



# CONSULTING MATTERS

A publication of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Independent Computer Consultants Association

www.iccadelval.org

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*From Leigh Weber, Director*

## What's in Your Wallet?

by Leigh Weber  
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**Director At-Large**  
ICCA/Delaware Valley



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ICCA/Delaware Valley

### What's in Your Wallet?

Is it on empty? Full? Somewhere in-between? We hear that the work prospects are improving, do you concur?

There is a lot of buzz about work being sent off-shore (wherever that is) and that consultants are being denied their chance to work for a company. If you have a specific example, we want to know! Another common concern is that companies only want W-2 based consultants and refuse to do business with an independent consultant, e.g., a firm that gets a 1099. Have you been a victim of this? This takes several forms: you can't get a direct contract with your prospect, or they insist that you go through some other organization as a W-2, or you must go through a preferred broker.

On the other hand ... many of our consultants are finding more than enough work and are working long hours. What is their secret?

### Secret Formula

Why are you looking here? There isn't a secret formula, but we hear that the choice of who gets the work and most importantly the *repeat* work are those consultants who:

- a. Are very responsive to their client's needs
- b. Know their client's business, not just their technology
- c. Know their client's competition and where their client's business can grow
- d. Are dependable
- e. Change with their client's needs
- f. Present an excellent image
- g. And yes, have a reasonable rate, *but not necessarily the lowest rate*

There does not seem to be a particular secret technology that guarantees employment. Some technologies do have a decrease in demand: anyone get a call for MultiMate? Probably not, but all languages: COBOL, FORTRAN, PL/I, C, Picker, C++, Java have an audience. Your challenge is to find *your* audience and convince them that you are the correct consultant for the work. More often than not, it isn't your technological prowess that wins you the work.

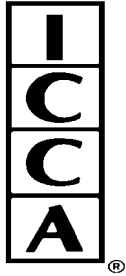
### Call to action

If we want to succeed in the marketplace, we need to learn from each other what works and what doesn't. We also need to remember our own network of consultants.

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**Meeting  
Information  
610-394-9090**

[info@iccaderval.org](mailto:info@iccaderval.org)  
[www.iccaderval.org](http://www.iccaderval.org)

6:00 P.M.      Networking & Cash Bar  
7:00 P.M.      Dinner  
8:15 P.M.      Meeting & Program

Entire Evening Prepaid	\$30 Members	\$40 Guest
Entire Evening at Door	\$40 Members	\$45 Guest
Networking/Speaker	Free Members	\$5 Guest

**First time guests pay member rates.** Prepayment must be received and cancellations for refunds must be made by Monday before meeting. Credit Cards accepted (MC, Visa, Discover). If there is more than one person in your party, we request that you pre-pay. Note that making a reservation is a promise to pay. "No-Shows" will be billed.

Mail Check Payable to:  
ICCA Delaware Valley  
125 N. Highland Avenue  
Lansdowne, PA 19050

**Meeting Locations:  
(Please call the hotel for directions.)**

**Philadelphia Airport Hilton**

215-365-4150  
4509 Island Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA

**DoubleTree Guest Suites**

610-834-8300  
640 W. Germantown Pike  
Plymouth Meeting, PA

**Clairon Hotel**

856-428-2300  
Route 70 & I-295  
Cherry Hill, NJ

**Holiday Inn Select**

302-792-2700  
630 Naamans Road  
Claymont, DE



**TOP TOPICS at  
ICCA DeVal  
2004-2005**

by Kathleen Conti, WebSquared, LLC

I was disappointed to miss the November meeting presented by Dan Goldberg. I have heard much feedback indicating that it was a very informative meeting. Dan had some great ideas focusing on perceptions. Dan challenged attendees to look at how we perceive our businesses, how our customers perceive us, and how we should be perceived. This focused attendees on the importance of perception for success.

Dan separated public relations from marketing and advertising. He made strong points for using public relations as a facet of our business. Using public relations could position our business as an expert in its field. This change in perception can be an important tool for a company's success!

The **December** meeting is a joint meeting with the Project Management Institute and will be held at our **Cherry Hill** location. We are very excited to have **Chris Fearnley** to present a **Survey of Linux and Open Source Technologies and their Business Functions**, which will be an overview the business functions of open source technologies.

