

CIPScene

Canadian Information Processing Society, Calgary Section

MARCH 2003



CIPS Presentation

MARCH LUNCH MEETING

"Knowledge Sharing and Networking"

Lunch with James Gosling

Speaker

James Gosling,
Sun Microsystems
Laboratories

Date

Wednesday,
March 5, 2003

Time

11:30 am
Registration

12:00 noon
Presentation

Location

Calgary Chamber of
Commerce
4th Floor, 517 Centre
Street South

Well-known former Calgarian James Gosling of Sun Microsystems Labs, will discuss the latest in web services, how standards can bring stability into applications, and important factors affecting information technology. Mr. Gosling is known as the father of Java technology, which he says is one of the "stable innovations" in IT and will continue to grow in importance as the types of intelligent devices connecting to the network evolve.

Many argue that the Java platform is the foundation for web and networked services. Its openness and flexibility have positioned it as the cornerstone for organizations to deliver web services to anyone, anywhere, anytime, to any device. Lunch with James will be a great opportunity to hear from a unique individual who has made a significant contribution to the world of information technology.

James Gosling is currently a Sun Fellow and Vice President at Sun Microsystems Laboratories, where his primary interest is software development tools. His work at Sun allows him to be involved in and witness new applications that are being delivered by web services. He graduated from the University of Calgary and received his PhD in Computer Science from Carnegie-Mellon University.

Please register by noon on Friday, February 28, 2003 as seating is limited.

Register online at https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/forms/cips_lunch.php or phone CIPS at (403) 244-4487. You may send a replacement if you cannot attend. Prepaid seats will be guaranteed until 12:00 noon, at which time they may be released for general admission.

PRICES - Pre-registered
(Prices include GST)

Members - **\$32.50**
Non-members - **\$40.00**
Student Members - **\$21.50**

A two-dollar surcharge will
apply for all walk-ins.

**PLEASE
NOTE!**

CIPS Calgary has adopted a new payment policy for its products and services. **There will no longer be an option to be invoiced. All payments MUST be received before the service is provided.** Payments may be made by credit card, cheque, or cash. If payment is to be made by cheque, please **present the cheque at the event. Do not mail it.** Cash payments will be taken at the door. No-shows will be billed if a reservation has not **been cancelled two days in advance of the event.**

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CIPScene

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(403) 244-4487.

CIPS welcomes articles or story ideas from readers. To submit an article, please contact the CIPS office.

An Evening of Comedy...



**Thursday
March 20, 2003**

(same performers as the weekend)

Doors open at 7:00 pm – Show starts at 8:00 pm

Yuk Yuks - Blackfoot Inn at 5940 Blackfoot Trail SE

COST

Members & Guests: \$7.00 per person

Non-members & Guests: \$10.00 person

Spouses are welcome!

Pre-registration is REQUIRED by March 10, 2003 at
<http://www.associationsplus.ca/cipsig/>
(click on "Social")



For the CIPS Board, the month of March means that elections are fast approaching. This year, we will have several vacancies as board members come to the end of their two-year terms. As we gear-up for election time, I am reminded of one of my favourite Winston Churchill anecdotes. Churchill was, of course, a legendary UK politician who liked nothing better than a good hard-fought election.

While campaigning for parliament in 1900, it is said that the young Churchill was doing a spot of canvassing, when one of those he approached exclaimed: 'Vote for you? Why, I'd rather vote for the Devil!' 'I understand,' Churchill answered. 'But in the case your friend is not running, may I count on your support?'

Well, I am happy to report that CIPS elections are not *quite* so colourful, and I certainly don't know of any occasion when a CIPS member has had to make as tough a choice as the one Churchill alluded to! However, the one thing we do have in common with the political election process is that we need determined men and women of good character to stand and use their talents on behalf of a group of people.

CIPS is part of the fabric of the Calgary business community. Its future success relies on people like you giving an hour or two a week to the cause. We need people who can carry on the tradition built and nurtured in Calgary since 1958.

In case you may have some fledgling thoughts of volunteering for the Board, I want to leave you with some compelling personal reasons for standing for the various positions which will soon be publicized.

1. We have fun on the CIPS Board. We are all volunteers giving up our time and we know that to maintain our enthusiasm, we need to have a good time.
2. You will learn on the CIPS Board. You can gain leadership experience; understand how a committee works and the dynamics that make it successful; and benefit from the knowledge transfer which occurs when you observe how other business professionals handle different situations, manage their time, or interact with others. And remember that, whatever you learn, you can take back to your own professional environment and use to enhance your personal performance.

3. You will develop a whole new network. Did you know that 66% of business professionals find their next job through networking? How extensive is your network?
4. You will have the satisfaction of adding to the rich history and tradition of CIPS in Calgary.
5. You may well discover an outlet for business and organizational talents you didn't know you had – these talents can be referenced and used in your current job or in future jobs.

