



CONSULTING MATTERS

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

January 2006

From The President...



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

What's going on at the CPC?

Did you know that local ICCA Chapter members have a representative governmental body in the National Organization? Well, they do. This body is called the Chapter Presidents Council, or CPC, for short.

You are probably already aware that the ICCA has a National Office in St. Louis with an Executive Director (ED) and volunteer National Officers and Directors that are collectively known as the ICCA National Board of Directors (NBOD). These Officers and Directors are elected *at large* by the entire membership for 2 year terms. Delaware Valley's own Leigh Weber leads the NBOD as its President.

But, the CPC consists of all the current presidents of the local chapters, as well as all past chapter presidents (who are non-voting members, and bring historical wisdom to the group's discussions). Therefore, this group is a *representative* body of the local members.

By charter, the CPC meets in-person once a year in conjunction with the National Conference in June, to conduct the business of the CPC. The CPC is lead by an elected chairperson, who is presently long-time ICCA member Gloria Metrick. The CPC meeting is also attended by the Executive Director, Joyce Burkhart, in a non-voting role. The NBOD also attends the CPC meeting in an advisory capacity.

In addition to the annual meeting, the CPC has the option to conduct work during the course of the year, and this Council has chosen to do just that through both online meetings and telephone conferences.

But, you may ask "What does the CPC do?"

The CPC is primarily a forum where the local presidents discuss ideas, issues and share what works and doesn't work in the chapters. These learnings are then brought home by the chapter officers to utilize in the local chapter.

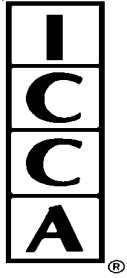
Recent discussions on our forum included:

1. NYC chapter doing target marketing for new members by purchasing a targeted mailing list, sending out a professionally prepared mailing and follow-up brochure
2. Chicago doing Google-Adwords campaigns
3. Del Val chapter doing joint meetings with other organizations to permit greater networking opportunity
4. Discussions on national web-site improvements
5. Creation of SIG's from the At-Large chapter that may evolve into future regular chapters

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**Meeting
Information
610-394-9090**

**info@iccadelval.org
www.iccadelval.org**

**TOP TOPICS @
ICCA DeVal
2005-2006**

by Kathleen Conti, WebSquared, LLC

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

It is hard to believe another year is coming to a close. It seems to have been a busy year for all. In summary of our last few meetings, our November meeting was an onsite meeting with ATX Communications where they presented an overview of VoIP technologies. The facilities were great and our hosts provided wonderful hoerduerves and a few drinks before dinner. Dinner was great and then we all moved with our coffee into the meeting room where ATX's Executive Vice President and General Manager, Guy Fardone presented. For December, we had a presentation in our Cherry Hill location by Dianah L. Neff, the Chief Information Officer for the City of Philadelphia. She discussed the implementation of "Wireless Philadelphia. Although attendance was low, I heard that Dianah was a great presenter and was sorry that I missed this opportunity to meet the CIO of the City of Philadelphia.

Our January meeting promises to be highly informational with a panel discussion led by **Skip Shuda** from Dream and a Team. This discussion will be focusing on our changing industry and how cheap labor and advances in IT will be affecting how we do business. For a more detailed summary check out our meetings page on the ICCA website: <http://www.iccadelval.org/icca/html/meetings.htm#Jan>. In February we are excited to welcome back Varma Mitchell who will be discussing Government Marketing.

At our last board meeting I let the board know that I would have to step down from the Program Coordinator position. Between the business, being a new mum, and keeping the house together there are just not enough hours in the day. I am willing to be a helper for the new coordinator so if anyone is interested please let us know.

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and enjoyed a little down time with the family. Happy New Year to all.

As per usual let me know if you have any suggestions or comments about our ICCA meetings - kconti@websquared.com or on my cell: 484-883-1005.

Wireless Philadelphia Benefits

by: Dianah Neff, CIO, City of Philadelphia

The benefits of making a wireless technology investment are broad and far reaching. First and foremost, the City embraced this initiative to remain a competitive location for businesses, a world-class center for education, and an attraction for visitors. The investment will also enable us to reduce the cost of public service delivery. Finally, it is an essential element of a long-term effort to invest in the human capital of the City – its workers, its residents, and perhaps most importantly its children for their and our future.

