

❖ Consultants in Minnesota ❖

December 2001

President's Message

By Randy Hayman

Greetings All!

First, I'd like to thank Bob Lewis, long-time columnist for InfoWorld for providing a great presentation on spotting the slam-dunk trends and technologies that are inevitably to become future market-share leaders.

I won't illuminate the details of the fantastic talk, but I will say that there are but a few criteria which have an extremely high correlation to successful adoptions of new trends and technologies. I'm beginning to sound like a broken record when I say "you missed another great one" if you decided not to attend our last monthly meeting. I guess that old saying about 'you snooze, you lose' has some merit....

In regards to the presentation which Bob Lewis gave, let me simply add that his list of a few criteria which fortold the success of the PalmOS PDA and Linux Servers was accurate to a 'T', as was his fortelling of the failure of OS/2. If you wanted to know more about how to make pridictions like these with relative ease, you should have attended his talk.

The December Christmas gathering will be held at the Steak and Ale near 494 & Penn Avenue - call Joan Barnes for the actual address/location, her contact information is listed elsewhere in this issue.

The Christmas gathering will celebrate our local Chapter's 20th Anniversary. Your local ICCA-MN chapter is one of the oldest chapters in ICCA, and many members have commented on our continual renewed growth and focus that keeps us current. If you have a vi-

sion which differs from our current direction, unless you let it be known, it will not be known. Help us help you!

Don't forget that our annual Broker's fair will be held at the Lido on January 15. This is our penultimate networking meeting of the year in which we can know and be known to the many consultant brokers that exist in the Twin Cities market. Be sure not to miss it (plus the Lido, like the Wyndham, has excellent buffet-style dining prepared exclusively for us!)

That's the view from here. Let me know your thoughts by sending me email at haymanr@icca.org.

The upcoming meeting schedule.

The 2002 ICCA Broker Fair will be held at the Lido on Tuesday, January 15, 2002. Larry Bremer will be the sponsor for this meeting. Please contact Larry with any names of brokers you have worked with the past and feel other ICCA members could benefit by learning about their organization.

Thanks to LeRoy Michaelson has volunteered to find a speak on the topic of VPN and connectivity, we have yet to finalize a date for this topic. As always, we need to finalize member sponsors for upcoming meeting, specifically the February and March meetings.

The April meeting is being sponsored by Randy Hayman and the speaker is Jeff Hickstein, Director of Sales and Marketing, Project Consulting Group. The topic for the April meeting will be related to Marketing. Please contact Amy McKenna, amymckenna@aol.com to sponsor, suggest a topic or suggest a speaker for a future meeting.

Officers:

President: Randy Hayman

Voice (651) 261-9939

Fax (651) 456-9426

email: haymanr@pureice.com

CO-VicePresident: Amy Mckenna

Voice (651) 702-5036

email: amymckenna@aol.com

CO-VicePresident: Charles Brotzler

Voice (952) 440-6673

Fax (952) 440-6673

email: stellarsol@icca.org

Treasurer: Norm Nelson

Voice (612) 399-0107

email: norm.nelson@icca.org

Secretary: William A. Buending

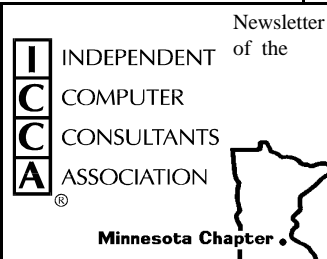
Voice (952) 931-9754

email: wbassoc@buending.com

Editor: Magne A. Hatlevik

Voice (651) 264-1608

email: magne@magpcs.com



The most compelling reasons yet to deinstall Microsoft Office and install StarOffice 6.0:

By Randy Hayman

I have been using StarOffice for about three years now - regularly, though not exclusively. Two years ago, I successfully experimented using my laptop two full weeks at a client without booting into Windows, and hence, not using Microsoft Office. The only reason I needed to boot into Windows after this experiment was to use some full-lifecycle-software-engineering products from Rational Software Corporation.

This particular client was using Novell IPX/SPX and Microsoft TCP/IP protocols along with both Novell and Microsoft NT domain authentication. My trusty old laptop running RedHat Linux v6.1 at the time, had no problems being productive in that environment.

Since that time, Rational Software has embraced, ported, and certified many of their tools to the RedHat Linux distribution. Now there is virtually no reason for me to even keep Windows 2000 on my current laptop, but I will for now, and only boot into it on occasion.

Two months ago, I de-installed, for good, Microsoft Office from my consulting business' laptop - a newer model than the previously mentioned laptop. This laptop boots into RedHat v7.2 and Windows 2000. This laptop must allow me to be immediately productive in every client I contract with. Here are compelling reasons I switched to StarOffice 6.0.