In **January** we will be having **Jon Bogen** talk about **HIPAA and the new regulations** that will be coming into effect in April. February we will be having someone speak on RFID (Radio Frequency Identification). I am still trying to nail down a speaker, so if anyone knows of an RFID expert that would be willing to present, please let me know. I am also starting to plan the 2005-2006 meetings so if you have any thoughts or suggestions, don't hesitate to contact me: [kconti@websquared.com](mailto:kconti@websquared.com)

**What's in Your Wallet?**

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They stand ready to help you help your customers and they depend upon you to help them with their customers. Alliances are an excellent way for you to help your client. They keep down costs by giving expertise on an as needed basis.

You need to make your expertise know to your prospects, clients, and network of consultants. Update your skills profile on the ICCA web-site, remind people at our monthly meetings about what you do, and have your own web-site to let people find you (yes, I know, it's still on my To Do list...)

Send your comments about this article to:  
[Notices@WeberConsult.com](mailto:Notices@WeberConsult.com)

## ICCA Delaware Valley Member Writes book

Congratulations to ICCA Member Deborah Dahl, president of Conversational Technologies. Dr. Deborah Dahl has twenty-two years of experience in the fields of spoken computer-human dialogs and natural language understanding. She is also very active in standards work in the World Wide Web Consortium. She is an expert in the World Wide Web Consortium's speech technologies, such as VoiceXML, and chairs the 50-member World Wide Web Consortium Multimodal Interaction Working Group. In November, her book, *Practical Spoken Dialog Systems*, will be published by Kluwer Academic Press

This book is a collection of 10 papers describing the life cycle of spoken dialog systems from requirements definition through deployment, with an emphasis on the practical considerations that are needed to make these applications successful. It also offers a glimpse into the future by including two papers on systems that are still under development in research laboratories. Some of the specific topics treated are error handling, speaker authentication, tool selection, and the psychological bases of human-computer communication.

[http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1402026749/qid=1100266268/sr=1-1/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/103-5552615-2015010?v=glance&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/1402026749/qid=1100266268/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/103-5552615-2015010?v=glance&s=books)

### Join the ICCA!

**Become a part of the region's premier association for Independent Computer Consultants.**

#### Membership rates are:

- \* \$100 Local Chapter Dues
- \* \$175 National dues for 1 person firm
- \* \$225 National dues for 2-9 person firm
- \* \$275 National dues for 10+ person firm
- \* \$25 National Processing fee  
(1st time only)

This Translates to:

- \* \$300 for a first-time 1 person firm
- \* \$275 subsequent years for 1 person firm

Call **610-394-9090** to request an application, or fill out membership application on line at [www.icca.org](http://www.icca.org)

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## ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meeting Dates 2004

✳ **12/9 Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ** *(This is a joint meeting with PMI)*

**Topic: Survey of Linux and Open Source Technologies and their Business Functions.**  
**Presented by: Chris Fearnley**

*Description:* An overview of what Linux and Open Source Technologies can provide to businesses and consultants (i.e., the business functions).

✳ **1/13 Philadelphia Airport Hilton, Philadelphia, PA**

**Topic: HIPAA Regulations**  
**Presented by: Jon Bogen**

*Description:* Mr. Bogen will discuss topics from his book "The HIPAA IT Handbook: Strategies to Protect Health Information." Mr. Bogen also serves as the High Tech editor of HealthCare Review and is board-certified from the American College of Healthcare Executives.

# Annoyance Busters -- Utilities and tools that smack down hassles with data, security, Windows, and your hardware.

excerpts from the Oct 2004 Issue of PC World Magazine article by Michael Desmond

Do you suffer from high blood pressure, migraine headaches, and a near-irresistible urge to throw expensive computer gear out the window? Your PC may serve up more disappointments than the Boston Red Sox in a late-September swoon, but hope is not lost. An array of useful utilities and tools can do much to smooth over your system's most glaring flaws. And you may be surprised to learn that many of the fixes for these niggling annoyances can be had for free.

