

You Still Have Time to Renew Your IEEE-USA Consultants Database Subscription

[IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#) (i.e. IEEE-USA Consultants Database) subscribers still have time to renew their subscriptions for this valuable asset. In 2015, you were able to have the exclusive privilege of participating in the webinar: *Cyber Security/Privacy Issues for Consultants*. In addition, in September you received a copy of the *2015 Consultants Fee Survey Report*. And of course you had an annual subscription to the [IEEE-USA Consultants Database](#). Last but not least, you are now able to join in the “Consultants Exchange” in [IEEE Collobratec](#).

Like your IEEE membership, your subscription has been extended for a few weeks, allowing you time to renew your subscription. We believe all the services this subscription provides is well worth the \$99 subscription fee. The database itself lets IEEE members anywhere in the world create a profile listing detailing their fields of expertise, skills and availability. Employers can search the database for consultants that meet such criteria as expertise, location, certification type and spoken languages. Employers can also list their needs on the database, and have consultants contact them.

The Alliance of IEEE Consultants’ Networks Coordinating Committee (AICNCC), an IEEE-USA committee established to provide policy guidance on consultants’ matters, advises that the database should be included in every consultant’s marketing strategy.

If you haven’t done so already, please consider renewing your [IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#) subscription today!



For those new to consulting, consider subscribing to the [IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#). If you subscribe, you will receive all the features previously mentioned. Of course, the main feature of the subscription is being able to list your profile in the [IEEE-USA Consultants Database](#). The database is a central location, where consultants from across the country can place profiles containing their expertise and contact information, and where business employers can come to find independent electrotechnology consultants.

To join, go to the [Special Interest Groups section of the Memberships and Subscriptions Catalog](#), and select [IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#). This step will allow you to enroll in the database, as well as pay the \$99 subscription fee.

After you subscribe, you can use your IEEE Account username and password to log-in to the [IEEE-USA Consultants Database](#), and create your profile. Take the time to make your profile stand out, by adding your specialties and keywords, so clients searching the database can find you.

Remember business clients/employers searching for electrotechnology consultants will easily be able to find the consultants they need in the database, due to many unique search features. Having a profile in the IEEE-USA Consultants Database allows national companies to find consultants wherever they are; and with the annual subscription fee of only \$99, just one referral will pay for the subscription.

Flipboard & IEEE Collabratec: Two Social Media Outlets For Accessing More Consultant News

We've talked about the [IEEE-USA Career and Employment Issues Flipboard Magazine](#) before in this newsletter. What is Flipboard? It is another entry point into the world of social media.

Flipboard is a very useful piece of social media that IEEE-USA is now using to post the latest articles on employment, career and consultant issues. Over the past two years, IEEE members and staff have been populating this magazine with articles on career management, employment issues, leadership, networking and consulting.

Most of you will find this app already on your smart phone. This software app allows users to "flip" through a social-networking feed (news feeds from other websites), to find articles of interest to them. In IEEE-USA's case, you'll be flipping through articles on different career topics. You can click this [link](#) to find the [IEEE-USA Career and Employment Issues Flipboard Magazine](#).

Some articles that may interest you are:

- How To Become a Home-Based Freelance Consultant

- Negotiating for Higher Fees
- Power of In-Person Networking

IEEE Collabratec

As discussed in *The Institute* "[IEEE Collabratec Can Help You Find a Job](#)," IEEE has started a new "Consultants Exchange" community in [IEEE Collabratec](#). The "Consultants Exchange" community is dedicated to addressing the interests of independent IEEE consultants. All [IEEE Consultants Network](#) and [IEEE Consultants Network Membership Premium](#) subscribers are eligible to join the "Consultants Exchange" IEEE Collabratec community. Please note: Any IEEE member is eligible to join the [IEEE Consultants Network](#).

In the community, members can network with other consultants from anywhere, exchange ideas on any consulting topic; seek and get advice; and access news and information that we may not be able to publish in this newsletter. Currently, more than 3,000 IEEE members subscribe to the IEEE Consultants Network. Let's set a goal by the end of 2016 to have every IEEE Consultants Network subscriber become part of the "Consultants Exchange" community in [IEEE Collabratec](#).

