**October 2011**

IEEE Signal Processing Society

# Conference Organizer Newsletter

## Word of Mouth and Website Publicity

*By Lisa D. Schwarzbek*

The IEEE Signal Processing Society sponsors or co-sponsors over 20 conferences each year. They provide networking and educational needs for more than 4,000 scientists around the world. Our conferences have a reputation for excellence that keeps attendees coming back year after year.

How can we make sure that SPS conferences continue to grow in size and impact while maintaining the quality? Effective Publicity.

From a publicity stand-point, SPS conferences have two principal attractions: high-quality technical programs and excellent networking opportunities. These attractions work together to make a conference an experience that people talk about for years. This word of mouth is our most successful publicity device.

The second most successful marketing device we have is the conference's website. Word of mouth and the websites, more than any other promotional devices, are what conference attendees use to learn about your conference: not e-mails, not flyers, and not print advertisements.

Word-of-mouth is an unreliable form of marketing, one cannot control what people say. They may send the wrong message or a negative message. An official website allows a customer to find the event without navigating a maze of potential misinformation and opinion. Sometimes they provide inaccurate information; occasionally, there are unsupported comments that can be negative.

The website is the most useful, and in some cases the only, device for marketing a conference that you can directly influence. On a website you can control the message; make certain that everyone gets the same information; and keep the information current. Thus, this is an area where, we must become more innovative and savvy.

## Inside this issue:

# Visa "Invitation" Letters

*By Linda Skeahan*

Visa applications are subject to a great deal of scrutiny around the world. Often applicants are required to appear in person for an interview as part of the visa application process. Since the applicant may only be informed of this additional screening at the time they submit their application, it is recommended that they apply no later than three (3) months prior to the conference. This is why it is so important to provide the visa "invitation" letter promptly; it is equally important to provide a properly written visa letter.

Visa letters are not to be treated lightly.

- The visa letter should never be placed on a conference website for downloading.
- The conference organizer may post a request form for a visa letter on the conference website.
- All visa letters must be signed by the Conference General Chair.
- Visa letters may be sent to Speakers/Presenters, Committee members and attendees who have **registered and paid** in full.
- Visa letters should not be sent to a requester who is from one of the countries embargoed by the U.S. Department of State. The list of sanctioned notation is kept up-to-date on their website, http://travel.state.gov/.

Visa letters should include only the facts:

- Conference title, dates and location.
- The role the person who is requesting the letter has at the conference such as committee member, speaker, presenter, or attendee.
- Confirmation that the requester has paid the required registration fee in full. You must verify that the payment clears before providing letter to the requestor.

The following article regarding improvements in the visa process was taken from the September 2011, Meetings Focus e-Newsletter and may be of interest to conference organizers.

---

*Senate Committee Approves Legislation to Improve Visa Policies*

*"The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee has voted to promote long-term stimulus by approving legislation to improve our visa policies. The Department of State has also announced a plan to improve the visa process in China and Brazil by taking steps to address the growing demand for visitor visas and reducing wait times. As a result—the full Senate and House will need to approve the Appropriations Committee bill to have it become law—progress is happening toward encouraging more international visitors, spurring more U.S. jobs and seeing substantial economic benefit.*

*The bill approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee comprises requirements and directives involving a number of important State Department activities:*

- *A requirement that the State Department submit a report outlining a five-year forecast of demand for nonimmigrant visas in Brazil, China and India, and a plan to meet that demand;*
- *Discretion allowing the State Department to carry out a secure visa videoconferencing pilot program;*
- *A required assessment by the State Department comparing their five-year forecast to the Commerce Department's five-year visitor arrival projections from Brazil, China and India; and*
- *Steps to hire a sufficient number of consular officers, which may include limited non-career appointment officers, in China, Brazil and India to meet the Department of State's standard of interviewing all tourist visa applicants within 30 days of the date of submitting their application. "*

