

From Your Newsletter Editor's Desk

Answers to 10 Questions by the Two Candidates for 2007 IEEE President-Elect

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The IEEE Board of Directors selected Lew Terman and John Vig to be the two candidates for 2007 IEEE President-Elect. In an effort to better present their platforms and in connection with the upcoming elections, Lew and John, assisted by the TAB Newsletters Committee, have prepared for the readers the following "Answers to 10 Questions by the two Candidates for 2007 IEEE President-Elect".

Lew Terman (www.terman.org) can be contacted at l.terman@ieee.org, and John Vig (www.JohnVig.org) can be contacted at j.vig@ieee.org.

QUESTION 1: What are IEEE's strengths?

Lew Terman: The volunteers are perhaps the most important strength; it is their enthusiasm, expertise, and time which is key to the success of the Institute.

Another major strength is the IEEE's generation and dispersion of high quality Intellectual Property, including archival publications, conferences/meetings, and standards. It is this IP which produces the revenue streams that financially enables the IEEE and create the information flow which is so valuable to the technical community. The IEEE publishes over 30% of the published material in IEEE's fields of interest, and its conferences/meetings around the world enable rapid dispersal of new results, as well as networking and face-to-face discussions.

A third major IEEE strength is globalization: RAB's structure of geographical based entities extends around the world in over 150 countries, allowing networking and the interchange of technical information at the local level.

Fourth, the IEEE has recovered from the recent downturn to a strong overall financial position. Reserves are at an all-time high, though some problems remain for specific O/Us. The financial performance of the Societies and Councils has been very important.

Finally, the IEEE has an excellent staff supporting the volunteers and working with them for the Institute and its goals.

John Vig: The IEEE's main strengths include:

1) That we are a non-profit membership organization; we have ~50,000 volunteers who contribute to the IEEE's >350 conferences, >100 journals, >300 sections, >900 standards, >40 societies and councils, etc.

2) The breadth and quality of products & services: publications, conferences, workshops, standards, educational products and services, sections, chapters...

3) Our diversity – i.e., that we have ~360K members, in 150 countries. The membership includes not only engineers but also computer/IT professionals, scientists...; men and

women; members of all cultures..., and that our activities transcend national borders.

QUESTION 2: What are the major challenges facing the IEEE?

Lew Terman: Membership has been essentially flat in recent years, and the number of higher grader members has been decreasing. A major problem has been the retention of new graduates, now below 25% three years after graduation. Society membership continues to decline, and the fraction of IEEE members without society membership is now over 43%. Much of this can be attributed to a perceived lack of value of IEEE membership relative to its cost. Increased support of member career development is important. IEEE membership will be 50% in Regions 7-10 within 10 years with current trends; the implications (and opportunities) need to be thoroughly examined. The long-term impact of IEL on membership could become significant.

Open Access is the major long-term question for publications - if all publications are available for free on the web, the IEEE publication business could collapse. Publication timeliness has been a problem, new publications are launched too slowly, and there is a strong need for practical publications to engage the practitioners/"bench-top engineers". Finally, there is the impact of going to full electronic publishing and on what schedule it might occur.

While the overall IEEE financial position is good, there are specific units with problems; further reduction of the infamous Infrastructure Charge is needed through continual evaluation of the efficiency of our operations. With the continuing growth of reserves, long term financial plans/goals for the reserves and their use must be developed.

Finally, the IEEE needs to react to new technologies faster to claim leadership positions in these technologies as they emerge. We must continue our search for effective and fair governance.

John Vig: How to provide sufficient value to justify the membership dues is a major challenge. A growing number of members who work for institutions which provide "free" access to IEEE's publications and conferences are asking, "I get everything I want from IEEE for free, so, why should I be a member?"

About 80% of IEEE members don't read IEEE journals on a regular basis. "The articles are by academics, for academics." Half of IEEE members work in industry. Providing more practical content without diluting the quality of our publications is a major challenge.