So, if you are on the fence, maybe jump over to our side and feel free to talk to me, Mohamed Teja, or Maria Anderson about what is involved in participating in CIPS at the board level.

If you have read this far, then it's possible that I still have your attention, so I'll leave you with one more Churchillian quote: 'Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.'

Consider helping CIPS win some opportunities by being on the CIPS board, and I can promise you a positive experience that you will look back on and be glad you had. ☺

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**A Canada-wide
Program**

Speaker

*Adam Geras, Software
Development Consultant*

Date

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Time

7:30 am

*Registration and
continental breakfast*

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Presentation

9:00 am - 9:15 am

*Question and answer period;
wrap-up*

Location

*Calgary Petroleum Club,
Devonian Room
319 - 5 Avenue SW*

Register online at
[https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/
forms/cips_seminars.php](https://secure.nl2k.ab.ca/aplus/forms/cips_seminars.php)
or see page 17 for a fax and/or
mail-back form.

Embracing Change: Retaining the Right Skills for You and Your Organization

Rapid changes and consolidation in the software tools industry are indicative of a dynamic and complex software development industry. In addition, agile methods such as Extreme Programming and Agile Modeling continue to stretch the conventions of our field. Navigating these changes and positioning yourself and your organization for the future isn't easy.

This seminar focuses on software engineering and software management skills that will help you and your organization to improve performance. Whether or not you plan to adopt agile methods, these skills will enhance the likelihood of successful transition and improve delivery capability. They will help you and your organization prepare for both "high ceremony" and "low ceremony" projects. It's all about delivery capability and having enough options in your portfolio to be able to continually improve it, even in the face of rapid change in our industry and in the industries we serve.

Adam Geras is a software development consultant and student specializing in:

- The component and object-oriented software development process
- Managing requirements and requirements-based testing
- Testing tools and technology
- XML and XML-related technologies

- Coaching and mentoring project teams on object-oriented analysis, design, and development
- Coaching and mentoring project teams on managing projects with an iterative software life cycle.

Mr. Geras successfully brings over thirteen years of software engineering experience in the software consulting and Internet industries. He has been a technical lead on both Microsoft-oriented projects and on Java-oriented projects, giving him unique insight into component technologies and projects that use them. He has designed the solution and application architecture for dot-com startups and click-and-mortar companies launching Internet ventures. His focus remains on configuring the software process and coaching/mentoring companies in the use of object-oriented techniques, including Rational Unified Process™ and agile processes such as eXtreme programming and agile modeling. He has worked with small, medium, and large companies to improve their software development process, in particular, their software testing practices. Mr. Geras enjoys teaching and is an instructor with the University of Calgary's Object-Oriented Software Technologies program. He holds a Bachelor of Science, Computer Engineering degree from the University of Manitoba. He also holds a diploma in Nuclear Medicine Technology from the Red River Community College in Winnipeg. He is a Sun Certified Java 2 Architect and a member of the Association for Computing Machinery and IEEE. He is currently taking his Masters of Software Engineering at the University of Calgary in Calgary, Alberta. ☺

Join us for this invaluable breakfast session!

CIPS CALGARY GOLD SPONSORS



CIPS CALGARY 2002-2003
SEMINAR SERIES

CIO Liaison

Stuart Quinn, Director



CIPS is dedicated to fostering networking among its members and key stakeholders. As the CIPS Calgary CIO Liaison, my role is to provide Calgary IT leaders an opportunity for regular networking and to foster communications to ultimately create a healthier Calgary IT community.

On December 10th, we hosted a Breakfast at the Petroleum Club which was sponsored by THE CIO SUMMIT®. The topic of this meeting's roundtable was to try to identify the key issues being faced by Calgary's IT leaders. Barry Clavir (Executive Producer of The CIO Summit®) moderated the discussion and provided some feedback received at the recent CIO Summit® held in Toronto. Barry also announced that he would be producing a Western CIO Summit® to be held in Calgary in the June timeframe.

The roundtable produced some very interesting discussion with the following emerging as key themes that Calgary IT Leaders are wrestling with:

General Themes:

- Focus on efficiency: both in IT operations and in assisting the business in shrinking its costs. Also a renewed interest in IT governance.
- Pace and volume of change: creating issues for IT Leaders. The reasons for the change varied but included: mergers and acquisitions, regulatory and privacy issues, and the adoption of new technology.
- Security and privacy: growing rapidly as an area of concern and attention primarily around network and data security issues with wireless technology adoption and new privacy legislation (Bill C-6).
- Growing frustration and distrust of the vendor and consulting community: due to a belief that there has been more hype and less substance in recent vendor and consulting products and services.

Also, many clients are feeling as if they are being held hostage to recent software vendor pricing practices.

- Knowledge management: is being viewed from a very skeptical perspective yet, with demographic changes and an aging workforce, it is becoming an important issue to provide continuity for the business.
- New forms of collaboration: among what may have been previously viewed as competitors to find synergies and mutual benefits.
- Challenges of cultural changes: created by many of the above issues.

If your organization is interested in sponsoring a CIO Breakfast, please contact Stuart Quinn at stuartq@shaw.ca. Topics that will be considered for the group should demonstrate thought leadership in IT management, operations, or technology and not be marketing-oriented. ☛

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CIPS CALGARY SPONSORSHIP PROFILE



Sun Microsystems is a CIPS Calgary Platinum Sponsor

About Sun Microsystems: Sun started in 1982 with four employees. Now, "with offices in 170 countries, Sun is a \$18.25 billion global leader in network computing solutions that 'Take it to the nth' ".¹ The Alberta office is helping to do just that.

Sun started operations in Calgary in 1986. Sun's technology "is the preferred platform" of many oil and gas producers in Alberta, according to Garry Rasko, Market Development Manager, Prairie Region.

However, Sun is not limited to Alberta's oil and gas industry. It has roots in the education community as well. Sun has two of four Sun Centers of Excellence in Alberta: the Sun Center of Excellence in Visual Genomics at the University of Calgary and the Sun Center of Excellence in eLearning at the University of Alberta. The Sun Center of Excellence program helps build new technologies that advance academic research.

According to Gord Sissons, Vice President of Technology and Products at Sun's Canadian Headquarters in Markham, Ontario, Sun is also providing businesses with technology solutions that advance time-to-market, reduce costs, and improve return on investment (ROI) through Grid Computing.

Grid Computing will enable organizations (especially oil and gas) that depend on the accuracy of high-

end visualization techniques to make critical decisions faster. And to be an industry leader, making critical decisions faster is paramount.

Sun has been able to attract and keep industry leaders as customers through its incessant innovation, ability to meet customer needs and provide its customers key learning services, and its ability to grow and maintain customer relationships.

In 2003, Sun believes the key to maintaining high-end relationships is the ability to teach self-monitoring and the ability to safeguard oneself against security leaks. Companies must guard their most important assets — their data. To secure data, Sissons recommends implementing security mechanisms that are proportional to the threat. For example, he notes that in some instances, an "air gap" (or physical separation) between a research or engineering network and a corporate network may be the best policy. Another policy that provides a solution to security leaks is the implementation of digital identification, which has been called the business issue of the decade. Practicing what it preaches, Sun has a digital identification system in place (Sun ONE Directory Server) that entitles certain users access to certain information — yet another reason customers trust Sun Microsystems.

Sun is able to provide its customers with the best solutions because it works with a community (iForce) of partners to deliver customer-driven solutions that incorporate the best technology and services. There is the understanding that no single vendor can provide customers with the best solutions.

By working with a community of partners and providing its customers with the knowledge necessary to succeed, Sun ensures enduring relationships that build the cornerstones of a solid business model for themselves, which is necessary to withstand setbacks within the IT industry. Sun is still standing, while others crumble. ■

Jolene Fleming
bfleming@telusplanet.net



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¹ Sun Microsystems, "Sun History" at <http://www.sun.com/aboutsun/coinfo/history.html#2001>



Student Update

The third CIPS student event of the year was held on Thursday evening, January 23rd, 2003 at DeVry Institute. The industry speaker was Catherine Brownlee, who is the proprietor, CEO, and president of Prominent Personnel (a Calgary-based executive head hunting firm). Ms.

Brownlee discussed how to write effective resumes, cover letters, and letters of resignation and the significance of choosing your references wisely. Catherine emphasized the importance of knowing what your references will say about you if contacted. References should include three types of people: 1) a direct supervisor, 2) a coworker, and 3) someone you supervised or, if not applicable, a past professor or long-time friend.

Ms. Brownlee also discussed the effectiveness of "cold calling" when applying for a posted job position. She mentioned helpful tips including: having high energy before making the call, asking open-ended questions, and having knowledge of the posted company position. During the interview process, many potential employees are asked behavioral questions such as:

- 1) "Tell me your finest hour in the past six months";
- 2) "Were you ever criticized for your work? What were these criticisms?";
- 3) "What kinds of people do you enjoy working with most? Least?"; and
- 4) "What is most important to you in a job?"

Students should come prepared to interviews with answers to questions like this in mind. Catherine

stressed the consequences of not knowing the difference between having a "working knowledge" of a subject and having a "proficiency" in it. One of the most important points brought up during the presentation was that you must be aware of your weaknesses. Otherwise, *not* being aware of your weaknesses becomes your biggest weakness. I would like to thank Catherine Brownlee for an evening packed with insightful career skills tips and advice.

