



Reviewing Our 2001 Strategic Accomplishments

Benjamin W. Wah, IEEE Computer Society President

As my presidential year draws to a close, I want to report to the IEEE Computer Society membership about our 2001 accomplishments. This “year in review” will serve to inform members about our progress toward achieving our strategic goals.

The priority project for the Board of Governors this year was the selection of a new executive director. I am pleased to announce that after an extensive search, David W. Hennage joined the Society as our executive director on 1 November. David brings with him a broad background in association and not-for-profit management. He impressed the Interview Committee with his expertise, intellect, sincerity, and enthusiasm. His strong financial and negotiation skills, coupled with his experience in leading organizations to fulfill their strategic mission, will be an invaluable asset to the Computer Society.

MAJOR NEW INITIATIVES

Several exciting new Computer Society initiatives were launched this year. These initiatives targeted the three primary challenges identified in our 2001 Strategic Plan: addressing member demand for digital products and services, increasing the value of membership for computing professionals worldwide, and improving the Society’s organizational nimbleness. The overarching objective for these initiatives is to provide our members with the best services.



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Total Information Provider project

In pursuit of the IEEE Computer Society’s vision as the “leading provider of technical information and services to the world’s computing professionals,” the Strategic Plan proposes to position the Society as a “total information provider” in computing technology.

To respond to member requests for concise, relevant, up-to-date technical material in diverse topical areas in digital format, the plan recommends numerous electronic services that support computing professionals and add value to that information. It provides a method of offering broader content from within the total scope of the computing literature and for synthesizing that information to focus on specific technical areas. The project also offers tools to help members address their problem of information overload and their need for access to essential and timely information with anywhere, anytime delivery.

The approach will be to develop a portal to the Society’s technical interest areas, focusing on making the Society’s core value-added expert knowledge structured and accessible. This portal will bring together appropriate intellectual property, aggregating the Society’s rich peer-reviewed material with additional content from other scientific publishers, professional magazines, and news feeds. It will also offer value-added services for individual members, such as personalization, customization, discussion forums, and bulletin boards. Services for groups will include facilities for scheduling and conducting electronic meetings.

Volunteer subject-matter experts and other contributors will be able to contribute to the collection of knowledge in numerous ways. Facilities to encourage interaction among professionals will be coupled with personalized information filtering agents, allowing members to focus on the knowledge they are seeking.

The three-year project will begin this quarter and will move through several distinct phases. We will establish an infrastructure and then test it using our communities in software engineering, pervasive computing, Internet computing, and information technology that we started in 2001 and our distributed systems and computing in science and engineering communities.

The first phase will launch with the purchase of a content management system and completion of Web infrastructure improvements. Our high-end Autonomy search engine will be enhanced to allow more advanced and complex search queries. Autonomy’s search capabilities will enable notification of members based on user profiles as well as greater customization, allowing members to choose the features, functions, and options they prefer.

Previous and current-year investments in our digital infrastructure have made the Total Information Provider project possible. The Computer Society has invested heavily in a full XML implementation of its digital library. The Society has one of the most extensive XML collections of its kind in the scientific and technical publishing arena. Our XML database has positioned us to pro-

vide advanced search services and to deliver specialized content.

In 2001, we made a significant investment in our digital library content by expanding the library's archives. In August 2001, we completed the 1995-1997 Legacy Proceedings Project to produce PDF files of individual conference proceedings. The project involved digitizing 21,911 papers in 403 volumes of proceedings. We also embarked this year on a Legacy Periodicals Project to extend coverage back to 1988. All 1988-1994 issues of *Computer*, *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications*, *IEEE Design and Test of Computers*, *IEEE Micro*, and *IEEE Software* have been added to the digital library. The project will be completed by March 2002.

Distance learning initiative

Another strategic goal is the value proposition to provide more value for Society membership. The Society's current value proposition includes a *Computer* magazine subscription, free e-mail alias, discounts for publications and conference registrations, and participation in professional activities.

To offer more value and improved services for our members, we developed a new distance learning initiative. In surveys, members have expressed strong interest in continuing education, both in information technology topics as well as project and general management skill topics. A 2002 pilot program will allow members to access technical courses on networking, security, databases, and programming languages. They will also be able to prepare for popular industry product certifications. We believe a significant segment of members will benefit from these no-cost courses tailored to their technical interests and personal schedules.

If the response is favorable, we will continue the program in future years. Additional information about this enhanced member benefit will be announced later this month.

Organizational nimbleness

Our strategic plan directs the Society to speed up its response to implementing new ideas and developing new products.

The plan also encourages the Society to seek strategic partnerships with other entities to enhance member services.

To accomplish this objective, we worked closely with our IEEE sister societies to launch two new journals in 2002 in a short time frame. *IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing* is supported by a long list of IEEE financial and technical society cosponsors. *IEEE Pervasive Computing* will be published in partnership with the IEEE Communications Society. At year's end, we are negotiating with the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society for cosponsorship of the *IEEE Transactions on Information Technology in Biomedicine*.

Our three main strategic accomplishments are the initiation of the Total Information Provider project, distance learning, and new publications.

In 2001, the Society underwent a comprehensive review by the IEEE Technical Activities Board Society Review Committee. The committee complimented the Society on its operations, and we will adopt its recommendation to share our best practices in publications, conference management, and strategic planning with other IEEE entities.

We also focused on relationships with our affiliate societies around the world. New agreements were signed with the Information Processing Society of Japan and Gesellschaft für Informatik. Discussions on new arrangements with the British Computer Society are under way.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Society's Member Digital Library Subscription (MDLS) and the Computer Society Library Subscription Plan (CSLSP) for institutional subscribers continue to grow. The Society will end the year with 165 CSLSP subscribers, up from 142 in 2000, a growth rate of 16 percent. The year-end projections are for more than 13,000 MDLS subscriptions, represent-

ing an 18 percent growth rate compared with the prior year. Twenty-two percent of our institutional package subs took electronic options in 2001, a 37 percent increase from 2000.

We also have concentrated on providing improved seamless Web access for members. Our staff is working with the IEEE to integrate our authentication schemes for members and other registered users of Computer Society Web-based services. Users will no longer be required to have multiple accounts and passwords to access Computer Society and IEEE Web sites. MDLS subscribers will be able to access their subscriptions via our digital library or IEEE Xplore.

Our program areas continued to expand in 2001. Conferences increased to about 150, as we added 22 new meetings. CS Press published proceedings for 158 conferences for a total of 161 volumes and 69,039 pages. CS Press also produced a 31-year proceedings compendium as its first DVD, plus nine proceedings CD-ROMs.

As part of our technical activities, we created task forces to address new technical areas, including electronic commerce, information assurance, and bioinformatics. We completed development of a software development certification exam for mid-level professionals that is awaiting final IEEE approval. We also published our final report on *Computing Curricula 2001 in Computer Science*. The second Computer Society International Design Competition held in June 2001 challenged 75 undergraduate student teams to design a computer-based personal device using Bluetooth wireless technology.

I am deeply grateful to the many selfless volunteers who contributed their valuable time and to the numerous dedicated and talented staff members who worked above and beyond their normal assigned duties to fulfill the objectives of our Strategic Plan. By focusing on our member and customer needs and investing in key strategic areas, I believe the Computer Society has made significant strides toward an exciting future for our membership and the profession. *