CIPScene

Automating Business Processes -
Improved Risk Assessments

CIPS **FEBRUARY** LUNCH MEETING

"Knowledge Sharing and Networking"

Speaker
Bryan Schultz

Date
*Tuesday,
February 5, 2002*

Time
11:30 am
Registration

12:00 noon
Presentation

Place
*Calgary Chamber of
Commerce
4 Floor, 517 Centre
Street S*

In the world of information technology, projects involving the automation of business processes continue to face a variety of risks that threaten the success of such initiatives. Risk is not always easy to accurately identify, quantify, or mitigate, especially in regard to business processes. Understanding clients' needs, translating these into technical requirements and creating systems that meet expectations can be difficult tasks. In our current, challenging economic times, there is an overwhelming need to spend IT investment dollars wisely and to ensure that the automation of processes are completed effectively and efficiently. These objectives drive home the need for a better way to assess risks relating to business process projects.

At the CIPS February luncheon, guest speaker, Bryan Schultz, will explore how to perform a risk assessment from a different perspective - software quality. Using this model, individuals will be able to determine the amount and type of testing, change control, documentation, and project control that is required in business process projects. Bryan's approach helps mitigate the commonly encountered factors that threaten the success of such projects. His methodology deals with the entire business process lifecycle from identifying business requirements to post-implementation. In this session, CIPS members and their guests will be provided with an overview of the risk assessment process, aspects affecting its use, and the benefits of this approach. If you wish to enhance the probability of success with your next IT business process project, you will be interested in Bryan's discussion.

Mr. Schultz has fourteen years of experience in computer system quality assurance, project management, and quality control. He is both an instructor and keynote speaker in Canada and the US on the subject of software testing and quality assurance. Bryan is a Certified Quality Analyst and a Certified Software Test Engineer. He is currently writing a book on the topic of risk management and will include excerpts from his work at the CIPS presentation.

Please register by noon on Friday, February 1, 2002 as seating is limited. Register online at https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/forms/cipsluncheon.html or phone CIPS at (403) 244-4487. Prepayment by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express will be accepted over the phone. No-shows will be billed if a reservation has not been cancelled two days in advance of the luncheon. Alternatively, you can send a replacement if you cannot attend. **Prepaid seats will be guaranteed until 12:00 noon, at which time they may be released for general admission.**

PRICES - Pre-registered
(Prices include GST)

*Members - **$30.50***
*Non-members - **$38.00***
*Students - **$21.50***

A two dollar surcharge will apply for all walk-ins.

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CIPS CALGARY PLATINUM SPONSORS

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ATTENTION!! Effective **March 1, 2002,** the CIPS Calgary office phone number will be changed to **(403) 244-4487.** Please amend your records accordingly.

IN THIS ISSUE

What Makes a Profession?

There are just over 600 IT practitioners in Alberta who hold I.S.P. certification. If you were to ask these members why they hold the designation, most would have very good reasons related to career advancement, commitment to the development of their profession, and a desire to express a personal commitment to ethical and competent practice.

Yet few of us have probably thought about the purpose, and the need, for professional certification. Why does the I.S.P. exist? Why does any profession exist? Why and how does a profession get to be broadly recognized as authoritative? Examining these issues helps us understand where the I.S.P. is today, and where it needs to go in the future.

To begin, let's look at the engineering profession. The origin of the engineering profession is (perhaps surprisingly, because of its simplicity) engines. The engineering profession emerged when a royal license for the construction and operation of steam engines was made mandatory after steam boiler failures had caused significant loss of life and property. Standards of construction and operation, and an apprenticeship program, were established by recognized practitioners in the field and enforced by rule of law in order to reduce these losses.

This example illustrates the primary principles under which all professions operate, those being fields of endeavour where:

- the layman cannot effectively evaluate the effectiveness of practice, and

- there is significant impact to the general public from incompetent practice.

Few of us can evaluate whether a medical doctor is practicing effectively, yet the impact of unprofessional practice on his or her patients can be fatal. So we are dependent upon the College of Physicians and Surgeons to monitor, and address, insufficient practice among medical practitioners.

It is impractical for investors to develop the skills necessary to determine whether the financial reports of the corporations in which they invest are complete and accurate. So we charge the accounting professional organizations with ensuring that accountants accurately report the financial results of publicly traded companies in such a way that they may be easily compared.

There are some secondary aspects to professions which are also important to recognize:

- Professions, to be effective, must necessarily operate at tension with the commercial interests of the field in which they practice. Minimal engineering standards drive up the costs at which facilities can be constructed and projects completed. Standard accounting principles may result in financial statements that reflect poorly on current corporate management. An effective profession ensures that there is a balance between the interests of the general public and the fiduciary interests of the entrepreneur.

- There is a high level exchange which occurs between the profession and the general public. In exchange for the financial rewards which result from controlling entry into, and practicing within, the field, the profession applies its collective expertise, and is collectively accountable, for ensuring that the regulated endeavour addresses the broad interests of the general public.