**Slowdown Busters -- Sluggish PC performance can test the most even-tempered person's patience. These utilities help provide a boost.**

## Clogged Windows

Over time, Windows can become so stuffed with spurious, forgotten, and corrupted Registry entries that it's amazing the operating system works at all; determining what exactly is slowing the works can be supremely difficult. [RegSeeker](#) gets things flowing again by cleaning out Windows' rusty pipes. Like other Registry cleaners on the market, RegSeeker can identify and then change or remove invalid or unused entries. Of course, every Registry tweak comes with an element of risk, so use the program's Registry backup feature before making any changes. **Free**

## Painfully Slow Acrobat Loads

Adobe Reader 6 could be one of the slowest-loading applications around—and that's really saying something. The fault lies with all of the sundry plug-ins that Adobe Reader insists on loading every time it launches—plug-ins that most people never use. Put some snap back into Adobe Reader's step with [Adobe Reader Speed-Up](#), which prevents those resource-hogging plug-ins from loading. You can even customize the utility to load only select modules. Without further ado, Adobe Reader launches in an instant. This must-have utility works with Reader versions 3.0 to 6.01. **Free**

## Windows Bulge

We all know the frustration of Windows bloat. The operating system is loaded with programs, services, modules, and applets that most of us don't need and probably won't ever employ. An incredibly handy utility, [XPLite](#) lets you strip out unwanted Windows XP features and unnecessary modules. The result is a lean and mean operating system that loads more quickly, responds faster, and occupies significantly less space on your hard drive. You'll also find versions that are compatible with Windows 98 and Windows 2000, which could extend the life of aging PCs. **\$40**

**Clutter Busters -- Finding buried files and keeping your PC neat and tidy can eat away at your productivity. These utilities speed up the process without requiring you to take a crash course in new methods.**

## Disk Space Dilemma

MP3s, video files, digital photos...this stuff can fill up hard disks fast, and it can be tough to tell where the data is going. Sure, if you hover a mouse pointer over a folder in Windows XP, a tool tip pops up showing how much data is in that folder and its subfolders. But to see precisely where all of the data is, you need [JDisk Report](#), a utility that produces a highly detailed, graphical overview of files and folders on your hard disk. You can call up a pie chart that displays a great overview of the folders consuming the most disk space; dive into a detailed table that reveals file names, dates, and sizes; or explore an easy-to-peruse chart that shows the distribution of files by size ranges. **Free**

## What's Really Going On?

Have you ever wondered what's happening behind the scenes in Windows? The Windows Task Manager—which you access by pressing **Ctrl-Alt-Del**—shows a terse list of applications and processes running on your PC. Unfortunately, you can't tell what these processes are doing or where they come from. [Process Explorer](#) sheds some much-needed light on those mysterious background apps, permitting you to drill down to see what folder an application started from and what resources it is using. This utility can also help you identify spyware and other nefarious background processes. **Free**

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**Consulting Matters** always welcomes newsletter article submissions. If you have an article that would be of interest to the computer consulting community, send your article to: [newsletter@iccaderval.org](mailto:newsletter@iccaderval.org). MS-Word or plain text is preferred. Article submission deadline for the January Issue of *Consulting Matters* is **December 20**.

# Annoyance Busters

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## Can't Find Duplicate Files

A 250GB hard disk can hold an awful lot of files—and the task of preventing duplicate files from piling up and getting misplaced can be difficult. Regrettably, Windows Explorer won't let you compare two directories side by side. [Xplorer2 Lite](#) is a Windows Explorer replacement that makes it easy to compare directories, sniff out duplicate files, and find the most recent version of files across directories. This is an especially terrific tool for people who need to sync the contents of desktop and mobile hard drives. For \$25, you can obtain Xplorer2 Pro, a version that adds advanced searching, FTP and Web syncing, and subfolder disk usage statistics. **Free**

## Renaming Files Can Be a Drag

As a result of the cryptic file names that digital cameras tend to assign to photos, many photography enthusiasts must laboriously rename dozens of files at a sitting. [1-4a Rename](#) takes the drudgery out of those makeovers, letting you rename multiple files (even in different folders) with the aid of its controls and an impressive set of filters. You can strip out a specific string of characters in unnecessarily long file names and replace it with, say, today's date; or you can remove capitalization, spaces, and nonstandard characters. The basic mode has a few useful rename filters, while the rather intimidating Expert Mode should meet the needs of all but the most sophisticated users. **Free**

***Infection & Hacker Busters -- Why is it such a struggle to keep your computer data secure and your privacy intact? These handy utilities will help you block unwanted intrusions and stave off legions of prying eyes.***

