

# ❖ Consultants in Minnesota ❖

August 2002

## President's Message

By Randy Hayman

Greetings!

I would like first to thank Rita McCormick for her wonderful presentation on free marketing for consultants at the June meeting. I would like to extend gracious thanks to Jack Rose, for not only sponsoring Rita, but for his efforts on making our website the success that it is. I would like to thank our Newsletter Editor, Magne Hatlevik, for the work he does each month to ensure that our newsletter gets created and sent to each of us every month.

It is through these volunteer acts that you see a vibrant organization withstand the tests of time.

I had three job postings to announce at the June meeting. Fortunately, the attendees we had jumped right on these and are persuing them independantly. I also asked for, but did not get, a volunteer to step forward to simply organize a survey for ICCA members and non-ICCA members to identify the benefits that either they already receive from ICCA membership, or would like to receive from their ICCA membership. The current Board of Directors will provide input, questions, and assistance as necessary, we simply need an individual to organize it so we can actually conduct the survey. Will you step forward and make your contribution? Contact one of the Board members listed to the left of this column.

Last year, I challenged each of our members to bring two guests to our monthly meetings over the course of the year. We were quite successful with this initiative. I repeat the challenge for this year - bring two additional guests over the course of the next twelve months. Let's grow this organization into a greater network of potential. You will get out of this organization nothing less than you put into it.

That's the view from here. Let me know your thoughts by sending me email at [haymanr@icca.org](mailto:haymanr@icca.org).

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**Publicity Can Be Free, says June Speaker**  
By Jack Rose

"Don't bother them with clutter," Rita McCormick advises, but with intelligent media choice and focus, consultants can utilize "free" media services to obtain publicity for their businesses at little or no cost.

Rita, a media consultant, was our featured speaker at ICCA-MN's June 20 meeting at the Wyndham Garden Hotel.

"Exhaust all your PR possibilities before turning to ads," she told the meeting. Local trade journals and newspapers are always interested in stories of local interest. Suitable topics include client success stories, business trends, notable events and new product launches. Less desirable are obvious puff pieces and "advertorials."

Other tips: put a press contact page on your company web site; call publications in advance and ask for media kits and names of editors; write the article yourself and include a byline with a one-line bio and contact information.

Rita's consultancy, McCormick Marketing Communications, can be reached at (612) 281-1182.

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Newsletter of the



INDEPENDENT  
COMPUTER  
CONSULTANTS  
ASSOCIATION



Minnesota Chapter

## Case Study on Security

By Randy Hayman

I recently had the great learning experience of setting up a server which needed to reside directly on the Internet - no firewall between it and the wild and wooly world wide web.

Remember last month when Mark Wolcenski gave his talk on security, he stated that you needed to be apprised of what black hats and crackers\* WILL do to your system(s)? Well, within a matter of two HOURS after configuring my server and connecting it to the Internet, I had multiple cracking attempts made on it from Belgium and Korea (Top Level Domain (TLD) country codes of .be and .kr). By the following morning, I had additional interesting IP addresses - from dial-up accounts in Germany (TLD of .de). Whether or not the sites that tried accessing my server were themselves cracked, I can not say.

This is fascinating to me, totally fascinating, that there are persons out there in the world with absolutely nothing better to do than port scan the Internet and search out machines with certain ports advertised as available. Mind you, I have a fairly good handle on securing computer systems, but the speed at which this machine of mine was hit from multiple COUNTRIES is astounding.

If you really want to see what ports you have open to the entire world when you are connected, and you are running some version of Microsoft Windows, take a look at LANPortScan (lanportscan.exe self extracting executable) available for download via ftp.languard.com. For those enlightened souls, look at the man pages for nmap. It is programs like this that hackers and crackers use across the Internet.

Only use this program against your own system(s).

If this real world experience doesn't either fascinate you or make you very, very, afraid, then you should not have any computers with Internet access.

When these black hats, or crackers, find a potential target, you can bet that the IP address of that target box is all over the underworld's message boards, not to mention any newsgroups. Is it coincidence or the marvels of instantaneous communications that within hours of my server showing up on the Internet I had logged attempts to penetrate this box from three different countries?

