IEEE IT Society Online Committee Report
(ISIT 2015 BoG edition)

Anand D. Sarwate

State of the Site, Recommendations, and Requests for Feedback
(which may not increase capacity, but can improve error exponents!)

14 June 2015
Committee consists of 5 people: Anand Sarwate, Matthieu Bloch, Adriaan J. de Lind van Wijngaarden, Stefan Moser, J. Nicholas Laneman

- Previous big expenditure ($\approx 40k) went towards infrastructure/database upgrades and “behind the scenes” improvements, as well as adding functionality for video support.
- Server upgrade should fix some recent problems we have with updating content and adding users.
- Currently budgeting only for “necessary” upgrades and bug fixes. trying to plan what are major priorities versus “as needed” items.
Major ideas from ITA 2015 BoG Meeting

- **Investigate mobile-friendly site design**  
  *Part of this proposal.*

- **Adding multimedia content (plenaries etc)**  
  *In progress, ongoing.*

- **Better integration with social media**  
  *Some ideas a few slides later, still in brainstorming mode*

- **Conference/school site hosting on itsoc.org**  
  *Currently used (mostly) by schools. Adding enhanced support is part of this proposal.*
A new focus for online resources

**OVERALL GOAL:** generate and organize more content for itsoc.org that is member-generated and “outward-facing”:

- Increase use of the site by “non-core” members and non-members.
- Use the Shannon celebration as a springboard for organizing content.
- Solicit tutorials, outreach resources, and other materials to help disseminate and share research and educational materials.
A smattering of potential outreach ideas

- Official ITSOC Twitter account
- Some curation/quick takes on ArXiV papers
- Using Tinyletter or other mail platform for mini-newsletters
- Allow members to create new mailing lists or wikis on topics of interest
- A podcast??? Or maybe video “quick takes” like the “Mathematical Monk” (h/t Alon)
- Make it easier to share/develop educational materials (e.g. short courses or pre-FnT materials)
- Soliciting and curating success stories for K-12 or other education initiatives (e.g. helping facilitate sustainable and translatable outreach)
Short-term action items

1. **User survey for all IT Society members**
   - Web usage has changed a lot since we first designed site.
   - Current site is mainly of interest to ITSOC insiders – want to know what functionality are valued by members.
   - **Goal:** new initiatives driven by member interest.

   *Easiest to do this through e.g. Google Forms.*

2. **Drive to get more participation in Online Committee**
   - Previous model had fixed roles (e.g. liaisons)
   - Existing composition has been the same for years
   - Need more at-large and special project point people who can head up initiatives (e.g. gathering tutorial materials, spearheading a social media initiative, coordinating Shannon celebrations)

   *Need a mix of students, postdocs, and established figures.*
Good news/bad news

Good news:

• Adriaan is on several IEEE committees for web-based technologies, like the MGA vtools and IT Coordination and Oversight Committees.

• Web technologies have evolved significantly – automatic propagation/dissemination to mailing lists, Twitter, etc. is significantly “easier” than it was n-years ago.

Bad news:

• IEEE support for society sites is limited to a Wordpress (e.g a blog) site + a few bells and whistles.

• Current IEEE initiatives are focused on things like CollabraTec and not on helping individual societies reach their members.
How we can spend our $$$

- **Redesign of the ITSOC site**: a major overhaul would change the look and feel of the site and modernize it.

- **Customizable conference sites**: developing an easier mechanism for making sub-sites for conferences – in the long run giving more control to organizers and taking that cost away from CMS.

- **Security and software upgrades**: partly maintenance, partly making this easier to update in the future.
Website upgrade options (total: $51300–$85500)

**Major redesign:** a new look and feel for the site ($17550 – $39000)
- Modernize design and interface with better association to IEEE brand
- Deploy a responsive design for mobile device users
- Let sub-site owners customize look and feel
- General software upgrades of sub-site management features

**Improved user management and contact:** develop custom interfaces for users in groups/categories ($31500 – $52500)
- security upgrades to user management system
- custom landing pages with relevant links and content category/group
- implement email digests for specific user category/group

**Correspondence:** better email lists etc. ($9000 – $22500)
- implement email digests that aggregate information relevant to each user category/group
My request/proposal

**major revision + better communication**

**Total budget requested: $45,000**

**Justification:**
- IEEE $1m has a short deadline – this is doable in time.
- Allow easier ways for membership to “self-organize.”
- Gives time to survey membership and ascertain member interests.
- If we want to be cautious, other developments can be deferred.
Thank you!