



CONSULTING MATTERS

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

March 2005

From The President...

Need more Business? Sponsor an ICCA Meeting

Keith Mast
Mast Consulting, LLC
President
ICCA/Delaware Valley



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Mast Consulting, LLC
President
ICCA/Delaware Valley

The ICCA/DV is actively seeking sponsors for its monthly dinner meetings. The board as well as all members should be on the lookout for companies or organizations who might want to speak to our group. Sponsored meetings benefit both the sponsor as well as our local chapter. The current fee to sponsor an ICCA meeting is \$125.



Todd Welch
Merrill Lynch

One of our 2004 sponsors, Merrill Lynch, recently inquired about sponsoring a second meeting. They are interested in sponsoring the joint Tempo meeting on March 10, 2005, in Plymouth Meeting.

I asked their representative, Todd Welch, if sponsoring an ICCA meeting was worth the investment.

He said, **“It was definitely worth it. The members were responsive. I was able to come away with a number of leads and I have already closed some business with several members.”**

The benefits of sponsoring an ICCA monthly meeting are:

- Opportunity to introduce products and services in a five-minute talk
- Opportunity to distribute literature at the meeting
- Free advertising in our chapter newsletter
- Free advertising on our chapter web site
- Opportunity to do business with ICCA members

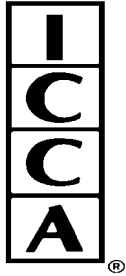
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I encourage all our members to keep on the lookout for companies that may have a product or service that would interest **our members**. Also be on the lookout for companies that have a product or service that would interest **our clients**.

If you know someone who wants to sponsor a meeting, please send the contact information to President@iccadelval.org. I will contact them and discuss the details of sponsoring a meeting.

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Meeting Information 610-394-9090

info@iccaderval.org
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

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

At our January meeting we had a lively discussion about **RFID** and how it will be affecting businesses and our lives over the next few years. I found that the conversation before and after the speaker was just as interesting and informative as the presentation as we had many experienced RFID people attend the meeting. I get the feeling that different aspects of this technology may be worth looking into as future meeting topics.

Our **March** meeting is a joint meeting between the ICCA and TEMPO (Trainers and Educators of Metropolitan Philadelphia). **Please note that this meeting has an earlier start time: Networking begins at 5:30.** The topic for this meeting will be **"The State of e-Learning at Merck Pharma"**. This presentation will look at the design and rollout of a company-wide leadership development program for new managers, at Merck. This blended learning program allows new managers to focus on what they will need to know and do to be effective in their role, and also gain the knowledge and skills to address the leadership challenges that come with managing others. The speakers will be: **Cheryl DeLarge, Merck, and Marc Crawford, Performance Impact, Inc.**

Our **April** meeting has been finalised and we are happy to let you know that Mario Pinardo, President of Achievement Dynamics Institute will be presenting **"Multiply Your Leads For New Business - Master Prospecting & Networking"**.

Hope to see you at our next meeting and don't forget if you have suggestions for meeting topics or speakers for upcoming meetings to let me know: kconti@websquared.com

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

Notes from the Digital Frontier

by Shri Chaudhary
BizTech Helpers

Is there a Smartphone in your future?

If you are a road warrior like me, you may want to read this. Are you carrying around a PDA, a wireless phone, a beeper, etc? Talk about being a wired (weird?) man (or woman)!

I was getting tired of carrying my iPaq and my cell phone, and needing 3 hands to find a number and make calls. Try that while driving (or on second thought, DONT!). I could have used a beeper too! Then how about the camera and the iPod and their chargers and accessories? Things were clearly getting out of hand, and pretty soon, I needed a wheeled dolly to carry around my arsenal!

Well no more! I think I found an answer. Enter the Smartphone! This is a relatively new entry in the mobile, wireless phone market. It combines the functions of a PDA and phone. Some models add a camera, video recorder, audio MP3 player etc.

Several companies make these things, and most major wireless carriers are offering one if not more types. The GSM based carriers like Cingular and T-mobile have more options.

The basic choice is between the Palm based vs. the Microsoft Windows mobile based vs. Blackberry devices. The Blackberry is very popular with the corporate crowd and is great for receiving and sending email on the go. It has a functional text keyboard. However, it is awkward to use as a phone. It is like holding a clamshell to your ear!

The Palm Treo 600 and now the 650 are the latest in the Palm line of smartphones. They do most things well, and are even decent size and shape as phones. Reports are that they don't work well in cars (see below).

Then there is the relatively new Microsoft Windows Mobile series of smartphones. These are phones that have PDA functionality grafted on them. They are small, have decent displays but do not use a stylus like the Palm ones. They are available in candy-bar or flip style.

