



# CONSULTING MATTERS

A publication of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Independent Computer Consultants Association  
www.iccadelval.org June 2004

## From the President

### Member Benefits

by Keith Mast  
Mast Consulting, LLC  
**President**  
ICCA/Delaware Valley



Keith Mast  
Mast Consulting, LLC  
President  
ICCA Delaware Valley

#### How can we slow the decline in our ICCA Delaware Valley chapter membership?

In the last 18 months, we have seen our membership numbers decline by 20%, falling from 96 in December 2002 to 74 today. The decline in membership has also been seen at the national level with the ICCA national organization dropping around 20% during the same period. Though the decline in the demand for I.T. services and other challenges facing independent consultants has contributed to the decline of the ICCA membership nationwide, we want to know:

#### What can ICCA Delaware Valley do to counter this downward trend?

The board has decided to focus on *Member Benefits* as way to improve member satisfaction and attract new members. At a recent board meeting, we pursued this issue by creating two lists: Existing Benefits and New Benefits. During a brainstorming session, we listed the *existing* benefits that we currently have at ICCA (local and national) and *the new* benefits that members want. We then voted on the items in order to determine the priorities. These two lists were then distributed for voting at the most recent public meeting 5-13-04. The results are outlined below. (The complete list of benefits can be found at the end of this article.)

#### New Benefit: Driving Business to Members

The national website states, "ICCA provides professional development opportunities and business support programs for independent computer consultants." ICCA has always been about helping consultants run their business. It is also about

***In this issue.....***

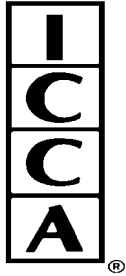
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getting advice and ideas from other consultants, and about advertising on the national website. Consultants have gotten business from these ICCA sources and from other ICCA contacts. But we can do more to bring business to our members. Based on all the voting, this is the number one benefit that members want. How can we accomplish this?

*Upgrade the website to make it easy for visitors to post I.T. jobs*

Our local [ICCA website](#) has been slated for an upgrade for quite a while. The upgrade will include an RFP (Request for Proposal) module that will allow visitors to post job openings. The prototype will allow a job to be posted by skill (Java, VB,

*(Continued on page 4)*



**Meeting  
Information  
610-394-9090**

**info@iccadelval.org  
www.iccadelval.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  
2003-2004**

by George Smith, GRS Associates

The scheduled speaker for the May meeting at the Airport Hilton was called out of town on short notice. Member **Mike Herrera, of Client Server Specialists, Inc.** graciously offered to step in. He delivered a presentation on 'Finding Your Niche', that I, for one, thought was terrific. Mike reminded me of many things I hadn't thought of in years, and that are rather pertinent at the moment! We had a good turnout, and there were lots of questions. So, many thanks to Mike for a great meeting.

For the June meeting, we will close out our program year back at our old home base, the Doubletree in Plymouth Meeting. Long time friend and associate **Fred Wilf**, an attorney with **Morgan Lewis**, will be discussing the legal issues around intellectual property. This is an area any attorney that presents to us gets asked about, so it will be good to have an expert on that area alone.

I hope to see many of you on the 10th for this last meeting of the year. We don't meet in July...but keep the remainder of your "2nd Thursdays" open. Look forward to our annual Pizza meeting in August (details coming soon), and look forward to the kick-off of our 2004-2005 Program Year in September.

**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)



## Here, Here! Welcome New Members

**Rich Moyer**  
**MREI Consulting**

3728 Stoughton Road  
Collegeville, PA 19426  
610-454-0860

richmoyer@aol.com

**Expertise:** Business management, process  
improvement, ISO9000

## Upcoming Dinner Meeting Dates 2004

### ✳ 6/10 Doubletree Guest Suites

Plymouth Meeting, PA

**Topic:** Intellectual Property and  
Related Legal Issues

**Speaker:** Fred Wilf, an attorney with  
Morgan Lewis

Digital Rights Management ("DRM") is a combination of technologies and laws designed to protect digital content from being used except as expressly allowed by the content owner. Fred Wilf, an attorney with Morgan Lewis, will discuss DRM-related legal issues, and how they affect computer consultants.

## Finding Your Niche

*by: Michael Herrera, Client Server Specialists, Inc.*

Those of you that saw my presentation on "Finding your Niche" will not get a repeat of the session here. The topic is so broad that a book could be written on each slide of the presentation. During the discussion time there were a number of questions that were insightful. I would like to use this space to discuss one of these questions.