IEEE-USA Webinar: Collabratec

We've mentioned the new "Consultants Exchange" community in [IEEE Collabratec](#), in this issue. If you are still unsure about how best to make IEEE Collabratec work for you, then join us at 2:00 p.m. EST on 14 January for a webinar addressing that very issue. Justine Spack is IEEE's online community specialist, working on IEEE's new online networking and collaboration platform, IEEE Collabratec. IEEE Collabratec is IEEE's new integrated online community, where technology professionals can network, collaborate and create--all in one central hub.

During the webinar, Spack will provide a demonstration of the many functions available within [IEEE Collabratec](#). She will walk you through everything--from setting up your profile to showcasing the variety of sub-communities within IEEE Collabratec. If you haven't joined IEEE Collabratec yet, this presentation is for you! You can [register today](#) for this upcoming IEEE-USA Webinar.

War Stories #8: Advertising and the Consultant

BY LARRY G. NELSON, SR.

You can promote your business in many ways, but newspaper ads and the Yellow Pages are *not* how to get consulting clients. Print ads can be expensive over time. Newspapers and the Yellow Pages are good, if you have a restaurant or auto repair shop--but these advertising methods don't work for most technical consultants. Targeted publications, available at trade shows and in special mailings, would also seem an approach that would be the way to go--but these also give no measurable results.

That said, you do need to advertise—put yourself out in front of your potential clients. Most importantly, you should be in front of them when they are looking, or it does minimal good. Your advertising needs to be long-term and consistent, to keep you in front of your desired audience. Continuity conveys you are in it for the long haul, not just trying consulting out only to quit and return to a traditional job--often leaving short-term clients high and dry.

Here are some low cost methods that work, and are sustainable:

Business Cards

Business cards are low cost. So, always have plenty of business cards with you--and distribute them to all you come in contact with. Think of these "small advertisements" as "business seeds." Spread them far and wide to increase the probability of growing new business. Cards convey your contact information clearly to prospective clients. Consequently, make sure you include the obvious: name, business address, business phone number and/or cell number, email address, and your company website address. I use plain black ink, but you can use color, if you prefer. Staples prints my cards, and they are better quality than you will get from your ink jet printer on card stock. And yes, that matters.

Web Site

A web site with your own URL is a good way to show you are in business. Don't use one of the free sites, like those your cable provider gives you. Look around for an unused URL, and pay to get it registered. You can use any one of a number of services to register and host your site. *Go Daddy* can do it for you at a good price, but I use RCN professional web hosting. I pay a bit more, but have no issues with keeping it online. For example: RCN immediately contacted me directly, when someone tried to hijack my site by having it moved to a different server. They blocked this attempt for me, and it saved me a lot of aggravation.

Professional Association Membership

I belong to the IEEE, AICN, Boston Consultants Network, Worcester County Section Consultants Network, and the New Hampshire IEEE Consultant Network. I get listed on their web sites as part of my membership. I also belong to the NSPE and MSPE as a Professional Engineer. I act as a guest speaker for many of these groups, and often get referrals this way, since people get to know me. Belonging is not enough. Attend meetings, volunteer, be involved!

Word of Mouth

Help others. People will come to know you as a problem-solver and it will yield you some referrals. You can help that along by asking those you network with, if they know anyone that may benefit from your expertise.

Partner Programs

If you work with specific hardware or software, the manufacturer often has some type of partner program. I am a certified consultant with Microchip and Parallax. I get referrals from their customers that need my expertise. I also am listed on their web sites as an approved consultant for their products. These listings give me free advertising, a credibility boost, and even a discount on their development tools and products. Many companies have similar programs, including Apple, Microsoft and National Instruments. Seek and you shall find.

Continued on page 4

Blog Post from Jim Todd, Consulting Physicist:

Have You Thought about Using LinkedIn Group?

I reviewed my notes recently on the subject of LinkedIn. My first use of LinkedIn dates back to 4 February 2008. That was the day that I decided to check out what this social networking application was all about. [Editor: Blog text converted for use at an IEEE meeting in September 2015, and for the 4th Quarter edition of the AICN Newsletter.]