Looking ahead, the industry speaker for the month of March will be Ted Barnicoat, I.S.P. who is the CIO of the Calgary-based Trimac Transportation Logistics office. The topic for this industry night is: "What does a CIO really do? Is it a job to aspire to?" A CIO needs to be a diplomat and a salesman with a touch of geek, and not too much ego.

Trimac is one of the largest bulk truck transportation companies in North America. Ted will discuss the role of the CIO and some of the attributes a CIO needs to survive and be the business leader of an information systems services function. Ted is a grizzled veteran of many battles and will enlighten and entertain students about his industry experiences. The date and time of this CIPS student event is Thursday, March 13, 2003, 7:00 pm at SAIT. The room location will be posted on the CIPS website. I look forward to seeing many students at the last student event of the year!

For details about upcoming CIPS events, check out our website at: www.cips.ca/calgary. In addition, if you have any questions about the CIPS Student Section, feel free to contact me at: leith@cpsc.ucalgary.ca.

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CIPS Calgary Section

Future Meeting Dates – 11:30 am

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Wednesday, April 2, 2003

Wednesday, June 4, 2003

*All meetings are held at the
Calgary Chamber of Commerce
4th Floor, 517 Centre Street South*

CIPS Events

March 5, 2003	CJUG SIG <i>Breakfast Meeting with James Gosling</i> 7:30 am - 9:00 am Ramada Hotel Grand Ball Room 708 - 8 Avenue SW
March 20, 2003	SEMINAR SERIES <i>Embracing Change: Retaining the Right Skills for You and Your Organization</i> 7:30 am - 9:15 am Calgary Petroleum Club 319 - 5 Avenue SW
March 20, 2003	CIPS SOCIAL <i>An Evening of Comedy</i> 7:00 pm - Doors open 8:00 pm - Show starts Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club 5940 Blackfoot Trail SE
April 10, 2003	PROJECT MANAGEMENT SIG <i>REDIS Phase I</i> Fifth Avenue Place Conference Centre 2 Floor, West Tower 237 - 4 Avenue SW
May 4 - 7, 2003	CIPS INFORMATICS CONFERENCE <i>Working Here, There, and Everywhere</i> Charlottetown, PEI

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CIPS Informatics Conference

Connected Organizations: Working Here, There, and Anywhere

May 4 – 7, 2003

Charlottetown, PEI – Delta Prince Edward Hotel



"Connectivity: the quality or state of being connective or connected; especially: the ability to connect to or communicate with another computer or computer system."

– Merriam-Webster OnLine



2003 INFORMATICS will be held in Charlottetown, May 4-7, at the Delta Prince Edward Hotel. This year's conference will examine the impact of Connectivity on:

- Organizations;
- Managers;
- Industry; and
- The Public Sector.

Each of these four streams will be considered from the perspective of four sub-themes:

- Technology;
- Human Resources;
- Infrastructure; and
- Process.

Among the many questions that we will be attempting to answer are:

- What will be expected of the professional?
- What will be required to manage a virtual team?
- How will industry be transformed by new technologies?
- What changes will be demanded from the public sector?

Come to Charlottetown this spring and add your voice to this wide-ranging and essential discussion. Take four days in May to meet, share, and learn with high-profile speakers such as:

- Jonathan Schwartz, Executive VP of Sun Microsystems' Software Group
- Gil Gordon, Telecommuting Consultant and Author
- Dr. Linda Duxbury, Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University
- Andy Blenkarn, I.S.P., Senior VP, EDS Canada
- Debra Keeling, Channel Business Manager, HP Software Solutions; and
- Dr. Paul Roman, Consultant, Army Simulation Centre, Canadian Armed Forces.

Take the opportunity to attend two of eight great Sunday half-day tutorials, and seven of 28 fantastic presentations on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. All this doesn't even include the many keynote sessions and panel discussions!

I.S.P. holders should take note that, by attending just this one conference, you will earn one quarter of your annual education re-certification credits! And people interested in getting their I.S.P. designations through the ICCP exam route, take note that ICCP exams may be offered at the conference.

Socially, delegates will have the opportunity to:

- Attend a welcome reception at the Confederation Centre of the Arts and tour the Art Gallery;
- Tour Founder's Hall, where the Fathers of Confederation met to discuss the union of the Colonies;
- Help CIPS celebrate 45 years of support and promoting the IT industry;
- Roll up your sleeves and dig into a great lobster meal; and
- Finish up the conference on the golf course for CIPS Charlottetown's golf tournament.

All this and you pay less than many one-day private training classes! The full package, which includes Tutorials, all the Conference sessions, plus the Social events, costs you only \$1,299.00! How many of us have paid at least that much for a one-day course?