*- September 2011, Meetings Focus e-Newsletter,*
*Senate Committee Approves Legislation to Improve Visa Policies*
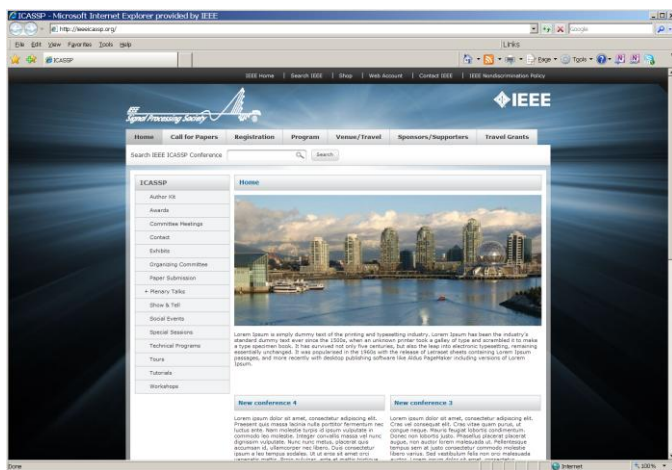*www.meetingsfocus.com (Accessed October 13, 2011)*
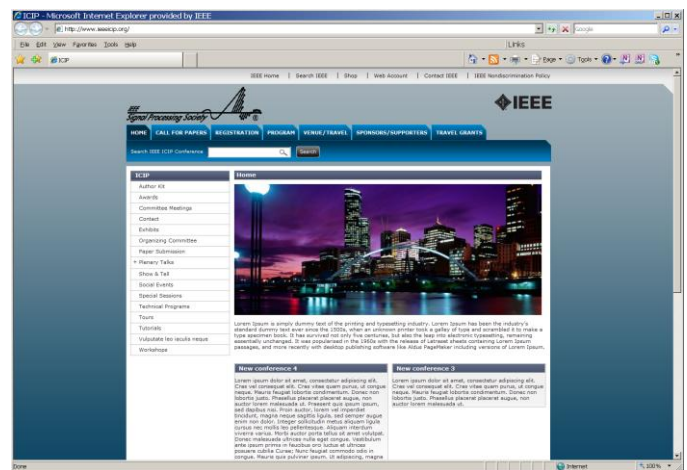
# Word of Mouth and Website Publicity

Our conferences, including ICASSP and ICIP, have an identity challenge on the web. There are new URLs for each conference and the URLs do not have a consistent naming format. The websites often do not direct visitors to past and future conferences, and they look and function dramatically different from year to year. The identity, or brand, is unpredictable diminishing both the value of the website as a publicity device and the perceived value of the conference.

Starting in 2013 there will be an enduring URL for ICASSPs: www.ieee-icassp.org and also with ICIPs: www.ieee-icip.org. The web sites are supported by the SPS Conference Services Department. Stable websites will build and standardize the ICASSP and ICIP brands.

The new sites load quickly and work well with the lowest-common-denominator browser and operating system. They are easy to navigate. The visitor will be able to find what he/she wants in 3 clicks or less. The text is clean and easy-to-read; there is good color balance; and the graphics are of good-quality. The sites provide information clearly, concisely, and coherently; are sophisticated; and employ up-to-date website best practices and design technologies.



ICASSP: www.ieeeicassp.org



ICIP: www.ieeeicip.org

The common content such as conference history, future locations, procedures for submitting bids, etc., will be maintained by the SPS Conference Services staff. Past conference information will be represented with summary and post-conference materials such as photographs and letters, information about the proceedings, and more.

The website content for active conferences will be provided by the organizing committee or its designee (i.e. professional conference organizer) with support from the Conference Services Department. The content will be updated as needed by the SPS staff.

Look for the ICASSP and ICIP website guidelines coming soon to the conference resources page at www.signalprocessingsociety.org.
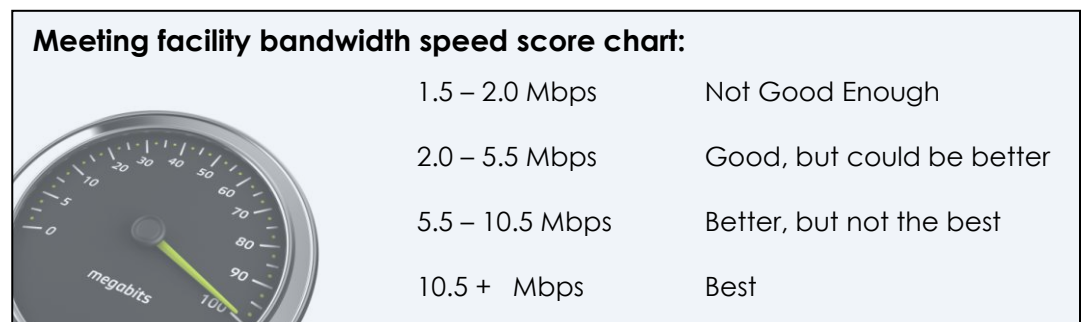
# Bandwidth

*By Nicole Allen*

As we transfer our business needs to the cloud, conferences must assure that a meeting facility has enough bandwidth to handle the demands for internet connectivity during your conference.  There are many activities occurring simultaneously throughout the day of a conference to consider:

A. The **Registration** Booth requires constant access to the Internet to connect to their database. A majority of registration tools now are web based and internet connectivity is needed to send and receive information.  In addition, the internet is needed to process payments for on-site registration.  Due to the critical importance of the security of this activity it is wise to use a wired connection.

