

AICN Newsletter

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IEEE-USA Consultants Fee Survey Report—2017 Edition

IEEE-USA has conducted surveys of U.S. IEEE members' compensation, since 1972. It implemented separate surveys, focusing on consultants' compensation, in 1998. Except for the years 1999-2001, 2003, 2005 and 2008, IEEE-USA has published this *Report*. With the exception of 2009, all surveys were stand-alone

surveys. All findings in this report represent only those identified themselves as self-employed consultants. Such participants are defined as the 467 individuals indicating 50%, or more, of their consulting hours came from working independently, with partners, or incorporated. [Purchase this eBook today!](#) ■



AICNCC Welcomes a New Consultants Networks in Seattle and Eastern North Carolina

The Alliance of IEEE Consultants Networks Coordinating Committee (AICNCC) congratulates Alon Newton, with the IEEE Seattle Section Consultants Network Affinity Group; and Gina Smith, with Eastern North Carolina Section Consultants Network Affinity Group, on the formation of their networks. These newest Consultants Networks became official on 19 June 2017 and 16 August 2017, respectively. If fellow consultants would like to give a personal welcome to these new networks, check out the [consultants page](#) on IEEE-USA's website for contact information. If other IEEE members would

like to form a consultants network, IEEE-USA offers step-by-step instructions about how to start a formal network. We encourage new consultants networks to register as Affinity Groups. After a group forms a network, it can take advantage of IEEE's branding and resources, and qualify for funding through IEEE Section rebates. If you don't see your consultants network's contact information listed on the IEEE-USA website, contact Daryll Griffin at d.r.griffin@ieee.org. ■

For questions, comments or submissions
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www.ieeeusa.org/business

IEEE★USA

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20 Ways to Attract Clients: Fishing for Business...

OK, let's get started with the question that has most of you chomping at the bit. ***How do I get clients/customers, anyway?***

In simple terms, you need to find customers, and then sell to them. And if you are just starting out, nobody else is going to do it for you.

Oops! I used the dreaded “**S**” word — ***Sell***. I know, you don't want to become a peddler--rather, you just want to solve client problems (for a hefty fee, of course). However, if you are going to succeed, first and foremost--you need customers. As we say in our profession, ***“If you don't have customers, you don't have a business.”***

To use a simple analogy, finding customers is a lot like fishing. First, you need to figure out where the fish are, and what kind of bait to use to attract them. Once you get a fish on the line, you need to figure out how to

get it in the boat. Remember: you don't get to eat the ones that got away!

You can consider attracting the ***marketing***. And think of getting the fish into the boat as ***sales***. Both are necessary, but as the late Peter Drucker once observed, ***“The better the marketing, the easier the sales.”***

For that reason, I always emphasize marketing when discussing consulting practices. The good news is that your marketing efforts need not be expensive or complicated. A few simple, well-executed plans can keep your net full.

To continue the fishing analogy, you typically need more than one line in the water. Over the years, we have found *no magic bullet* exists for finding consulting clients. Rather, you usually need a combination of methods is to keep the leads coming in.

In fact, with multiple lead sources you often experience a multiplying effect. For example, if you get a referral and your prospect has already seen an article you wrote, or heard you speak, then your success rate can increase drastically.

It all starts with leads! Here are 20 lead generation ideas we have used at one time or another over the years. Unlike “big company” approaches, most require little money—but do require time and effort. I suspect we’ll add a few more, so it will likely be 20+ ideas.

Some methods are better suited to just starting out (or even before starting), while others are better suited to later stages in your business. Some focus on writing, while others focus on personal contact.

To start, choose methods with which you are most comfortable — that way, you’ll stick with them. My recommendation is to try several (but not too many), and then refine your approach with time.

- Write magazine articles
- Develop white papers
- Write a book
- Start a blog
- Start a newsletter/e-zine
- Become a speaker
- Teach a class
- Support professional organizations
- Attend trade shows
- Start your own trade show
- Develop a web site
- Present seminars/webinars
- Referrals & Testimonials
- List in directories
- Network

- Collaborate
- Use agents and reps
- Advertise
- Cold call/warm call
- Gimmicks

Daryl Gerke (blog author) discusses each of these ideas individually in his blog, *Jump to Consulting*. In this newsletter issue, we also reprint his blog post on “Directories.” Daryl and IEEE-USA hope these 20 ideas will help you start thinking about how to “fish for your business.”

(Source: Jump to Consulting, 1/11/2011.)

LEAD GENERATOR #14 – DIRECTORIES

Directories should be a part of every consultant’s marketing strategies. The secret is to get a listing in the right directories—the ones potential clients use. So, give some thought to where you might look to find someone like yourself.

