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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY
WADE HERSCHBERGER

Greetings,

How many of us use Powerpoint or OpenOffice Impress on a regular basis in our jobs? I suspect quite a few. In my ramblings around the internet, I ran across an interesting article, The Visual Display of Quantitative Information, by Edward Tufte on the use of Powerpoint. He is Professor Emeritus at Yale University, where he taught courses in statistical evidence, information design, and interface design.

Dr. Tufte makes a case that Powerpoint is limited and often abused by presenters. Given the limited space available it can be difficult to convey in-depth information; some information is just very difficult to condense into bullet form. Or we see presentations reverting to very small fonts or condensed diagrams to try to squeeze the information onto a slide. Also, given the myriad of 'goodies' at your disposal, many "replace serious analysis with chartjunk, overproduced layouts, cheerleader logotypes and branding, and corny clipart. That is, PowerPointPhluff. ... The PP slide format has probably the worst signal/noise ratio of any known method of communication on paper or the computer screen...In day-to-day practice, PP templates may improve 10 or 20% of all presentations by organizing inept, ex-

Next Meeting

Wed, Dec 17

Holiday Party

For all of us & significant others

New Delhi Bar & Restaurant

1400 Nicollet Ave. Mpls

Social Hr: 5:30 Dinner 6:30

Members \$25 NonMembers \$28

NO RSVP. Just be there

tremely disorganized speakers at a cost of detectable intellectual damage to 80%."

A good point to keep in mind as you are developing presentations is "The slides are not the presentation; they are there only to help you follow the flow or to help illustrate a point." Powerpoint can support a presentation very well, but they shouldn't attempt to be a substitute

for the information the speaker is trying to present.

At his web site <http://www.edwardtufte.com>, there is yet another point that struck me as a business owner. Edward Tufte has taken a paper (a very well written, seminal paper, to be sure) and turned it into product. Not only can you buy a copy of the paper, you can also buy his books, posters, artwork, and even special graph paper on his site. He even offers a one-day course on 'Presenting Data and Information'. How many different ways can you sell something related to a single concept; obviously quite a few. And most of these are not tied to the number of hours you as a single individual can work in a day!

I encourage you to visit his site and if you do presentations regularly, spend the \$7 for his paper. It will be a good investment of time and (a little) money. Wade

NOTICE FROM ICCA-MN WEB MASTER

BY JACK ROSE

Member authentication will move from a development machine to a production machine this month. Passwords stored as cookies on your computer will have to be re-

entered. If you've forgotten yours, change it now. Email password@icca-mn.org to have your reset .

BUILD BUSINESS BY SHARING SUCCESS STORIES

BY JACK ROSE

Rita McCormick, our featured speaker at ICCA's November 18 dinner meeting, offers a new definition of "PR" -- Performance Recognition.

Rita's an expert on using free media to get publicity for your consultancy at a fraction of the cost of conventional advertising. And, as she points out, you're an expert in your field -- technology. The news media -- newspapers, radio, television, and the trade press -- are legitimately interested in your successes and in what you have to say. You can view these media as an extension of your sales effort.

Not to mention the "third-party" feel of getting published in an outside journal. It really enhances your credibility.

Some of the publicity tips Rita presented:

[1] Stop writing press releases.

Editors are short of time. They're more likely to print a finished article than do a lot of work on a press release they have to re-write. If your publicity efforts help them save time, they're more likely to use your material, remember you in a positive light,

and call on you the next time.

[2] Share your successes.

Editors are most interested in client success stories. Describe a conflict and its resolution, or a problem and what you did to bring about its solution. Second most popular topic are expanded services, and industry trends.

Opinion pieces (clearly labeled as commentary) are also welcome.

[3] Spread it around.

Keep the copyright on what you've written. Once you've been in one publication, often you can get the same article into similar ones. Make reprints available to your clients and prospects, as well as other editors!