### **Has your company ever started the process of developing a niche and then discovered it was wrong?**

I could give you the typical trial and error answer of "throw enough mud on the wall and something will stick." However, since most ICCA member firms are small companies or individuals, most of us do not have the luxury of being able to sustain many "trials and errors." We are constrained by our time, resources, and skills.

At CSSI we have dropped potential niches at different levels of participation when we realized that the niche was too competitive (middleware), not cost effective (CRM) or out of our reach (reporting solution).

### **Competition**

CSSI's original niche was doing screen scraping and web-to-host solutions. Our customers utilized different middleware, such as IBM's Host on Demand, or Attachmate's Host Publishing System, as the platform for development. We positioned ourselves as experts in these tools and technologies. As this market evolved, more competitors came on the scene. At the same time the size of the projects grew to where companies would no longer use small solution providers. In order to maintain our position in this niche it was going to require a longer sales cycle, more programmers, and a variety of expertise that was changing rapidly. At the same time the number of companies needing these services were dropping but the price tag on the projects was rising. We decided during this period to look for another niche, before all the work dried up. We still do this kind of work but it is typically based off the reputation that we created years ago.

### **Cost Effective**

CSSI then started looking for opportunities. We decided that we would look at the Contact Management industry since all companies needed it and it appeared to be under served. What we found in studying the industry in 2000 was that there were two tiers of products: individualized and truly enterprise solutions. The individualized products (such as Contact Managers for a specific industry) attempted to be enterprise solutions but had their limitations. The enterprise solutions tended to have their own consulting practices that they bundled with the software sale.

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# Member Benefits (continued from page 1)

Oracle, etc.) or by industry (eg, Finance, Manufacturing). Once the job is submitted, members with matching profiles will be notified by email that an RFP has been posted. Members can then respond to the posting by phone or email. Two other chapters, Kansas City and Chicago, have a similar feature on their websites. Kansas City has a [Request for Consulting Services](#) feature and Chicago has a [Post a Requirement](#) feature. (Click the above links to view these features.) Send any suggestions or comments, or to volunteer to help, to [president@iccaderval.org](mailto:president@iccaderval.org) or contact another board member.

## **New Benefit: Health Insurance**

The second highest priority of new benefits is health insurance. The national website lists two providers that will give ICCA members preferred rates. *Excalibur* offers medical health and dental insurance plans for ICCA members in most states. *The Daniel and Henry Company* offers medical/life insurance vital to independent computer consultants. This company will shop the market to find the best program for your specific needs. These programs offer a variety of options in deductibles, co-payments, plan designs and additional options.

While these companies may provide adequate coverage, ICCA consultants are still looking for more affordable health care options. (Aren't we all.) While there has been some investigation by board members, this remains a difficult benefit to provide at the chapter level. Health benefits will continue to be handled at the national level.

## **New Benefit: New Consultant Orientation**

Remember when you were first starting out? Wouldn't it have been helpful to have had an orientation to being Independent Consultant? Perhaps that's why many of us joined ICCA in the first place – to get help becoming a consultant. Many members (and guests) voted for a *New Consultant Orientation*. The board will be considering this benefit in the coming months.

## **New Benefit: Business Seminars**

Mike Herrera, of CSSI, created a series of business seminars several years ago. The seminars included topics such as Running a Business, Marketing, Banking, and Contracts. The seminars, held in Ft. Washington, PA, were well-attended and well-received. There were a significant number of votes to repeat these business seminars.

## **Existing Benefit: Referrals/Collaboration**

Members continue to value the referrals they receive from other ICCA members. Collaborating with another member to complete a project is also highly ranked. Join ICCA and get involved and you will get referrals from other members. (I have personally benefited in this area; many other members have as well.) This is a benefit that each one of us can contribute to. Need work done? Call another ICCA member.

## **Existing Benefit: Dinner Meetings**

Visitors who attend our meetings usually feel their objectives have been met. A recent visitor commented "*Had a better time than expected. Everyone was nice. Will attend future meetings.*" Thanks to George Smith, GRS Associates, and others, ICCA Delval has had interesting programs for many years. The dinner meetings are how most of us became acquainted with ICCA and it the reason why most of us came back. Kathleen Conti, Websquared, LLC, the newly appointed Programs Chair, hopes to continue the legacy of excellent programs.

## **Existing Benefit: Website Listing**

Each member is allowed to post his/her name, address, phone, email, website, and a summary of his/her consulting services. Members can also select from a list of skills that they provide. When a visitor comes to the national site, he/she can search for a consultant in the Delaware Valley with a desired skill. Many members have benefited from these website hits. The board has identified the website as a priority and it will continue to be improved.