If you have a hard time believing this, I urge you to visit a couple of URLs which may change your naivette. Just a couple of them are listed below, which by the way, I found within a matter of seconds after googlizing my search:

<http://www.thenewbiesarea.com/tutorial.shtml>  
<http://www.happyhacker.org/uberhacker/index.shtml>  
<http://www.tigertools.net/board/?topic=topic1>  
<http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/~HD213/hack.htm>  
<http://www.defcon.org/defcon-ftp-archives.html>

If you were not aware of the existence of sites like the above, or sites that provide a look into the world of hacking and cracking, peruse these for an eye-opener:

[http://www.mobrien.com/windows\\_nt\\_wardoc.htm](http://www.mobrien.com/windows_nt_wardoc.htm)  
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~l0rd/hack.htm>

When I actually started my Apache web server on this machine (directly connected to the Internet), I was flabbergasted that within NINE SECONDS, I was logging Microsoft Internet Information Server exploits against this machine's Apache web server. While, one may denigrate

the intelligence of the 'script kiddies' performing such attempts, my point is simply that within NINE SECONDS of starting up the web server, I was logging crack attempts. I make no judgement on the intellectual fortitude of the crackers at my door. To this day, almost a month since setting up this server, I have yet to detect a successful intrusion. This can either mean that I have not had a successful intrusion, or that I have yet to detect a successful intrusion. I leave that argument as an exercise for my readers.

The Linux firewall I have had successfully keeping nefarious activity off of my business LAN (always-on connection to the Internet since July of 2000) will finally get upgraded. After running non-stop since July of 2000, through patches, and minor upgrades, I will finally upgrade the kernel. This machine is powered via a 1400 VA UPS system so even with the power grid problems we've had, it has yet to reboot.

Then, again, maybe I'll simply configure a new firewall and let the old one keep processing along until it finally needs to be rebooted.

\* In brief, crackers are malicious, hackers are not, though both may use the same tools and techniques. To hackers, personal knowledge is the goal, to crackers, malice is the goal.

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

Take Care and Enjoy!



**VISI.com Speaker Will Describe Costs, Benefits, Technology, Partnering Opportunities**

By Jack Rose

There are two types of costs -- telephone and Internet -- you can't have one without the other and they are NOT mutually exclusive, says Bil MacLeslie, Director of Operations at Vector Internet Services Inc. (VISI.com). Bil will speak on VISI's unique telecom & data services at our Tuesday, August 20 meeting at the Italian Market Deli by Lido in Roseville.

Boasting four 45MB DS-3 backbones from four competing carriers and an almost fanatical dedication to uninterrupted uptime, VISI.com is ranked #1 ISP on City Business's Top 25 lists since 1996. Already well known to most of our members, VISI is also the host of ICCA-MN's web site, www.icca-mn.org.

Bil will bring us up to date on the products and services offered, talk about the technology behind the products, profile some of VISI's customers and competitors, and highlight some partnering opportunities for consultants.

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**ICCA-MN Member Directory**

by Randy Hayman

The Minnesota printed version of the Member Directory won the best printed directory award at the CPC meeting in Denver

Up here in the moderate climates of Minnesota, we think that our directory achieved the success it did at the CPC awards because it has seven unique points. They are as follows (in no particular order):

- \* A visually appealing cover identifying it as the Directory of Consultants and Services of the Minnesota Chapter of ICCA, with the publication date.
- \* A table of contents with general ICCA (National and local) sections (pages 1-7), plus the individual businesses of our members (pages 8-48), and the index (page 49) of skills and contacts.
- \* A section of ICCA National information, National contact information, code of ethics, and standards and practices.
- \* A section on the Minnesota Chapter with meeting information, dues information, officer information, contact information, "How to Find and Select a Consultant" information, how best to use a consultant, and our Chapter Referral Service information.
- \* A section for each of our member businesses, listing the name, contact information, the skill sets (keywords) of the business/consultant, and a brief write-up by the company/consultant akin to their somewhat expanded 'elevator talk'.
- \* A cross reference section (matrix) for identifying which businesses have Mainframe, Mini, and Micro skill-types.
- \* It has been unchanged in format for at least a decade - was it simply 'our time'?



Meeting Reservations: Members may phone your reservation to Joan Barnes at 651-257-2570 by 3:00 PM, Friday, August 16, 2002. Non-members should mail this form to: ICCA Minnesota, c/o Norm Nelson, 2200 E 22nd St. Minneapolis, MN 55404-3165

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Menu Selection: The Lido Italian Buffet

Members \$25 Non-members \$28 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
Late Charge \$2 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
Enclosed is a check for: \_\_\_\_\_



# Next Meeting

Tuesday, August 20, 2002

**VISI.com - Costs, Benefits,  
Technology, Partnering  
Opportunities**

## Italian Market Deli by Lido

2801 North Snelling Ave  
651-636-9721

(north of Rosedale)

Social Hour at 5:30PM  
Dinner at 6:30PM

For reservations call  
Joan Barnes @ 651-257-2570

## FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, September 18, 2002 Wyndham

### ICCA Disclaimer notice.

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[ed. note]

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**Attention all ICCA members:**  
Get involved--write a story for  
the newsletter. I need stuff to fill  
these white(blue) pages!!



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Plymouth, MN 55442-1536

Stamp

**First Class Mail**