Once you've located a business editor, Rita advises, it's best to make your initial approach by e-mail. Include a link to your firm's web site, a biography, and two or three one-paragraph story ideas.

Our thanks to Rita McCormick of McCormick Marketing Communications for her presentation. She can be reached at ritzcomm@visi.com or (612) 281-1182.

YOU CAN BEAT CANCER, YOU CAN SURVIVE HEART ATTACK, BUT CAN YOU AFFORD TO PAY FOR IT?

BY ERIC GIBSON

Medical science has made some truly amazing progress over the last century. Americans are living longer, healthier lives and surviving diseases that only a couple decades ago would have killed them. That's the good news.

The bad news is that while survival rates for most diseases have jumped, so have the medical costs associated with that survival. In fact, according to a 2002 report by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, Americans' health care spending soared 8.7% in 2001 - the largest increase in a decade. And a study by the National Institute for Health Care Management stated that spending on drugs doubled from 1997 to 2001 - rising from \$78.9 billion to \$154.5 billion.

But studies by the American Cancer Soci-

ety indicate that the indirect costs of a critical illness can greatly outweigh direct medical costs. This leaves many who suffer critical illnesses like heart attacks, cancer or strokes to pay the indirect costs of survival - costs not covered by their health plans like deductibles and co-pays, treatment outside a provider network and lost income - on their own.

"This is a far bigger problem than most people realize," said Ken Smith, a First Vice President at Mutual of Omaha. "These indirect costs can add up quickly. If you're not prepared financially, it's almost like being punished for surviving. Unfortunately, most traditional insurance plans just don't cover these expenses."

Health insurance pays for things like doctor

Survival rates for most diseases have jumped, but so have the medical costs.

CRITICAL ILLNESS CONT.

bills, surgery and traditional treatment, while the insured is responsible for co-pays, deductibles and non-covered procedures. Disability insurance replaces a person's monthly income, but only a portion of it - and benefits don't usually start until after a 30- to 90-day waiting period. Also, most self-employed individuals don't qualify for adequate disability coverage due to tax-deductions. For life insurance to pay benefits, a person has to die. And while there are a few "specified disease" policies out there, they pay benefits only for the disease specified.

Critical illness insurance - a product relatively new to the U.S. market - fills this protection gap. It pays a cash benefit to a policyholder when they are diagnosed with one of several covered critical illnesses like cancer, heart attack or stroke. The money is paid with no waiting period. And unlike traditional health insurance, it pays directly to the insured.

"It's money they can use any way they want, right when they need it most," Smith said.

Many Americans will have to face a critical illness in their lifetimes. According to the American Cancer Society's 2002 Cancer Facts and Figures report, men in the U.S. have a 1 in 2 lifetime risk of developing cancer, and U.S. women a 1 in 3 risk. Critical illness insurance gives them a way to pay for it.

"The bottom line is, people need critical illness insurance," Smith said. "Once you understand the financial consequences of getting life-threatening cancer, having a heart attack, going blind or suffering kidney failure, there's no way you wouldn't want to protect yourself, your family, and your business from these costs."

Eric.Gibson@mutualofomaha.com

Critical illness insurance covers expenses not covered by disability & life insurances

B2B-EBIZ INCREASES PROFITS WITH UCCNET

BY BOB NEWMAN

Reducing the cost of doing business is one of the goals of Business-to-Business e-commerce (B2B eBiz).

Today, the success of the retail supply chain depends on the movement of goods, and the corresponding flow of information related to those goods.

Because this process is often error-prone, an average of 30 percent of product data is incorrect in a company's system. These inaccuracies lead to invoice and shipping errors, costing a company in the form of chargebacks and returns. Every day, the retail industry wastes up to 30% of its investments in time, effort and money in reducible data errors.

Re-keying information related to goods is the greatest cause of these data errors.