Complete conference details including registration details are available online at <http://www.cipsinformatics.ca>

We look forward to seeing you in May! ☺

CIPS CALGARY SILVER SPONSORS



Project Management SIG

The Project Management SIG meets four to five times a year and brings together speakers on current topics in IS Project Management.

Sessions (and beverages) are provided at no cost. Attendees are invited to bring along their own lunches.

Our next session is scheduled for Thursday, April 10, and will feature Duane Martin, Project Manager for the implementation of the Regional Emergency Department Information Systems (REDIS) at the Calgary Health Region.

REDIS Phase 1 was a \$2.7 million initiative to automate the emergency departments of the four acute care hospitals (Foothills, Rockyview, Peter Lougheed Centre, and Alberta Children's Hospital). The objective of the new system is to track the patient through the entire emergency experience from triage through outcome and to improve communication among caregivers.

Duane has been managing projects for 25 years. He will share with us the challenges of this particular implementation and the key strategies that he and his team followed over the course of two years to produce a successful outcome.

Our sponsor for this session is Ethier Associates. Ethier Associates delivers project-based consulting services for business and IT customers. It specializes in Project Management, Business Process Innovation, and Business Systems Analysis.

The session will be held:

Date	Thursday, April 10, 2003
Time	12:00 noon (sharp) to 1:00 p.m.
Location	Fifth Avenue Place Conference Centre 2nd Floor, West Tower 237 - 4 Avenue SW

Check out our website and sign up as a member of the SIG. All members will receive email notifications of upcoming events. Membership is free of charge.

To register for an event, visit the CIPS SIG website at: <http://www.associationsplus.ca/cipsig/>

Should you wish further information, please contact:

Karen Wright – Partner, Ethier Associates
Phone: (403) 234-8960
Email: kwright@ethierassociates.ca

Ken Wiens – President, KGW Consultants Ltd.
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Karen Wright
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kwright@ethierassociates.ca

Visual Basic

Bob Morton
(403) 237-5740 x 304
bobm@wardvinge.com

To post your upcoming SIG events, contact Nguyen Tran by phone at (403) 514-4004 or email ntran@cips.ca.

Calgary Java Users Group

Breakfast with James Gosling will be a great opportunity to hear from the father of Java. There will be ample opportunity to ask questions and hear about his current work.

Gosling is currently a Sun Fellow and VP at Sun Microsystems Laboratories where his primary interest is software development tools. His work at Sun allows him to be involved in and see new applications that are being delivered by web services.

He graduated from the University of Calgary and received his Ph.D. in Computer Science from Carnegie-Mellon University.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Gunter Sammet by email: Gunter@SammySolutions.com or by phone 210-2603.

Event	<i>CJUG Breakfast Meeting with James Gosling</i>
Date	March 5, 2003
Time	7:30 am - 9:00 am
Topic	TBA (see www.cjug.com for up-to-date information)
Location	Ramada Hotel Grand Ball Room 708 - 8 Avenue SW
Cost	\$15.00 (includes hot breakfast buffet)

Note: Purchasing a meal ticket is required for this event. Payment can be made by cash only. ☛

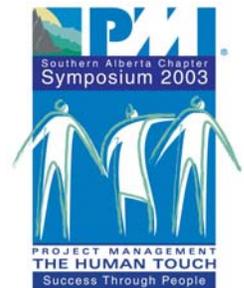
Project Management Institute: Upcoming Symposium

The Project Management Institute – Southern Alberta Chapter (PMI-SAC) is pleased to provide more details regarding the 2003 Symposium "Project Management: The Human Touch – Success Through People".

The Keynote Dinner Reception on Thursday May 1, 2003 is traditionally the most popular networking event at the Symposium. This year's event promises not to disappoint! Relax at an evening of fine dining, networking with colleagues and being inspired by keynote speaker Don Bell of WestJet Airlines.

In addition to exceptional speakers, this year's Symposium will also include a trade show to further enhance each attendee's experience. Over twenty exhibitors, including established organizations and young, hot newcomers, will showcase their products and services for you - the movers and shakers in the project management profession! The Exhibition Hall will be open to attendees on Thursday and Friday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm each day.

To ensure everyone has the opportunity to realize the significant savings of registering early, we have extended the early registration discount deadline to March 31, 2003. And, all early bird registrants will be eligible to win one of several Microsoft prizes. Visit <http://www.pmisac.com/symposium/2003> for more information and to register for the event. We are updating the website as information becomes available! ☛



CIPS CALGARY BRONZE SPONSORS



To find out how YOUR company can sponsor CIPS Calgary, contact the CIPS office at (403) 244-4487 or Michelle Cariou at (403) 261-5903.

LAUGH BYTES

Rant On!