B. **Exhibitors** need to have access to the internet for demos, processing orders, etc.…

C. **Presenters** should have the ability on a moment's notice to connect to the internet to support presentation, e.g. to stream live a video clip, sound clip, etc.

D. The **Internet Café** permits attendees, to connect with family, employers, colleagues, and allows access to the latest announcements on the conference website.

E. The ever increasing popularity of smart phones and tablets in use by about 90% of **attendees** on site also must be considered.

**How can you make sure the meeting facility has enough bandwidth to handle it all?**

You need to take a few minutes to measure the bandwidth when conducting your site visit of the meeting facility.  Use your lap top or other internet device in each area of the meeting facility (i.e. lobby, breakout rooms, and lecture halls) to sample the connectivity speed.  While connected to the network, visit www.bandwidthtest.net or www.speakeasy.net or www.testmy.net. Click "Start Test" or "Test Download" and wait for the speed to be measured. Then compare the speed rate against the following guideline.

**Meeting facility bandwidth speed score chart:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1.5 – 2.0 Mbps | Not Good Enough |
| 2.0 – 5.5 Mbps | Good, but could be better |
| 5.5 – 10.5 Mbps | Better, but not the best |
| 10.5 +  Mbps | Best |

# Copyright

**Revised IEEE Copyright Form Released.**

**New Policy on IEEE Authors Posting Accepted Versions of Their Papers**

The IEEE Intellectual Property Rights Office has announced that a revised IEEE Copyright Form is now available. It includes important policy changes approved by the IEEE Publication Services and Products Board (PSPB) in November 2010. In particular, Section 8.1.9 of the IEEE PSPB Operations Manual now more clearly defines which versions of authors' papers are available for their own reuse.

Please visit the IEEE website for more information.

http://www.ieee.org/publications_standards/publications/rights/index.html

## IEEE Signal Processing Society

445 Hoes Lane

Piscataway, NJ 08854 USA

E-Mail: sp.conf.info@ieee.org

WEB ADDRESS:

### Welcome to Our Newsletter…

Welcome to the IEEE Signal Processing Society Conference Organizer Newsletter. In each bi-monthly edition you will find informative articles about planning and implementing an IEEE-SPS conference.

### Contacts:

**V. John Mathews, Vice President-Conferences**
Mathews@ece.utah.edu

**Lisa D. Schwarzbek, Manager Conference Services**
l.schwarzbek@ieee.org

**Linda Skeahan, Conference Services Coordinator, General Services**
l.skeahan@ieee.org

**Nicole Allen, Conference Services Coordinator, Technology**
n.allen@ieee.org

| Upcoming Conferences | Call-for-Paper Submission Deadlines | Locations | Conference Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2011 IEEE International Workshop on Information Forensics and Security (WIFS) | | Foz do Iguaca, Brazil | November 16-19, 2011 |
| 2011 7th International Conference on Natural Language Processing and Knowledge Engineering (NLP-KE) | | Tokushima, Japan | November 27-29, 2011 |
| 2011 IEEE International Workshop on Genomic Signal Processing and Statistics (GENSIPS) | | San Antonio, TX, USA | December 4-6, 2011 |
| 2011 Automatic Speech Recognition and Understanding Workshop (ASRU) | | Hawaii, USA | December 11-15, 2011 |
| The Fourth International Workshop on Computational Advances in Multi-Sensor Adaptive Processing (CAMSAP) | | San Juan, Puerto Rico | December 13-16, 2011 |
| IEEE International Symposium on Signal Processing and Information Technology (ISSPIT) | | Bilbao, Spain | December 14-17, 2011 |
| IEEE International Conference on Emerging Signal Processing (ESPA) | | Las Vegas, Nevada USA | January 12-14, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing (ICASSP) | | Kyoto, Japan | March 25-30, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE International Symposium on Biomedical Imaging (ISBI) | November 13, 2011 | Barcelona, Spain | May 2-5, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE 13th Workshop on Signal Processing Advances in Wireless (SPAWC) | January 30, 2012 | Cesme, Turkey | June 17-20, 2012 |
| 2012 The 7th IEEE Sensor Array and Multichannel Signal Processing Workshop(SAM) | December 2, 2011 | Hoboken, NJ, USA | June 17-20, 2012 |
| IEEE International Conference on Multimedia & Expo (ICME) | November 28, 2011 | Hoboken, NJ, USA | July 9-13, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE Statistical Signal Processing Workshop (SSP) | February 15, 2012 | Ann Arbor, MI, USA | August 5-8, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE International Workshop on Machine Learning for Signal Processing (MLSP) | May 7, 2012 | Santander, Spain | Sept. 23-26, 2012 |
| 2012 IEEE International Conference on Image Processing (ICIP) | January 12, 2012 | Orlando, Florida | Sept. 27-Oct. 6, 2012 |