What does this mean for the I.S.P. designation? Given these examples, it becomes clear that our efforts as information systems practitioners are not sufficient to establish an authoritative professional designation. An authoritative professional organization arises only when the general public, and as a result government, identifies a need to administer a field of endeavour for the general public good.

Next month, we will examine some of the issues which may lead to the establishment of professional practice in the information systems field, and what CIPS members and the CIPS organization can do to ensure that the I.S.P. plays a definitive role in these developments.

As we all settle into our second month of 2002, I would like to remind everyone of the front and centre events for February and provide a sneak preview for March.

2001-2002 Membership Drive

We are in our fourth month of the membership drive, as it was launched at the November CIPS luncheon. The theme of the drive is **'Celebrating Professionalism Through Community'**. The CIPS community is a great forum for networking, education, and being informed of industry trends . As an association, we can support each other and strengthen the Calgary IT community as a whole. However, feedback has indicated that many in Calgary's IT industry are not aware of CIPS. Many of the uninformed may be your peers, friends, and employers.

We encourage you to share the benefits of being part of the CIPS community. As an added value, if a new member joins on your referral, both your names (new member and referrer) will be entered into a draw for a one-year CIPS membership renewal for 2002-2003. Remember to have your referee put your name on his/ her application as the referrer. You can contact the office for membership drive posters for your bulletin boards at work, or obtain them at the CIPS luncheons. Individual applications are also available if you want to specifically invite someone to investigate CIPS. In addition, corporate presentations can be scheduled by emailing calgarydata@cips.ca or by contacting the CIPS office.

Anniversary Celebrations

CIPS celebrates milestone anniversaries in five-year intervals. We missed celebrating the 1999 through 2001 anniversaries, so we are catching up by celebrating anniversaries for March 1999 to August 2002. We are going to include July and August as CIPS is off in the summer. As a result, there are 286 CIPS members with anniversaries.

Ten members are celebrating twenty years, 57 are celebrating fifteen years, 124 are celebrating ten years, and 82 celebrating five years. Although all milestones will be recognized and celebrated for this period (1999-2002), we have thirteen people who have **significant** milestone anniversaries. They are:

Dr. Ronald George (40 years in 2002)

Mr. Mark Bercov (35 years in 2000)

Mr. Ron Foyer (30 years in 2000)

Mr. Bruce Miller (30 years in 2000)

Mr. Reg Pankewitz (30 years in 2000)

Mr. W. Strauch (30 years in 2000)

Mr. Robert Morton (30 years in 2001)

Mr. Ross Goodwin (30 years in 2002)

Mr. Mike Carleton (30 years in 2002)

Mr. Tom Lineham (30 years in 2002)

Mr. Donald Morrison (25 years in 1999)

Mr. Wayne Krywolt (25 years in 2001)

Mr. John Domaschenko (25 years in 2001)

Also, we would like to make special mention of one twenty-year celebrant, **Dr. Tom Keenan**, who volunteered to be our CIPS spokesperson and public personality this year.

So, there is reason to celebrate – now, how *do* we celebrate? In the past, we have recognized the anniversaries with a pin presentation at a luncheon. Due to the number of honorees, we are doing things a little differently this year in order to maximize speaker time at luncheons.

All milestone members with less than 25 years will receive letters and pins in the mail in February. If you are eligible for a pin and do not receive it by early March, email calgarydata@cips.ca. Members who have reached their 25th or higher anniversaries will be

recognized at the February luncheon. Membership in an organization for 25 to 40 years is a significant milestone. If you know these members, give them a 'pat on the back' and be sure to be at the February luncheon to congratulate them. A name on a page is difficult to associate with a person so, in order to introduce you to these special members, we will also be paying tribute to them in the March CIPScene. Finally, we will be inviting all anniversary participants to the March Industry Focus Pub Night so you have an opportunity to express your personal congratulations without taking away time from the luncheons.

Presentation Makeover

In last month's issue, it was indicated that the membership committee is working on 'making-over' the CIPS presentation. Be sure to provide your comments on any aspect of CIPS. Look for the video person at the CIPS luncheons. Don't be surprised if someone appears at your CIPS events taking random photographs.

Industry Focus Pub Night

As many of you know, CIPS Social Director, Rob Koski, and his committee put on a pub night every month which is a great opportunity for networking. Be sure to look for details under the CIPS Events column.

The Industry Focus Pub Night takes somewhat more effort to put together and it is dependent on interest and volunteer resources from the membership. The first one was on November 22, 2001 and the response was fantastic, as there were about 150 or more attendees. That Industry Focus Pub Night was intended to be a one-time adventure to support those in the community with their job searches. However, since that pub night, members have been asking when the next one would be. The key to putting on another one was finding a topic that is both in demand and where there is expertise within the CIPS community. One CIPS member, Karen Hawke, suggested our next topic – security – and we would like to thank her for her contribution.