Half of IEEE's revenues result from the sale of publications. "Open access," the worldwide movement to disseminate scholarly research literature online, free of charge, threatens these revenues.

QUESTION 3: What are the major changes IEEE needs to be making?

Lew Terman: Membership: increase (and actively market) membership benefits around the world, broaden the base of membership such as aggressively moving into software, services, applications and solutions. Follow up the China initiative with similar efforts for India and Eastern Europe.

Publications: establish a faster track for new publications, pilot new publications that are more practically-oriented, and establish

a reward system for reducing the submission-to-publication time. Develop the best search capability for technical material, and make it a membership benefit.

Education: the *Expert Now* program for continuing education is off to an excellent start; aggressively push it and make it available to members.

Financial: drive good financial behavior for Operating Units with reserves by giving them more access to those reserves – as the ratio of the O/U's reserves to expenses increases, allow access to an increased percentage of the reserves. Continue to work on decreasing the Infrastructure Charge and increasing revenues, though not at the cost of making IEEE's prime goal increased surpluses/reserves. Develop a long-term financial plan/goals for the IEEE reserves.

Governance: the current governance structure is not egregiously broken; continue to work towards streamlining operations and governmental efficiency.

Finally, work across the IEEE major Boards to establish a spirit of working together, understanding each others problems, and working with staff on identifying and solving tactical and strategic problems.

John Vig: To improve the IEEE's agility, e.g., with respect to entering new technologies, I have proposed that we establish an IEEE Venture Capital Fund. Any person could propose an idea, and, if the idea is judged to be worthy, receive up to \$100,000 to implement, or show the feasibility of, the idea.

To provide practical content, I have proposed that we create a new category of peer-reviewed publications, "application notes" - which would include "how-to's," and case studies; and that we digitize many of the ~600 IEEE Press books and make them available to members, and members only, for free.

The IEEE should be more willing to take prudent risks, and it should be more willing to terminate unsuccessful activities.

To explore new ideas, the IEEE should experiment more – with new membership models, dues structures, publication models (e.g., new forms of peer review), etc.

The IEEE needs to improve its communications with members. The Institute should become a real newspaper, i.e., it should report both the good and the bad, and it should publish controversial views, even when such views may displease the leadership.

The IEEE should join with other engineering and scientific organizations to establish a public relations campaign to improve the image of engineering and science.

QUESTION 4: What are some of the important challenges facing IEEE as a publisher in service to its membership?

Lew Terman: Issues raised by Open Access will need to be anticipated and managed. A major implication is to at least maintain the revenue stream which our publications generate. IEEE needs to help members navigate the mass of data available from IEEE, other technical publications, and on the

web. Practical publications need to be developed with the collaboration of RAB and TAB. Goals for article publication timeliness must be set, and rewards established for publications to meet or exceed the goals. Establish a fast approval track for new publications. Maintain the importance of peer review. Keep monitoring the possibility of going to all electronic publishing, and establish when or if it should occur well before any critical point occurs.

John Vig: Open access, the worldwide movement to disseminate scientific and scholarly research literature online, free of charge is a serious challenge because half of IEEE's revenues result from the sale of publications. Google, at www.scholar.google.com, and similar services, now make it easier to find the free copies of publications. Papers can be read without having to pay the publishers.

Delayed open access, e.g., making publications open access two years after publication, would not be as damaging. It would allow the IEEE to maintain most of its publication revenues while fulfilling its mission of being "for the benefit of humanity and the profession."

A frequently heard criticism of IEEE publications is that they are primarily "by academics, for academics;" they are not useful for practitioners. About half of our membership is from industry. If our publications are not useful for the majority of our members, then we have a serious problem.

I have proposed three solutions to this problem. One is to ask authors to provide, voluntarily, a "practical impact statement" with their papers. The second is to create a new class of peer reviewed publications, "application notes," and the third is to digitize IEEE Press books and make them available to the membership.

The mean time between an author's submission and the date of publication of an article is too long for some of our journals; the delay for five of our journals has been >120 weeks. This must not be allowed to continue, and it need not continue, as evidenced by the fact that the mean is <50 weeks for 31 of our journals.