Philadelphia has a very large public school system with 270 K-12 schools and over 220,000 students. The School District has been working very hard to train teachers on how to incorporate technology into their curriculum, to get computers into households, and to unwire their campuses. By end of next month, 200 campuses will be wireless. But the schools need affordable broadband access in the homes to complete the circle that will allow parents, students, teachers and administrators to be able to communicate. The School District has developed academic applications, tutorials and the ability for parents to find out what their child's homework is for that day or week.

According to the School District's survey of November 2004, only 58% of households with children have access to the Internet in the home and 64% have computers. However, when you look at it on a socio-economic basis, affluent neighborhoods have 93% access while low income neighborhoods only have 25% access. The number one reason stated was cost and the second was computers in the home. Wireless Philadelphia's goal is to provide citywide low cost access somewhere around \$16 - \$20/month and to provide 10,000 free computers with training over five years.

Every day we have new examples of how wireless is helping the City's economy. In May 2005, the Secretary of Strategic Planning received a call from a representative of a Chinese, quasi-governmental group that would be visiting the US in June looking for investment opportunities. He mentioned that some amongst the group had originally been reluctant to add Philadelphia to their itinerary, but that a story about "Wireless Philadelphia" had convinced them that the City was indeed technologically advanced and they came to Philadelphia.

In our low income, American Street corridor, a private investor is rehabbing an abandon warehouse into artist studios. Five of the 12 potential tenants required wireless

access to sign up. Because his warehouse is in one of the City's six neighborhood pilot areas, he will be able to bring high speed wireless internet access into the building quickly while the tenants will have outdoor wireless access also.

Wireless is changing the lives of some of Philadelphia's most needy. One of the first cases that touched me about the impact wireless and the Internet can have on people's lives was the Cox family – three generations of women sharing a rowhouse – gets high-speed Internet access for \$10 per month. It has changed their world.

Taah (pronounced Tay-uh) was an unfocused third-grader whose father is in jail. Her mother Maya, who was 13 when she gave birth to Taah, was told at the time that she probably needed a kidney transplant. Theodora Cox, at 64, faced the added uncertainty of retirement.

Theodora engaged in an eight-week training course, which allowed her to purchase a computer for \$120 and get wireless broadband for \$10 per month through the People's Emergency Center (PEC), a nonprofit social service group in Philadelphia.

Now Taah "is the technical director in her class". Maya and her mother researched kidney diseases and corresponded with patients and doctors. And Theodora uses the Internet to help her sell a line of candles to people in the neighborhood and beyond. In the words of Gloria Guard, President of PEC, who provides wireless broadband access to over 100 homes in the neighborhood, "making technology available is like a pebble in a pond".

The Wireless Philadelphia network will also enable the City to reduce the cost of public service delivery. We estimate by year three the City will be able to save as much as \$2 million a year in reduced telecommunications cost. This will be achieved by reducing the amount we pay for cellular wireless access for field staff like building and health inspectors, assessors and streets crews. We will also be able to reduce our T-1 access to remote facilities (over 300) by more than 50% of what we pay today.

In the last two years, more than 93 cities in the US have deployed wireless broadband networks for public use and hundreds of cities have announced similar plans. This trend has led to debates in many state legislatures and courtrooms about whether local governments should have the ability to

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ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meetings

January 12, 2006

Topic: The Cheap Revolution

Location: Holiday Inn Select, Claymont, DE

Panel

- **Skip Shuda**, Startup and Entrepreneur Advisor, Team and a Dream, Wharton SBDC Early Stage Practice
- **Lee Devin**, Dramaturg & author of “Artful Making - What Managers Need to Know about How Artists Work”
- **Jennifer Guinan**, President of Sage Strategic Marketing
- **Andrea Michalek**, Managing director of Unit of 1.
- **David Newman**, Founder of UNCONSULTING

Description: Join us for an in-depth exploration of the emerging business phenomena that some are calling The Cheap Revolution. Global access to a vast network of talented professionals and stunning advances in Information Technology is changing the way business is done. A growing pool of free information is just a mouse-click away. Fierce competition among service providers is heating up in all but the most specialized niches. Like it or not, The Cheap Revolution is here.

