

# ❖ Consultants in Minnesota ❖

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Strictly Business® solutions expo Special

### (More Than You Ever Wanted to Know About) ICCA Minnesota

By Ben Moyle (08/28/1998)

[Reprinted with permission from the Sep/Oct98 issue of *The Independent*. ICCA's National Magazine]

The ICCA Minnesota Chapter was formed in May 1981, when Steve Epner, founder of ICCA started telling people to call me to find out where the first meeting was being held. It was news to me, I thought we'd only discussed finding out if there were enough national members in the area to make it worth considering.

I think there were 10 people at the first meeting, but it grew fairly quickly to 25 or so. It seems like the chapter has almost always had around 40 members, except for the very beginning and for a few years after Section 1706 (of the Tax Reform Act of 1986) came out, when, like ICCA nationally, the chapter nearly doubled in size due to the interest in fighting that law, and perhaps to some extent the publicity it afforded us all. But it dwindled back down after a few years.

The chapter has always met monthly, continuously since 1981, and the meetings are almost always dinner meetings, rotating between Tuesday and Thursday of a particular week of the

month, a concept I picked up from other associations. The location also floats, alternating between two sites in different quadrants of the Twin Cities for most years. Although the chapter considers all of Minnesota its territory, and has had members from Wisconsin and Iowa also, nearly all of the members have been in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, but that is still a large area, a non-trivial drive from one extreme to the other. The meeting format is social hour, dinner hour, presentation and/or business meeting hour.

The chapter newsletter has always been mostly a next meeting announcement, plus recap of what happened at last meeting, and/or description of what chapter president or newsletter editor did on their summer vacation; literally a letter.

ICCA Minnesota has hosted one regional conference, and one National Conference (1997). We've probably had more than our share of National Board senten..., er, terms. Yours truly was on what's sometimes called the 'pre-Board Board', a group that Steve Epner more or less appointed until the first election transpired, then I served on the first elected Board, and later again via the

Chapter President's Council (CPC) chair position. Dan Whealdon was National President, and Bill Buending and Bill Smale have also served on the National Board.

The chapter produces its own member directory every year, and also operates a referral service. The latter simply involves someone looking for a contractor, whether a broker, an end user, or a member with an opportunity he can't fill or needs help with, calling the member managing the service, describing the position very briefly, which is then mailed to the members. Those meeting skill and schedule requirements call the service manager and are given the source's contact numbers. The referral service is described in a local computer newspaper 'calendar' section. This service used to be quite active, but in the last year for no known reason has had very few opportunity calls.

The chapter usually participates in one, some years two, local computer trade shows each year, members taking turns manning the ICCA booth for a couple of hours.

Perhaps what is most 'interesting' about the Minnesota Chapter is that it has never been very interesting. It's never been very big, but has never threatened to die from lack of members either. It has always had a core group which attends most of the meetings. Getting people to step up for officer positions each year has sometimes been worrisome, especially with such a small group to draw from. But there have never been any internal squabbles that I know of, the chapter checks don't bounce, and we've not been in trouble with National for getting creative with membership rules, advertising, etc. For 17 years and counting.

### Officers:

#### President: Randy Hayman

Voice (651) 261-9939

Fax (651) 456-9426

mail: haymanr@pureice.com

#### VicePresident: John B. Rose

Voice (651) 214-5053

email: jbr@icca.org

#### Treasurer: Norm Nelson

Voice (612) 399-0107

email: norm.nelson@icca.org

#### Secretary: Larry Bremer

Voice (763) 553-1994

email: ljbrem@compuserve.com

#### Editor: Magne A. Hatlevik

Voice (651) 264-1608

email: magne@magpcs.com

#### Chapter WebSite: www.icca-mn.org

INDEPENDENT  
COMPUTER  
CONSULTANTS  
ASSOCIATION

Newsletter  
of the



Minnesota Chapter



Bennett Isaac Moyle, age 55, was killed Thursday July 26, 2001 when his 1989 Glasair III homebuilt airplane crashed on final landing approach to Wittman Regional Airport for the Experimental Aircraft AirVenture convention near Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He was the sole occupant of the plane. In 1978 he formed his consulting firm, BI Moyle Associates, Inc. specializing in systems software for IBM mainframe computers. The company, well known simply as "BIM" in the industry, performs

mainframe systems consulting services and develops systems software for corporate and government clients worldwide. Ben was President of the Minnesota Chapter of the Independent Computer Consultants Association, served on the National Board of Directors and was honored with a lifetime membership. His lifelong interest in flying led him to invest in several aviation companies. He was also president of Minnetonka Chapter 178 of the Experimental Aircraft Association, and an active member of the Aviation Safety Interest Group and the Glasair Society.

---

---

## 10 Tips for Hiring a Computer Consultant

As business-related technology becomes increasingly sophisticated and complex, many business owners, office managers and systems operators are turning to independent computer consultants to develop high tech business solutions that keep a company ahead of the competition and ensure their operation has the tools and training needed to run smoothly and efficiently.

But how do you go about finding and hiring a qualified consultant who understands your business needs?

The Independent Computer Consultants Association (ICCA), a national not-for-profit organization which promotes ethical professionalism within the industry, offers these 10 tips for choosing a consultant:

- ◆ Be wary of the consultant who attempts to 'snow you' with technical jargon. A consultant should be able to explain things clearly in terms you can understand. You should feel comfortable with your consultant and believe that he or she has your best interests at heart.
- ◆ Listening is a virtue. A consultant should listen to your needs and objectives, before offering solutions. A consultant's primary task is to understand your needs and translate them into system solutions that will work for you.
- ◆ Check references carefully. It is not necessary that a consultant has done exactly the same work for someone else, but it is important that his clients are happy with the results and continued service.
- ◆ Ask about the consultant's relationships with vendors. Vendor ties often mean that the consultant has better access to the technical support needed to complete projects. Some vendors offer extra training and technical support to consultants with whom they have an on-going relationship.
- ◆ Inquire about the consultant's objectivity. Ask the consultant to specify any special allegiances or financial incentives tied to computer products. The ICCA code of ethics specifies that as independent computer consultants, members do not have undisclosed interests in client decisions, and are objective in their recommendations for each specific client situation.
- ◆ Determine who the consultant's backup will be. Discuss up front who will complete the project if something happens to the consultant. Many smaller consulting practices have agreements with colleagues or through their associations to provide backup for them.
- ◆ Consultant Accountability. Regular status reports are a good safeguard against the unexpected. They should keep you up-to-date on the consultant's progress, as well as the costs being incurred.
- ◆ An hourly or daily rate doesn't tell the whole story. An experienced consultant at a high hourly rate can usually justify that rate by producing value in a lot less time than a lower priced consultant. Plus, a good job will lead to lower maintenance costs in the future.
- ◆ Membership in a computer association adds legitimacy. Consultants in organizations such as ICCA pledge to uphold a high business standard and are often backed by professional liability insurance. ICCA, for example, functions as a nationwide business support forum composed of nearly 1,500 member firms. Through the network, a consultant is able to obtain business and technical support to provide the best possible service. Consultants also exchange referrals to help clients find a proper fit between their needs and a consultant's expertise. Association involvement demonstrates a dedication to professional development, which is essential to staying on the cutting edge of the computer industry.
- ◆ Ask how long the project will take. The consultant should be able to give you an idea of the time that is involved. This is what he or she will base the cost estimate on. Make sure you also establish a way for the consultant to notify you of delays.

Copyright 1995 Independent Computer Consultants Association.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing