

ОБІЖНИК - NEWSLETTER

ТОВАРИСТВО УКРАЇНСЬКИХ ІНЖЕНЕРІВ АМЕРИКИ – НЬЮ ЙОРК
UKRAINIAN ENGINEERS' SOCIETY OF AMERICA – NEW YORK BRANCH



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From the President's Desk

The recent few weeks have been slow on UESA chapter and member news, so I've included some information culled from the Internet which members should find interesting and/or useful.

As always, please do not forget that our local newsletter, the web site and the national newsletter are always looking for stories on the professional and personal accomplishments and events. Please send it in so that we may share it with our fellow members.

Next, I'd like to remind our members one more time about membership dues. **If you have not already done so, please do not forget to send in payment for your membership dues.** Full members pay \$35, retired members pay \$20 and student members pay \$15 per year. We are rapidly approaching the point where non-paying members will be labeled as "inactive" members and will stop receiving mailings etc.

The Society is working hard to bring services to its members and has been successful in delivering items such as the newsletters and the membership directory. For these things to continue, improve and grow, we need the financial support of our members.

Finally, I would like to address the upcoming UESA General Meeting which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 6, 2003. Mail ballots will be issued shortly and in addition to listing candidates for the next Board of Directors, there will be several proposed amendments to the Society's by-laws. In general, the amendments are designed to allow for the expansion of UESA and to streamline certain administrative functions.

One amendment centers on officially defining the "associate" and "student" membership levels in terms of requirements and rights. Two key items to be

aware of are that associate members' voting rights will be restricted to only matters that pertain to the associate membership level and that "associate" members must support UESA's mission as defined by the by-laws. Some concern was raised that the addition of associate members would dilute UESA's traditional mission statement. I would like to assure members that this is not the case. Rather, the associate membership will allow UESA to recruit people who support our goals and projects but do not qualify because they do not hold "technical degrees."

Another set of amendments focus on the dues structure and collection system. One amendment will make a provision for a local chapter to officially collect an additional assessment to supplement the 40% which is collected via the national dues structure. This is an extension of the current system and is in recognition of the fact that chapters having varying expense levels due to their location etc. A second amendment will clarify the date by which a member must fulfill their dues obligation in order to be considered a member in good standing.

The third dues related amendment transfers the responsibility for the collection of membership dues

Don't forget to pay your membership dues



Незабудьте заплатити вкладки

to the national board of directors and defines the responsibilities of the National Treasurer with respect to the reimbursement of collected funds to the local chapters.

This is a major change from the way UESA has collected dues over the previous years and is being proposed in order to acknowledge the changes in our community. Members are no longer concentrated solely in large metropolitan areas and they have a greater tendency to move from one state to another. The current immigration from Ukraine is one driven by economics and as a result people are settling where work can be found rather than where the Ukrainian community is concentrated.

These and other issues require that UESA function as a national organization where a central body can maintain member information and keep track of members as they move from one city to another.

Some members have been concerned that centralization of the dues collection will lead to less contact from the local board of directors and that it will reduce the effectiveness of the local treasurer. Neither of these items are true. As is evident in the New York City chapter, our communication channels extend beyond dues notices to include this newsletter, event announcements, and e-mail messages. Additionally, the local treasurer is tasked with the responsibility of developing our local budget, tracking event finances, and dealing with other sources of expense and income which are needed to run the chapter.

I'm certain that some members have other concerns, however, in the long run I think these amendments will be beneficial not only to the national organization but also to the local New York City chapter.

I strongly encourage all chapter members to vote "YES" the proposed ballot amendments and to make certain they send in their votes to be counted.

Also, please note that in order for your vote to count, you must be a "member in good standing". This requires that your membership dues have been paid.

The two previous dues notices issued this year were for 2002 dues. If you responded to one of these two notices, but did not indicate the payment was for 2003, then the dues were recorded as payment for 2002. Consequently, you most likely owe membership dues for the 2003 calendar year.

A 2003 dues notice will be issued in tandem with the ballots. If you have any questions regarding your

dues status, you can call me during office hours at 212-719-9700 for clarification.

Until next time.....

Marco Shmerykowsky, PE

Марко Шмеряковський

Why Am I Getting All This Spam? Unsolicited Commercial E-mail Research Six Month Report

Center for Democracy & Technology - March 2003

[This article is essentially the executive summary from a more detailed report written by the Center for Democracy & Technology. The report can be read on the Internet at the following web address: <http://www.cdt.org/speech/spam/030319spamreport.shtml>]

Summary

Every day, millions of people receive dozens of unsolicited commercial e-mails (UCE), known popularly as "spam." Some users see spam as a minor annoyance, while others are so overwhelmed with spam that they are forced to switch e-mail addresses. This has led many Internet users to wonder: *How did these people get my e-mail address?*

In the summer of 2002, CDT embarked on a project to attempt to determine the source of spam. To do so, we set up hundreds of different e-mail addresses, used them for a single purpose, and then waited six months to see what kind of mail those addresses were receiving. It should come as no surprise to most e-mail users that many of the addresses CDT created for this study attracted spam, but it is very interesting to see the different ways that e-mail addresses attracted spam -- and the different volumes -- depending on where the e-mail addresses were used.

