



CONSULTING MATTERS

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

www.iccadelval.org

March 2004

From the President

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



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President
ICCA Delaware Valley

Is outsourcing U.S. jobs overseas good for our economy or does it just result in more lay-offs of U.S. workers?

The answer to this question may depend on which side of the equation you are on. If you're a corporation trying to reduce costs, you may favor outsourcing. But if you're an I.T. worker who's just been laid off, you may dislike *or even hate* the word outsourcing.

Recently, a WHYY radio program, *Radio Times with Marty Moss-Coane*, discussed the above question. Moss-Coane started the program by stating, "A growing number of U.S. firms are sending high-tech and service jobs overseas where labor is cheaper."

The program peaked my interest.

Two economists, **Dan Griswold**, of the [Cato Institute](#), and **Rob Scott**, of the [Economic Policy Institute](#), were guests of Radio Times that morning. Some of Griswold's viewpoints about Outsourcing were:

- o The 'world' outsources to the U.S.
- o American companies sell three times more IT services to the rest of the world—more than \$10 billion—than they buy
- o An example of this *reverse-outsourcing*: IBM recently signed a \$2.5 billion tech support contract with Deutsche bank.
- o Other types of products are outsourced to the U.S.; example BMW, Honda, and Toyota all build their automobiles in the U.S.

Some of Scott's viewpoints about Outsourcing were:

- o 2.5 million I.T. jobs have been lost since 2001
- o Corporations are doing very well
- o IBM is laying off U.S. workers
- o IBM is now hiring outside the US (outsourcing)

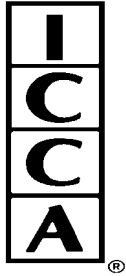
Not too long ago, the [H-IB Visa](#) was the hottest political topic for I.T. professionals, including independent consultants. It seems that outsourcing has now become the number one political topic. How does outsourcing impact independent consultants? Some of these include:

- o Independent Consultants rely on a form of *outsourcing* for their business (*for companies with no or limited I.T. departments*)
- o Displaced I.T. workers may increase the pool of independent consultants (*which could lead to more ICCA members*)

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**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 February 12th meeting was at our location in Delaware. **Tim Ruzbacki**, a senior consultant for **MKS, Inc.**, gave a presentation on work flow management which was well received by a nice crowd.

Next month will be a joint meeting with TEMPO at the **Plymouth Meeting Doubletree**. It is an interesting coincidence that when we made the arrangements with TEMPO, they had a speaker in mind who turned out to be an ICCA member! **Audry Jaffe** is a long time Del Val member who focuses on project management and work process consulting. She will be speaking on **'Enabling our clients to manage change.'**

As many of you know from past events, meetings with TEMPO offer expanded networking opportunities that make the meeting worth extra effort to attend. I hope to see many of you there on March 11.

I am pleased to announce that **Kathleen Conti** (kconti@websquared.com) has agreed to take over as program chair next season, so I don't need to continue in my recruitment efforts here. Thank you Kathleen! It's not too early to start sending her program, speaker, and meeting location ideas.

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**

From the President

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- Displaced I.T. workers may increase the pool of independent consultants (*which could lead to more ICCA members*)
- Outsourcing may drive the price of I.T. services down
- Smaller companies that want to outsource may consider using independent consultants rather than a source in India

ICCA's National Office holds this [position on outsourcing](#):

"ICCA supports the use of these four tax credits to encourage onshore I.T. development:

1. Credits for use of U.S.-based employees and contractors:
2. Credits for contracting with U.S. corporations, partnerships, and other business entities, including sole proprietorships
3. Credits for use of U.S. tools and equipment
4. Increase tax credits for companies producing in the U.S."

Tax credits seem like a reasonable way to encourage business to "hire at home."

No matter what your position on outsourcing might be, I think it is certain now more than ever that we (independent consultants) must continue to define and redefine our own goals and objectives. We must continue to evaluate our services, how we market them, and how we deliver them. We must work harder at finding and securing new business. And we must find ways to broaden our appeal beyond our geographical boundaries.

While researching this article, I discovered an interesting article on the internet: [Outsourcing Hype vs. Reality](#), By Jon Surmacz, CIO.com. The article says in part: "*Contrary to common perception, most Fortune 1000 companies are standing on the sidelines.*"

Two additional resources on the topic:

[A Buyer's Guide to Offshore Outsourcing](#)

<http://www.outsourcing.com/>

Good luck growing your business – locally and globally!