Thus, as a result of membership demand and introduction of a relevant topic, the social and membership directors are working together to put on another Industry Pub Night for March 28. We have the topic and the venue, so now we just need the content: experts in security. If you can be a resource for the Security

Focus Pub Night, please email calgarydata@cips.ca or contact the CIPS office. If you were not at our last pub night, being a resource means that your security expertise will be advertised on your lapel and, while you have a drink in hand, other members will talk with you about security in a one-on-one atmosphere.

In addition, new members will be invited to this pub night, so the membership committee can conduct brief individual orientations. As mentioned earlier, anniversary celebrants will also be invited, so their CIPS peers can personally congratulate them.

Be sure to watch the CIPS Events column for further details.

Other Membership Opportunities and News

'Women in Technology' month is celebrated in March, so look for events associated with this topic.

Another very important event in March is the **Student Job Fair.** Further details are available from Shilo

FOCUS ON MEMBERSHIP

Beechinor, Student Section Chair.

Starting this month, we are adding two segments to CIPScene for our membership:

1. **A CIPS Calgary Welcome:** New members will be recognized in CIPScene as they appear on the CIPS database. (See page 15.) Although the membership committee welcomes new members (with phone calls and orientations), it is important for you as members to make them feel 'at home' in CIPS. Be sure to give a hearty handshake to new members you recognize or meet at CIPS events.

2. **Ask the Board:** This column will highlight answers to questions that the Board committees field on a regular basis, as well as addressing new queries. Our community is only as good as the communication within the community. This means you need an opportunity to ask questions and to tell the CIPS Board what you want to get out of your membership. There are several venues for getting answers: contacting the office, emailing or phoning a Board member, or asking a peer. Unfortunately, many do not ask questions unless they happen to meet a Board member. CIPS is a member-based organization and you need to make sure you express what you want from your association. Those in office are volunteers who are there for you.

To increase the opportunity to ask questions and get answers:

- A suggestion box will be at the CIPS luncheons and pub nights. The Board welcomes any comments, suggestions, or questions.

- The new segment 'Ask the Board' will appear in each newsletter. Look for it on page 13 of this issue.

Have a great month and we'll see you at the CIPS events this month. ◖~

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Telecom Rates Decline, Along With Service Quality

Stuart Quinn, CIO Liaison

Since the mid-1990s, rates for voice and data telecommunications services have declined by an average of fifteen percent per year, with no end seemingly in sight.

While declining rates are obviously good news for customers, there's a downside: faced with shrinking margins, carriers have less incentive to bend over backwards to please their customers. As a result, a steady erosion of account support and service quality has accompanied falling prices.

Today, many customers continue to negotiate telecom service agreements based on cost. That is a mistake, says Compass executive consultant Nick Wray. "Low rates are a given, they've become a commodity," he says. "Customers should therefore focus on service quality, and negotiate contracts with incentives and penalties around measures such as availability, commissioning of new services, billing accuracy and support, and general account support." ◖~

The PMBOK® Guide 2000:
An International Standard

CIPS **FEBRUARY** SEMINAR
"Knowledge Sharing and Networking"

Speaker
Greg Skumolski,
Project Management Systems, Stream
Data Systems Ltd.

Date
Thursday, February 21, 2002

Time
7:30 am
Registration and
continental breakfast

8:00 am – 9:00 am
Presentation

9:00 am - 9:15 am
Question and answer period; wrap-up

Location*
Fifth Avenue Place
2nd Floor, West Tower
202, 237 – 4 Avenue SW
***Please note new address**

Join us for this invaluable breakfast session!

Refer to the enclosed insert for registration information or register online at **https:/secure.nl2k.ab.ca/ aplus/forms/cipseminar.html.**

Why is there so much interest in the new PMBOK® Guide 2000? There are many reasons. The Project Management Institute's Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge® is recognized as the *de facto* global project management standard. (Please re-read the last sentence and consider that it is against this standard you and your project performance may be measured!) Or the PMBOK® Guide might have generated discussion perhaps for what was left out. Today, it seems that everyone is involved in project work. More and more people are therefore using the Guide to help them plan, manage, and assess their projects. The Guide is also an ANSI standard; standards are fundamental to the emerging project management profession. Any way you look at it, the PMBOK® Guide is fundamental to people involved in projects. Greg Skulmoski was a member of the core team that edited and published the PMBOK® Guide 2000. He was the only Canadian on that team and will relate his experiences and some behind-the-scene stories about developing this new Guide. While the new Guide is important to the project management community, the PMBOK® Guide 2004 (in progress) is even more promising. Come hear about this pivotal document and what it means for the IS community. Greg's presentations are informative, interactive, and entertaining. This presentation will especially be of interest to those who plan, manage and/or approve project work; you will not want to miss this presentation!

