



CONSULTING MATTERS

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

April 2005

From The President...

Changing of the Guard; Change is Good Right?

John Erthal
Alphalon Business Solutions, Inc.
President
ICCA/Delaware Valley



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Alphalon Business Solutions, Inc.
President
ICCA/Delaware Valley

Greetings Members and Prospective Members. As I write this article on the eve of my "inauguration" as the ICCA/Delaware Valley local chapter president, I'd like to express some of the feelings and thoughts that come to mind:

Gratitude

-- to our local chapter members for electing me as your new local chapter president. I hope I'm as good as you believe I am. I'll endeavor to be up for the challenges that await me. During the first month, I've set a goal to get to know you better. So, be sure to say "hello" at the next meeting!

Appreciation

-- for the outstanding work of the outgoing chapter president and board directors. Also, for the ongoing officers and directors. As a 6-year ICCA member and board director for the last year, I had a first hand opportunity to observe just some of the time and energy put into the chapter meeting by our immediate past president Keith Mast. From his two-year tenure, Keith has a long list of accomplishments (that we could devote an entire article to), and he has shared his exuberant sense of humor (only sometimes offbeat) to make the various meetings more enjoyable for all. Fortunately, Keith will return to support the board as a director. I'd also like to express appreciation to outgoing director Rose McNeill, who provided valuable, thoughtful ideas and insight to the board during her term of office. We have one additional outgoing director, Leigh Weber, who is stepping forward to assume the duties as the ICCA

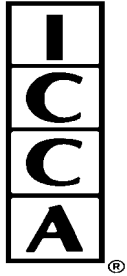
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National Board President. Congratulations, Leigh! And, thank you all.

I also would like to acknowledge my appreciation and thanks to the ongoing officers, directors, and committee chairs of the local ICCA board: Michael McAndrews (VP), Cindy Cole Macia (re-elected as Secretary, Congrats Cindy!), George Smith (Treasurer), Kathleen Conti, Patti Pickup, Mike Herrera, Diane Herrera, all of whose tireless efforts make the local organization the effective ensemble that it is. Special thanks go to Linda Falotico, our administrator, who helps make monthly meeting sign-up and day-to-day communications run so smoothly.

I would also like to take this time to welcome new board member
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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

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



TOP TOPICS at ICCA DeVal 2004-2005

by Kathleen Conti, WebSquared, LLC

I thoroughly enjoyed the March joint meeting with **TEMPO**. As a previous member of **TEMPO** it was great to see old friends and colleagues and catch up on the latest news and industry happenings. Other than the social aspect, our evaluations let us know that the presentation by Merck and Performance Impact Inc was well received. They presented a case study of working together on a rollout of a companywide leadership development program.

Our **April** meeting will be presented by **Mario Pinardo** of **Achievement Dynamics Institute Inc.** and will be held at our Cherry Hill location. We look forward to getting some new tips and tricks for marketing our businesses and getting new leads.

May is a joint meeting with the IMA which will be held at a different time to what we are used to. Note in your calendars it is going to be on a ***Tuesday*, May 17th** at the William Penn Inn in Gwynedd, PA.

The last action item I have on my list is appealing to our members to help me choose the topic for our June meeting. Judy Weintraub from Weintraub Legal Services has agreed to speak at our June meeting. She has offered us 5 options as topics. The list of topics, along with related descriptions, can be found on page 7. Please take a moment to review the list and see which one(s) would be the most beneficial for you. Please email me at: kconti@websquared.com to let me know your choice.

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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



Here, Here! Welcome, New Members!

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expertise: distributed applications, web applications

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www.upstreme.com
610.430.3270 (office)
expertise: Bus/Tech Strategy, Software Dev, EIA, PM

28th Annual ICCA National Conference

*Atlanta, Georgia
June 10-12, 2005*

Schedule of Events...

