



WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Welcome to ICSE '99

By Will Tracz

ICSE '99 is being held in the "City of Angels" and whether or not this turns out to be a heavenly event, conference attendees will be blessed with fine weather, an excellent technical program, and superb local arrangements. Continuing in the fine tradition established at ICSE-17 in Seattle, over the next four days WOW will bring you late breaking news stories, interviews with speakers, and interesting bits of information about the conference, the location, and the current and next generation of software engineering researchers and practitioners. Stay tuned for more.



Local Arrangements Chair Hal Hart and Meeting Planner Corbin Ball

WOW reporter catches up to the man behind the scenes

An interview with Corbin Ball.

Q. Inquiring minds want to know, what's it like running a big conference?

A. Small and large meetings have roughly the same elements: AV, registration, catering, etc. — it is really just a matter of scale and adding more coffee cups. When you run very large meetings, it becomes increasingly necessary to delegate into management teams for AV, registration, exhibits, etc.

Q. What did you do to make things work right?

A. In meeting planning, two major skills are required: an attention to detail and a desirability to work with people. Ninety-five percent of the work is done prior to the meeting and involves double and triple-checking the arrangements and making sure that the hotel and other suppliers are understanding what you need. It also helps to involve the hotel staff as part of the planning team. Finally, technology and Internet skill are a must to do things efficiently.

Q. What did you do to make things work

right that didn't work as planned?

A. This is an ongoing process in meeting preparation. Things nearly always work out satisfactorily in the end, it just is a matter of taking conflicting desires and circumstances and working through them with the volunteers, hotel and staff to what will be the best options.

Q. What "surprises" did you have?

A. I worked 18 years for a large optical engineering society. One of the biggest surprises is how similar the software engineering association "culture" is to optical engineering — I feel right at home. It has been primarily a matter of learning a new set of acronyms.

Q. I need some logistics about ICSE...

A. Estimated number of attendees 700, number of tutorial registrants 325 and workshop registrants 338, so far. I expect that the number of volunteers would exceed 80. There are about 240 separate event items scheduled for the meeting.

Q. How much effort went into the preparation for ICSE?

A. About 80,000 flyers with the Call, Advance and Reminder cards, 3 meetings in about 16 hours that I was involved with, 19 hours of phone and fax calls and 8,000 email messages received and sent. We are talking ballpark here.

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Weather Forecast

Today (Sunny)
High: 28 C (84 F)
Low: 17 C (63 F)

Tomorrow (P/Cloudy)
High: 26 C (80 F)
Low: 15 C (59 F)

You are Here!

By Mike Walsh

Welcome To Los Angeles.

You have arrived in the fine city of Los Angeles, California. It combines great weather and numerous attractions to delight both the resident and the visitor. Residents would know the area, but visitors might need some guidance.

Weather:

The weather, barring El Nino, is usually beautiful. At this time of the year, you may expect some morning clouds followed by afternoon sunshine. Although it is still relatively early in the year, we do have the Southern California phenomenon of "Visible Air." In many other parts of the country you may have the uncomfortable feeling that the atmosphere outside could be absent because you can't see it. In Los Angeles you can usually look up and note a brown tinge proving air is present. Under some circumstances this will be reinforced by a certain stinging feeling in the eyes. This is sometimes called smog. While smog can frequently be seen by looking up from the ground it is usually more prominent when viewed from above, either from a plane or from a car going over a hill. An excellent spot to view the Los Angeles air is from the top of the Sepulveda pass on the San Diego freeway going into the San Fernando Valley. The sight of brown clouds below you awaiting your descent, can only be regarded as awe inspiring.

Earthquakes:

We haven't had a really big one since the Northridge earthquake of 1994. However, it would not be unlikely for a small earth tremor to occur during the period of this conference. These can be either short jolts or rolling back and forth movements. Most of these are minor and cause no damage. Basically, if it goes on long enough, then it is really time to get worried. What can you do about it? It is a good idea to watch out

for things on shelves above your head and to crouch under something solid such as a desk if the quake is a big one. It is also a good idea to look for close cover as it is dangerous to try to run from one location to another. Large quakes result in a series of aftershocks that occur, usually with increasing times between shakes and a lower level of shaking as time proceeds after the main quake.

Car Chases:

Some years ago as I was driving home to the San Fernando Valley, I was passed by a car traveling at very high speed. I watched it without much concern and then was suddenly passed by police cruiser after police cruiser. Although a bit rattled by this, I maintained my lane and a steady speed while all of the vehicles disappeared ahead of me. As I continued, the traffic jammed up and eventually I passed a scene where the original car had been forced into a freeway fence and was surrounded by patrol cars.