How to Create and Manage Successful E-mail Newsletters and Campaigns

by Raj Khera, MailerMailer LLC

E-mail allows you to communicate with your current and prospective clients quickly and inexpensively. You can use "opt-in, permission based" electronic marketing to report urgent news to your customers, advise them of upcoming events, and send reminders.

This article provides tips to help you create and send successful electronic communications. You will learn how to get subscribers, create an attractive layout, and write interesting copy. Following these simple suggestions will help minimize problems and make your e-mail messages more successful.

1. Encourage clients to sign up

Encourage your current and prospective customers to subscribe to your e-mail newsletter by printing an announcement and sign-up form in your existing newsletter, circulating sign-up sheets at events, or allowing your web site visitors to subscribe online.

Remember— not all customers will want to subscribe to your e-mail messages! Some may even file spam (unsolicited commercial e-mail) complaints with their Internet Service Providers (ISPs) if you send e-mail to them without their permission.

2. Find out each customer's interests

Ask subscribers their name, e-mail address, and a few other questions about their interests, so you can target your messages. Once you have gathered that information, you can upload it to an e-mail list management company.

E-mail list management companies help you create, send, and track electronic newsletters and campaigns. Many of them provide web-based tools that help you upload and manage your subscriber list. In addition, some offer sign-up links and electronic registration pages that you can add to your web site.

3. Never, ever purchase or borrow an e-mail list

This is the cardinal rule of electronic marketing. Don't be misled—most organizations and individuals who sell or rent e-mail lists DO NOT have permission to do so, regardless of what they may tell you. Sending mass e-mail to individuals who have not requested it can cause problems with your e-mail list management service provider and may cause your company to be labeled as a spammer. Reputable list management companies have strict policies against the use of purchased or traded lists and may terminate your account if you violate those policies.

4. Keep accurate subscription records

You may get a complaint from a customer who has forgotten that he or she subscribed to your newsletter or who is using an e-mail filtering

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How to Create and Manage Successful E-mail Newsletters and Campaigns

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tool that automatically flagged your message as spam. You should be able to provide that person with his or her original sign-up information. Keeping accurate records will help you respond to these types of requests quickly and justify your mailings to your bulk e-mail or Internet Service Provider.

Your records should include each person's name, e-mail address, the date they requested to be added to your list, and how they signed up. If they subscribed online, record the web site address from which they signed up. Most e-mail list management services collect and retain this information automatically for web-based sign ups.

5. Use double "opt-in" registration

There are two standard methods for online registration-single and double opt-in. With single opt-in, a subscriber enters his or her e-mail address and is then automatically registered. Double opt-in is the preferred method for e-mail newsletter subscription because it requires confirmation. Subscribers automatically receive an e-mail informing them that if they want to complete the process, they must confirm by clicking on a link. Double opt-in eliminates the risk of someone adding another person's address to your list without his or her permission.

6. Use consistent graphics

Your customers will be more likely to read your newsletters and announcements if they recognize them immediately. Create and use consistent graphics for your e-mails by choosing a basic layout with coordinating text, link, and background colors. Design your electronic newsletter and e-mails to match your company's web site. Some e-mail list management companies, such as MailerMailer, provide different design tools to make this task much easier. You simply fill in the blanks on one of their online templates, and your electronic newsletter and messages are automatically formatted.

7. Target your messages

Your e-mails will be most successful if you write targeted messages that reflect your customers' interests. You can send general announcements and also inform customer of new developments in their areas of interest.

8. Use a good subject line

Many people scroll through their e-mail inboxes rapidly and delete messages with suspicious subject lines or report them as spam. When writing your messages, always ask yourself, "If I read only the subject line and nothing else, would I believe this e-mail were legitimate?" Make sure the tone of your subject line does not resemble those often found in spam. Avoid words and phrases like URGENT!, FREE!!!, Breaking News, \$\$\$, and other similar terms.

Instead, give your mailing an official name and include a topic and/or date in the subject line. For example: "Stephens Computer Consultants Newsletter: March 2004" is a much better choice than "Our newsletter". If your clients see something recognizable in the subject line, you will likely see increased readership and fewer spam complaints.

9. Preview your text and layout before sending

E-mail the message to yourself first. Check that your text is large enough and written in a darker color on a lighter background so your subscribers will be able to read it easily.