Greg Skulmoski has project experience in government, health care, retail, and oil and gas sectors. Within these, Greg has functional and project experience in information systems and finance. Greg manages the Project Management Office for Stream Data Systems Ltd., a Calgary-based IS services company. Software development, systems integration, electronic commerce are the sorts of projects Stream has been delivering for the last fifteen years. Greg is also finishing up research under the direction of Dr. Francis Hartman in the Project Management Specialization Programme at the University of Calgary. His Ph.D. dissertation is about IS project participant competency. He has taught project management at the University of Calgary in the Faculty of Management and in the Faculty of Engineering while completing his studies. Greg regularly publishes his research in journals and presents at conferences including the Association for Project Management, the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering International, the International Project Management Association, the International Research Network on Organizing by Projects, and the Project Management Institute. Greg was a member of the PMI Project Manager Competency Project Team. He has also contributed to other standards such as the Work Breakdown Structure Practice Standards Project. Greg is also working with the Organizational Level Control Initiative that has brought together the leading project management researchers and practitioners from five continents to develop the basis for a Global Body of Project Management Knowledge. ☙〜

You won't want to miss any of these important topics:

Thursday, March 21, 2002
Internet Security: How to Secure the Future
Peter Jarmics

Thursday, April 18, 2002
Wireless Communications
Martin Stares

Thursday, May 16, 2002
Report from the Trenches: How "Extreme" is Extreme Programming?
Gerard Meszaros

Seminar Series
2001 - 2002

CIPS Seminar Series is catered by Second Cup, Fifth Avenue Place.

CIPS Calgary Section
Future Meeting Dates – 11:30 am

Tuesday February 5, 2002	Wednesday May 1, 2002
Wednesday March 6, 2002	Wednesday June 5, 2002
Wednesday April 3, 2002	

All meetings are held at the
Calgary Chamber of Commerce

4 Floor, 517 Centre Street S.

CIPS Events

February 20, 2002 **NETWORK MANAGEMENT SIG**
Security
11:45 am – 12:45 pm
HP Office
3600, 150 – 6 Avenue SW
(Petro-Canada Building)

February 21, 2002 **2002 SEMINAR SERIES**
The PMBOK® Guide 2000: An
International Standard
7:30 am - 9:15 am
Fifth Avenue Place
Conference Centre
202, 237 – 4 Avenue SW
(Note new address)

February 21, 2002 **GIS SIG**
Implementation for the City of
Calgary Assessment Department
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Ceili's Irish Pub & Restaurant
(Downstairs Room)
513 – 8 Avenue SW

February 24, 2002 **INDUSTRY PUB NIGHT**
5:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Brewsters Eau Claire
101 Barclay Parade SW

March 12, 2002 **PROJECT MANAGEMENT SIG**
12:00 noon – 1:00 pm
Fifth Avenue Place
Conference Centre
202, 237 – 4 Avenue SW

March 28, 2002 **GIS SIG**
Delivering Maps on the Web Using
ArcIMS
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Ceili's Irish Pub & Restaurant
(Downstairs Room)
513 – 8 Avenue SW

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2001 – 2002

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861-9384
maria@softofficesolutions.com

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263-2272
m.teja@cips.ca

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319-7483
barrie_cameron@cpr.ca

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Matthew Hillhouse
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matthew.hillhouse@powerpool.ab.ca

Special Interest Group Director
Nguyen Tran
514-4004
ntran@cips.ca

CIO Liaison
Stuart Quinn
237-0500
squinn@compass.ca

Publications and Web Presence
Blake Kanewischer
206-5914
blakek@cips.ca

Marketing and Publicity
Herb Malcomson, I.S.P.
233-6602
herb.malcomson@eds.com

Academic Liaison Director
Leon Cygman
207-3107
lcygman@cal.devry.ca

Membership Director
Marion Ng
818-7945
calgarydata@cips.ca

Sponsorship Director
Denise Richards
261-5903
drichards@aplin.com

Social Director
Rob Koski
210-4057
rob.koski@sait.ab.ca

Student Section Chair
Shilo Beechinor
569-2773
shilo@cips.ca

CIPS Calgary Office
Pamela Wilson, Executive Director
244-4487
pamelaw@incentre.net
calgary@cips.ca
www.cips.ca/calgary

I have just had the most frustrating experience. I was visiting the website of a large corporation, wishing to purchase a service it offered. I was baited from page to page, trying to find the information I required about this service. When I could not find the information I was looking for, I thought I would send a message, so I completed the contact form. Lo and behold, my message was rejected because I did not fill out the customer ID field. Well, of *course* I didn't provide my customer ID - I was not a customer, yet! Argh!

Common Sense

The Internet is no longer a mystery to most IT professionals, nor is it to much of the rest of the world. So I must ask myself, why is it that frustrating corporate websites such as this exist? Forget about the widely published statistics that state how easy it is to lose potential customers due to frustration. Common sense would dictate how important it is that people visiting your website can either (a) find the information they require easily, or (b) contact your company for the information. Of course, the 'look and feel' of a corporate website should be suited to a particular market sector and, at the same time, it should be clean and easy to navigate. There is truth in the old adage - simple is good. A fundamental question that should be asked by companies is: "who are we trying to attract to our website and what would they like to see?"

There will be a Short Quiz...

