

Branding and the IEEE: A Concept Whose Time is Here

By David Kemp, Chair, IEEE Branding Ad Hoc Committee

The IEEE, which we like to point out is “the largest technical professional society in the world,” is under siege. Powerful new forces are undermining the organization’s future. They include competitive pressures by aggressive and nimble commercial publishers with very deep pockets, continuing high (and costly) IEEE membership turnover, and lack of a cohesive, consistent IEEE image or brand that weakens the IEEE key constituents’ ability to understand the overall value of the organization to them.

To gauge the effect of this lack of a consistent and unifying image, the IEEE conducted research during 1998 and 1999 among key IEEE constituent groups – volunteers, other members, students and recent graduates, and influentials in industry, government and academia.

Here are some of the findings:

The IEEE is not meeting current or evolving member needs well enough.

✓ In recent surveys conducted among the IEEE’s global membership, more than 75 percent said they personally value their membership, but only 25 percent perceive it to be of value to their employers.

There is a widespread image void about what the IEEE is – and who it represents, what it stands for, and where it should be headed.

In the same surveys, fewer than half of the members responding said the IEEE is suited to represent information scientists, systems analysts and software engineers.

✓ Alternative sources of technical information are a key competitive threat to the IEEE.

One-third of the members in the surveys affirm the Internet is becoming a better source of technical information in their fields than the IEEE. And

in a related survey, nearly 63 percent of non-members avow the IEEE is the best source of technical information in their field, but significantly more (86 percent) rely on the Internet.

Does all this disturb you as much as it does me?

Longtime IEEE members who have seen this data are very concerned about it. Since early this year, the Branding Ad Hoc Committee, authorized by the Board of Directors and established by the IEEE President, has been examining IEEE branding issues and is now developing recommendations to provide to the Board in November 1999. With the value of the IEEE name worth literally billions of dollars, the global reach of the organization, and the leadership reputation for its published content, we believe it is possible to refresh and energize the Institute.

✓ To accomplish this, we need a new, motivating positioning to fill the image void. We need a branding and identity system to support that idea and unify our diverse elements. And we must aggressively market our positioning to our key audiences.

In other words, the IEEE must change – how we operate, communicate, and define ourselves. Change is difficult. It is always more comfortable to stay with the familiar. But our technological world is rapidly transforming itself, with industries converging at ever-faster rates, and new fields emerging with jobs that were unimaginable a decade ago. In the face of all this, the IEEE must step up to managing its brand and leveraging its great value.

The management visionary Peter Drucker said, “Whom the gods would destroy, they first give 40 years of success.” In three years, 2003, the IEEE will mark its 40th anniversary.

(For more on the IEEE Branding activities, check this site: <http://www.ieee.org/organizations/committee/branding/index.htm>)

Long Island and the IEEE Need Joel Let's Elect Him

by Irwin Weitman, P.E.

I speak for myself here. As a voting member of the Long Island Section Executive Board I voted for Joel Snyder as President elect of IEEE. The vote was unanimous for Joel. Not because he lives in Plainview, Long Island but because what he has done for us and all IEEE members.

By now you should have received your IEEE ballot. **Voting is your right and your responsibility, and you should exercise it.** If you have already sent your vote in, fine. But if you haven't, don't let the opportunity to vote pass you by.

Last month Charlie Rubenstein's *Pulse* article entitled *Our Favorite Son - Joel Snyder, A Compass Also Has Four Points* talked about Joel's Four Point Plan. I am taking this opportunity to add my own comments and insights about Joel.

Joel is a proven leader with over 30 years of IEEE service starting in our Section and then serving at the Board level as a Director and a Vice President. Besides being active in the geographic based side (our Section, Region, and country) of IEEE, he is also a member of several technical societies and serves as Membership Development Chair for the Engineering Management Society. He is the only candidate who truly brings the concerns of the working engineer to the IEEE. He has worked for several companies in Senior Engineering and Project Management positions and is the owner of a successful company. He also has credentials as a leader and innovator in academia.

