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Becoming Involved with Conferences: Lessons from ECIS

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PROFESSIONAL PANEL

BECOMING INVOLVED WITH CONFERENCES: LESSONS FROM ECIS

Panellists:

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Issues:

For many researchers, conferences are seen as opportunities for presenting their research and for interacting with fellow researchers. Undertaking conference officer roles with leading conferences like ECIS can also often be seen as an important measure of esteem for academics, which can assist them in their career development as well as providing useful opportunities for raising their profile within the international research community.

However, it is not often clear how individuals can become involved with conferences such as ECIS and what is expected in various conference roles (conference officers, track chairs, associate editors, reviewers, doctoral consortium faculty). Participation in conferences like ECIS may also be limited because of concerns about what the reviewers are looking for with non-traditional tracks like panels, case studies and the doctoral consortium.

The aim of this panel is to draw on the experience of ECIS officers to help disseminate this information. Whilst the advice given will be specific to ECIS most of the issues apply more generally.

Presentations:

Edgar Whitley will introduce the panel. Edgar is secretary of the ECIS standing committee which receives applications for hosting future ECIS conferences. He will describe the process by which ECIS conference locations are selected including details of proposing locations. He will also provide an overview of the reviewing process.

David Avison was panels chair for ECIS 2005 and will briefly outline the role of the panels chair in a conference like ECIS and describe what is likely to make a successful panel proposal. David is also joint programme chair of ICIS 2005 in Las Vegas, so can address questions about practice at ICIS as well.

Robert Winter was case studies chair for ECIS 2005. Case studies at ECIS are different from regular research papers and Robert will describe the process for reviewing case studies and the expectations the reviewers have of successful case studies.

Karlheinz Kautz was the doctoral consortium chair for ECIS 2005. With the important role of PhD students for the development of the information systems field, the doctoral consortium provides an excellent opportunity for students to meet and work on their doctoral ideas. Karlheinz will describe what happens at the doctoral consortium, how students are selected and the key role that doctoral consortium faculty play in the process.

Marianna Sigala was track chair for a new ECIS track (IT in Tourism and Travel). She will describe her experiences in proposing a new research track for the conference, as well as her experiences of the process of selecting reviewers for the track, soliciting papers and making recommendations to the research paper officers.

The panel is intended to be an open, informal exchange of information, so there will be plenty of time set aside for questions about the process of becoming involved in the organisation of conferences like ECIS.

About the panelists:

Edgar Whitley is a Reader in Information Systems at the London School of Economics and Political Science, UK. He is co–editor of the journal Information Technology and People and is secretary of the ECIS Standing Committee. He was programme chair for the first ECIS and theme chair for the “Society” theme at ECIS 2003.

David Avison, panels chair for ECIS 2005, is distinguished professor in information systems at ESSEC Business School, Paris, and research professor at Brunel University, London. He has researched in the field of IS development over many years using qualitative research approaches, in particular, action research. David is co–editor of the Information Systems Journal. He was theme chair for “Information and Communication Technology” in ECIS 2003, panels chair in ECIS 1999 and David is also Programme co–chair for ICIS 2005.

Karlheinz Kautz, doctoral consortium chair, is a Professor in the Department of Informatics at the Copenhagen Business School. He is a co–editor of the Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems and was research papers chair for ECIS 1999 and ECIS 2002. In 2003 he was ECIS doctoral consortium chair.

Marianna Sigala is a Lecturer in Operations & Production Management at the University of the Aegean, Greece. In ECIS 2005 she successfully launched the “IT in tourism and travel” track, which attracted 15 submissions.

Robert Winter, Case Studies chair for ECIS 2005, is director of IWI-HSG, the information management institute of the University of St. Gallen. IWI-HSG is the largest IS research unit in Switzerland and conducts several large research projects with financial institutions from Switzerland and Germany. He was chair of the “IT Innovation and impact on the structure of industries” track at ECIS 2003.