After building a corporate website, and undergoing rigorous internal testing, it would be advantageous to have potential customers provide feedback on the site before it is officially launched to the world. I am certain some companies do this already, but clearly, not enough do; otherwise, websites such as the one I visited would not exist. Sometimes, we as IT professionals think we know best. We read extensively and apply new methodologies to how we do our work. There are many times, and this is one of them, where listening to your customers will definitely boost your business. Take what your customers tell you and use it to make your corporate website more appealing and useful.

On the Bright Side...

At the same time, I am amazed at the large number of well thought-out, information-rich websites that do exist. There are many corporate sites that allow you to access a veritable feast of information. I'm certain few of us imagined it would be like this when the web was just becoming popular a few short years ago.

For someone research-oriented like myself, being able to find reliable information on the web is a huge time-saver. Whether I am attempting to resolve a technical problem, researching a business issue, or gathering information on a product I would like to purchase, the web is the first place I turn to. This speaks volumes for how much (and how quickly) this technology has matured over the past ten years and how dependent the world has become on it. We, as IT professionals, often strive for perfection so we tend to look toward the future and concentrate on improving existing technologies or developing new ones. Once in a while, we need to remind ourselves to look back at what we have accomplished and be proud of the advancements we have made in the IT industry. What accomplishment are *you* proud of today? ▣〜

Network Management SIG

For this month's meeting, our speaker is Shalin Kashyap from Calgary Police Service's Crime Prevention Unit. He will talk about new roles in policing to secure public safety from the perspective of the internet and emerging technology; identifying risks to networks and the impact on community; the need for collaboration, communication, and identification of risks by network system administrators, and Information System Security professionals within a 'hybrid and hive' model, as developed by the Calgary Service Crime Prevention Unit.

Shalin is a senior constable with the Calgary Police Service's Crime Prevention Unit. He has over 12 years service with Calgary in criminal investigation, policy development, and law enforcement training. Prior to that he was attached to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's 'Special I' section in Alberta for several years.

Shalin has a Bachelors degree in soci-criminology and a minor in law in the liberal arts from the University of Calgary. He is a leader in workplace learning and leadership and was recently offered an academic position to undertake his Masters degree at the University of Calgary. He is currently completing his Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) designation.

Currently, he is responsible for the research, development, and training of effective crime prevention strategies for the public and the police service. He has been primarily tasked with design and implementation of preventing the crime risk presented by emerging technologies and the Internet. He is also a recognized specialist in design and behaviour analysis in 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' and recipient of the 2000 Mayors Award for outstanding achievement.

Over three years of focused collaboration, program research, and development have lead to the production of the 'hybrid and hive' model of cyber-crime prevention, as well as to the development of collaborative courses and targeted presentations for multiple demographics. This work has placed Calgary as a leader in the area keeping the public safe through emerging technology and the internet.

Shalin's work, along with that developed in the Crime Prevention Unit, was recently recognized and presented to the Society of Policing of Cyberspace International Conference 2001 as a 'Best Practice' in North American collaboration and public education.

February Lunch and Learn Meeting

Date	February 20, 2002
Time	11:45 am – 12:45 pm
Topic	*Security*
Speaker	Shalin Kashyap, Calgary Police Service's Crime Prevention Unit
Location	HP Office, 3600, 150 – 6 Avenue SW (Petro-Canada Building)
Cost	Free. Please note that this is a brown bag lunch meeting.

RSVP is required. Please email to nm_sig@cips.ca

Project Management SIG

Our March session will feature **Dr. Janice Thomas** who will provide an update on the PMI-sponsored research study on selling project management to senior executives. Janice presented the results from the first phase of this research to the PM SIG audience in January 2001. This session will be sponsored by **Ethier Associates**. More details regarding the session and how to register will be emailed to SIG members.

The next PM SIG presentation will be held:

Date	Tuesday, March 12, 2002
Time	12:00 noon (sharp) – 1:00 pm
Location	*Fifth Avenue Place Conference Centre has moved. The new location is:* 2nd Floor Conference Room Fifth Avenue Place, West Tower 237 – 4 Avenue SW

Should you wish further information please contact:

Bill Bentley
Partner, Corvelle Management Consultants
Phone: (403) 803-2529
Email: BillBentley@corvelle.com

Karen Wright
Partner, Ethier Associates
Phone: (403) 234-8960
Email: kwright@ethierassociates.ca

SIG **SPOTLIGHT**

C I PS Calgary

GIS SIG

The next meeting of the GIS SIG will be on February 21, 2002. Due to the popularity of having the GIS SIG meetings in a pub, we will be meeting at Ceili's. The speaker will be Allan Benvin. Allan will be discussing the implementation of GIS as part of the new assessment system being developed for the City of Calgary. Topics covered will include enterprise GIS, rolling spatial history, spatial data manipulation, and the integration of business and spatial data.

Allan Benvin is a Senior GIS Consultant with GDS & Associates and has been involved on the GIS component of the City of Calgary Assessment project since October of 2000.