ICCA Delaware Valley Shirts

\$25 per shirt. Various colors available.

Size	S	M	L	XL	XXL
Color	Green	Ecru	White	Navy	

Qty _____ Total Enclosed: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

ICCA Delaware Valley Mugs.

\$5 each

Qty _____ Total Enclosed: _____

Send this form with check payable to:

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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

Shirts/mugs will be ready for pickup by the following meeting.

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As the proliferation of spam (unsolicited commercial e-mail) increases, so will false reports of spam. Following are several ways to help you avoid problems and reduce complaints:

10. Remind people that they subscribed each time you send your newsletter

A short note can remind your clients that they requested your newsletter and announcements. In addition, you can collect your subscribers' first names and personalize this message to increase readership and reduce complaints. For instance, your message could start with a personalized greeting such as "John, thank you for subscribing to the Stephens Computer Consultants newsletter. Here is our latest issue". Some list management companies, such as MailerMailer, offer "mail merge" capabilities to personalize a message to each recipient automatically.

11. Make it easy for customers to unsubscribe

Each of your e-mail messages should include a link so clients can easily unsubscribe from your electronic mailings. Virtually every e-mail list management service offers this feature.

12. Include your address and phone number

The new federal anti-spam law, the CAN-Spam Act, requires senders to include their physical address in e-mails. In addition, publish your organization's phone number in your messages so customers can call you.

13. Send mailings regularly

Your subscribers will remember they signed up and look forward to your newsletters and e-mails if you send them on a regular schedule. The frequency of your mailings depends on their content and purpose. Sending something monthly or even weekly is usually acceptable. However, infrequent mailings may result in spam complaints because customers may not remember signing up for your list.

14. Finally, adhere to your company's privacy policy

Your sign-up page should point to your privacy policy. Always follow your privacy policy to the letter. You will want to assure your customers that you will not sell or use their information in any way that they did not specifically request. For example, you could be violating your privacy policy if a client signs up for one newsletter and you send them a different one. Some e-mail list management companies provide you with a privacy policy if you don't have one.

Following these simple suggestions will help you retain your subscriber base, which is fundamental for a thriving electronic newsletter or outreach campaign.

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MailerMailer is a secure web-based e-mail list management and hosting service for creating and tracking opt-in newsletters and e-mail campaigns. It enables you to create and send personalized, targeted e-mails based on your subscribers' interests and demographics. This low-cost, do-it-yourself service automates e-mail list set up and maintenance and includes newsletter templates for easy management. For information and a free trial, visit www.mailermailer.com.

Contact:
Raj Khera
Phone: 301-869-4449 or 1-800-475-1415

Upcoming Dinner Meeting Dates 2004

Joint Meeting with TEMPO

✳ **3/11 Doubletree Guest Suites**
Plymouth Meeting, PA

Topic: Enabling our Clients to Manage Change

Speaker: Audrey Jaffe
Jaffe Consulting LLC

Each of our projects involves change... in the way people use technology, or work, think and act ... to some degree. Audrey Jaffe, Principal Consultant of Jaffe Consulting LLC, will discuss effective strategies for trainers and systems consultants to help clients cope with change.

✳ **4/8 Clarion Hotel**
Cherry Hill, NJ

Topic: Staying Out of Litigation

Speaker: Michael Revness
Kurtz and Revness, PC

Learn how to construct contracts that will protect your company.

March Tech Calendar

11 - March

ICCA Del Val Chapter Meeting
Joint Meeting with TEMPO
"Enabling our Clients to Manage Change"
Audrey Jaffe, Principal Consultant of Jaffe Consulting LLC
Doubletree Guest Suites
Plymouth Meeting, PA
6pm - 7pm Networking
7pm - 8pm Dinner
8pm - 9pm Presentation
www.iccadelval.org

13 - March

Network of Women in Computer Technology (NWCT)
Annual Saturday Seminar
<http://www.nwct-phila.org/calendar.htm>

24 - March

Philly.net
SQL Reporting Services, Bill Wolff,
Agility Systems
SQL Server "Yukon"
Microsoft
Malvern, PA
<http://phillydotnet.org/Meetings/default.aspx>

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● submissions.
●

● If you have an article that would
● be of interest to the computer
● consulting community, send your
● article to:
● newsletter@iccadelval.org.

● MS-Word or plain text is preferred.
● Article submission deadline for
● the **April** Issue of Consulting
● Matters **March 26th**.
●

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