The results offer Internet users insights about what online behavior results in the most spam. The results also debunk some of the myths about spam.

Major Findings

- Our analysis indicated that e-mail addresses posted on Web sites or in newsgroups attract the most spam.
 - Web Sites - CDT received the most e-mails when an address was placed visibly on a public Web site. Spammers use software harvesting programs such as robots or spiders to record e-mail addresses listed on

Web sites, including both personal Web pages and institutional (corporate or non-profit) Web pages.

CDT tested two methods of obstructing address harvesting:

- Replacing characters in an e-mail address with human-readable equivalents, e.g. "example@domain.com" was written "example at domain dot com;" and
- Replacing characters in an e-mail address with HTML equivalents.

E-mail addresses posted to Web sites using these conventions did not receive any spam.

- USENET newsgroups -- Newsgroups can expose to spammers the e-mail address of every person who posts to the newsgroup. Newsgroup postings, on average, generated less spam than posting an e-mail address on a high-traffic web site. In our study, we discovered that most newsgroup-related spam is sent to the address in the message header, even if other e-mail addresses are included in the text of the posting.

- For the most part, companies that offered users a choice about receiving commercial e-mails respected that choice. Most of the major Web sites to which we provided e-mail addresses respected the privacy choices we made -- when a choice was made available to us.
- Some spam is generated through attacks on mail servers, methods that don't rely on the collection of e-mail addresses at all. In "brute force" attacks and "dictionary" attacks, spam programs send spam to every possible combination of letters at a domain, or to common names and words. While these attacks can be blocked, some spam is likely to get through. In many cases, spam generated by these attacks will be directed to shorter e-mail address (like bob@domain.com) before it is directed to longer addresses (like bobwilliams@domain.com).

Tips for Avoiding Spam

Currently there is no foolproof way to prevent spam. Based on our research, we recommend that Internet users try the following methods to prevent spam:

- **Disguise e-mail addresses posted in a public electronic place.**

CDT received the most spam just by placing an e-mail address at the bottom of a web page. Spammers "harvest" these addresses with computer programs that collect and process addresses and add them to spam mailing lists. If a user must post his/her e-mail address in a public place, it is useful to disguise the address through simple means such as replacing "example@domain.com" with "example at domain dot com" or other variations such as the HTML numeric equivalent, in which "example@domain.com" could be written "example@domain.com."

Opt out of member directories that may place your e-mail address online. If your employer places your e-mail address online, ask the Webmaster to make sure it is disguised in some way.

- **Read carefully when filling out online forms requesting your e-mail address, and exercise your choice.**

If you don't want to receive e-mail from a Web site operator, don't give them your e-mail address unless they offer the option of declining to receive e-mail and you exercise that option. If you are asked for your e-mail address in an online setting such as a form, make sure you pay attention to any options discussing how the address will be used. Pay attention to check boxes that request the right to send you e-mails or share your e-mail address with partners. Read the privacy policies of Web sites. If you suspect that a Web site has violated its privacy policy, you can report it to your state attorney general or the Federal Trade Commission.

- **Use multiple e-mail addresses.**

When using an unfamiliar Web site or posting to a newsgroup, establish an e-mail address for that specific purpose. Alternatively, instead of just using one or two e-mail addresses, you can use "disposable e-mail addresses," which consolidate e-mail in a single location but allow you to immediately shut off any address that is attracting spam. By recording which disposable address was used at which web site, one can track what sites are causing spam. Many Web sites are now providing free e-mail accounts. A search in Google Directory for "disposable e-mail addresses" provides a list of e-mail providers

designed for one-time use e-mails.

- **Use a filter.**

Many ISPs and free e-mail services now provide spam filtering. While filters are not perfect, they can cut down tremendously the amount of spam a user receives.

- **Short e-mail addresses are easy to guess, and may receive more spam.**

At least one spammer tried to guess the e-mail addresses used in this study by sending mail to short and common addresses. E-mail addresses composed of short names and initials like bob@ or tse@, or basic combinations like smithj@ or toms@ will probably receive more spam. E-mail addresses need not be incomprehensible, but a user with a common or short name may want to modify or add to it in some way in his or her e-mail address.

For further information, please contact Ari Schwartz at the Center for Democracy & Technology, 202-637-9800, ari@cdt.org.

SpamAssassin

As an addendum to the tips provided in the previous article on e-mail SPAM, I would suggest that members experiencing excessive amounts of unsolicited commercial e-mail (ie. SPAM) investigate if their Internet Service Provider offers some version of the SpamAssassin (<http://www.spamassassin.org>) program.