QUESTION 5: Do you see IEEE in future years as an organization based on its strong membership base, or do you foresee other models?

Lew Terman: IEEE should remain a membership-based organization. Membership is critical – it is the members through whom we serve our technical communities, and who provide the volunteers that are critical to the success of IEEE. Members also provide a means of measuring how relevant we are to the technical world, and provide the mechanism for engaging emerging technical and geographic areas.

John Vig: I see the IEEE continuing to be a membership-based organization - with its tens of thousands of volunteers and its membership diversity as its pillars of strength.

I do, however, see a need to experiment with membership and dues models. Some members, for example, may be willing to receive Spectrum and The Institute electronically if the dues were lowered by the costs of producing the paper copy of those publications. We have >\$160M in reserves. Therefore, we can afford to experiment.

The success of our IEEE Electronic Library (IEL) is hurting membership recruitment and retention. (IEL subscribing institutions, which include many of the largest universities and corporations, provide “free” access to IEEE publications.) I hear more and more “I get everything I want from IEEE for free, so, why should I be a member?” Therefore, another experiment I would propose is to offer reduced dues to those working or studying at a few IEL organizations and measure the effects on membership numbers.

QUESTION 6: What changes in IEEE would you advocate in response to quick industrialization and potential IEEE presence in large Asian countries?

Lew Terman: The two major Asian countries of interest are quite different in technical environment and social structure. I believe the current China initiative is appropriate; we need to understand the environment and the current approach seems a good first step. We need a deeper understanding of the specific needs and opportunities and how to involve that community to effectively stimulate IEEE membership and volunteerism.

India is also a key growth area in the 21st century, and currently has more IEEE members than any country outside the US. We need to understand why they join, and focus on the appropriate member and technical services to support their interest. India has a strong university structure with which we should be working.

John Vig: IEEE’s presence in large Asian countries is actual, not just “potential.” For example, in 2005, we held 59 conferences in China, and a total of 129 in China, India, Japan and Korea. Our publication sales, in China alone, amounted to ~\$5M in 2005. Total sales to the four countries was ~\$20M. In 2005, our combined membership in these four countries was ~45K.

Although the IEEE has made inroads in China and India, it is a long way from realizing the potential presence in these and other countries. Membership is too expensive for many in Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe... We need a membership strategy for potential members who can’t afford our dues, not just in Asia, but, throughout the world.

QUESTION 7: What do you see as the power of the IEEE President and how would you exercise this power?

Lew Terman: The IEEE President has three major responsibilities/opportunities:

a) Running the Board and ExCom meetings effectively, including setting up the meetings. This is important as the members of the governing bodies of the IEEE meet for only a short time, and it is important the meetings be efficient for the most effective interaction.

b) Providing leadership to the Institute: setting directions, establishing committees and study groups to get information and sift through alternatives, work with the staff, work with the IEEE Boards and governance levels. It is in this area that the President can have the most effect. I would focus on bringing the various groups in IEEE together, and on listening to their input, getting an open airing of issues and sug-

gested solutions, and generating and following through on new ideas.

c) “Showing the flag” around the world, to both IEEE geographies/groups and non-IEEE entities - geographical, technical and political. The interactions with IEEE groups are very important to generate mutual understanding, and the interaction with non-IEEE entities is important to present the IEEE and the technical community it represents, and to understand their needs, views, and to understand possible opportunities.

John Vig: The president’s duties are to: chair the meetings of the IEEE Board of Directors, Executive Committee and Assembly; perform ceremonial functions such as meeting with dignitaries, presentation of awards, opening remarks at conferences, etc.; promote the objectives of the IEEE; and be “the Chief Executive Officer of the IEEE.”

I would make maximum use of the presidency to advocate the IEEE’s agenda, both within and outside the IEEE.

I would set at least one lofty (man-on-the-moon-like) goal for the IEEE, aimed at inspiring and mobilizing the volunteers and staff.

