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Theme: Managing Change in the 1990's

ACUTA Conference a Success in Philly!

We've never seen anything like the change telecommunications is going through...the '90s will be an exciting decade, and we need to manage the changes."

This comment from keynote speaker Robert Stoffels summarizes the 18th annual ACUTA conference held in Philadelphia in July. More than 600 telecommunications professionals gathered to attend over 50 informative sessions, user groups, and region meetings. Sixty vendor booths boasted an array of mind-boggling technological advances, from video/satellite equipment to a car fax! A free message center allowed attendees to stay in touch with home base, and work was accompanied by play — including a block party at the Franklin Institute and a banquet/dance with the Larry Elgart Orchestra. Also featured were delicious meals and good conversation. Come with us now and enjoy the day-by-day activities of ACUTA Conference '89.

FRIDAY, JULY 21

The conference is two days away, but the Board of Directors and ACUTA staff members have already arrived at the Adam's Mark Hotel. The Finance Committee meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. and continues through lunch, finally breaking up at 4:30 p.m. The ACUTA staff members are busy, too: Director Del Combs finalizes conference arrangements, Staff & Events Coordinator Kellie Preston prepares for vendor registration, Staff Assistant Lisa McLemore works on attendee registration, and Publications Editor Nanci Unger catalogs the contents of more than 50 boxes of conference materials.

SATURDAY, JULY 22

A long day for the ACUTA Board of Directors — they meet from 8 a.m. to nearly 5 p.m., with lunch brought into the boardroom. Meanwhile, Lisa and Kellie train workers from the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau. Throughout the day the Exhibit Hall and Delaware Room are filled with busy vendors constructing their booths. By evening, Lisa and Nanci have assembled the conference portfolios; they needily note that 26 inserts have been placed in more than 500 portfolios, bringing the number of portfolio items to over 13,000!

SUNDAY, JULY 23

Conference Day One has arrived! Attendees and vendors begin registering, and Membership Chair Pat Paul coordinates the traditional "First Timers Contest" and User Group sign-ups. Soon the Ballroom Foyer is bustling with people carrying bulging portfolios, renewing old friendships and meeting new ACUTA members. First time attendees receive an early evening welcome at a special reception, and everyone celebrates later at another reception in the Exhibit Hall. The vendor booths are the most interest-
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PRESIDENT: Michael Grunder, Yale University
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT: Bill Orrick, Washington University in St. Louis
VICE PRESIDENT: Paula Loendorf, University of North Dakota
SECRETARY: Patricia Paul, Cornell University
TREASURER: Coleman Burton, University of Missouri
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Bonnie Johnson, University of Kentucky
PROGRAM CHAIR: Malcolm Reader, University of Calgary

REGION DIRECTORS: Region 1 - To be announced; Region 2 - Don Hoover, Villanova University; Region 3 - James Dransfield, Duke University; Region 4 - Kenneth Leverington, University of Arkansas; Region 5 - Dino Pizzutti, Ohio State University; Region 6 - Garry Tatsum, University of Guelph; Region 7 - Howard Lowell, Colorado State University; Region 8 - Donna Powell, California State University.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR: Del Combs • PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Nanci Unger
STAFF & EVENTS COORDINATOR: Kellie Preston • STAFF ASSISTANT: Lisa McLemore

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"Planning requires the entire institution, not just our individual units. Make sure the technology you’re choosing goes along with your institution’s programs.” — Dr. Ginny Pearson Elliott, University of Missouri-Rolla (shown at left) in her conference presentation on Distance Learning

Region 7 Director Howard Lowell is greeted by Doug Dickerson, Chip Chapman, and Jack Chapman of the Fishel Company. Howard’s wife Marlene joins in the Exhibit Hall fun.

“The colleges and universities are our primary target market for communications construction. We design, build, and maintain voice and data systems, and ACUTA gives us direct access to the decision makers of our target market.” — Jack Chapman, Marketing Manager for the Fishel Company

was moved and passed that the Board look seriously at a number of issues related to the election of Regional Directors and their tenure. It was felt by some that Regional Directors should be elected and their tenure be more specifically defined in the bylaws. (Regional Directors currently are appointed by the President and serve one-year, renewable terms.)

Incoming President Mike Grunder commented that the Board had discussed the topic of electing Regional Directors on a number of occasions. The conclusions drawn from those discussions were to leave the selection process as previously defined, based on the varying and usually modest degree of member enthusiasm for the past throughout the regions and the difficult logistics for holding such elections.

In a post-meeting conversation, Mike Grunder stated that the Constitution and Bylaws Committee would begin work as soon as possible on these and other related issues so that action could be taken by the membership at the next meeting.