1. It has text filters for every word processing system I have ever heard of, ever used, and many that I had never heard of, and some that I thought went the way of the Edsel, way, way, many years ago. Alas, I still find clients needing to bring current many documents created in years past. StarOffice 6.0 can read everything I've thrown at it, period.

2. Since my consulting business' laptop must be at home in many different environments, I dual boot it into Windows 2000 and RedHat Linux v7.2. My use of StarOffice allows me to use the same of-

office suite no matter which operating system I boot into. The operating system no longer matters, what does matter is the interoperability and 'fit' into the client architecture such that I am immediately productive when I come onboard.

As an aside, this dual boot functionality is valuable beyond belief. When a client's MS BackOffice Server stopped issuing leases for their DHCP clients, I configured my laptop running Linux to issue leases and the client was back in business within 5 minutes, getting leases from my laptop until they could fix their problem, days later, after they called in outside support. Five minutes of reduced functionality vs. days - you do the math on the cost savings of that with your own clients.

3. I never, ever, ever, have to worry about any vendor strong-arming me into a licensing agreement for Office Productivity Suite software since StarOffice is Open-Source. I simply download a newer version if I need to upgrade.

4. StarOffice 6.0 is even more rock-solid, and faster, than its predecessors. When I started using StarOffice, 4 full versions ago, I had some performance problems on old Pentium 5 hardware with limited memory, though I have yet to have it crash in any way under any platform I've used it with. The v6.0 software is wonderful.

Yes, I have found an office suite capable of exceeding my expectations of the Microsoft Office suite and I can put my money where my mouth is. If you are watching cash flow like many of the rest of us, consider the option of never having to purchase another software license for your Office Suite software. StarOffice 6.0 runs on x86 architecture Linux, x86 architecture Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2000/XP, and Sparc architecture Solaris.

If you encounter any combinations of Windows and Linux or Solaris, you owe it to yourself to be interoperable with your Office Suite standards.

Oh, and you can download the latest version of StarOffice, at no charge, from <http://www.sun.com/staroffice>.

And, yes, StarOffice does read and write Microsoft Office application formats to the point that nobody needs to ever know you are running it.

Have you found such a breakthrough application in your business? Why not write an article and let more of us know about it?

That's the view from here. Let me know your thoughts by sending me email at haymanr@icca.org.

Extreme Programming (Wrap-up)

By Amy Mckenna

Thanks so much to Susan Standiford for speaking about Extreme Programming (XP) methodology at the October ICCA meeting. Susan is currently a Director of Engineering for Retek, a software product company serving the retail industry. Susan has spent the last year researching and implementing XP at Retek as a proof of concept with great success. She explained the 12 components of XP including, planning, small releases, simplicity, continuous testing, refactoring, paired programming, and collective ownership. Susan walked through the short release cycle for an XP project and shared examples of XP project maps. It was evident that Susan was passionate about her experience implementing XP but she was also open to discussing the limitations of XP with the group. There was good interaction between the ICCA members and Susan and she tried to answer any question for the audience.





Holiday Fun

Tuesday December 18th, 6:00PM or so
Steak & Ale, 2801 Southtown Drive, Bloomington

Holiday Fun 2001 will be at the Steak and Ale Restaurant located on the 494 frontage road between Penn and France on the south side of 494. Bill and Joan McTeer will bring their usual fun games, so we will be our own entertainment. (Yeow, I am almost tempted to say that Bill and Joan will provide the team-building exercise. It's been quite a year.)

Dinner Choices and Cost: We can decide what we want to eat when we get to the Steak & Ale, but **please call in a reservation (651-257-2570)**; the private room that we have will depend upon how many people are expected, and it's more fun if we aren't too cramped.

These will be the dinner choices:

\$25

Sirloin Steak – 7 oz
Hawaiian Chicken
Salmon – 10 oz

\$30

Signature Herb Roasted Prime Rib – 8 oz
Sirloin Steak – 12 oz
Stuffed Shrimp

\$35

Signature Herb Roasted Prime Rib – 12 oz
Strip Steak – 14oz
Baked Lobster Tails
Sirloin Steak and Stuffed Shrimp

I'll be bringing the traditional herring and aquavit. Hope to see you all there!!!

Have a "Ho Ho Ho"
HOLIDAY





Next Meeting

Tuesday, December 18, 2001

Holiday Fun

Steak & Ale

2801 Southtown Drive, Bloomington
952-884-0124

6:00PM or 18:00 or so

For reservations call
Joan Barnes @ 651-257-2570

FUTURE MEETINGS

Tues. Jan. 15, 2002 – Broker Fair at The Lido

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Get involved--write a story for the newsletter. I need stuff to fill these white(blue) pages!!

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7632 Sherwood Road
Woodbury, MN 55125

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