Friday, June 10, 2005: Chapter President's Council (CPC) Meeting during the day and Welcome Reception that evening

Saturday, June 11, 2005: Daily Speaker Sessions with an Awards Banquet Dinner that evening

Sunday, June 12, 2005: Daily Speaker Sessions

Monday & Tuesday, June 13 & 14, 2005: ICCA National Board of Directors Meeting

For more info visit http://www.icca.org/confinfo_june2005.asp

Curing Laptop Overheating

by Fred Langa

Excerpts taken from **Information Week, February 14, 2005**. For full article, go to <http://tinyurl.com/5xtj6>

What Causes Overheating In Laptops?

When a laptop gets too hot, the cause almost always boils down to one of three main issues: Dust and dirt blocking airflow through the unit; a dead fan; or environmental causes.

Whatever the cause, the unit can't get rid of its heat, and temperatures climb inside the case. If you're lucky, the laptop's heat-sensing circuits will shut everything down when temperatures reach dangerous levels; you may lose data, but your hardware will probably survive, at least for a while.

If you're less lucky, you'll start getting data errors or lockups. Here, too, you may lose data, but you may be able to save the hardware through a prompt manual shut-down.

In a worst case, or after repeated lesser overheating episodes, your laptop may simply end up cooked to death; either inoperative, or so unreliable as to be worthless.

Of the three main reasons for overheating, the environmental issues are the most obvious and easiest to avoid: Don't use your laptop in full sunlight for extended periods; don't leave it in a closed car on a sunny day; don't place it on or near extreme heat sources, such as radiators, hot air vents, and so on. Common sense, really—and the same advice that's in almost every owner's manual for almost all portable electronic devices. It's so obvious, in fact, we won't spend any more time on it.

The other two reasons—dead fans and dust and dirt—both cause reduced airflow through the laptop. You can look for and solve these problems the same way. Most times, you won't have to open the laptop's case, so there's no issue of voiding the warranty, and nothing that requires exotic tools or training. In fact, it's so simple a procedure, I'm amazed more people don't do it.

Real-Life Example:

Cleaning A Laptop's Cooling System
Consider this test case: An IBM ThinkPad that's several years old. It's my personal laptop; it's used almost literally every day.

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Curing Laptop Overheating

by Fred Langa

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As with almost all hardware work, your job will go smoother and be easier if you work in a clean, well-lighted area. Because you'll be peering into small openings on your laptop, you may also find it useful to have a bright flashlight on hand, in addition to bright ambient lighting.

With the laptop shut off (not "suspended," "sleeping" or "hibernating;" but shut down all the way), start by unplugging all cables from the unit, and then remove the battery pack, which usually is on the bottom or in the side of the laptop. (Check your owner's manual for exact instructions.)

Start with a thorough visual inspection of all the laptop's case openings, and make a mental note of any dust and dirt accumulations.

First, find the air exhaust, intake, and fans(s), if any. On this laptop, the exhaust is on a rear corner of the case; the intake is on the bottom of the unit, and there is one fan in the intake, blowing cool air into the system. Other laptops place the fan on the exhaust side of the air path, sucking warm air out of the case; still others use more than one fan.

On our test system, six of the small exhaust openings are substantially blocked with fine, gray dust, and there's more dust visible on the heat sink fins, behind the plastic grill.

The intake area also shows visible dust buildup. There's a modest accumulation of dust on the top edges of the fan blades; around the edge of the circular opening; and on some of the plastic grillwork that's directly over the fan.

While the inlets, outlets, and fan are the obvious places to look, be sure to check any and all other openings in the laptop. For example, the docking port opening on our test system shows a light dust buildup.

Similarly, the card slots, network plug openings, floppy and CD drive openings and the like also need inspection: A flashlight or other bright light source may help you peer inside the smaller/darker openings without having to take anything apart. Make a mental note of any locations where you find a dust build-up.