Despite the growth of computer networks; corporate databases and ERP systems remain islands of information. While CIO's acknowledge the cost savings and competitive advantage to be gained by collaborating with their customers and suppliers, they are unwilling to expose their systems to security threats and corporate espionage by connecting directly to their trading partners. This disconnect between the computer systems of business trading partners causes product information to remain manually entered.

To solve this problem, the Uniform Code Council, Inc. (pioneer of the UPC code) has created UCCnet to provide:

- A Global Item Registry.
- EAN*UCC System Standards Validation.
- Item Data Synchronization.

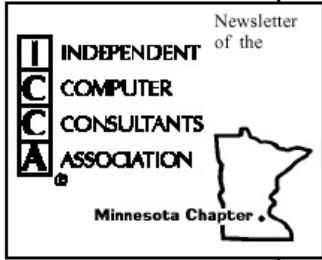
By synchronizing item data UCCnet will:

- Eliminate the costly re-keying of data
- Speed up item creation and life-cycle maintenance.

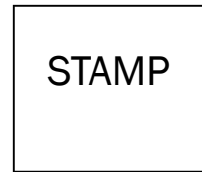
Working with standardized data elements will facilitate better reporting and provide faster, more efficient electronic review and approvals and build a foundation for future applications.

UCCnet is already having a huge impact. Industry leading retailers such as Home Depot Inc., Meijer Inc., SUPERVALU Inc., and Wal*Mart Stores Inc., to name a few, have endorsed the adoption of UCCnet to all of their supply chain partners. Adoption of this new business process will give companies a cost advantage over their competitors who fail to adopt this new way of doing business.

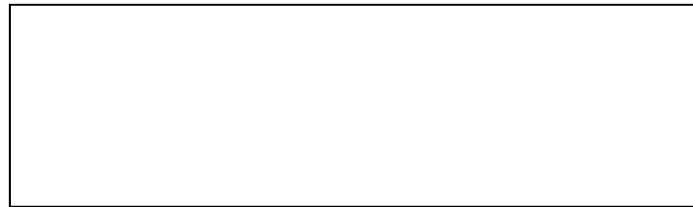
Although in its early adoption stage, UCCnet stands to revolutionize the way products are brought to market.



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First Class Mail



CALL FOR ARTICLES

BY JACK ROSE

Got a story to tell? We'd like to hear it.

Can you write a few paragraphs on an interesting topic related to what you do for a living? ICCA of Minnesota is looking for articles for this newsletter, for our web page, and for submission to larger-circulation journals. It's an effective and inexpensive way to get your firm -- and ICCA -- into the limelight.

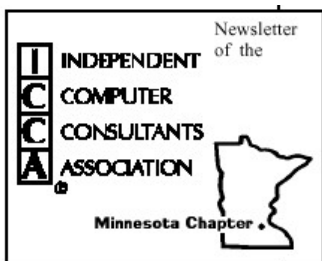
Here are some of the discussion topics that have been suggested in the past several months. You can write on any of these, or suggest another.

How you rescued a client's data, saved him money, or kept him out of the doghouse.

- "I don't usually criticize other consultants, BUT ..."
- The client from hell!
- I have a small business. I don't need consultants and I couldn't afford one.

- Why is software so expensive?
- I haven't updated anything in my system in the past 18 months. I don't read the trade papers as I imagine you do. What's out there that I ought to know about?
- I use my computer every day. What should I do RIGHT NOW to make my computer less vulnerable?
- It's difficult finding good consultants. What are the key questions I should ask to find out if the candidate is a good guy? How do you screen who to use and who to lose?
- How can I tell if my computer has a virus?
- When is it OK to copy software?
- If you're unsure about your journalistic skills, we'll be happy to rewrite your stuff for you. You have final say over what gets submitted for publication.

Please help! Send your articles or story ideas to editors@icca-mn.org, or call our chapter's new number, 612-245-ICCA.



*When You Hire One of Us, You
Get Our Collective Knowledge and
Experience*