Joel's statements highlight his continued concern for the members and their careers, address IEEE's fiscal responsibility, and look toward the our future. He has insight, vision, and courage.

A vote for Joel will be a vote for someone who represents our industry, the employed and self-employed engineer as well as the academician engineer. He represents local activities, professional activities, technical activities, and educational activities. Joel truly represents all of us. I urge you to vote for him.

If you want more information see his web site at:
www.snyderassoc.com/jbs

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Please visit our website at: <http://sils.pratt.edu/~longis/> for up to date listings, changes and cancelations

October 6, 1999 — LI Consultants Network. At 7:00 PM, Mr. Arnold Novick, President of Mission Sciences Corporation, will speak on *Underwater Acoustics and Sonar*. At the auditorium of Polytechnic University on Route 110 in Farmingdale. For further information, call John Dunn at (516) 378-2149 or at ambertec@ieee.org.

October 11, 14, 1999 — Multi-Threaded Programming for Embedded Systems Seminar. 6:00 to 9:00 PM, Melville NY. For more information call Prof. Beheshti (516) 686-7437 or via email b.beheshti@ieee.org.

October 25, 1999 — Executive Committee meeting at AIL at 6:00 PM. Please call in advance Amnon Gilaad to arrange for Security pass at 595-6322.

Nov: 1, 3, 8, 10 1999 — Seminar on Data and Computer Communications. Sponsored by the Communications Society Long Island Chapter. Cover topics such as ATM, TCP/IP, HDLC, ADSL, T1, E1, Ethernet, X.25, RS232, MAC. \$300 members, \$350 non-members. For more information call Prof. Beheshti (516) 686-7437 or via email b.beheshti@ieee.org.

November 2, 1999 — LI Consultants Network meeting, see above for details.

OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION CHIEF ENGINEER

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We are representing one of the leading companies in the standard power transformer market. Our client has sales of about \$30 million and is an operating unit of a diversified industrial manufacturer with sales of \$500 million.

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If you know of someone who would benefit from knowing about this opportunity, please ask him/her to contact either Jim or Jane Herget at 1-800-753-9293, (216) 791-6000, or fax (216) 795-1522. You can visit the Harcourt Group site at www.harcourtgroup.com for more information on the Harcourt Group.

Professional Activities Report

by Irwin Weitman, P.E.

The changes of employment practices of our society are already being felt in our engineering community. A continually growing number of workers in this country are now employed in "temporary" positions. Some call this "Consulting" or several other descriptors, but they all boil down to this, "Get the most work for the least money", etc.

Some companies involved, make NO commitment to the worker regarding how long he will be employed and provide NO benefits. Some companies provide benefits but they are paid for by the worker. This behavior does NOT engender any degree of loyalty from the worker, nor does the employer expect any. This is an unhealthy condition for the company or the worker. Yet, we find that this pattern is growing and is already felt in the engineering community.

Most managers with engineering design, development or research backgrounds would surely agree that this practice inhibits the creativity of the practitioner from who management is expecting creativity. Unfortunately the "bottom line" thinkers that sit near the top of many of these companies pull the strings that force this practice in order to generate more immediate returns.

A clear indicator of how significantly these social changes are disrupting the employment scene is the fact that medical doctors are now considering unionizing to help solve their problem. If they do become unionized then the public will be faced with a quality problem.

Getting back to the problem of temporary help. Companies face a problem of very short cycle time for both development and other tasks related to bringing a product to market. Managers are caught between getting quick results and keeping costs to a minimum. They hesitate to hire full time employees because they don't know when the bubble that is pushing them is going to break. They bring in personnel that do not fit into the company culture and can see no future with the company. The company can not offer the worker anything that will engender loyalty to the company and it no longer expects loyalty. From a pragmatic point of view, the company has no choice but to hire a worker on a temporary basis. The worker is similarly forced to accept a temporary position because that is all that is offered.

This problem confronts all aspects of employment and professions. We are just seeing the tip of the iceberg. That is it!

I have not heard of any proposal for a solution to this problem and unfortunately I don't have any suggestion.