Date:	February 21, 2002
Topic:	*Enterprise GIS Implementation for the City of Calgary Assessment Department*
Time:	3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Location:	Downstairs room at Ceili's Irish Pub & Restaurant
	513 – 8 Avenue SW
Cost:	Attendance is free.

March GIS SIG Event

Date:	March 28, 2002
Title:	*Delivering Maps on the Web Using ArcIMS*
Time:	3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Location:	Downstairs room at Ceili's Irish Pub & Restaurant
	513 – 8 Avenue SW
Cost:	Attendance is free.

For further details concerning either of these events, contact Allan Benvin at: Phone: (403) 508-2864; Fax: (403) 508-2867; Email: abenvin@gds.ca

CIPS Special Interest Groups

Register for Events Online!

In conjunction with all CIPS affiliated Special Interest Groups, CIPS Calgary has developed an online event information site that will allow visitors to view and register for upcoming SIG related events.

The site can be accessed at **http://www.associationsplus.ca/cipsig/.**

Citrix
Alicja Rymkiewicz
arymkiewicz@altatraining.com
www.calgarycitrix.org

Data Warehouse
Hassan Sherazi
(403) 228-5423
HSherazi@aol.com

William Miles
(403) 233-5810
william.miles@eds.com

Database Administration
Doug Hopkins
dhopkins@dbcorp.com

e-Business
Yogi Schulz
(403) 249-5255
YogiSchulz@corvelle.com

Deborah Clark
(403) 862-2716
debc@quadrus.com
ebiz@quadrus.com

Geographic Information Systems
Allan Benvin
abenvin@gds.ca

Help Desk
Phil Lalonde
(403) 292-3204
phil.lalonde@royalbank.com
www.hdi-calgary.org

Java Users Group
Ralph Bohnet
(403) 264-5840
ralph@clrstream.com

Linux
Herman Van Kerr
www.calgary.linux.ca

Network Management
Dana Cusi
dana.cusi@cips.ca

Greg King
wgking@cips.ca

Project Management
Bill Bentley
(403) 803-2529
BillBentley@corvelle.com

Karen Wright
(403) 234-8960
kwright@ethierassociates.ca

Visual Basic
Bob Morton
(403) 263-1200
mortonb@webmaxim.com
www.vbusers.net

To post your upcoming SIG events, contact Nguyen Tran by phone at (403) 514-4004 or email ntran@cips.ca.

Knowledge Management –
Learn to Share Before You Buy

Leaf through any Information Technology publication and you are sure to find several references to Knowledge Management software products. Like most software products, all of these virtually guarantee that they will go a long way to solving many of the intractable problems with which your organization has been struggling. Knowledge Management vendors claim that all your employees will have instant access to the combined knowledge of your organization, allowing them to work faster, reuse best practices, reduce costly rework, and continuously improve performance. What these Knowledge Management advertisements fail to mention is that, unless your company already enjoys a corporate culture emphasizing the sharing of information, the extent of promised productivity gains are far from likely or even possible to achieve. A successful Knowledge Management system begins, not with the software as many vendors would have you believe, but with a re-evaluation of your corporate culture.

Many organizations foster and reward cultures of information hoarding, where individuals and separate departments build up and gather their own knowledge. These businesses hope that, by installing a Knowledge Management software suite, they will be able to reap productivity rewards in the near term. They are more than willing to purchase the appropriate software and assign or hire a team to implement it, only to find that the sought-after results never materialize. Why? Of all Knowledge Management implementations, more than fifty percent fail or return poor results, because management neglected to ready the corporate environment for the shift to a "sharing" culture. If you were to place most organizations under a magnifying glass, you would find that they more closely resemble a Pacific island chain than a unified land mass. Each part of the company is loosely connected to all the other parts, but often that is where the association ends. Each employee and business unit jealously guards its corporate knowledge so that its services become indispensable. Unfortunately, this mentality only serves to fracture an organization into tiny independent islets unwilling to share their knowledge, thereby hindering a company's ability to act as a unified team.

A "sharing" culture is critical to the success of any Knowledge Management implementation. A project team achieves the best results when each member knows the overall objective, can chart the progress of each team member, and understands his/her part in achieving that goal. A research team is faster to innovate if each member has access to and can leverage all prior research to create a new product rather than unknowingly reinventing an old one. Both of these optimum team outcomes are only possible if the team members share information with each other and realize that the more they share, the more successful they will be as a cohesive unit. Migrating a corporate culture from one of information hoarding to one of information sharing will not occur overnight. Many employees are unwilling to share their knowledge because they view this transfer as a one-way street. They anticipate that once they give away their "tacit" knowledge – the expertise that resides only in their head - they will no longer be required and are expendable. They fail to realize that, if all members of the organization share what they know, everyone will be able to perform his/her job more efficiently, thereby contributing to the company's success and potentially securing one's future employment. Suddenly, it is no longer necessary to wait those precious hours for an individual to call you back with critical information that only he or she knows, because this information is now contained within the corporate memory and can be accessed at the touch of the proverbial Knowledge Management button. But how do you migrate an organization from hoarding to sharing?