The Board of Directors has been too inward-focused. I would propose the establishment of a council of advisors – consisting of prominent, mostly outside experts and leaders – to advise the IEEE leadership.

QUESTION 8: In the 2005 IEEE elections, only 14% of the membership voted. What, if anything, would you do to increase members’ participation in IEEE elections?

Lew Terman: I think what we are doing this year is pretty good – talking to the Regions and other entities which invite us (with Q&A sessions where time permits), sending these 10 questions to the Newsletters, participating in the Philadelphia debate and making available recordings of the debate and presentations of the candidate platforms on the IEEE web site, and making additional information available on our personal web sites.

John Vig: In 1975-77, when a controversial candidate, Irwin Feerst, ran for IEEE president, 36% voted. In those days, the membership was more involved in IEEE issues than they are today.

Today, the membership is rarely informed of controversial issues. For example, last year, I received reports of meetings where readings from the Koran and Christian prayers were parts of the program. Why not report such events and ask the membership whether or not such religious expressions should be allowed as parts of IEEE events?

“THE INSTITUTE is the newspaper of the IEEE” claims The Institute’s website but, The Institute is more a “house organ” than a newspaper. As president, I would propose to the Board of Directors, and The Institute’s Editorial Board, that The Institute become a real newspaper of the IEEE.

The office holders in IEEE, especially the President and the other members of the Board of Directors, make decisions about matters that are important to the membership and the future of IEEE. Voting in the annual IEEE election is the chance members have to choose the decision makers. With only 14% voting, 7+% of the members can decide the fate of IEEE.

QUESTION 9: What have been your three most important contributions to IEEE?

Law Terman: In the late 1990's, I was instrumental in the conversion of the Solid-State Circuits Council to the Solid-State Circuits Society. This was very successful; the SSCS is now the 5th largest Society in the IEEE, and the Journal of Solid-State Circuits records the highest number of hits in IEL. I served as the first SSCS president elected by the Society.

In the mid 90's, IEEE and TAB were going through financial difficulties. I was appointed TAB treasure, stabilized the situation and improved the communication with TAB, and served a second term as Treasurer.

In 2001, I was on the Board as the bottom fell out of the IEEE financial situation. As part of a team effort, we were able to put in place a number of changes which arrested the slide.

John Vig: My three most important contributions are:

The IEEE Sensors Council, i.e., I proposed it, shepherded it through the approval processes, and was elected its founding president, in 1999. In 2005, the Council's journal published 1500 pages, and its conference had >500 registered participants.

Between 1999 and 2002, the IEEE's reserves declined >\$50M (>40%), due, in large part, to the decline in the value of IEEE's investments. Up to this point, the IEEE had no formal investment policy. I wrote the first draft of the Investment Operations Manual (IOM), then worked with in-

vestment professionals, volunteers and staff to finalize it and get it passed by the Board. Contained in the IOM is an investment policy which has reduced the risks and increased the transparency of IEEE's investments.

I brought what is now the IEEE Int'l Frequency Control Symposium into the IEEE. I negotiated the takeover of this conference by an IEEE society (UFFC). This conference is now the premier international conference in its field.

QUESTION 10: What would be your single and most recognized contribution that will distinguish your IEEE Presidency from those of others?

Law Terman: I would like my presidency to result in the elimination of any silos between IEEE operating units, and attacking IEEE problems with coordinated efforts across IEEE.

John Vig: The president under whose leadership innovation flourished in IEEE.

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Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.
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PRESENT AN ALL-DAY WORKSHOP ON

Convergence in Communication and Computing

Date: Friday, November 17th, 2006

Time: 7:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Location: Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona – ASU Memorial Union (Arizona Room)



TOPICS

Vision – A View of the Future of Convergence

Market – Current Status and Future Trends

Communication Technology Options and Standards

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Device Technology – RF, Microwave, Analog, and Base Band / Graphic Processing

Panel discussion on the Future of Convergence in Communications

Business Model

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