What we have here is society or cultural dilemma. As a very large group, we at IEEE have to face this reality and look for a solution to our problem while making this solution palatable to the companies. LET'S NOT WAIT FOR POLITICIANS AND TIME TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

Now is the time the working engineer must consider his or her own future and work with other engineers to help provide for their future. The IEEE is the vehicle for us to create a solution to this problem. Unfortunately, the IEEE has changed the thrust of the annual "National (PACE) Professional Activities Committee for Engineers Conference" has now been changed to the "Professional Development Conference". The conference program shows it to be directed primarily toward improved technical education and engineering management. Although this is important and desirable is not a substitute for Professional Development and does not alleviate the problem described above.

Although "Career Development" is an important issue, it is primarily a personal one. IEEE can and does locate and bring to our members material for engineers to use for their technical growth, IEEE should be PRO-ACTIVE in relation to the members professional development. The individual engineer in concert with his or her colleagues can contribute to IEEE Directors understanding of member professional needs. With this knowledge IEEE can use its "muscle" to help promote the long term career (professional) success of its' members.

The following article appeared in the June 28, 1999 issue of IEEE-USA Legislative Report. When someone asks what has IEEE done for us lately we can proudly say IEEE PAPERS AND REPORTS ARE READ BEFORE THE United States Senate as EXPERT opinion. This should serve as evidence that IEEE-USA does provide a very important service to our members. It lends credibility and a voice to IEEE and its members. This is the answer to those in some quarters of IEEE

that say we don't need IEEE-USA.

"SENATE PASSES Y2K BILL— SENATOR GORTON LAUDS IEEE INPUT

On June 15, the Senate passed by a vote of 62 to 37 the Y2K Dispute Resolution bill(H.R. 775), legislation which provides a 90-day notice requirement to allow repairs before a plaintiff can bring a Y2K-related suit, and which sets monetary limits on punitive damages. The bill also imposes proportionate liability and restricts claims for economic damages in Y2K-related tort and noncontract actions, and suspends federal penalties for Year 2000 failures by small business contractors. In passing the bill, the Senate majority rejected two Democratic proposals that would have added consumer protections to the bill. The Senate will now confere with the House on their version of H.R. 775 before adopting a final measure to present to the president for signature. The bill faces strong opposition from consumer protection groups and trial lawyers. President Clinton will use the veto threat during conference negotiations in an attempt to force inclusion of consumer protections in the final bill.

On June 18, Sen. Slate Gorton, R-Wash, lauded a recent letter by IEEE's Y2K Technical Information Focus Group, which he read into the Congressional Record (pages S7279-S7281) during morning business. A transcription follows:

Technical Realities of the Y2K Act

Mr. GORTON: Mr. President, earlier this week the Senate passed a bill that tries to bring some reason to the legal chaos that could result from Y2K failures and Wednesday evening the Senate appointed conferees to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate bills. I rise today to commend the Senate for doing this, and to read from an excellent memorandum underscoring the need for a quick resolution and final passage of a conference report.

A memorandum prepared by the Year 2000 Technical Information Focus Group of the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the "I triple E," provides the best analyses and explanations I have seen of the complexity of Y2K litigation; of why the argument we heard during floor debate that the bill is designed to protect "bad actors" and that it fails to provide sufficient incentives for remediation is generally hollow; and of

why it is so important that we do what we can to minimize the economically paralyzing effects of a predictable and utterly overwhelming legal snarl. The memorandum, sent to various members of Congress, is particularly compelling because its authors do not represent businesses that may be sued, but are members of an international non-profit association of engineers and computer scientists.

The memorandum is so good that, rather than simply have it printed in the Record, I will read it.

(See full text of letter at <http://www.ieeeusa.org/forum/policy/99june09.html>)

Mr. President, the bill we passed earlier this week is modest. It may very well not meet all the concerns expressed by the IEEE. The legislation may, however, at least reduce these threats. As a consequence, we must enact meaningful legislation."

A second article in the same issue shows the interest IEEE-USA takes in protecting our (yours and mine) interests.

