  
Navman Wireless

Multilingual Oxford graduate Barry Neill joined Navman Wireless and turned his head to IT in January 2004 following a brief stint as a Crime Prevention Officer.

Vehicle tracking specialist Navman Wireless uses GPS satellite technology, the Vodafone GPRS network and the internet to enable businesses to track, message and monitor their fleet for increased efficiency and profitability, and legal compliance.

Barry, 30, initially worked in the company's technical support department before joining the global support team where his responsibilities involved looking after the business's New Zealand and Australian servers. His current role involves overseeing and maintaining the office IT infrastructure and the network infrastructure of Navman Wireless's tracking software system at its outsourced hosting facility, run by data centre specialist MDS Technologies.

**How did you become involved in the IT industry?**

My brother Tony was the founder of Navman Wireless UK back in 2001 and needed IT support for a company that operates in what has become one of the fastest growing business technologies in the world.

**Who has been the biggest influence on your career?**

That would have to be my eldest brother Ian. He is a computer network engineer and taught me a great deal. I acquired the skills from him that my other brother Tony needs!

**What is the biggest issue in the data centre at the moment?**

Data is king for a high-tech operation like Navman Wireless. Vehicle tracking relies on the storage, as well as transmission, of data to ensure customers can continually receive accurate, up-to-the-minute information on their fleet vehicles. For Navman Wireless, having total confidence in the service provider that will host data and run its applications is paramount, we have that in MDS Technologies.

MDS offers high security and has direct linked leased mobile phone connectivity

lines from Vodafone into the hosting facility and all the data generated from our vehicle tracking systems is received over those leased lines. The lines also have multiple redundancies so that, as well as increased performance with direct links to the Vodafone network, back-up lines avoid reliance on one single connection. MDS also provides additional redundancy, with provision from multiple operators, and can accommodate our future growth requirements.

**What is the question you are asked most often in your business life?**

Can we do this cheaper?!

**What are the best/worst things about your job?**

The best things are the new product developments and new skills that must be learned, which can both fascinate and challenge. The worst thing is repeatedly applying solutions to problems I've already solved.

**What advice would you give to someone starting out in the industry?**

Acquire specific skills in actual products and technology – whether it is Active Directory, Linux, knowledge by database type (SQL,

Oracle, etc) or programming language. General knowledge is great, but businesses want skills that can be applied directly to every day scenarios.

**Which living person do you most admire and why?**

I do not admire anyone – nobody is perfect.

**Where would you like to live?**

The west coast of Ireland in a house by the ocean.

**What is your favourite book?**

Faust by Goethe.

**If you could go back in time, where would you go?**

I like technology far too much – I would not go back! I would go forward though, if that is an option...

**How do you relax?**

Reading with a glass of red wine.

**What football team do you support?**

Hmmm, not into sport at all – can think of few things more boring than merely being a spectator!

**What is your desert island disc?**

Capercaillie: Dusk Til Dawn

**What is your ideal holiday?**

I want to go to Iceland to see the volcanoes.