He went on to say that the work of the Committee will be reported regularly in the ACUTA News, and he asked that any comments or suggestions on that work be directed to him or Committee Chair Bill Morris.

One additional item of business was discussed related to the topic of ACUTA’s various educational programs and Regional Meetings. Members from Region Two expressed a strong desire to hold such meetings this year and were of the impression that they would not be doing so.

It was explained that Regional Meetings are very desirable events and that none scheduled had been cancelled. However, due to complex scheduling logistics, varying degrees of member enthusiasm, ACUTA’s other educational offerings and current financial considerations, Regional Meetings will not, in a general sense, be a high priority item this year. Region Two has a Regional Meeting scheduled for the Spring, and Regional Director Don Hoover will be planning and coordinating that event with the Lexington Office.
PHILADELPHIA BOARD MEETING

The summer meeting of the ACUTA Board of Directors was held on July 22nd, prior to the Philadelphia conference. President Bill Morris and incoming President Mike Grunder both stressed the fact that ACUTA has been going through, and continues to go through, a significant transition period. ACUTA is no longer a purely volunteer-run organization. Rather, our professional staff significantly changes (and improves) the way we function, both on an individual level and as a group.

New procedures and amended policies are required to insure a smooth-running organization. Additionally, a professional staff means new and significant budget challenges to be dealt with by the Association. Bill Morris stated that the transition to date has been extremely well handled and if current efforts continue he sees no reason for concern.

Mike Grunder agreed and went on to stress that a centralized, professionally-run headquarters office is a logical outgrowth for ACUTA, based on the pattern of its development over the years. With growth in members and services, our activities require the support and coordination of a centralized office. In order to remain financially healthy and continue to stimulate growth, however, we need exceptionally good coordination throughout the various regions. Therefore, increased emphasis will be placed on the role of Regional Directors. Mike went on to summarize the expanded goals and responsibilities of the Regional Directors as well as his presidential goals. He will describe these further to the membership in future issues of the ACUTA News.

It was the consensus of the Board that an increase in the number of ACUTA members and expansion of member services will be a key priority over the next few years. Over 3,500 colleges and universities are eligible for membership with about 600 of those currently members. The majority of our member institutions are level 1 and 2 schools; therefore we must appeal to the smaller institutions. These schools cannot always afford to travel great distances to meetings, and ACUTA hopes to appeal to them with increased published materials and expanded opportunities to network with other telecommunications professionals at a more localized level.

Because of the necessary emphasis on budget challenges, two major decisions were made which affect ACUTA members and finances. Throughout the past few years, the Board has seen and discussed indications that our dues are quite low in relation to similar organizations. After extensive discussion, the Board approved increasing the annual dues for industry members from $150 to $200. The increase will go into effect in January 1990.

Based upon a Finance Committee recommendation, the Board also approved increasing the fees for our "Understanding Telecommunications" workshop. For the past two years, ACUTA annually subsidized approximately $25,000 of the cost of these workshops. Discussion centered around the high quality of this workshop and the cost benefits of attending it compared to similar workshops presented throughout the country. Based on that, the fee for the 2 1/2 day workshops was increased to $150 for college and university members and $250 for college and university non-members. Industry member fees will be $200 while industry non-member fees will be $400. The non-member industry fee will include dues for that individual only.

Membership Chair Pat Paul and Treasurer Coley Burton indicated that membership renewals are tracking well to date. New memberships approved since January total 111. One more reminder is due out to members who haven't renewed in early August.

Acting Finance Chair Bill Orlick submitted the proposed operating budget for FY 1989-90. The budget was approved unanimously by the Board after extensive discussion. Bill and Coley also reported on the status of the current budget and the Board discussed the financial statement to be handed out to the membership at the annual meeting. A copy of next year's annual budget and income estimates is included separately in this newsletter to all college and university members.

The Board went on to approve the scheduling of our "Understanding Telecommunications" workshops for one year at a time and publicizing them accordingly on a master calendar. This will allow schools to plan which dates and location will best suit them.

An ad hoc committee studying the annual conference start day and length recommended that ACUTA consider offering an "Early Bird Special" session on Sunday afternoon at a nominal fee. Because of less expensive airfares available for staying over a Saturday, many similar associations offer a program on Sunday. In further discussion, it was learned that several members have requested more user group meetings covering specific applications such as voice processing, automated registration and management systems. It appears that it might be feasible to offer all user group meetings on Sunday. The Program Committee will study these issues and make a recommendation on this at the next Board meeting in January.