## Too Many Passwords

So many Web sites and networks require a log-on that people frequently resort to using easy-to-remember passwords that are a cinch for computer-literate lowlifes to crack. It doesn't have to be that way. [Password Safe](#) is an encrypted database that securely stores all your user name and password entries in a single place so you can copy and paste complex passwords into Web pages and system log-on screens. The only password you have to remember is the one you use to access the scrambled Password Safe database. Most important, with this tool you can afford to use long and complicated passwords—the types that are highly resistant to being cracked—for all of your various log-ons. **Free**

## The File Isn't Really Deleted

When you delete a file in Windows, it isn't actually gone. Only

the pointers to its locations on the hard disk (and the first letter of its file name) have been removed. Consequently, anyone who has access to your computer can come along with a half-decent file-recovery tool and pull up all sorts of valuable, confidential data from your disk. [BCWipe](#) clears out files for good by overwriting with random data the portion of the disk that contains a given file. You can adjust wiping levels to suit your degree of paranoia, from quick one-pass wipes to military-grade cleansings that will overwrite files half a dozen times or more. Also, BCWipe scrubs swap files and free disk space, both of which can house bits and pieces of private data. You can schedule relatively time-consuming operations—such as overwriting large swaths of the disk—to happen overnight. **\$40**

## Stop Tailing Me!

Are you sick and tired of having your every move logged by nosy Web sites? Or having your files, including the sensitive ones, silently stored by Windows—for months on end—in cryptically named, hidden subfolders? [IE Privacy Keeper](#) is a compact utility that wipes the slate clean every time you start or exit Windows. Cookies, temporary files, lists of recently opened files, Internet Explorer URL history, AutoComplete lists—all of these and more are banished from your hard drive. You can even instruct the applet to delete specific files or Registry keys to ensure that every trace of your movements is lost. When you select the Secure Delete option, IE Privacy Keeper will overwrite the data that it deletes with random bits, thereby foiling outsiders' attempts to recover old files without your permission. **Free**

## Flash Finagling

Not only can Flash animations make an unwelcome (and unexpected) racket when they launch automatically, but they can also bypass most pop-up blockers—which means that a Flash file carrying malicious code has the potential to infect your computer with a virus. [TurnFlash](#) offers a trustworthy cure for this vulnerability: It enables you to toggle the Flash playback capability in Internet Explorer on or off anytime you want. When you arrive at a site where you would actually like to see the Flash animation play, all you have to do is click the taskbar icon. Afterward, if you click the TurnFlash icon again, Flash playback in IE will be disabled once more. It doesn't get much easier than that. **Free**

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This excerpt highlights 11 of the 24 utilities mentioned in Desmond's article. To read this article in its entirety, go to: <http://www.pcworld.com/resource/printable/article/0,aid,117411,00.asp>

# December Tech Calendar

## 7- Dec

DVCUG Conference & Vendor Expo!

7:30am - 4:30pm

Gregg Conference Center

The American College

Bryn Mawr, PA.

<http://www.dvcug.org/seminar2004/overview.htm>

## 9- Dec

ICCA Del Val Chapter Meeting  
Survey of Linux and Open Source  
Technologies and their Business  
Functions

Chris Fearnley, President, CEO &  
Chief Technology Officer of  
LinuxForce Inc.

Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ

6:30 PM - 9:30 PM

[www.iccadelval.org](http://www.iccadelval.org)

## 14- Dec

Computer Professionals of Center  
City

7:00-9:00 pm - networking event

The Irish Pub

Philadelphia, PA

<http://cpccentercity.com/>

## 6-Jan

At the Moment of Need: Designing  
and Producing Performance Support  
Resources

Date: Thursday, January 6, 2005

Time: 12:45 pm - 4:15 pm

Speaker: Gloria Gery, Consultant,  
Gery Associates

Location: WHYY, 6th/Race St.

[www.tempo-train.org/programs.html](http://www.tempo-train.org/programs.html)

If you hear of an event that  
would be of interest to our  
members, send the meeting  
notice to

[newsletter@iccadelval.org](mailto:newsletter@iccadelval.org)

## ICCA Delaware Valley Board of Directors Committees and Other Contacts 2004-2005

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