The first efforts consisted of not much more than getting an account set up, and the bare-bones minimal information of who I am, and where I was working. As an aside, a friend from Massachusetts and I were having a casual conversation about LinkedIn. He discovered that I had this original account that I had forgotten about on LinkedIn. On 30 August 2009, I closed that abandoned account. Along the way, I had inadvertently opened a second account, where I realized growth in using this application.

I was glad that I did invest the time to build a credible profile. It took time, effort and a learning curve to do it. But, success struck! This posting documents what I have learned about LinkedIn groups and sub-groups. I thought it might be of interest to those who want to learn a bit more about it.

First, I learned that you may join 50 groups – that's the limit! It might seem like a large number, but I have discovered getting to 50 isn't that hard. Now, my "problem" is managing what groups I really want to belong to. Also, a group may have sub-groups. Sub-groups don't count against the 50-group limit. I haven't discerned if there is a sub-group limit.

Next, what groups to join? I've summarized my take on it below:

- **Academic affiliations:** Could be anything from high school, college, graduate school, alumni associations and continuing education
- **Special interest groups:** If you are like me, self-identifying terms such as "systems engineering" will get you started. Search for those key-words to find like-minded groups.
- **Professional Associations:** What professional associates do you belong to? A group from that association probably exists.
- **Business Associations:** Where do you work? Where did you used to work? I have found groups that organized around, for example: alumni of "Name the firm."
- **Groups that your contacts are members of:** When I get a new contact, I check out the groups that they belong to. As I personally work with search firms, joining the groups that my contacts belong to has been productive.
- **Support Groups:** They come in all sizes and types. I ask around. I have been quite surprised about what is out there.

Well, let's see, that gives us six categories of groups. If you join one or two in each category, that will get you going to about a dozen! So, get your group on!

Continued from page 3 (War Stories)

Writing

Another avenue is writing. You can write articles, or even a book. You will not get rich writing--and it can take a lot of effort--but the written word sticks around for a long time, and you can often reuse your writing for different groups.

Presentations

If you are inclined, try your hand at teaching a class. Give a seminar. Volunteer to be a speaker for a month, for one of your professional organizations. The point is to put yourself out there. Become known. Be accessible to prospective clients.

IEEE-USA Commends Sens. Grassley, Durbin for Introducing H-1B, L-1 Visa Reform Legislation

On 11 November 2015, IEEE-USA President Jim Jefferies commended Sens. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) for introducing legislation aimed at reforming the H-1B and L-1 temporary visa programs.

"As the largest organization of America's high-tech workers, IEEE-USA strongly endorses this bipartisan legislation," Jefferies said. "Given the very public recent examples of U.S. employees being replaced by H-1B workers, it is clear that something needs to be done to reform these visa programs."

"The H-1B and L-1 Visa Reform Act" explicitly prohibits the replacement of employed American workers by H-1B and L-1 visa holders. Employees at Disney, Southern California Edison and Cargill, among others, have lost their jobs and been forced to train their replacements.

"No one should be in favor of replacing middle-class Americans workers with foreign employees," Jefferies said. "There should also be no objection to banning support for outsourcers who use the H-1B program as a job-exporting machine."

The legislation, cosponsored by Sens. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), would increase enforcement, modify wage requirements and provide protection for American and international workers.

Grassley, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said in a statement, "The abuse of the system is real, and media reports are validating what we have argued against for years, including the fact that Americans are training their replacements." <http://1.usa.gov/1joCCQ>

IEEE-USA supports increasing the number of employment-based EB visas for high-skill workers.

"IEEE-USA represents not only America's electrical and computing engineers, but also many foreign students in STEM fields who wish to become new Americans to create jobs in the United States," Jefferies said. "We look forward to working with high-tech employers to enact and implement these reforms."

Top 10 Programming Languages of 2015:

top 10

New languages enter the scene, and big data makes its mark...

In July 2015, *IEEE Spectrum* published its annual list of top ten programming languages. In case you missed it, we want to share it with you. Check it out [here!](#)