Program Chair Mal Reader reported that based on member input he is striving toward a goal of having 25 to 30 percent of future ACUTA speakers be college and university members. More panel discussions and case studies have been presented this year than ever before and more are planned for seminars in Toronto, Scottsdale, Orlando and Portland.

Any member wishing to receive a complete copy of the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting should contact Lisa McLemore at the Lexington office.
As I mentioned at the Philadelphia Conference, it's a real privilege for me to have the opportunity to serve ACUTA as its 18th President. I've been associated with ACUTA for almost 15 years in one capacity or another and I've seen it grow from a relatively small, volunteer-run organization to its current size with professional staff and an impressive positive impact on the telecommunications industry.

Of course many, many good people deserve the credit for our success. As true as that is, I would be remiss if I failed to point out that this past year has been a critical one for ACUTA. The development of our National Office and its staff was a very difficult and complex transition. The fact that it was accomplished so smoothly and quietly (if you will) is a real tribute to two people.

First, President Bill Morris deserves the association's undying gratitude for guiding us so steadily through the transition process. There were a million large and small decisions that had to be made. Some of them were very difficult decisions. All of them were very important and all of them took serious thought and wise consideration. Being President of ACUTA is time consuming and takes tremendous energy in the best of times. Add to it the pressures of this transition and you have a real labor of love on Bill's part.

Going hand in hand with Bill's steady counsel and guidance was the tireless hard work of our Administrative Director, Del Combs. Prior to becoming Administrative Director, Del was instrumental in setting up ACUTA's hugely successful vendor exhibit and sponsorship programs. Del has carried that program forward along with the multitude of other responsibilities associated with setting up and running our National Office. Site selection, negotiating contracts with hotels, selecting menus for events, finalizing program materials, editing and printing brochures, supervising staff, interacting with the Board; the list goes on and on.

The transition isn't quite complete yet and next issue I'll use this space to tell you a bit about where I hope to lead our association in the coming months. For this month, however, my hat is off to these two fine, hardworking gentlemen.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mike Grunder, Yale University

Incorporation and Bylaws Committee Update

Bill Orrick, University of Washington in St. Louis

The committee, under the direction of Bill Morris, the committee's chair, is gearing up to begin the process of looking at revisions, updates, and corrections to our current bylaws. Items that will be considered are:

1) Clearer definition of the role of Regional Directors.
2) Possibility of election of Regional Directors and Chairs (when Chaired by member-at-large)
3) Method of removal from office of any elected Officer or Director.
4) Update the list of members of the standing committees.
5) Update responsibilities of Officers.
6) Inclusion of a statement of the role and responsibilities of the ACUTA Headquarters and staff.
7) Tenure of all elected officials.
8) Review and clean-up of all sections to assure no contradictory statements to the Articles of Incorporation or other sections within the Bylaws.

If there are other areas of concern that the membership wishes the committee to review, please contact one of the members of the committee. They are: Bill Morris, Acting Chair (out until November 1989, but in contact); Bill Orrick, Acting Chair (until November 1989); Paula Loendorf; and Pat Paul.
First Timers Contest
Pat Paul, Cornell University

For the past three years we have held a First Timers Contest at the annual summer conference. Attendees who have never attended an ACUTA summer conference are eligible to participate. First timers earn points by obtaining signatures from certain ACUTA members and answering several trivia-type questions about ACUTA. The contest helps newcomers get acclimated and gives them an “excuse” to approach and meet other attendees. In the process they also learn about ACUTA and the services we offer.

The contest has always been a success and well-received by ACUTA first timers. This year we did something a little different with the prizes. In the two previous years, we awarded prizes only to the top two or three scorers. This year, however, we distributed consolation prizes to anyone who scored at least 50 points, and we had the largest participation ever.

Approximately 60 first timers came to the Philadelphia conference; 27 of them participated in the First Timers Contest and earned enough points for a consolation prize. Total available points were 625 with a tie-breaker question to settle the real “winner.” This year’s winners were:

1st Place - Mary Hughes, Penn State University
2nd Place - Kim Shackelford, Central Missouri State University
3rd Place - Karen Kimberling, Penn State University

Mary, Kim and Karen all had perfect scores, and most others scored over 500 points. Consolation prizes were given to 24 first timers: bright blue T-shirts with neon green ink emblazoned with the ACUTA logo and “My First Time Was Great!”

All participants seemed to enjoy the contest and agreed that it helped break the ice, enabling them to meet a lot of people and learn a lot about ACUTA. Congratulations to our first timers, and thanks to all who helped them with the correct answers.

IN THE EXHIBIT HALL AT PHILADELPHIA - Whitney Johnson, Director of Data and Telephone Systems for Northern Michigan University, and Diane Brown of US Sprint experiment with new technology.