Laptop hard drives and RAM banks are heat producers, and a layer of dust can act like a sweater, trapping heat inside. If these components are readily accessible on your system, you can carefully remove their access covers to see if any dust is accumulating there. Be sure you only look; don't touch, as these components are static-sensitive.

Start The Cleanup

Ordinary, clean, dry cotton swabs are fine for much of the cleaning you'll be doing. Later on, you'll be blowing dust out from inside the laptop, so at this step your primary goal simply is to loosen any stuck-on dust or "fur balls" inside the laptop. If necessary, you can remove most of the cotton from the tip of a swab to access tight spots; you only need a small amount of cotton "fuzz" on the swab tip for effective cleaning of confined spaces. Work carefully and gently; don't force the swab into tight areas.

Once the worst of the dust has been loosened or removed mechanically with the cotton swabs, use compressed air to complete the job. (Air carried most of the dust into your laptop; air can likewise remove most of it.) While you can use almost any source of dry, clean air, your best bet may be to use a product designed for the purpose. For example, I used a can of "Dust Off;" it's one of many similar products available at most office-supply and electronics stores. These cans of compressed gases produce highly controllable, highly directional, very intense bursts of dry, filtered air; and usually come with a long plastic nozzle that's ideal for working inside crevices and hard-to-reach places. A can costs only a few dollars and can last for many cleanings. (Read and follow all label directions.)

No matter what air source you use, be careful not to overspin the laptop's fan: A strong blast of compressed air can spin a small fan like a pinwheel, over-revving it enough to damage the motor or bearings. To prevent such damage, keep the fan from spinning as you clean it. I gently inserted a clean cotton swab between the fan's blades so the fan couldn't rotate when I blasted the blades clean with compressed air.

With the laptop's fan blades secured, maneuver the flexible tip of the compressed air dispenser to access every part of the laptop that you can reach around and through the fan assembly, from every possible angle. And be careful: You may be surprised at how much debris whooshes out with the first few blasts of air!

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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.
●
● MS-Word or plain text is preferred. Article submission
● deadline for the May Issue of *Consulting Matters* is
● **April 25th**.
●
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From The President

Continued from page 1

Ron Jones, who was just elected to a two year term. Congratulations, Ron!

Legacy

– There are many new members and long-time members that have benefited from the organization built and maintained by many years of generous contributions by volunteer board members and officers over the years. I have respect for this legacy and aim to advance it.

Lucky

– A best-kept secret: I'd like to reveal to you that it's very lucky to be a member of the Delaware Valley chapter. We have been told by National Board members that we have one of the best local chapters in the country, if not the best.

Apprehension

– on the unknown, and in some ways, unpleasant changes that are going on inside our industry. I hope to help identify threats to the future success of our profession, and share my findings with the membership.

Excitement

– The air of change is not necessarily a 100% negative one. One of the flags we Information Technology consultants have historically waved and benefited from is the "agents of change"

banner. Many of the outcomes of our innovations over the years have resulted in the automation and streamlining of processes that have allowed increased revenues, reduced costs, and increased productivity for our clients. These changes sometimes have resulted in the reduction, redeployment, and/or retraining of various clerical, manufacturing and workflow personnel. These changes have also provided opportunity. Now, we have entered a time when we as consultants increasingly find that some of the pressures of change are being cast upon us. Most of us find it is much tougher to be on the receiving end of change, than we ever imagined as deliverers of change.

Opportunity

– I look forward to assessing the value of the local organization to its members in order to see how we must transform the chapter as necessary to meet the evolving needs of the membership.

Relief

– It turns out I ran unopposed. While this is not so unusual for our chapter, it would have been really disconcerting to have come in second in the voting. Thanks again.

Promises

– I hope to make as many meetings as I can, even those that are furthest from my home base. I look forward to seeing you at the meetings. Feel free to drop me an e-mail or a call if you have any comments or ideas you'd like to share.

ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meeting Dates 2005

✳ **4/14 Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ**

Topic: Master Prospecting & Networking

Presented by: Mario Pinardo, President of Achievement Dynamics Institute, Inc.

Description: Discover the Keys and Secrets of How to:

- **Create an Endless Chain of Referrals**
- **Get Past the Gatekeeper – Every Time**
- **Make Networking Events Work for You**
- **Improve the Quantity and Quality of your Prospects**
- **Keep Your New Business Pipeline Pumping**

✳ **5/17 William Penn Inn, Gwynedd, PA ***Tuesday Night*****

Topic: Joint Meeting with the IMA (Institute of Management Accountants)

Presented by: ICCA and IMA panelists

Description: The format will be similar to that of last year's IMA/ICCA meeting. One or two ICCA members will present topics of interest to IMA members and IMA members will present topics to ICCA members.

Curing Laptop Overheating

by Fred Langa

Continued from page 4

Note also that some “compressed air in a can” products can spray a supercooled liquid if you invert the can. This is good for neither the laptop nor anything else the liquid may touch; and it actually can cause frostbite on human skin. Once again: read and follow all the directions that accompany whatever compressed air product you use.

Repeat the cleaning process for all other openings you identified previously. Use care with any openings near the fan to ensure that your blast of cleaning air doesn't spin the fan; if necessary, re-secure the fan with a swab, as before.

When you're done, the fan area and other openings will be clean, clear, and dust free.

Wrapping Up

Replace any covers or access panels you previously removed, and reinstall the battery pack. When the laptop is right-side up, you may wish to use some of your remaining compressed air to blow out the keyboard area. Cotton swabs also can help clean any other cracks and crevices around the screen or keyboard.

You also may wish to use a soft, slightly dampened cloth to wipe down the case and screen; be very careful not to rub hard on the screen, which may be vulnerable to scratching or breaking; and use care not to let any liquid drip into any part of the laptop.

On my laptops over the years, I've had good luck with plastic-treatment products such as “Armor All.” Used sparingly (no drips!), it's improved the contrast on my displays by helping to reduce the appearance of the fine scratches that can accumulate on a laptop's screen; these scratches scatter light. After treatment, with less light being scattered, the whole display looks better. But different laptops are made from different plastics, and I can make no guarantees about how your system will respond: If you want to try this, you're on your own: Experiment carefully on an inconspicuous spot before trying a large area, and, again, use extreme caution not to allow any liquid to drip anywhere into your laptop.

When you're done cleaning, fire up the laptop, preferably on AC power, so it will run at full speed and produce maximum heat. Listen carefully: The fans should operate as they did before. For example, if your fans always came on at initial startup, at least for a few seconds, make sure you hear them spinning during this startup. Or, if your fans normally would come on after, say, five minutes of full-power operation, wait the full five minutes to ensure the fans are now working properly.

If they're not, try a simple fix: With the laptop turned on and running, very, very slowly and carefully move it—no sharp jolts or fast, sudden moves!—so you have access to the fan. Using one of your cotton swabs from before, gently nudge the fan blades in the proper direction. Sometimes, that's all a fan needs to get going after it's been stuck: It may then spin normally for a long time to come.

But if not, your laptop needs service; it should not be used with a dead fan, or permanent damage may occur. If your laptop is out of warranty and you're mechanically handy, you may be able to open the case, remove the dead fan, and install a replacement yourself. But if the laptop is in warranty or if you're unsure of your abilities, call for professional help in replacing the fan.

When your laptop is running OK, use a thermal monitoring tool, such as the free [SpeedFan utility](#), which lets you monitor the temperatures, fan speeds, and voltages inside many systems. (Not all SpeedFan features work on all systems, but the temperature monitoring—which is the most-important function—works on the majority of systems equipped with thermal sensors.) A tool like this can help you understand your system's thermal performance; and give you early warning to impending problems in the future.