Join us for
more laughs
at the next
CIPS Social
at Yuk Yuk's
Comedy Club
on March 20!

When I was a kid, adults used to bore me to tears with their tedious lectures about how hard things were when they were growing up, what with walking twenty-five miles to school every morning uphill both ways through year-round blizzards carrying their younger siblings on their backs to their one-room schoolhouses where they maintained straight-A averages, despite their full-time after-school jobs at the local textile mill where they worked for 35 cents an hour just to help keep their family from starving to death!

And I remember promising myself that, when I grew up, there was no way in hell I was going to lay a bunch of crap like that on kids about how hard I had it and how easy they've got it! However...

Now that I've reached the ripe old age of twenty-nine, I can't help but look around and notice the youth of today.

You've got it so easy!

I mean, compared to my childhood, you live in Utopia!

And I hate to say it but, you kids today don't know how good you've got it! I mean, when I was a kid, we didn't have the Internet... if we wanted to know something, we had to go to the library and look it up ourselves! And there was no email! We had to actually write somebody a letter – with a pen! – and then you had to walk all the way across the street and put it in the mailbox and it would take, like a week to get there!

And there were no MP3s or Napsters! If you wanted to steal music, you had to go to the record store and shoplift it yourself! Or you had to wait around all day to tape it off the radio and the DJ would usually talk over the beginning and screw it all up!

We didn't have fancy stuff like "Call Waiting"! If you were on the phone and somebody else called, *they got a busy signal!* And we didn't have fancy Caller ID boxes either! When the phone rang, you had no idea who it was – it could be your boss, your mom, a collections agent, your drug dealer... you just didn't know!!! You had to pick it up and take your chances, mister!

And we didn't have fancy Sony Playstation videogames with high-resolution 3-D graphics! We had the Atari 2600 – with games like "Space Invaders" and "Asteroids" and the graphics sucked! Your guy was a little square! You had to use your imagination! There were no multiple levels or screens; it was just one screen forever! And you could never win – the game just kept getting harder and faster until you died – just like LIFE!

When you went to the movie theater, there was no such thing as stadium seating. All the seats were the same height! If a tall guy sat in front of you, you were screwed!

Sure, we had cable television but, back then, that was only like twenty channels and there was no onscreen menu! You had to use a little book called a TV Guide to find out what was on!

And there was no Cartoon Network! You could only get cartoons on Saturday morning... D'ya hear what I'm saying!?! We had to wait ALL WEEK, you spoiled little brats!

That's exactly what I'm talking about! You kids today have got it too easy!

You're spoiled, I swear to God! You guys wouldn't last five minutes back in 1984! ☹

Unknown, unless someone wants to lay claim to it...

WHAT IS CIPS?

CIPS is a group of professionals from all areas of IT. We offer the only IT professional designation (the I.S.P.) in Canada. Our events, including regular seminars, luncheons, and conferences, are dedicated to promoting continuous learning and networking opportunities. Through learning from other like-minded professionals, we are able to stay ahead in this fast-paced industry.



In the January 2003 issue of this newsletter, Richard Thompson, President of CIPS Alberta, outlined the activities of the CIPS Alberta Board for the 2002-2003 operating year. I have the privilege of informing you about a few of the key activities the board members are undertaking. We will also publish the results of these activities to the CIPS Alberta membership in due course.

Survey of IT Consumers

The CIPS Alberta Board is concerned with the degree of awareness and understanding of the I.S.P. designation in the marketplace.

Accordingly, we have contracted Incite Solutions, Inc. to conduct 20 to 25 telephone interviews with a selection of human resource managers from large organizations. At the time of writing, this survey is to be undertaken in February and the results will be communicated to the membership in April. CIPS Alberta is to identify and select organizations that represent the I.S.P.'s primary IT Consumer market. The following major steps outline the process to be undertaken by Incite Solutions in February:

- Develop the interview questionnaire.
- Pre-test the questionnaire using two or three individuals.
- Administer the survey.
- Compile the results.
- Prepare the final report and action items.

Media Relations Management

The CIPS Alberta Board is concerned with maintaining awareness of the value of the I.S.P. designation. The Board has decided to be proactive in issuing to the media news releases and articles in advance of technology-related issues. The outcome of the Survey of IT Consumers is expected to guide the Board regarding what communications need to be made. Incite Solutions, Inc. will serve as the media relations quarterback for CIPS Alberta in terms of identifying opportunities and coordinating CIPS Alberta volunteers to deliver on such opportunities. The following activities will be undertaken and completed in the May to June time frame:

- Determine the 2003 schedule of IT-related publications, special issues, opportunities, etc. across Alberta.
- Contact key publications and media contacts to obtain opportunities to provide feature articles on IT-focused topics written by an I.S.P. A small CIPS

Alberta/I.S.P. blurb would appear at the end of the article (similar to the Chartered Accounting feature at the back of the Alberta Venture magazine or to the regular sales/marketing feature in Edmonton's Commerce News).

