Industry Communities Board Meeting Notes --12/5/16 at GLOBECOM

Attendees: Ian Wong, Ashutosh Dutta, Hendrik Berndt, Rob Fish, Alex Gelman, Hikmet Sari, Adam Greenberg, Charlie Zhang, Jerry Pi, Peiying Zhu, Ed Tiedeman, Amitava Ghosh, Chi-Ming Chen, Liang Ying Chang, Chonggang Wang, Michael Condry, Charles Schroeder, Durga Satapathy, Deep Medhi, Luis Correia, Yang, Narisa Chu, Andreas Mueller, Genshe Chen , Fambirai Takawira, Nirmala Shenoy, Latif Ladid, Gang Wang, Andrea Cattoni (phone), Qi Bi (phone)

The purpose of this board is to organize and promote relevant communities that are attractive to industry, government, and/or other non-academic sectors. The goal is for this board and others in the community to advise on creating appealing content for industry, and to increase ComSoc’s industry membership in the long term.

What is the percentage of industry membership in ComSoc?

* Numbers vary, but some surveys put it at about 40%.
* As an example of products that are needed to provide industry members with what they need, however, it was noted that industry attendance at GLOBECOM (a flagship conference) is about 10%.
* Points to the need for products to bridge this gap.

What is an industry community?

* A group that contributes around an area of interest.
* The Board is starting with 5G, IoT and SDN as areas of interest.
* 5G Coordinators are Yang Yang and Hendrik Berndt; IoT Coordinator is Chonggang Wang; SDN Coordinators are Peter Mueller and Chi-Ming Chen.

What is expected of members?

* If you are at GLOBECOM and/or ICC or GLOBECOM, attend meetings in person. Otherwise attend online.
* Advise industry members on the value of ComSoc’s content.
* Serve as and/or recommend authors and speakers.
* Encourage people to join the various communities.
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Roundtable discussion:

* Board members should endeavor to find out how many engineers in their organization are active ComSoc members. (Active was defined as having done more in the past year than read a ComSoc magazine.)
* Need to gather feedback on current ComSoc content, conferences, and events for industry. Gauge the value of membership today, and provide ideas for what can be done to increase the value to industry.
  + Magazine content often can be accessed via one’s company, which diminishes its value as a selling point for individual memberships.
* Better membership statistics are needed.
  + Note: ComSoc staff is working on a Member Relationship Management system.
* Desire is for areas of interest to drive engagement as people start signing up.
* Focus on content that is currently being produced and its value to industry; this will drive people to become members.
* Leverage regional differences: Look at regions with more industry growth and concentrate on those.
* Instead of conferences, do shows: Partner with companies that do industry-focused exhibitions (such as CTIA, CES, Mobile World Congress.)
* Explore online delivery of conference content to cut costs and increase participation.
* Perhaps leverage regional differences -- look at regions with more growth.
* Need to assess which verticals ComSoc can deliver the most value to; there are so many with disparate needs that not everything can be put under the same blanket.
* Live streaming events is useful (Brooklyn 5G Summit as an example.)
* Easy member access to recordings and tutorials (perhaps from conferences) would be a differentiator. Also invite experts to give talks that are available only to members; perhaps bring the Distinguished Lecturers Tour to corporate locations.
* The Challenge is too much content, not lack of content. How do we filter and shape information into packages that are useful, and how can that information be pushed for practitioners who are short on time?
* Will practicing engineers be able to absorb the academic material currently offered by ComSoc?
  + Note that industry proposals are in addition the academic material, not to force-fit it, replace it, or dilute it.
* It’s hard to find things on the ComSoc website
  + Note that staff is working on a site redesign; planning also is underway to bundle different products that address the same topic and to put certain products behind a “member wall.”

Next steps:

* Industry Content and Exhibition Committee (ICEC) website will be turned into the Industry Communities Board site with Steering Committee names and bios and a means for those who are interested in participating to sign up for a mailing list. Plan to have complete by ICC.
* Narisa Chu (Awards Chair) is soliciting industry sponsorship for the GLOBECOM/ICC Industry Forum Award.
* Rob Fish is working with the ComSoc Industry Awards Committee to put together more practitioner awards. Anyone who has an idea for these awards should contact Ian Wong or Narisa Chu.
* Ashutosh Dutta presented on the 5G Summits that ComSoc has organized to date.
  + Some thought the focus of each summit should be narrowed to a specific theme or technology, so the content is different each time.
  + Others noted the summits are local events, which provides more room to be repetitive.
  + Note that ComSoc staff is in the midst of reviewing the summit structure and 2017 plans with Ashutosh and Rob; their next meeting will be December 19.