February 9, 2006

Topic: Government Marketing

Location: Towne House, Media, PA

Speaker: Varma Mitchell

Each year the Federal Government spends over \$200 billion to purchase goods and services from business across the United States. Some of these funds are earmarked for doing business with small businesses. States and local governments also spend billions of dollars to purchase goods and services of all kinds.

Marketing to the government can be daunting to small businesses because of the strict process the business must adhere to. Knowing how to prepare to do business with the government, and understanding the requirements will make the process much easier.

This presentation will review key contracting codes, how to navigate internet sites such as CCR, PRO-NET, some of the certifications provided by the SBA, rules one must follow to be successful (FAR, CFAR, DFAR) the golden rule of contracting with the government, where to find opportunities, important informational sites on the internet and how the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at Temple University can assist you to successfully market with the government.

If you have never done business with the government and interested in doing so, or if you are seeking to expand your marketing activities with the government, this presentation will provide you with the tools to do so.

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

The Towne House Restaurant

610-566-6141
117 Veterans Square
Media, PA

Clairon Hotel

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

Holiday Inn Select

302-792-2700
630 Naamans Road
Claymont, DE

ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meetings

March 9, 2006

Topic: Best Practices in Developing Valid Assessments

Location: Doubletree Guest Suites, Plymouth Meeting, PA

Speaker: Steven Just, Pedagogue Solutions

Joint Meeting: Joint Meeting with TEMPO

As training departments increasingly use examinations to ensure required levels of subject mastery by their employees it becomes critically important to guarantee that the exams are properly constructed. Properly constructed exams ensure valid and defensible measures of student performance.

Unfortunately, many training departments treat question writing, exam construction, and data analysis as afterthoughts. Inexperienced employees and vendors are often called upon to write questions, and the rich database of exam history is left unanalyzed. This presentation covers basic testing principles that will help organizations ensure that their assessments are valid and legally defensible.

The ICCA Wants You!

February is elections for the
Delaware Valley Chapter Officers
and Board of Directors

If you are interested or know someone interested in getting involved and helping grow the Del Val Chapter, please contact one of the board members on the last page of the newsletter.

From the President

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In addition, the CPC is the “owner” of some of the organization’s official documents, including the Chapter Model Bylaws. While maintaining such tomes may be considered drudgerious work (to a certain extent, it is), it is for the benefit of the organization to enable the structures, standard operating procedures and policies that these by-laws support.

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.

MS-Word or plain text is preferred. Article submission deadline for the November Issue of *Consulting Matters* is **November 25rd**.

Acquiring And Managing Leads

The process of gaining new customers can be summed up in two steps - 'getting leads' and 'converting leads to customers'. Although the first step is the responsibility of marketing and the second is the responsibility of the sales function, the two have to work together to optimize their effectiveness.

Generating the leads themselves is always the first task of any successful marketing exercise. Leads can be purchased, as in buying a mailing list of prospects, but gaining your own isn't difficult. Just know that you should be prepared to use a variety of ways to attract qualified prospects rather than depending on just one source.

Promote yourself and manage enquiries – Think about how some companies are always announcing the results of a market study or survey. They get a lot of airtime and press space and are perceived as being experts in their area of operations. You can conduct your own survey and publicize the results, becoming an 'instant expert' in your own industry.

Team up with an affiliate – Find a business that's not a direct competitor but whose customer base represents a list of good prospects for your own firm. Exchange mailing lists or do a joint promotion to both groups of customers and create a campaign that specifically targets them.

Create articles for other companies' newsletters and websites – If you can come up with something really interesting that others will publish it's like gaining their recommendation for your business. There are literally thousands of newsletters and websites that are happy to receive high quality, useful content for their readers.

Do your research - media like daily newspapers, Internet blogs, newsgroups and websites where people can post queries are great places to look for people who might be interested in your products. They're also good sources of business intelligence about developments in the marketplace that might provide opportunities to open up new markets for your products or services.

Get out and be seen – Trade shows and exhibitions are surprisingly undervalued, but mainly because so many exhibitors aren't good at following up the leads they get from them. They're always a good way to meet seriously interested prospects, especially for B2B marketers.