- Draft a press release and/or personally contact selected media on a fixed, quarterly schedule to build and maintain relationships and awareness of CIPS Alberta and the I.S.P. designation.
- Monitor, on an ongoing basis, potential advertising options, interview opportunities, event postings, etc. and draft specific press releases as required.

Website Re-design - We Need Your Input!

The CIPS Alberta membership is being requested to provide input to the CIPS Alberta Board on the usability and value of the information provided in the CIPS Alberta website (www.cips.ca/alberta).

The Survey of IT consumers also contains questions related to what value, if any, the site provides to industry. Incite Solutions, Inc. will conduct the following:

Usability Survey – A short online survey will be sent via email to CIPS Alberta members and posted as a pop-up window on the CIPS Alberta website for two to three weeks to gather feedback from current users on the existing site. This information will be combined with that gained from the Survey of IT Consumers.

Site Redesign – A complete site redesign with enhanced site architecture, an improved graphical user interface, streamlined content, and a consistent layout/design on all pages throughout the site is to be done. A clean, modern, and professional image combined with features such as drop-down menu items and the addition of images/photos will make the site more visually appealing and easier to navigate. Key steps will include:

- Develop a new site map.
- Design a shell (template) for the new site.
- Modify the content.
- Acquire visuals (images/photos).
- Develop a draft version of the new site.
- Develop advanced features.
- Launch the new site.

Advanced features – The development of a member login section and a resource centre for the IT and HR professional communities will increase traffic to the site and increase the site's profile and professionalism.





Alberta Regional Director's Update

Right about now, some of you may be wondering why my photo and name appear with the Alberta Regional Director's update. You may be thinking that someone may have made a mistake

while putting CIPScene together. Well, the truth is that no one has erred – I am indeed one of the Alberta Regional Directors. In addition to my role as Past President on the CIPS Calgary Board, I have also volunteered to fill the Alberta Regional Director's role on the CIPS National Board until May 2004.

As you know, Barrie Cameron, I.S.P., had been a Regional Director on the CIPS National Board for a number of years. Barrie decided to resign from the role late last year and I offered to step in until the end of the term. Why would I do this, you ask? There are a number of reasons why this role interests me. After holding various directorships on the local Board for the past four years, it's time for me to broaden my perspective of the CIPS organization. Being a Board member at the Section level is a great experience, but having a National perspective is very beneficial to our members, not only locally but also across the country. I believe that this local experience gives me a more rounded perspective on the National Board, as well.

Here are some of the initiatives that CIPS National is currently working on:

- The I.S.P. Review Committee is currently looking into developing multiple paths toward obtaining the designation currently offered by CIPS. As well, some issues this committee is tackling include the development of a Common Body Of Knowledge (CBOK) and/or a process whereby to assess Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). This will be particularly exciting to those IT professionals who do not possess a formal computer science education but have acquired industry knowledge over many years.
- CIPS National is working with the federal Government to obtain additional funding for CIPS and also make CIPS more visible, especially when IT matters arise requiring our expertise. Other countries often approach CIPS for our expertise.

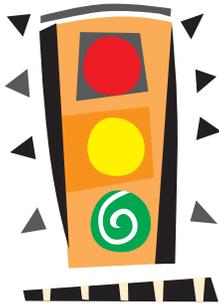
In order for CIPS to continue working at the international level, we need the support of the Canadian government.

- The Societal Transition Committee, of which I am a part, is assisting the National Board with how to evolve as a professional society. The I.S.P. definitely ties into this discussion and also how we become more relevant in the ICT industry. Being new to this initiative, I am still learning what the issues are but am impressed with the calibre of people on this committee and the amount of work that's already been done. If you would like to read more about this initiative, go to <http://www.cips.ca/transition>.
- CPAC (College Program Accreditation Council) has merged with the ISAC (I.S. Accreditation Council). CPAC was formed in 1988 in order to identify those colleges and technical institutes offering diploma level programs which meet the needs of employers and involve the application of computers to the solution of business related problems. ISAC is an autonomous body established in 1996 by the Canadian Information Processing Society (CIPS) to review and accredit undergraduate Management Information Systems (MIS) programs at Canadian universities on a voluntary basis. The responsibilities of these councils will remain separate; however, they will share volunteer resources. Ideally, in the future, there will be one accreditation council with multiple committees to deal with different accreditation routes.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of Informatics 2003 in Charlottetown, P.E.I. It will be held in May 2003 and it's sure to be a great event in a very beautiful part of our country. For more information, visit www.cipsinformatics.ca.