USER GROUPS
Pat Paul, Cornell University
User Group Coordinator

This year’s user groups at the Philadelphia conference were the best yet. I will be collecting meeting minutes from the eight ACUTA members who moderated each session and will publish that information in the coming months. I would like to thank those eight people for their cooperation and assistance:

Centrex - Jim Shea, Boston University
AT&T - John Kingland, Iowa State University
Ericsson - Linda Bogden-Stubbs, SUNY Health Science Center
GTE - Tom Newell, University of North Texas
InteCom - Ralph Berg, Northern Arizona University
NEC - Tom Bonadeo, James Madison University
Northern Telecom - Frank Ferrara, Princeton University
ROLM - Ferrell Mallory, Brigham Young University

I would also like to thank the many manufacturers’ representatives who assisted our moderators and stood on the firing line for two hours.

The purpose of the ACUTA user groups is to allow ACUTA members who own/operate PBX products from the aforementioned manufacturers to spend some time together discussing issues of importance and exchanging experiences. Most of the manufacturers already have formal user groups; some have several unique ones for each product. The purpose of the ACUTA user groups is not to circumvent the existing groups, but rather to supplement those efforts and bring forth issues unique to the college/university market.

If you are a member of a PBX user group, I would appreciate any information you can offer on upcoming meetings/events, minutes/observations from user group meetings you attend or any other information that might be of value to other ACUTA members. This User Group column is a regular feature of this newsletter. Feel free to send any user group information to me or directly to the ACUTA office. I’ll accept anything legible by fax or will be glad to take information over the phone and write it up for you. My fax number is (607) 255-8761 and my telephone number is (607) 255-5525.

Remember, we need your input.
Party Line

Ruth Michalecki,
University of Nebraska

Have you ever wondered what happened to the “good-old-days” of summer at universities? I can vaguely remember when we had some breathing time following the last days of school in May until fall semester activity hit full speed. Now, or so it seems, we are busier during the summer months than at any other time of the year.

At any rate, summer is almost over and we still have at least a month’s work left before the faculty and students arrive. Help!

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ISDN and SS7 were featured in a recent edition of The Kiplinger Washington Letter even though they didn’t exactly identify the technology. The article talked about all the new and exciting things we will be able to do with our telephones in the near future, including getting involved in some hot controversy over matters of privacy. They predict Congress will get into the privacy issue this year, but will take no immediate action. Services that will be offered first include:

- Call Avoidance. You will be able to duck calls you don’t want by drawing up a list of numbers you don’t want to hear from. When any of these numbers call you, your phone won’t even ring. Wonder what the caller will hear? It promises to change the way that many firms do business and will change the way we manage our time at home — just think, no more calls selling magazine subscriptions. Not sure I could handle that.

However, there will be a price to pay for all this new technology, and a timing variance for implementation, depending on where you live. New Jersey will be the first place to have these new features, parts of the state are already equipped...and 90 percent will be within the next year. Next, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, with test trials scheduled for New York and New England. Miami and Atlanta will provide most of the new services by early fall, the rest of the south by 1993, and the midwest in about four years. Some of the major cities in the western states will be equipped earlier. A national network of these special services will be available by the early ‘90s. Until the network ties together the regional telcos with the long distance carriers, the new service offerings will have a limited use.

It doesn’t promise to come cheap! Best guess is that calling identification will cost from $6.50 to $9 per month. You will have to buy a special box to display the numbers of the callers. Some of the telecos are marketing in New Jersey for about $80. True ISDN capabilities on ISDN sets should solve the display issue.

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Household members will have their own numbers and there will be a distinctive ring for each member of the family.

- Call Tracing. Get an obscene call, press a code and the caller’s number will be captured at the teleco’s central office.

- Automatic Call Return. If you just missed a call because it stopped ringing before you could get to it, you can order your phone to call the party that just dialed you, whoever that may be.

- Selective Call Forwarding and Selective Call Waiting. Now you can select which calls you want to be forwarded and the ones you want to know are trying to get in touch with you.

- Caller’s Ring. You can assign a distinctive ring to regular callers and then decide whether to answer the phone if you are in the shower or otherwise engaged. In fact, industry that produced a half-billion in revenues last year.

Originally started to handle the pay phone business, especially the 75 percent that pay phone owners did not receive commission on, it soon moved to include hotels, hospitals, and dorms. Service stations, convenience stores, and restaurants are heavy users of AOS services. It is attractive to the phone owner because they can tack on a surcharge that can provide a healthy revenue stream.