"GRAMM ANNOUNCES BILL TO INCREASE VISA LIMITS FOR HIGHTECH GUEST WORKERS

In the June 1 comments to Dallas business leaders, Senator Phil Gramm announced plans to introduce the "New Workers for Economic Growth Act," which would increase the number of foreign engineers, computer scientists and other highly skilled workers who can be admitted to work temporarily (for up to six years) on H-1B visas from the current 115,000 a year to 200,000 a year. Gramm's new bill would also eliminate the Social Security earnings test that currently limits how much retirees can earn before being penalized by the IRS."

This single bill has (at least) two issues, one from which I would personally benefit and a second that would harm engineers and to a lesser extent companies in the long run.

IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE HOW LEGISLATIVE BILLS ARE PRESENTED SO THAT POLITICS (NOT COMMON SENSE) DETERMINES OUR LAWS.

YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT GETTING IEEE TO DO THINGS THAT YOU WANT DONE FOR YOU. Ask me! Get on the IEEE web site, learn about the issues and write to your representatives in congress.

My e-mail address is: i.weitman@ieee.org

IEEE-USA WANTS YOU To Apply for an FCC Fellowship

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15, 1999 -- IEEE-USA is seeking an IEEE U.S. member interested in spending a year as an Executive Fellow at the Federal Communications Commission beginning in June 2000 through May 2001. The Fellow would be assigned to the FCC's office of Engineering and Technology to support a number of important projects involving new, advanced, and alternative telecommunications technologies, particularly in the wireless and network areas.

Selection criteria include U.S. citizenship, Member grade or higher, and a strong technical knowledge in the relevant areas. But to avoid a conflict of interest, Fellowship candidates may not presently be employed by, or have a significant interest in, companies that are regulated by the FCC. The Fellowship provides a stipend of \$50,000. Deadline for receipt of applications is Dec. 3, 1999.

Contact: Chris Brantley, IEEE-USA
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1999 EAB Award Winners Announced

The IEEE EAB has selected the following recipients for the 1999 EAB Awards:

EAB Meritorious Achievement Award in Accreditation Activities

- Theodore A. Bickart, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO - "for exemplary and imaginative leadership in the accreditation process"
- Richard A. Painter, Painter Engineering, Colorado Springs, CO - "for sustained and creative leadership in the accreditation of engineering technology programs"

EAB Meritorious Achievement Award in Continuing Education

- Mohamed E. El-Hawary, Dal Tech, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada - "for exemplary and sustained contributions to continuing education in power engineering worldwide"

Major Educational Innovation Award

- Donna J. Brown, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign - "for the development of Mallard, an innovative, multi-functional, discipline-independent management system for web-based education"

Meritorious Service Citation

- David G. Green, University of Alabama at Birmingham - "for outstanding and sustained service to the aims and objectives of the EAB"
- Forrest L. Staffanson, Ogden Engineering, Ogden, UT - "for outstanding and sustained service to the aims and objectives of the EAB"

Employer Professional Development

- Samsung Electronics Company, Ltd., Seoul, Korea - "for outstanding contributions to employee continuing education and professional development"

Awards will be presented at various IEEE events during the Fall of this year. Watch The Institute for details on the 2000 EAB Awards nomination-process. For more information on EAB awards, contact Rae Toscano at r.toscano@ieee.org or visit www.ieee.org/eab. Congratulations to this year's winners.

