

## **BREAK –OUT TOPIC**

### **ComSoc- Industry Relations: Volunteers, Cooperation, Funds, etc.**

**Coordinator: Peter Hill**

## **ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS**

- **Career CV value**  
The voluntary work should provide some gain in career terms to IEEE participants; this added value could be either direct or indirect – promotion opportunities might be a key issue here.
- **Professionalism & peer support forum**  
The activities must be seen to be entirely professional by peer groups and the work involved should not emasculate career patterns in any way.
- **Support from employer**  
Voluntary work will inevitably take up some of the available professional time and employers should be encouraged to support this by understanding that there will be a bonus for both sides.
- **International dimension – networking**  
The IEEE ComSoc networking opportunities are wide on an international scale and consequently extremely technically valuable and beyond.
- **Business opportunities**  
Those active members in commerce and industry will find valuable business links in the network; university volunteers can also obtain useful contacts vis a vis various academic opportunities.
- **CPD aspects**  
Continuous Professional Development is an important factor which will be automatically enhanced through active chapter work and at the higher ComSoc activity levels.
- **Industrial “gossip”**  
Meetings can quite informally produce valuable cross-information between industrialists who would otherwise be seen to be directly competitive. This is the nice side to industrial espionage!
- **Stimulate IPR creation**  
The networking opportunities created will in most cases inevitably produce new ideas and intellectual property; this applies particularly to conference and meeting activities.

## COOPERATION

- **Pre-competitive stage networking & ‘gossip’**

As with voluntary work above, cooperation at any level is bound to produce significant mutual gain to the parties involved with drafting contract bids etc; this applies equally to industry, commerce, defence and academe.

- **Non-prejudicial membership – STANDARDS**

Discussions at the ‘gloves-off’ level should produce technically fairer and less biased standards evolution, so that the polarization of the final technical standard does not go to the ‘big boys’ only.

- **Direct talks to industry – technical & beyond**

Take any opportunities to deliver talks to industry on site where practicable; this will inevitably sell the IEEE and ComSoc dimensions to a captive audience. By the same token, industry should be encouraged to give invited talks to chapters and also join the committee if possible.

- **Joint events – inter-Chapter & industrial seminars**

The holistic factor gain of running joint events is most important; this applies to joint chapter events, such as linking signal processing, control etc, and also industrially based meetings where possible. These activities will in general enhance membership.

- **Globalize beyond English speaking communities**

The majority of events at chapter level and beyond are directed towards US/UK/English speaking communities. This is somewhat limiting and will inevitably detract from increasing our membership on a world scale and also limit the ComSoc volunteer base in particular.

## INDUSTRY – FUNDING

- **Major players- relevant activities**

Activities should be relevant to all parties, and in particular be specifically directed towards the needs of industry if we aim to get sensible cooperation and possibly funding also from the industrial sector. In this respect, the major players should be identified and technically courted; networking at all levels is paramount here – take any sensible opportunities which emerge from professional work.

- **Training funds- conferences**

There is concern that industry supports staff at the training level by placing them on very expensive short courses. This money would be much better spent by registering the same staff at major conferences which have tutorial days in addition to the usual technical sessions; the problem of course is how to get this message across with reference to CPD.

- **Reduced fees & subs at conferences**

It should be seriously considered to initiate a reduced conference fee policy where relatively large numbers of potential attendees are likely to be involved – very much on the same lines as supermarkets sell chosen goods on a ‘buy 2 get 1 free’ basis to attract sales! The same idea could perhaps be considered where industry is considering IEEE ComSoc membership for a significant group of staff – for example, UKRI chapter had almost 600 Marconi engineers on the books at one time.

- **Contact top of ‘value chain’**

In industrial networking, it is important to understand that the key people to contact are in general very close to the top of the tree in terms of management and finance. Such contacts are much more valuable than pure technical managers as they are at the top of the ‘value chain’ and could therefore make vital and immediate decisions on our behalf.

- **Exhibition possibilities**

This is currently done at conferences and the like so no further comment here.

- **Detect Chapter opportunities**

Be proactive in taking up just any opportunities which will enhance chapter operations.

- **Recognition of industry leaders – plaques & awards**

It is important to recognize industry achievement and make appropriate ComSoc awards; these may be no more than a suitable plaque which is cheap but has enormous potential value when sitting on an MD/VP’s desk!