One of the newest (and best examples, in my opinion) is the Audiovox SMT5600 by AT&T Wireless. Due to the merger, it is now in limbo, since Cingular has not picked it up. However, they will have it soon.

Another hot one is the Cingular- Motorola MPx220, in a flip style. The SMT 5600 is very small, has a great 2.2 display that does a good job with web pages. The Windows smart phones synch with Microsoft Outlook.

So if you use Outlook as your PIM (personal information manager) and email client, you always have all your contact and calendar information at fingertips. That feature is worth its weight in gold! (Luckily, the phone weighs a mere 4.2 oz, so the gold is affordable [-:-]) I have no problem reading text emails on the screen.

If anyone is interested in smartphones, contact me and I will be happy to share web links that will give you more information.

Windows Smartphones

<<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsmobile/smartphone/default.msp>>

Must Have Feature in your new phone (and your new car)

One feature to look for in a new mobile phone is Bluetooth. It is a new wireless network technology that allows the user to wear a cordless headset. With more states requiring use of headsets while driving, it is a smart investment. Some cars (The Toyota Prius, or some Acura models for example) have Bluetooth capability. When I start my car, it automatically recognizes the phone on my belt. Calls can be made and heard through the cars audio system. No more fumbling with the seatbelt trying to get the phone out of pocket or purse!

Besides hands-free, Bluetooth is useful for wireless synching with your PC (or Mac), wireless keyboard, mouse or printer, GPS receiver and so on.

At this time only a handful of cars offer built-in Bluetooth. If you are in the market for a car, and use a mobile phone heavily, this is a must have feature! Ask for it. If you want to keep your car, some companies offer a add-on kit. See the link below.

Cars and Bluetooth

<<http://www.edmunds.com/advice/specialreports/articles/103685/article.html>>

About the Author:

Shri Chaudhary is a principal of BizTech Helpers and HomePC Helpers, a computer and technology consulting company which he co-founded in 1999. They focus on technology consulting and provide IT services to small business, home based businesses, telecommuters and home PC users.

The company also provides web hosting and design and custom software development. BizTech Helpers is based in Media, PA. Email: shri@bthelpers.com

It Pays to “Productize” Your Consulting Services

by William K. Pollock

There are many advantages to “productizing” your business’s consulting offerings. Just as in the product segment where a brand name and its associated levels of awareness, image and market positioning can draw customers to your business, consulting services and support can also be positioned to benefit from the same marketing and promotional advantages. However, in most cases, they must first be “productized.”

In general terms, “productization” means simply taking an otherwise generic type of consulting service or support offering, and redefining and packaging it more as a “product” offering. For example, if your organization provides a variety of IT-based consulting services to a number of vertical markets (i.e., bank/financial, medical/healthcare, retail/wholesale, etc.), you may wish to “productize” these offerings to appeal to each market directly. Differentiating and packaging your offerings...

“professional computer services for the financial community”

or

“IT support for the physician’s office”

may be one way of doing so.

Larger businesses may also benefit from “productizing” their consulting service and support offerings by individual business segment, such as “small office/home office (SOHO) business services”, “retail office business services”, “medical office business services” and so forth. In many cases, if all your business does is advertise that it can provide consulting support in general, that message alone may not be attractive enough to entice a bank, hospital or legal office to respond to one of its advertisements.

In each of these examples - without productizing - potential customers may mistakenly believe that your company only has a general capability to support computers, but *not* enough specific expertise to support “my special business segment.” Again, by packaging and promoting your services in a business-specific “productized” manner, you can convey the dual messages that (a) you can provide the support, and (b) you know the business segment.

Of course, your business will most likely need some additional market information before it is able to effectively “productize” its offerings. The market research required to build the proper foundation upon which to “productize” your services should consist of a combination of secondary and

primary research directed toward the goal of identifying, defining, analyzing and assessing the types and breadth of consulting services and support offerings presently being used by your targeted markets, as well as an assessment of what competitive consulting “products” are already being offered in the marketplace. The market research should address the following key areas:

- Definitions, descriptions, components and classifications of each individual consulting offering being considered;
- Service product packaging (i.e., in terms of whether a specific consulting service would be sold as a standalone and/or “bundled” product with other offerings);
- Pricing methodology (i.e., whether the services will be priced on a “retail” or discounted basis, etc.);
- Business segment focus (i.e., to what specific segments will the service be offered, and should this require segment-specific marketing and promotional literature, etc.); and
- Summary comparisons, assessments and critiques of what other competitive consulting offerings may already be available.