... An excellent spot to view the Los Angeles air is from the top of the Sepulveda pass on the San Diego freeway...

This was the old way, without helicopters or TV coverage. A few months back I went out of my Condo to mail a letter at the corner. In the sky about a block away I counted eight helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft circling. Police cars were heading north at a nearby corner. I walked to the corner, crossed the now quiet street, and mailed some letters. I was delayed in returning across the street by police cars heading the other way with sirens and lights indicating that, regardless of whether the walk light was on, it wasn't a good time to cross the street. I walked home, flipped on the TV, and followed the remaining portion of the chase until it ended with the evader driving through a fence and ramming a police car.



ICSE '99 Registration Desk

If caught in a car chase, the police will expect you to stop if they are using sirens. If they are close stop where you are, otherwise pull over to the roadside. If they aren't using sirens, which is frequently the case during a long car chase, maintain your lane and try to slow down. Don't get curious and try to follow. If you must know what happened find a TV set and start flipping channels until you find a station that is covering the show.

Local Crime and Safety:

The airport area and the general area around the Marriott Hotel are relatively safe and not particularly noted as a "high crime" area. However, this is a large urban area and it is also not an area where it is desirable to wander around by yourself late at night. Be particularly alert in any secluded areas such as parking lots. Although the crime rate is down, there are more police on the streets, and we haven't had a major riot or "civil unrest" since 1991, the bottom line is still that your personal safety is your own responsibility.

Your Chances Are Good:

I have lived in this area for 37 years and that is enough time to observe more than one major earthquake, riot, large scale brush fire, car chase, and major police activity. These events are, however, exceptions, not the rule. You may quite reasonably expect to attend an intellectually stimulating conference and in your spare time take in some of the many attractions of Los Angeles.

ICSE Workshops and Tutorials

First Workshop on Economics-Driven Software Engineering Research

By David Coppit

Yesterday, the First Workshop on Economics-Driven Software Engineering Research brought together representatives from software engineering, management, and industry to create an agenda for research in the field. Kevin Sullivan's opening remarks were followed by presentations by Barry Boehm, Sol Greenspan, Rajiv Banker, Peter Hantos, Mary Shaw, Somesh Jha, and Martha Amram. The diversity of the participants was demonstrated in the wide range of problems identified during the discussion sessions following the presentations. Participants raised concerns over the applicability of economics based approaches to diverse domains, the characterization of value for software, the need for models, formalisms, and decision-making tools, the transfer of research to practitioners, and much more.

Lacking a well-developed body of knowledge, the participants agreed that the initial evaluation criteria for research should be fairly permissive, but that later contributions be held to higher standards. In the short term, there was much interest in identifying case studies in the application of economics-based approaches to software engineering, such as the application of real options theory to decision making for reuse in the face of uncertainty. In the longer term, development of theory, surveys of approaches, comparative analyses, and controlled experiments are the goals.

This workshop was characterized by many questions and few answers. Nevertheless, all participants found the meeting to be useful, as demonstrated by the unanimous agreement to hold another such meeting in the next year. In the interim, Sullivan plans to establish an on-line community to support the development of a common knowl-

edge base and to enable further discussions.

Software Engineering Over the Internet

By Davor Cubranic

The "Software Engineering over the Internet" workshop, organized by Frank Maurer of the University of Calgary, brought together sixteen participants. In all, thirteen papers were presented, broken into four sessions. The first session included Maria Penedo's paper on TRW's experiences with using Web-based virtual rooms for small team collaborations and Stephen Dossick's presentation of using a Quake-like engine for walking through a 3-D representation of a software project in order to enable distributed software development.

Next, there was a joint presentation by Frank Maurer and Harald Holz on using MILOS, a Web-based process support system, for the interleaving of process planning and enactment, and for supporting virtual software corporations. The third session was on experience management. Carolyn Seaman presented her ongoing work on an Internet-enabled software experience factory that uses dynamic query interfaces for browsing and searching, while Carla Blanck Purper talked about a Web-based process center following the German government-mandated standard for software development.

The workshop reconvened after lunch with three papers on the management of software artifacts. Fabiano Cattaneo described a lightweight approach to this issue taken in the Labyrinth project. Brian Hong talked about DISC, a distributed Web-based software configuration management tool. Lastly, Premkumar Devanbu discussed security and privacy issues in automated configuration management of personal workstations over the Internet. In the next session, Richard Hall's presenta-



Second Workshop on Component-Based Software Engineering

tion of software deployment in an enterprise environment and Raymond Wong's on a system supporting "pay-per-use" software sparked a lively discussion on the respective merits of the two approaches to charging for software. Eventually, the participants agreed that there is room for both, although the currently dominant model of one-time fixed payment is likely to remain so in the future.