SpamAssassin(tm) is an open source e-mail filter which performs a wide range of heuristic tests on mail headers and body text to identify "spam". Each check performed on a message's header or body text is assigned a numeric value. For example, if the message contains the phrase "We respect all removal requests" then that adds a value of 4.3 to the message's "spam score." Once the value reaches a user defined cut-off value (the default is 5.0), the message is marked as SPAM and is either automatically deleted or filed in a separate directory.

From personal experience, I've found that this program traps nearly 99% of all unsolicited e-mail while rarely producing a "false positive." Although "false positives" do occur, it is usually easy to fix either through a SpamAssassin setting or by modifying a setting or two on the sender's side.

For Your Information: NYS Continuing Education for Engineers & Land Surveyors Required to Maintain Professional Licenses

[The following is a reprint from the web site of the NYS Office of Professions (<http://www.op.nysed.gov>) answering "frequently asked questions" regarding the new continuing education laws. We are reprinting it here for the information of our members]

A new law will go into effect on January 1, 2004 requiring all New York State licensed professional engineers and land surveyors to complete mandatory continuing education (Section 7211 of Article 145 of the Education Law). Preliminary information about this new law in the form of a series of questions and answers is provided below based upon questions recently received by the State Education Department. Regulations to implement the new law are currently under development. When more detailed information on the continuing education requirement is available, it will be posted on this site.

1. How many hours of continuing education will be required under the new law?

In each three-year registration period:

- professional engineers will be required to complete 36 contact hours of continuing education.
- land surveyors will be required to complete 24 contact hours of continuing education.

2. When will I be required to begin reporting completion of continuing education?

The new law goes into effect on January 1, 2004.

- If you are renewing the registration of your license between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, you will not be required to report continuing education.
- If you are renewing the registration of your license on or after January 1, 2005, the number of contact hours you will be required to complete and report will vary depending on when your current registration expires, but will not exceed 36 hours for professional engineers or 24 hours for land surveyors.

For your first three-year registration period after the new law goes into effect, you will be required to complete continuing education at a rate of 1

hour per month beginning January 1, 2004 to the date your registration is due to be renewed. For example, if your new registration period begins on January 5, 2005, you will need to have completed 12 contact hours of continuing education by January 5, 2005.

3. Are there specific courses that I must take to meet the requirement?

You will be required to complete continuing education in an approved subject area from a provider approved by the New York State Education Department.

- Professional engineers will be required to complete 18 credits in "courses of learning"; the remaining 18 credits may be completed through "educational activities".
- Land surveyors will be required to complete 16 credits in "courses of learning"; the remaining 8 credits may be completed through "educational activities".

A list of approved sponsors/providers and more information on approved subject areas, "courses of learning" and "educational activities" will be available on this site after regulations for continuing education are enacted by the Board of Regents.

4. What if a licensee does not complete the required continuing education after the new law goes into effect?

A licensee who has not satisfied the continuing education requirements will not be issued a registration certificate by the Education Department and therefore, may not practice. If a licensee practices his or her profession after the Department has denied renewal of a registration for failure to report completion of continuing education, the licensee could be subject to disciplinary proceedings for professional misconduct. The Department, at its discretion, may issue a conditional registration that is valid for up to one year to allow licensees to make up any deficiencies and complete any additional continuing education, which the Department may require. Conditional registrations are not automatic and cannot be renewed.

5. What if a licensee is having difficulty meeting the continuing education requirement due to special circumstances?

The Education Department can grant adjustments to the continuing education requirement to licensees with serious health related issues, those

on active military service, or for other good cause acceptable to the Department, that prevents the licensee from meeting the continuing education requirement. The Department will consider requests for adjustments to the continuing education requirement on a case-by-case basis.

6. Will I be required to complete continuing education if I am not practicing professional engineering or land surveying?

If you have notified the Education Department that you are not engaged in practice and your registration is in inactive status, you are exempt from the continuing education requirement. If, at any time, you return to practice, you must complete the continuing education requirements that apply to your particular situation.

7. Will I be required to keep records of the continuing education I complete?

Yes, you must maintain adequate documentation of the acceptable continuing education you complete. You will be required to make continuing education records available to the Education Department upon request.

8. Where can I find sections of the law that pertain to the continuing education requirement?

The statutes that apply to this requirement are available on this site:

<http://www.op.nysed.gov/article145.htm>

In addition, relevant sections of NYS Education Law are available upon request by calling the Mail and Supply Unit at (518) 474-3817 ext. 320 or e-mail opforms@mail.nysed.gov.

9. Where can I find more information?

Additional information will be available on this site when the regulations for continuing education are enacted by the Board of Regents. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the State Board for Engineering and Land Surveying at 518-474-3817 Ext. 140, email enginbd@mail.nysed.gov or lsurvbd@mail.nysed.gov

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