In any case, with the fans spinning normally, and with your laptop's cooling system now dust-free and unobstructed, your portable PC should now run cooler—and maybe quieter—than before!

About the Author:

Fred Langa, in his Langa Letter, examines the end-user side of corporate computing. While checking out the products, practices, tools and technologies that affect us all, he also tries to remember that this stuff was originally intended to make our lives easier. Imagine that!

Fred Langa, a former Chief Editor of Byte and Windows Magazine, has been covering computers since the days when 640K was more RAM than anyone could possibly need. Besides writing this column, Fred also publishes an e-newsletter with over 170,000 subscribers, and runs several popular Web sites. See

<http://www.langa.com> for more information

Participate in Fred's discussion forums

<http://www.informationweek.com/forum/fredlanga>

TOP TOPICS at ICCA DelVal

Continued from page 2

June meeting topic options. Email kconti@websquared.com to let us know which topics interest you.

1. Building successful partner relationships

Everybody has a story about a partnership or business alliance that has fallen apart. Unfortunately, it is a somewhat common occurrence. Yet entering into alliances with other businesses or individuals can greatly expand a company's opportunities and markets. This workshop discusses how to build durable partner relationships through discussion of critical issues, such as roles and responsibilities, compensation structures and exit strategies. Discussion of these issues builds a common understanding, enhances alignment and teaches the parties how to deal with other thorny issues that may come up, thus building collaborative partner relationships.

2. Negotiating with confidence

Most people dislike negotiating because they do not like confrontation, and fear losing or having their position rejected. With some tips and practice, everyone can improve their negotiating skills and gain the confidence to be a good negotiator. This seminar will provide negotiating tips and strategies to build confidence and enhance negotiating effectiveness.

3. Leading productive meetings

Meetings take up a lot of time, and unfortunately, often waste a lot of time. Businesses cannot afford to have people sit in unproductive meetings. In contrast, well-run meetings stimulate greater participation and more creativity, and achieve better results. This seminar covers how to run effective meetings.

4. Tools and techniques for preventing and resolving conflict in the workplace

Workplace conflict can be very expensive for businesses. Studies show that the number of such conflicts is increasing, and that managers spend approximately 40% of their time dealing with workplace conflicts. Businesses can reduce their costs in this area by training their managers in conflict resolution techniques and by taking steps to resolve conflicts as early as possible, before they grow into full-blown disputes. This seminar covers conflict management techniques as well as tools for resolving workplace conflicts quickly.

5. Basic principles of contract law

In some cases, having a written contract can be worse than not having anything at all. Many business owners sign other companies' form agreements without having any idea of the risks they are taking. This seminar will cover basic principles of contract law, provide an understanding of key contract provisions such as warranties, indemnities and limitations on remedies, and explain what to look out for when entering into a contract.

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

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Qty _____ Total Enclosed: _____

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

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

April Tech Calendar

14- April

Delaware Valley ICCA Meeting
Multiply Your Leads for New
Business

Mario Pinaro, Achievement
Dynamics Institute, Inc.

5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Clarion Hotel

Cherry Hill, NJ

www.iccadelval.org

19- April

Computer Professionals of Center City
7-9 pm

The Irish Pub

Philadelphia, PA

<http://cpccentercity.com/cpccevent.htm>

19- April

Network of Women in Computer Tech-
nology

Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)

Jon Kern, Compuware

5:30-9 pm

The Radnor Hotel

St. David's, PA

<http://www.nwct-phila.org/>

20-21 April

Philadelphia SecureWorld Expo

Valey Forge Convention Center

Valley Forge, PA

www.secureworldexpo.com

26- April

NetworkWorld Technology Tour:

WAN Optimization

Philadelphia, PA

[www.nwfusion.com/
events.techtour.html](http://www.nwfusion.com/events.techtour.html)

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

newsletter@iccadelval.org

ICCA Delaware Valley Board of Directors Committees and Other Contacts 2005-2006

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