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is now live on the internet

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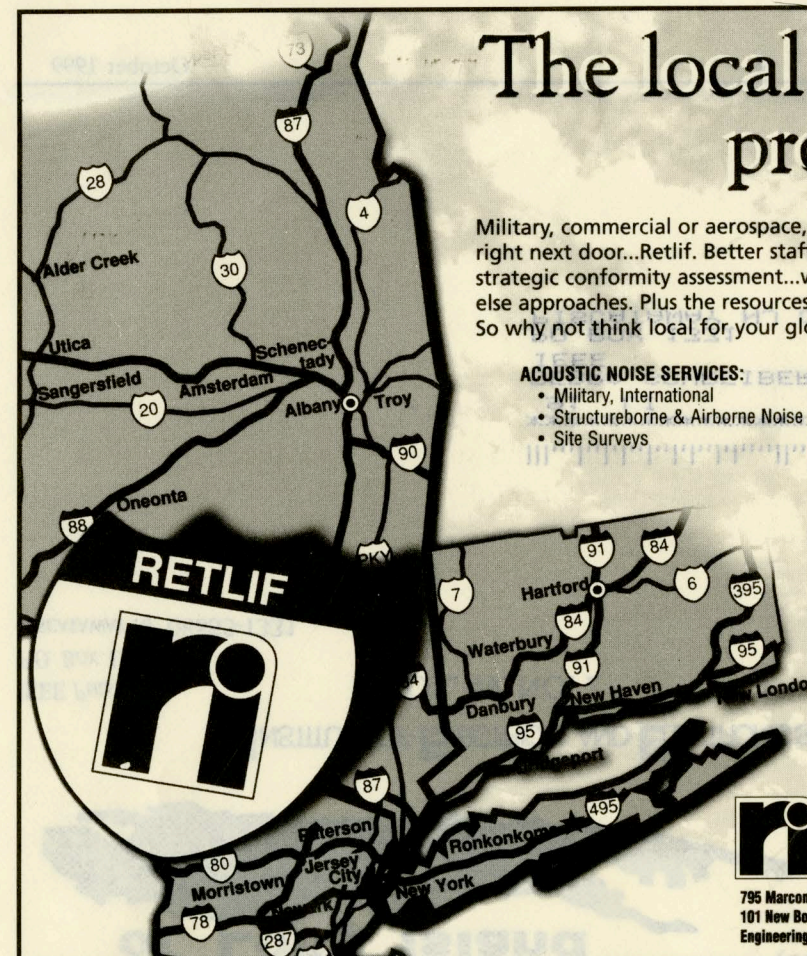
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30 YEARS AGO

by Rod Lowman, Historian

In October of 1979, William Mason Associate Director of the Transportation Systems department at the Mitre Corporation in McLean, Va, described for us some of the work the Federal Government is supporting towards the development of a wide variety of new transportation systems and the technology critical to the development of such systems.

One major activity he described was the Northeast Corridor Transportation Project which included the development of the test vehicle with the world's first linear induction motor. His presentation also gave a status report of developments in high speed transportation systems, including tracked air cushion vehicles, linear motor drives, hybrid electric cars, steam and turbine powered buses, and dial-a-bus systems.

He also described a small three passenger electric "MINICAR" for use in an unique fleet-rental experiment planned for Philadelphia. The car was to

be used for commuting on a monthly rental basis and would be available for drive-it-yourself taxi use during the day on a trip mileage basis.

Mr. Mason also covered current work on automated highways, automatic radar guidance for automobiles, and key dynamic systems modeling and simulation developments sponsored by the government.

The title of this fascinating presentation was *High Speed and Advanced Urban Transportation -- Fact or Fiction*. I don't remember that he gave predicted dates and schedules but after 30 years I leave it to you whether it was really fact or fiction. Even at the time I think that many of us, knowing that the government was involved were somewhat skeptical of its being fact. When government regulations and large investments in rail systems are involved, it takes a little longer so I think the LIRR and the LI Expressway will be with us for a while yet. However, don't give up. Some of this may still come to pass!

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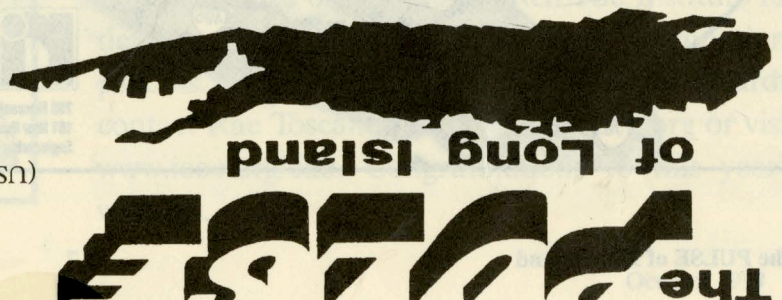
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