Before any palpable change can occur in the ranks, an organization's management must be exemplary in sharing its knowledge and rewarding employees who do likewise. Too often, management is interested in integrating employees' knowledge while communicating nothing in return. Such an approach is destined to fail. As a manager, what are you willing to give to the corporate knowledge base that will enhance the learning that your employees can bring to bear on their jobs? Are you willing to reward and recognize those employees who excel at sharing their knowledge with the rest of the organization? Many companies focus on individual achievement by rewarding individual independence and initiative, at the expense of neglecting to recognize employee contributions furthering the interests of the group. To reverse this trend, organizations must decide how they are going to value and reward contributions to group knowledge. Once this paradigm shift from the betterment of the individual towards that of the group

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Since I started in CIPS, I have moved a few times. Do I still get an anniversary pin taking into account the years with CIPS in other cities?

➤ The local Calgary section is part of the national CIPS organization. Being a member of CIPS is being part of the national organization. Thus, anniversary recognition is based on total years of membership from initial membership regardless of what sections you spent time in. The pin will reflect total years of membership. (Marion Ng, Membership Director)

When I was a student, I was a member of the CIPS student section. When I graduated, I decided not to renew my membership but am now thinking about becoming a member again. Is there any way I can get back on the student graduated fees schedule?

➤ The policy is 'To be eligible for the graduate fees you must be a student member first. If you **were a student member** and let your membership drop, you have **one year to renew and still be eligible for the graduated fees;** otherwise, you would pay full fees to rejoin'.

As you were a member, **if** your one year since membership renewal has **not** lapsed, then you should submit your application as soon as possible and should indicate you are applying under this policy to ensure you get the graduated membership fees.

Thanks for asking this question, as there may be many students in this position. (Marion Ng, Membership Director)

I have recently become unemployed. I was thinking of dropping my CIPS membership. Is there any other option?

➤ I would not recommend dropping your CIPS membership when you need it the most.

CIPS has a policy that, if you are unemployed at the time of renewal, you are eligible for a 50% discount on your membership fees as long as you indicate your employment status on your application. However, this is **only effective at renewal**. There is no refund of any portion of the membership fee that has already been paid for your current membership year. Since your membership has been paid, you should take every opportunity to use it. When your renewal time comes up, if you are still unemployed, then you can take advantage of the 50% discount. Good luck with your job search.

Thank you for asking this question, especially as many members are not aware of this policy. (Marion Ng, Membership Director)

I moved down from Edmonton. In Edmonton, we used to have supper meetings, which made it easier to get to and we could take our time. I noticed all Calgary meetings are lunches. Why does Calgary not have supper meetings? Are there plans to have supper meetings in the future?

➤ Historically, supper meetings have not been well attended in Calgary. The membership expressed a preference for lunch sessions. However, in 2002, we will be hosting at least one evening event to determine if there is renewed interest. We may provide a blended approach (lunches and suppers) if there is sufficient interest from CIPS members and their guests. (Matthew Hillhouse, Continuing Education & Program Director)

To submit your queries or concerns, phone the CIPS office at 244-4487 or email calgary@cips.ca. ◖～

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becomes recognized through the corporation, only then is it time to implement a Knowledge Management tool.

Once a "sharing" corporate culture has started to take root, the implementation of a Knowledge Management software suite can most certainly enhance and speed the process. Implementing such software as a precursor to beginning the transformation to a "sharing" culture, however, can meet with failure. The software is not a prerequisite for the cultural change; without a "sharing" culture, the software is a waste of resources. If you are considering Knowledge Management as the "next big thing" for your company, be sure to look at how your organization currently values and shares its knowledge. If, when looking through the microscope at your corporate structure, you see a chain of knowledge islands rather than a unified whole, it is time to take a step back and re-evaluate the functioning of your organization's knowledge structure before boarding the Knowledge Management train. ◖～

Matthew Barnicoat is a Consultant in the Knowledge Management practice for CGI, Calgary. CGI is one of Canada's leading IT consulting firms and has been operating for over 25 years.

Reversing a Chain Reaction

Basic nuclear physics suggests that a chain reaction occurs when two sub-critical masses meet and become super-critical, as opposed to "merely" critical. This phenomenon can be observed in many fields, although its genesis can most properly be said to be in nuclear physics.

One such area where this can be observed is in information technology employment. In short, larger cities tend to attract a large number of educated, qualified, and competent IT professionals. The rationale is that large cities have a greater proportion of problems requiring or best utilizing an IT solution. Of course, as IT professionals gain employment in a given area, other professionals seek out the opportunities in that area, and we have achieved a critical mass of IT professionals.

However, this accrues other undesirable side effects, much like a rampaging chain reaction will. Recall that, in a fission reactor, if the rate of subsequent fissions for each "source" fission exceeds a one-to-one ratio, the pile will go critical and blow. We've already seen some examples of this in San Francisco, Seattle, and other tech hotbeds.

So many technology professionals (and ancillary personnel) headed to the hotbeds that local industry's ability to absorb the glut of people was overwhelmed. Evidence of this was appearing even at the height of the tech boom. The situation was exacerbated with the dot-bomb implosion.

Another undesirable side effect is that IT professionals, as a group, tend to require more space than many other professionals. Collaboration is a significant part of any successful IT shop. Whiteboards, tables, and boardrooms are an attendant part of collaboration. This means that IT shops, on a per person basis, are over-consumers of space. This puts upward pressure on commercial vacancy rates and therefore, rents.

Residential properties aren't immune to the upwards pressure on vacancy rates, rents, and mortgage rates, either. Many Silicon Valley school districts have been combating superinflated rents and housing prices by building "moderately" priced housing for their teachers as a recruiting tool. One hardly thinks of teachers as being so poorly remunerated that housing is completely beyond their reach, but this was the case in Silicon Valley.

Simply put, the social cost of IT professional overpopulation is not insignificant, and needs to be weighed carefully.

On the other side of the coin, however, many IT professionals have rather "geeky" tastes, and it may be of value to them to be able to see Star Wars at 12:01 am on the day of its release. This tends to be easier to do in a larger community, simply due to economic factors.

A further argument can be made that there are more activities, whether cosmopolitan or not, in a large urban centre. Calgary is home to numerous athletic leagues, volunteer programs, and cultural events. These activities may well appeal to IT personnel who want nothing more than to unwind after a long, stressful week.

Larger centres also support more networking, training, and educational opportunities. CIPS Calgary alone supports at least ten user groups, and larger centres support many more. Without networking, training, and

A CIPS Calgary WELCOME

CIPS Calgary would like to **WELCOME** the following new members who have recently joined our association. We trust your forthcoming experiences with our CIPS community will be fulfilling. The Membership Committee conducts orientations intermittently where you will have an opportunity to find out about all aspects of CIPS and ask any questions you might have. You will be contacted when the next orientation is scheduled. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can email **calgary@cips.ca** or **calgarydata@cips.ca.** As new members joining during our membership drive, your names have been entered into the membership drive draw to take place in June 2002. Refer to the Focus On Membership column for details of the membership drive. ▭〜

As of January 4, 2002

Mr. Dave Albers	Ms. Holly Montgomery
Ms. Jan Brigden	Mr. Greg Morrell
Mr. Robert Brough	Mr. Matthew Nielsen
Mr. Stuart Doran	Mr. Trent Pattison
Ms. Deanna Dyson	Mr. Binh Phan
Ms. Becky Gallagher	Ms. Kristie Potts
Mr. Gerald Hunt	Mr. Bruce Robertson
Mr. Paul Johal	Mr. Peter Rodier
Ms. Carmen Leavitt	Mr. Tyler Saunders
Mr. David Lowther	Mr. David Slaughter
Mr. Wei Sing Lyn	Mrs. Shelley Stefiuk
Ms. Dotti MacNeil	Mr. David Tao
Mr. Brent Marcinyshyn	Mr. Ken Tarry
Ms. Robin Melnyk	Mr. Marc Weil
Mrs. Anna Montegudo	Mr. Jason Yagelnesky

REVERSING A CHAIN REACTION

education, IT professionals have a difficult time maintaining their currency.

Finally, larger centres provide more flexibility in job and career changes. It is simply easier to find work with a different company in a larger centre than it is in a smaller centre. Similarly, for those people who may be changing careers, it's easier to find support in a larger centre.

It's obvious, then, that there are some pros and cons to larger centres. It's easy to construct a starter list of pros and cons of smaller centres by simply reversing the statements above. However, that doesn't go far enough into exploring why IT shops should consider hiring IT professionals in areas that don't form part of a census metropolitan area.

With the rise of technologies enabling "work anywhere" mentalities, US companies have successfully outsourced software development, technical support, and other functions to Indian firms. Granted, there are obvious issues with this, but it would seem a much simpler endeavour to implement such technologies among a user base in the same country, no more than 4.5 hours apart in time difference (British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador, in case you're wondering).

Another positive factor is a bit more nebulous, but many people who are raising young families swear by the smaller centre lifestyle – even if their children don't always appreciate that lifestyle. Typically, smaller communities really are just that – communities.

Finally, the lower cost of living and lower-stress lifestyle enables companies to pay their employees absolutely less, although the lifestyle it may buy is relatively more affluent. This has a direct impact in two areas: the bottom line and staffing levels. Perhaps two more staff can be hired if the company relocates to a smaller centre.

It would be interesting to conduct a survey of Canadian IT professionals (and even our American brethren) to see just how much interest there is in reverting to a slower, less frantic pace in their day-to-day lives. Granted, when a server goes down or a showstopper bug is found at 3:00 am, the pager will still go off, but that can be balanced against everything else.

Thankfully, people aren't radioactive elements. Were they, we would have to insert deuterium rods into the reactor to halt the runaway chain reaction. As it stands, we just need to follow Kevin Costner's dictum, albeit slightly altered: build it, and they will probably come. ▭〜

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