Since many of your competitors may have already moved toward the “productization” of their consulting service and support offerings, now may be the most opportune time for your business to move forward as well. A good place to start would be with respect to conducting basic market research. One way of doing so would be as follows:

- Review competitive brochures and sales literature (i.e., hard copy and/or off the web) to learn more about how other firms are packaging and promoting their various consulting offerings;
- Survey the Internet and on-line database services to supplement, support and corroborate the information initially obtained from the marketing literature;
- Find out which consulting firms are targeting which vertical markets by identifying the segment-specific trade shows where they exhibit and/or speak; and
- Talk to your own clients about what they see as the principal benefits and advantages of using your specialized consulting services, and integrate these findings along with the external market data and information you have been collecting about other firms that are supporting clients in the segment.

At the conclusion of your assessment and evaluation of all of the collected data and materials, you should be in a

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It Pays to “Productize” Your Consulting Services

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much better position to “productize” your principal consulting service and support offerings, and cross-check them against both the needs and wants of your customers, and the alternative offerings provided by your competitors.

If the market believes that all you are offering is a generic set of commodity-like consulting service and support offerings, but that your competitors have more clearly defined support “packages” designed specifically for their business, they will be more likely to go to the competition than to you. However, by “productizing” your offerings in a manner that reflects the specific attributes, benefits and advantages required by each individual client segment, you should also stand to benefit from the differentiated market positioning of your overall portfolio of consulting service and support offerings.

About the Author:

William K. Pollock is president of Strategies For GrowthSM (SFGSM), the Westtown, Pennsylvania-based services consulting firm specializing in strategic business planning, services marketing, CRM consulting, market/survey research, and customer satisfaction measurement and tracking programs.

Bill may be reached at 610-399-9717 or via e-mail at wkp@s4growth.com. SFGSM's website is accessible at www.s4growth.com

ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meeting Dates 2005

✱ **3/10 Doubletree Guest Suites, Plymouth Meeting, PA**
******Joint Meeting with TEMPO******

Note Different Start Time, this meeting only. Networking 5:30, Dinner 6:30

Topic: The State of e-Learning at Merck Pharma
Presented by: Cheryl DeLarge, Merck Pharmaceuticals
Marc Crawford, Performance Impact, Inc.

Description: This presentation will look at the state of eLearning at Merck & Co and what marketing efforts are being utilized to bring the message to the masses. The presentation will explore “horror stories” regarding eLearning initiatives, look at marketing efforts through the eyes of the learner, explain some of the signs that an organization is ready for eLearning, and discuss best practices that are working at other companies.

✱ **4/14 Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ**
Topic: Master Prospecting & Networking
Presented by: Mario Pinaro, President of Achievement Dynamics Institute, Inc.

Description: Mario Pinaro is the president of Achievement Dynamics Institute in Mt. Laurel. His clients include fortune 500 companies, Olympic athletes, and hundreds of professionals and small business owners. Over the last 20 years, he has delivered more than 2,500 workshops and seminars - specializing in personal and team empowerment and increasing personal effectiveness

From The President...more about Meeting Sponsors

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We appreciate all our sponsors from recent meetings. They are:

InspiriTec, represented by Judy Rosenwinkel, offered ICCA Members an opportunity to receive grant money from the Dept of Labor.

AXA Advisors, LLC, represented by Tara Prindible, a leading provider of financial services for consumers and businesses, working with clients to help them define and meet their financial goals.

Cittone Institute, represented by Bob McNamara, training company sponsored our July 2004 Pizza Party.

Merrill Lynch, represented by Todd Welch, provides wealth management services

Wechsler/Marsico Associates, represented by Ron Bradly, provide individual and family insurance and retirement benefits.

Again, I encourage all our members to keep on the lookout for companies that may have a product or service that would interest our members. Or perhaps a product or service that would interest our clients. If you know someone who wants to sponsor a meeting, please send the contact information to President@iccaderval.org. I will contact them and discuss the details of sponsoring a meeting. Thank you for your help!

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 April Issue of *Consulting Matters* is **March 25th**.

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.

March Tech Calendar

19- March

NWCT

NWCT Annual Saturday Seminar

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

10- March

Delaware Valley ICCA Meeting

Joint Meeting with TEMPO

***** Annual Elections for Chapter Officers *****

The State of e-Learning at Merck
Pharma

Cheryl DeLarge, Merck Pharma, and
Marc Crawford, Performance Impact,
Inc.

Sponsored by: Merrill Lynch, Todd
Welch, "Wealth Management"

5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Doubletree Guest Suites

Plymouth Meeting, PA

www.iccadelval.org

15- March

Computer Professionals of Center City

Networking Event

7pm, The Irish Pub

2007 Walnut Street

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

23- March

PA/DE/NJ

Distance Learning Association

8:30 am to Noon

University of Delaware

Clayton Hall

Non-members: \$25

PADLA 2005 Members: Free

You must register to attend.

<http://www.v-workshops.com/pby/padla/private/private.asp?nid=308>

If you hear of an event that would be of interest to our members, send the meeting notice to
newsletter@iccadelval.org

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