Following the last session, which consisted of Luis Olsino's presentation of a Web site quality evaluation method, and Davor Cubranic's examination of open-source software development, the workshop ended with a summary discussion of themes visited during the day: the potential for agents in the context of software engineering over the Internet, the noted reliance on the Web as the main channel for user interaction and cross-platform information dissemination, and the future of software engineering in the Internet age. One particularly interesting concluding remark was that perhaps if programmers take the virtual software corporation concept to its extreme, they might eventually operate like law firms: a gathering of experts who hire out their services for work on specific cases (adding that it might not be such a bad model if we also get to bill by the hour). The meeting ended with an applause for Frank Maurer for organizing the workshop, and his call for another such workshop next year.

Tricia Talks Tonight

By Mike Wing

Famous ex-Navy 'sailor' Tricia Oberndorf, now leading the SEI's COTS-Based Systems Initiative, Patricia Oberndorf will share what they have learned. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to join her tonight, at 7 p.m., in the Atlanta/Boston room, right after the ICSE Opening Reception. This promises to be a candid, eye-opening session offering practical advice about organizations and processes.



ABSTRACT

Using commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) products in the development of systems has become increasingly important in recent years. The Software Engineering Institute began their COTS-Based Systems (CBS) Initiative over two years ago. In this talk, Tricia will discuss the make-up of the CBS initiative and some of the things they have learned and put together over the course of the work.

Tricia Oberndorf co-leads the SEI's COTS-Based Systems Initiative. Her work focuses on integration and open systems. Tricia Oberndorf is a Senior Member of the Technical Staff at the Software Engineering Institute. Prior to coming to the SEI, she served the US Navy for over 19 years.

LA Picks

The Getty museum is definitely worthwhile. In fact, it may be the only thing in LA county worth seeing :-). The LAX area is the pits.

The beaches are nice: either go north (Malibu) or to Orange County (Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, Crystal Cove)

D. T.

How many ICSEs have you attended?

By Will Tracz

WOW is running a contest to find out the attendee who has attended the maximum number of ICSEs and identify the person who has attended the earliest. Please drop a note in the suggestions box in the registration area after filling out the following information.

Number of ICSEs attended :
Number of the first ICSE attended (from list below):

The complete ICSE history:
ICSE-1: Washington, DC (1975)
ICSE-2: San Francisco, CA (1976)
ICSE-3: Atlanta, GA (1978)
ICSE-4: Munich, Germany (1979)
ICSE-5: San Diego, CA (1981)
ICSE-6: Tokyo, Japan (1982)
ICSE-7: Orlando, FL (1984)
ICSE-8: London, UK (1985)
ICSE-9: Monterey, CA (1987)
ICSE-10: Singapore (1988)
ICSE-11: Pittsburgh, PA (1989)
ICSE-12: Nice, France (1990)
ICSE-13: Austin, TX (1991)
ICSE-14: Melbourne, Australia (1992)
ICSE-15: Baltimore, MD (1993)
ICSE-16: Sorrento, Italy (1994)
ICSE-17: Seattle, WA (1995)
ICSE-18: Berlin, Germany (1996)
ICSE-19: Boston, MA (1997)
ICSE-20: Kyoto, Japan (April 1998)

The results of this survey would be published in a later issue of WOW.

ICSE '99 Window on the World

Editors-In-Chief:
Will Tracz

Production Editors:
Nikunj Mehta (USC, USA)
Erika Hart (Brown, USA)

Reporters:
Michael Walsh (TRW retired, USA)
David Coppit (Virginia, USA)
Davor Cubranic (UBC, CAN)

Additional Exhibitors

ICSE '99 Addendum

ICSE conference staff is pleased to announce two additional exhibitors, TeraQuest from Austin, TX and +1 Software Engineering from Camarillo, CA.

TeraQuest is a software engineering process improvement consulting company. Through consulting, training and process assessments, it helps its customer achieve significant quality and productivity improvements in the development and maintenance of software products.

+1 Software Engineering supports 14 products in support of build management, configuration management, problem tracking, report generation, software reuse, unit test, integration testing and regression testing, as well as providing reverse engineering support of Ada, C, C++, FORTRAN and Pascal.

LA Picks

There is a great fountain next to the Academy of Music in downtown LA. It comes right out of the ground. Great for kids to run through on a hot day. At certain times it is programmed to dance to music. We've never managed to find a schedule but often took our kids there to cool off. They loved it even though it wasn't dancing.

L. D.

Wanted tickets to *Star Wars: the Phantom Menace*.

Contact member of the WOW staff for more information.

Quote of the Day

*Not everything that counts can be counted,
Not everything that is counted counts.*

A. Einstein.