Regardless of how they're acquired, one of the most critical areas in any business is managing the leads that come in. Unfortunately, because a lot of good leads don't respond immediately to sales efforts they aren't pursued long One

way to cope with this situation is to create a follow up system that will automatically contact leads at designated intervals, perhaps by email or by sending them a piece of print material created to reflect their area of interest. If all leads are followed up for a set period of time it keeps them 'warm' until the sales process finally closes them.

This type of follow up is especially useful for leads gained at large scale events like trade shows. The process can commence immediately after the event and then be maintained by some form of contact on a regular basis – perhaps weekly or bi-monthly.

To begin designing such a follow up system go back over your previous sales records and answer these questions:

1. How many contacts did it take before a sale resulted?
2. What was the frequency of contact with those customers where the sale was finally closed?
3. What kind of contact method proved the most effective?
4. How long did it take before the lead was converted to a customer?
5. What percentage of leads became customers?

This information will guide you in creating the system so that you can determine such aspects as the type and frequency of contact and what kind of results you should expect.

Gaining leads and then following them up are all part of the overall job of staying in business. Get the two working together and you'll have a much better chance of success than if you let them function independently.

Source: RAN ONE Inc.

Reminder

IRS Deadlines

Quarterly Tax Payments Due January 16, 2006

1099s Due - January 31, 2006

Wireless Philadelphia

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provide such networks.high-technology firsts that government has advanced:

- Government almost single-handedly financed the research budgets of the technology industry in the mid-20th century that led to some of the first breakthroughs in computing technology including the ENIAC out of Philadelphia.
- Government sponsored the original research that lead to the Internet. Today the most highly used websites on the Internet are government sites.
- Government has been one of the primary buyers of the first generation of every new computing technology from super computers to GPS.

Local governments have long had to absorb the ultimate cost of expanding technology. Cities pay when traffic backs-up for miles due to communication construction. Cities pay when schools and communities don't have learning tools that depend on communication technology because it's simply not profitable to expand the services there. When cities and their residents pay the ultimate cost of technology changes, then cities must have a seat at the table when decisions regarding how those technologies are advanced and deployed. Cities and local governments should not be restricted in investing or participating in the development of promising new technologies when it is in the best interests of all of its citizens to do so.

Dianah Neff, CIO
City of Philadelphia

Dianah L. Neff has 18 years experience in providing leadership and implementation of organization-wide strategic information technology planning, assuring reliability of information technology infrastructure, and directing information technology departments in their delivery of technology support services in both city and county organizations. Prior to working in government she had 14 years experience in the private sector working for high-tech software and hardware firms in Silicon Valley.

Neff is recognized for her vision in long-range systems planning and her work in developing innovative systems. She is currently leading the City's Digital City initiative to become the first major city in the U.S. to implement a citywide wireless network. In 2005 Neff was selected as one of the Top 25 Women of Distinction in Philadelphia, Computerworld's Premier 100 CIO

Welcome New Members

Delaware Valley Chapter of the ICCA

DMS, LLC

304 Bromley Drive
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062
609-502-5219

Gavin Software Solutions, LLC

614 Third Ave, Suite B
Audubon, NJ 08106
609-220-9598

Serac Solutions, LLC

117 West Clearfield Road, Suite 100
Havertown, PA 19083
610-613-8205

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 _____

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
iccadelval@rcn.com

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

January Tech Calendar

Jan-12

ICCA Delaware Valley Chapter
Meetin
The Cheap Revolution
Skip Shuda (panel discussion)
Claymont, DE, Holiday Inn Select
<http://www.iccadelval.org/icca/html/meetings.htm>

Jan-12

TEMPO

“Performance Support Tools “
Time: 12:45 pm - 4:00 pm
Speaker: Ted Henson and Trish
Trolley, Global Knowledge
Global Knowledge
King of Prussia, PA
<http://www.tempo-train.org/programs.html>

Jan-18

Philly.Net
Visual Studio Team Systems
Chris Menegay
5:30-8:30
SEI office
Oakes, PA
<http://phillydotnet.org/>

Jan-17

NWCT

Convergence: IT Security and
Physical Security
Mark Garrison, CEO, Reviewnet
<http://www.nwct-phila.org/calendar.htm>

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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