Although existing benefits do not need as much time and energy as new benefits, the board remains committed to maintaining and improving these benefits where possible. If you have comments about new or existing benefits listed above, or about any item in the benefits list, please send them to [president@iccaderval.org](mailto:president@iccaderval.org) or contact another board member.

A complete list of New and Existing Benefits is listed on page 5. If you have not yet ranked these benefits in order of their importance to you, please do so by sending an email to [president@iccaderval.org](mailto:president@iccaderval.org). If a benefit important to you is not listed, tell us that, too. We all want the Delaware Valley ICCA to be a valuable resource for members.

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# Member Benefits (continued from page 4)

## NEW BENEFITS

Driving Business to members  
 Health Insurance Group  
 Website Upgrade  
 Business Seminars  
 New Consultant orientation  
 Partner w New Horizons (Computer Training)  
 New Member Discount on local dues  
 Breakfast meetings (technical topics)  
 Create something consultants want  
 Formal Mentoring  
 Group Announcements  
 Partner w Wangard (Retirement Plans)  
 Peer Review of web pages  
 Recognizing referrals/collaboration  
 CLOSER ASSOC. w/ OTHER GROUPS! Bus/Tech:

## EXISTING BENEFITS

Referrals/collaboration  
 Dinner Meetings  
 Insurance Benefits  
 ASCII  
 Website Advertising - local  
 Forms and Contracts  
 National Conference  
 Newsletter - local  
 Board of Directors  
 Informal Mentoring  
 IT networking  
 List on Website  
 Member recognition award  
 Newsletter - national  
 Status  
 Vendor discounts  
 Website Advertising - national

# Finding Your Niche (continued from page 3)

The individualized products had SDK's for developers. Developers/integrators could become partners and get listed on their web sites. It looked like a good opportunity. We next looked at creating a pricing structure and a skills assessment with the assumption that we could market across the industry. What we found was that most companies had spent \$350 on Goldmine or

Act! and were really not interested in paying for custom development or buying expensive add-on software. In talking to other companies that created add-ons we found that they were usually priced at about \$100 and had small install bases. This market was clearly not cost effective for CSSI.

### Out of Reach

We recently decided that we wanted to start looking for a new niche that would (a) focus our skills on a larger base and (b) be a natural extension of our current business (customization/enhancements to Portfolio Management Software). We decided to create an xml reporting tool that could be targeted toward any business. We started development and after three months decided that we would need to table this project until our resources (money and skills) were more inline with what we were trying to accomplish. Hopefully we will return to this niche in near future.

You can see from the above examples that some niches become the wrong choice. The examples I describe above had us changing our direction at different stages of the cycle. The point is to find a niche (optimally in an underserved arena), and then continually analyze your niche to see if it's time to move on. Sometimes you have to make hard decisions based on what you find.

## ICCA Delaware Valley Shirts

Size    S    M    L    XL    XXL  
 Color   Green   Ecru   White   Navy

Qty \_\_\_\_\_ @\$25      Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form with check payable to:

ICCA  
 125 N. Highland Ave  
 Lansdowne, PA 19050

Or call/email your VISA/MC/Discover card number,  
 expiration date, and total dollar amount of order to  
 610-394-9090    [icca@erols.com](mailto:icca@erols.com)

Shirts will be ready for pickup by the following meeting.



## New Member Company Profile

In each issue of Consulting Matters, we introduce you to one or more new members and firms. In this issue, we introduce you to **Rich Moyer, MREI Consulting**

Rich recently retired, after thirty-two years, from a Fortune 50 company that has experienced its share of mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and chessboard reorganization. Rich has, over the last fifteen years, been an internal consultant, process engineer, systems engineer, manager, Quality champion, and senior member of technical staff. He has led major IT and business unit projects, doing reengineering, process improvement, business case development, RFP development, proof of concept trials, project management, and vendor management. He was a middle manager and senior advisor to the executive team in IT that helped move his company from a primarily mainframe, dumb terminal environment, to the largest mission critical distributed computing environment in the country.

As a business consultant and practitioner, Rich has taught dozens of classes in the Texas Instruments Business Process Engineering methodology, Managing Through Change, and project management methodologies that targeted senior- and middle management, helping them evolve the business through an intense period of merger-mania. As a certified practitioner of BPE, he has led many multi-discipline, cross functional teams through business process analysis, process improvement, reengineering, and system development that enabled fundamental changes to the business as it progressed up the Fortune 100 ladder.