In closing, I invite CIPS members to contact me with any questions or concerns that you would like discussed at CIPS National. I am here to not only bring CIPS members up-to-date on what is happening at the national level, but also to bring your concerns or ideas forward. My email address is manderson@cips.ca – feel free to send me an email at any time. ☛

Calgary's Traffic Signals



The City of Calgary maintains over 760 traffic signals and traffic control devices within the city limits, installing about 25 new signals per year. A traffic signal consists of all the lights at one intersection.

Traffic Control Devices

Every traffic signal is controlled by a computer (traffic control device). Engineers consider

traffic flow and volume for every intersection and then calculate how a signal should operate. The traffic device for an intersection is then programmed to control the signal, which can be a fixed cycle regardless of traffic demand (such as signals in the downtown core), or which can be changed by input from a sensor.

The traffic signals downtown are programmed to allow a longer green light for morning traffic coming to the core and, as the day progresses, the program changes to allow the longer green light to traffic *leaving* the core. Such signals can have four or five timing pattern changes per day.

Traffic Sensors

Some signals have inductive loop detectors buried in turn lanes and through-traffic lanes. The loop is electrically charged which creates a magnetic field. When a vehicle goes over a sensor, the magnetic field is disturbed and the sensor lets the traffic control device know that a vehicle is waiting for a green light, or it counts the traffic by recording the gap between disturbances in the magnetic field. The control device then adjusts the timing of the light to favour the waiting vehicle or allow the greater volume of traffic to proceed.

Emergency vehicles can transmit a priority signal to a traffic control device which changes the light and allows the emergency vehicle to pass through an intersection more safely. This signal is used mainly around fire stations where a truck needs to access a main route quickly.

Pre-emptive signals are transmitted by C-trains, some buses, and emergency vehicles. The transmission lets the traffic control device anticipate a vehicle with a large passenger load and allow it a green light at a

sooner opportunity. In the case of C-trains, the pre-emptive signal lowers the train crossing barriers and causes the warning lights to flash.

The Computers that Control (Almost) Everything

Half of the city's signals are connected to a central computer system located in the Municipal Building. The data is transferred via a city-owned cable network at 1200 baud (about 2400 bps), and stored in a database.

The traffic signals department has used the Management Information System for Transportation (MIST) for over five years. The system collects data from traffic control devices; every fifteen minutes, the system updates a record of traffic volume for an intersection, and a report tracks every pre-emptive signal or pedestrian request made to a device.

A city map displays every intersection that is connected to MIST, using an arrow icon that points in the direction which traffic is currently flowing. Clicking on an arrow brings up a real-time display of a specific intersection, including the location of sensors that change from blue to yellow when a vehicle drives over it.

Four servers manage the entire traffic department. One server communicates with all the field equipment and control devices via modem; one server is a database where all the collected traffic data resides, one stores all the traffic control programs; and one controls the local area network for the traffic signals department.

Traffic Signal Engineers monitor the equipment and maintain the system but, if anything happened to one of the servers, the traffic control devices in the field would still continue to execute self-contained programs. ☛

*Suzanne Kaprowski
suzkap@canada.com*

Reference:

Ahmad Radmanesh. City of Calgary Traffic Signals Department. Personal Interview 15 January 2003



Registration Form - Seminar Series 2002-2003

Name _____ Company _____

Company address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____

Email _____

Individual ticket(s)

Member _____ @ \$40.00 = \$ _____

Non-member _____ @ \$50.00 = \$ _____

Student _____ @ \$20.00 = \$ _____

Total = \$ _____

Seminar Series Packages (members only)

Attend 3 Seminars _____ @ \$102.00 = \$ _____

Total = \$ _____

Please indicate seminar choice(s) according to package selection:

Embracing Change: Retaining the Right Skills for You and Your Organization

March 20, 2003

To Be Determined

April 17, 2003

To Be Determined

May 15, 2003

Check our website at www.cips.ca/calgary for updates on speakers and topics as they become available.

CIPS Calgary has adopted a new payment policy for its products and services.

There will no longer be an option to be invoiced. **All payments must be received before the service is provided.** Payments may be made by credit card, cheque, or cash. If payment is to be made by cheque, please present the cheque at the event. **Do not mail it.** Cash payments will be taken at the door. **No-shows will be billed if a reservation has not been cancelled two days in advance of the event.**

All prices include GST.

GST #10421 66619 RT0001

Ticket prices non-refundable.

Should you be unable to attend, please send an alternate.

Payment

Enclosed is a cheque made payable to CIPS Calgary Section (mail orders only)

Please charge my credit card Visa Mastercard American Express

Card number _____ Expiry date _____

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Fax this portion to CIPS Calgary Section office at (403) 244-2340 or mail to PO Box 4091, Station C, Calgary, Alberta T2T 5M9



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