

2003 INCOSE Avenue of the Saints (AoS) Conference on Systems Engineering

By: Mr. Tony Thompson (AoS Conference Chair) and Mr. John Povacz (Tutorial Chair)

Summary

The Heartland, Midwest Gateway and North Star Chapters of INCOSE, recently concluded the inaugural INCOSE AoS Conference on Systems Engineering conveniently located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The mission of 2003 AoS Conference was to foster the definition, understanding and practice of world-class systems engineering in industry, academia and government.

Report Out

Responses from attendees, vendors and presenters have been very positive. We are currently receiving requests from other local specialty chapters (IEEE, ASQ, PMI, etc.) to combine future conference agendas for attendance and cross-discipline communications leveraging. Also, we have received a request for conference planning assistance from the INCOSE Crossroads (Indiana/Illinois) Chapter.

Tutorials

Target Costing - Ms. Tami Capperauld/Ms. Janet Horton (Boeing): Very well attended with approximately fifteen people. Tami also performed additional private training with RC Finance for approximately twenty financial analysts. Not certain if this additional training was conducted at additional costs to RC. This tutorial was not recorded due to proprietary restrictions.

MSN Frameworks - Mr. Jeff Carter (Rockwell Collins): Very well attended with approximately twelve people. This tutorial was recorded; slides only are available for review.

Target Costing: Pursuit and Order Capture - Mr. Carl Watts (Rockwell Collins): Well attended with approximately eleven people. This tutorial was recorded; slides only are available for review.

JTRS Overview - Mr. Ken Ackerman (JTRS JPO), Col. MacLaird (JTRS JPO), Col. Whitehurst (AFC2ISRC), Mr. Ed Calhoun (Rockwell Collins): Very well attended with approximately thirty four people. This tutorial was recorded; slides only are available for review. All four presenters also conducted two days of technical discussions with the RC Program Office and Advanced Technology Center (ATC). All four presenters also had private tour of RC facilities and labs.

Presentations

Eighteen Technical Presentations, using three simultaneous training tracks were conducted. Attendance at each presentation ranged from nine to twenty people, depending on the topic.

Follow-on Actions

To date, numerous requests have been made for DVD copies of the recorded tutorials, especially JTRS. All requests have been provided copies of the presentation slides. John is leading the rendering activities. Discussions with RC Marketing, A/V and Learning and Development are on-going to create budget estimates for DVD rendering. Options include placing the tutorials on Oasis or Centra. Oasis would provide access accounting and may be linked to Systems Engineering Training. In addition Oasis would provide DVDs for distribution upon request. Centra could provide video minus the slides, or slides with voice-over minus the video. Preference is to create the rendering in Oasis. Learning and Development will provide a cost estimate in early April. Learning and Development may also provide funding for DVD rendering, but not certain for this fiscal year.

Present AoS conference results to INCOSE Symposium 2003, Crystal City, VA Chapters Meeting scheduled for June 29 - July 3. Also, we will begin Knowledge Management / Systems Engineering Certification discussions while in attendance at the INCOSE Symposium 2003.

Update the INCOSE Heartland WebPages to include AoS Conference results, conference photos, available slides for downloads, and sale items (cups, shirts).

Finalize budget expenditures and income for a consolidated financial statement. Not all billings have been received. Expected completion is mid-April.

Begin discussions with the INCOSE NorthStar and Gateway Chapters to initiate planning efforts for the next AoS Conference.

Provide conference services to the INCOSE Crossroads (Indiana/Illinois) Chapter.

Summary of Registration

- Banquet - sixty four registered for the evening
- Tuesday's Four Tutorials with twenty seven registered for the day
- Wednesday Eighteen Break out Session with seventy three registered for the day
- RC-Tour was cancelled due to four of the original seven registered for the tour enjoyed a private ATC tour the day prior
- Seven "New" INCOSE Members

Exhibitors

- Rockwell Collins
- Artisan Software
- Distributive Software
- I-Logix, INCOSE Heartland Chapter
- Predicate Logic
- Popkin Software
- Telelogic
- The MathWorks Inc.
- Vitech Corp.

Companies in attendance:

- Rockwell Collins
- Boeing
- US Air Force
- The MITRE Corp
- Computing Solutions
- Deere & Company
- Defense Contract Management Command
- DISTek Integration, Inc.
- Distributive Software
- Hornbacher Associates
- IBM/ Rational Software
- I-Logix
- Joshua Tree Performance Improvement, Inc.
- Mathworks
- Popkin Software
- Rational
- Synopsys, Inc.
- Telelogic
- Tychometrics - Predicate Logic
- Vitech Corp.
- Univ. of Iowa
- ISU Students
- UI Students

Lessons Learned

- Sponsorship works. Both monetary and no monetary support is crucial during the event life cycle.
- E-commerce works, 81% of the 2003 AoS registrations were via our website (www.incose.org/heartld). We enabled our website for event sales and online purchasing capabilities via Mollyguard Events (<http://www.mollyguard.com>). Mollyguard Events allows event holders to quickly and effortlessly collect registration fees online for your events. Transactions are processed by online payment leader PayPal (<http://www.paypal.com>). We, the event organizer, received the monies directly into our own account at the time of the transaction.
- Establish make money plan early as part of overall marketing strategy for targeted demographics works.
- Establish communication early works. Utilize established marketing strategy for communication plan tailoring, things to consider:
 - Direct mailing (5 prior) follow up with e-mail campaign (1 and 3 week(s)prior)
 - Internal letters INCOSE company sponsors (2 weeks prior)
 - News release to media such as newspaper, television radio (3 weeks prior)
 - Publish event on internet chapter web page and incose.org events calendar
 - Publish to chamber of commerce's event calendars as well as other local event calendars
 - Ask other organizations to publish event in their respective newsletters such as INCOSE, PMI, ASQ, ASM, etc.
 - Continued communication to membership and partners is paramount.
- Assign committed key players to key positions works. Roles to consider:
 - Conference Chair needed for overall conference planning and promoting of conference. The go-to person.
 - Offsite Coordinator needed to foster partner relationships with off-sites (e.g., sponsor, neighboring chapters, such as NorthStar and Midwest Gateway, PMI, IEE, and others)
 - Committee Chairs needed for various tasks such as Tutorials, Breakout Sessions, facilities, food and refreshments, etc.
 - Session Chairs needed for event day, they fill many daily tasks.