With his background in process analysis/reengineering, Rich developed and implemented an IT distributed computing software release management methodology, distributed systems change management methodology, and distributed systems engineering review process. The success of these programs was demonstrated by his release management team, who controlled the distributed computing infrastructure consisting of over 600 servers that provided client-server mission critical applications for over 12,000 X-Windows, Unix, and PC desktops, delivering a consistent 99.9% end-to-end availability. The application planning team under his leadership was responsible for facilitating SDLC design reviews and systems engineering reviews for all IT distributed systems that were put into production for the corporation.

Rich has been an active leader in Quality initiatives, with experience in Crosby, Carnegie-Mellon Capability Maturity Model, Six Sigma, and ISO9000. As a certified ISO9000 internal auditor, mentor, and Quality Champion, his contributions were significant in the attainment of a single ISO9001-2000 registration for the largest data-center and distributed systems operations organization in the United States.

Rich is an expert in cost savings initiatives centered on document output management, which includes reprographics, copy, fax, and print. In his research, he benchmarked with many companies who were able to attain twenty- to forty-percent savings in document output costs, and partnered with vendors who were experienced in the analysis and facilitation of these initiatives through managed print services.

Rich led the team for the corporate Save-A-Dime initiative, a low overhead, multi-channel awareness campaign and swat team that solicited employee participation, and published success stories that accumulated hundreds of thousands of dollars in cost savings in just several months.

Currently, Rich is working through consulting agencies to expand his industry focus, doing primarily Sarbanes-Oxley pre-audit work and documentation of IT and financial controls, and IT project management. His management consulting practice targets small businesses and start-ups as a small business coach and cost consultant, and is looking at larger companies to realize savings and reduce absenteeism through employee benefits programs.

Rich is actively networking to gain exposure for his business as a new member of ICCA, the Professional Business Network (PBNworks.com), and attends Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Development Center events. Other networking activities include Execunet, participating in outplacement seminars, a member of a Yahoo group consisting of 900+ retirees from his former company, and has recently joined LinkedUp, an online networking group. Rich is also an active member of the Diversified Investor Group (DIGOnline.org), which is the largest real estate investment organization on the east coast, and is looking to expand his real estate portfolio.

Rich has been talking with the US Postal Inspectors, local police departments, and the county sheriff's departments to develop free public seminars on Identity Theft. One in eight people in the US will be victims of ID theft this year, so his seminars provide information and tips on prevention, guidance from the Federal Trade Commission, and a video provided by the US Postal Service. As a two-time victim of identity theft himself, Rich gives his personal endorsement for a product by Pre-Paid Legal Services called Identity Theft Shield to assist in ID Theft detection and recovery.

Rich has partnered with family psychotherapist Gwenyth Lewis to offer Will & Living Will Completion Workshops. Together Rich and Gwenyth help participants break through the procrastination, which has put their loved ones (and the rest of the 70% of U.S. adults who don't have Wills) at risk. Participants receive financial as well as other information that empowers them to help their loved ones avoid unnecessary conflict.

Rich has a personal website at <http://home.comcast.net/~rich.moyer/> that contains an outline of his services, in addition to links to newsletters, legal resources and business tools, and some introductory chapters to his e-book, "The Corporate Diet".

# June Tech Calendar

## 9 - June

"Executive Women's Profile"  
5:30 pm - 9:00 pm  
Williamsons Restaurant  
Bala Cynwyd, PA  
<http://www.nwct-phila.org/>

## 10 - June

ICCA Del Val Chapter Meeting  
Fred Wilf, an attorney with Morgan  
Lewis  
"Intellectual Property and Related  
Legal Issues"  
Doubletree Guest Suites  
Plymouth Meeting, PA  
6pm - 7pm Networking  
7pm - 8pm Dinner  
8pm - 9pm Presentation  
[www.iccadelval.org](http://www.iccadelval.org)

## 11 - June

NJTC's CFO Awards 2004  
Forsgate Country Club  
Monroe Township, NJ  
[www.njtc.org/events/cfo2004](http://www.njtc.org/events/cfo2004)

## 26 - June

Wicked Lans of Delaware  
LAN Party  
11 am-2 am  
Dover, DE  
[www.wickedlans.com](http://www.wickedlans.com)

.....  
● **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@iccadelval.org](mailto:newsletter@iccadelval.org).

● MS-Word or plain text is preferred.  
● Article submission deadline for  
● the **July** Issue of Consulting  
● Matters **June 25th**.  
●

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

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