Forbes Magazine quoted a few prices for calls. A five-minute call from New York City to St. Louis, MO, using 111 costs $5.25. The same call using AT&T costs $2.01. A five-minute call to Dallas on a Saturday afternoon is quoted by 111 at $5.25. AT&T’s price for the same call was quoted at $1.45.

However, the interesting question from Forbes is why, since they are the market leader and have enjoyed healthy revenues, are the insiders at 111 unloading their registered 144 stock as fast, it would seem, as the law allows. According to Forbes, 111’s founder Ray Millar and a charitable trust he controls have sold 472,180 shares in the last year and filed to sell another 88,613 shares last month. Another director unloaded 328,888 shares; a vice president sold 211,666 shares while another executive vice president parted with 66,732 shares.

In the June 1989 issue of Networking Management, Senior Editor Dave Powell has an article called “Avoiding the AOS Trap.” He makes three simple points to remember when dealing with an AOS provider:

- AOS companies are neither all good or all bad.

- What you get out of a relationship with an AOS (or, for that matter, any supplier) depends on what you ask for, negotiate, and get in writing.

- When you decide to collect commissions on your telephone users’ calls, don’t be too greedy.
I read where Loyola University of Chicago selected AT&T for their new voice/data network linking their three Chicago-area campuses. It is scheduled to be completed in early 1990 and will feature the AT&T Definity. The installation calls for three Definity 75/85 systems and one System 85 and will serve a total of 7,000 lines. The 85 will be used for the residence halls on the Lake Shore campus.

As part of the new project, all three campuses and residence halls will be completely rewired with optical fiber and twisted pair copper cable to connect the system and accommodate voice/data permitting faculty and staff to plug in a phone, terminal, or both at any location. In addition, the wiring plan will support products from other vendors, leaving the door open to new technology in the future, regardless of who the vendor happens to be.

Loyola is excited about the ISDN capabilities that will enable them to transmit images like X-rays more effectively than the present telephone network.

Loyola University is an independent Jesuit, coeducational institution of higher learning and health care founded in 1870. Their medical center is a regional and national resource with leading programs in heart transplantation, neonatal care, oncology research, and trauma and burn facilities. I visited with Ray Paulis, the telecommunication manager at Loyola's Medical Center, in Palm Springs and in Philadelphia. He reported the installation was moving along very well and he promised to keep us posted.

* * * *

Certain people are easy to remember — one that fits this category is no longer with us. Gene Locke was the Director of the Office of Telecommunications at Columbia University from 1979 until he passed away May 4, 1989. He had been a member of ACUTA since 1979 and was a regular participant in the annual conference until his health prevented him from going.

Gene battled cancer during the last four years of his life, but he was determined his health problems wouldn't keep him from contributing his all to the telecommunications project at Columbia. He simply wouldn't quit!

My last visit with Gene was at the Norfolk Conference. He was still the same "salty old dog" with his special wit and humor. I shall miss him and I am sure his many, many friends in ACUTA will miss him. As I said, some people are awfully easy to remember and very hard to forget.

See you next month.

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That's right, no more long distance calls until August unless...

Reaching Students via "Tilly Fone"

If your's having problems getting students to pay attention to your telecommunications news, take a tip from Paula Loendorf, Director of Communication Services at the University of North Dakota. Paula knew students weren't taking note when communications news came their way. As she and her staff brainstormed, Paula had an idea: "I think we should do something that the kids would like...let's think of a cartoon character."

Enter "Tilly Fone," a whimsical yet no-nonsense figure that epitomizes the caring, nagging mother whose "tough love" keeps us in line. Tilly's major role is in providing updates on the Student Long Distance Sharing System. She made her debut in mid-1988 on an insert with student late payment reminders, noting that a fee would be charged if the code was disconnected. Where other means had been ineffective, Tilly was a success — Paula's department got a greater, quicker student response than usual.

Recent inserts have Tilly providing student reminders ("Tilly Here...Remember to pick up your long distance authorization code") and cost-saving tips ("ATTENTION Students living in residence halls. Here is how you can get long distance for less!")

Paula is quick to share credit for Tilly's success, noting that "the whole staff collaborated." How did they come up with such a comic, yet assertive, character? "Synergy, maybe," Paula laughs. "The staff has a lot of fun with Tilly. Everyone gets involved in what message Tilly will give each month."

Tilly Fone's future is bright. Paula and her staff plan to make Tilly an integral part of their communication with students, including her in housing packets, on posted flyers, and in the campus newspaper. Tilly has been so effective, in fact, that she may be used to convey telecommunications news to faculty and staff as well.

Editor's Note: Paula Loendorf is the newly-elected Vice President of ACUTA.