Most directories provide search capabilities (expertise, location, etc.), so consider your search categories. If you don’t see a good match, contact the directory owner and suggest a new category. This tip is particularly important, especially if you serve a narrow niche.

However, directories alone are not enough. They are just a starting point, so you need to have other pieces in place. A web site is ideal, since most directories allow only minimal information. Be sure to include your web address and e-mail in the listing.

Don’t have a web site? [Set one up—even if it is a single page](#). Nowadays, a phone number is also not

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enough—most people want to check you out before initiating contact.

The good news is that many directories are inexpensive, or free. So where are these directories, and how do you get listed? Here are several options:

- **Professional organizations**--Good for visibility with professional colleagues, often leading to referrals. Most have online directories, although some still offer printed directories. Often free, but may include a nominal annual charge.
- **Trade magazines**--Good for visibility with potential nationwide clients. Most have online directories; and some include printed directories, as part of annual Buyer's Guides. Often free--but for a nominal charge, usually you can enhance your listing. If offered, I recommend doing so.
- **Civic/business organizations**--A good choice, if your clientele is primarily local--such as legal,

accounting, architecture, etc. Examples are Chambers of Commerce, Business Round Tables, etc. You may want to participate in the organization, for even more visibility.

- **Technical answering services**--For years, we've belonged to [Intota](#) (formerly Teltech), an organization that connects businesses with peer-recommended experts. More than 10,000 experts in the science, engineering, medicine, regulations and business. Free for consultants, and these services even pay you to answer simple questions (often leading to longer consultations).
- **Finally, your best use for directories is in conjunction with other lead generation methods**--such as web sites, professional activities, articles, presentations, etc. In fact, our experience has shown that [multiple methods multiply your success](#).

(Source: *Jump to Consulting*, 2/4/2013.)

WANT TO Write An Article For IEEE-USA InSight?

CALL FOR AUTHORS

IEEE-USA InSight is a free online newsletter featuring timely and informative articles, essays and opinion pieces on the career and public policy issues affecting the careers and lives of U.S. IEEE members, as well as the issues shaping the modern technology professional's workplace. Article submissions are welcome in four categories:

CAREERS, PUBLIC POLICY, @IEEEUSA and VIEWS

For more info, visit: INSIGHT.IEEEUSA.ORG



Renew Your IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium Subscription Today!

For IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium (i.e., the IEEE-USA Consultants Database) subscribers, you still have time to renew your subscriptions to this valuable asset. The main component of this subscription is being able to place your consultant profile in the [IEEE-USA Consultants Database](#). The profile provides consultants with the opportunity to list their contact information, engineering expertise and keywords words, so potential clients can search and locate them. IEEE-USA does a lot to promote the value of this service to IEEE members; however, we also believe IEEE members should know its history--and some key statistics about this service.

The IEEE-USA Consultants Database evolved from what was formerly the Directory of Electrotechnology & Information Technology Consultants. IEEE consultants had a profile listing their names, contact information and expertise, in this very popular print directory. Member consultants have often relayed to IEEE-USA staff that members would carry this directory with them to initial client meetings, to show that they were a member of a larger society of independent consultants.

From that directory the IEEE-USA Alliance of IEEE Consultants Networks Coordinating Committee (AICNCC) moved to put this successful product into an electronic format, where clients could search for independent consultants via the web. To create an income stream, IEEE-USA charged IEEE members a minor fee to list their profile, in what we now call the

IEEE-USA Consultants Database. IEEE-USA's annual charge is currently \$99.00 per subscriber.

IEEE-USA does a lot to market this product to IEEE members. However, marketing to those that hire consultants does present a challenge. We've learned over time from our annual *Consultants Fee Survey Report*, that about 58% of all consultant business comes from repeat clients. Another 24% of consultants get their clients through personal networking, or referrals from clients, or friends. From this trend, we can see most clients look to people they know, as opposed to searching online, if they are in need of a consultant. IEEE-USA will always look for different ways to market this product, so subscribers can be exposed to clients in need of engineering consultants.

The good news is that clients are definitely looking at subscriber profiles. When we upgraded the database a few years ago, we created a method where subscribers can see how many times their profiles has been viewed. We provide monthly data on how many times a subscriber's profile came up in a broad consultant search, and how many times their profile has been viewed. We believe it's a great feature of this service.

With these new details about the IEEE-USA Consultants Database, we hope consultants are more ready than ever to subscribe to, or renew their [IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#). Subscribe or renew today! ■