

## IT Managers Connection

■ HOME ■ EMAIL ■ ABOUT ■ RSS 2.0 ■ ATOM 1.0

### Recent Posts

[Interview] Part4: Barb Bowman - Top Five Tips in Wireless and Devices

[Interview] Part3: Barb Bowman - Top 6 Challenges with Wireless Technology

[Guest Blogger] Riding to the "Surface"

[Interview] Part2: Barb Bowman - Wireless Best Practices

[Interview] Part6: Barb Bowman - Critical Issues for Organizations; IT Professionals Making a Difference

### Tags

Adam Cole Barnaby Jeans BizTalk Blaine Bey Career Tips **CC Blogged Down** CIPS Collaboration Community DavidCarbi DJ Dinkley Don Spencer **Downloads** Energize IT **Events** Graham Jones Guest **Bloggers** Industry Perspectives **Interviews** IT Alignment **IT Manager** Interviews IT Manager PodcastSeries Jacqueline Hutchinson Jing Chen Use Services Mitch Tulloch **MS News** NewsWire Partners Podcasts Ruth Morton Sean O'Driscoll Security **Stephen Ibaraki** Tools & Utilities **Training** Val Matson Wireless Technology

### News

The postings are provided "AS IS" with no warranties, and confers no rights. You assume all risk for your use.

> Blogs that link here

Technorati

Do you want to receive this blog via email?

10 email readers

BY FEEDBLITZ



Canada's Association of Information Technology (IT) Professionals



Resident Bloggers  
Stephen Ibaraki Industry Analyst  
FCIPS, I.S.P., DFAPA, CMP, MVP



Ruth Morton IT Pro Advisor  
Microsoft Canada



### [Interview] Part 11: Teresa Hennig, International MS Access Authority

This is the next blog in the [continuing series](#) of interviews with leading professionals. In this series of blogs, I have an exclusive interview with Teresa Hennig. Teresa is an international authority on MS Access, a top user group leader, a best selling author and a recognized and profiled MVP.

Enjoy!

Stephen Ibaraki, [FCIPS](#), [I.S.P.](#), [MVP](#)

### 5 Biggest Issues Facing User Groups



Stephen: What are the 5 biggest issues facing user group communities, IT societies today and what are your recommendations for meeting these challenges?

Teresa:  
Issue: Declining membership

Recommendation: focus on serving the members in ways that recognize the high demand on their time, the issues that they are currently dealing with and the technology available to serve their needs. User groups need to compliment, not compete with, news groups and other online services.

Issue: Scheduling quality presenters

Recommendation: It can be challenging to schedule experienced presenters who are ready to speak on a topic that is of current interest to your group. Look for ways to help presenters gain skills. Maybe hold a training session - these are often done in conjunction with code camps. We also encourage team presentations; (sometimes this is with a mentor helping a first time presenter), but it also works well with two friends. This takes the pressure off and allows them to become more comfortable in front of a group. Or, have two shorter presentations during one meeting; these require less prep time and are less intimidating for first-time presenters.

Issue: Presenting current topics

Recommendation: With the rapid changes in technology, it can be challenging to balance between, demonstrating the latest features and advances, and discussing features that are relevant to the membership's current work and interests. We often do a mix of showing what can be done, but also demonstrate the use of the technology that they are currently using.

Look to related industries and technologies to see what your membership needs to understand and work with. Then, invite a company to do a technical presentation, (not a marketing spiel), demonstrating how their tool/service leverages and extends the reach of your program. This also a great way to get drawing and review items. It is critical that this is not a sales pitch!

Issue: Perception of Value

Recommendation: We all know that value is a perception. Help the audience recognize the benefits of networking, of having the Q&A sessions where they get immediate solutions to answer THEIR unique problems, of seeing what others are doing. We often mention that it can be as important to know that something CAN be done as it is to be able to do it. That's where meetings are so valuable. They expose members to features, techniques, and approaches of which they might otherwise be unaware, but when they come across a situation in their work, they will draw the correlation and be able to respond. Whether that means calling in expertise or knowing that they can research the topic for examples, they have the advantage of knowing how to get started.

Issue: Meeting space and equipment

Recommendation: Many companies will sponsor a group by providing a meeting room. Ideally, this will have a computer and projector set-up, but not always. If it doesn't, perhaps the group will invest in a projector - then every presenter's laptop becomes a podium machine. Other meeting locations that work are community centers, libraries, convention buildings, a community rec room. With more people moving to laptops, we will hopefully see a resurgence in lab sessions. And, with a few CDs, jump drives, or router and cables, people can quickly share files and work through exercises.

Look for more with Teresa in the next blog.

I also encourage you to share your thoughts here on these interviews or send me an e-mail at [sibaraki@cips.ca](mailto:sibaraki@cips.ca).

Posted: Tuesday, May 29, 2007 8:00 AM by [ednitmgr](#)

Filed under: [Stephen Ibaraki](#), [Interviews](#)



John Osley Director Community Evangelism  
Morocco/Canada



Archives

- June 2007 (12)
- May 2007 (24)
- April 2007 (20)
- March 2007 (14)
- February 2007 (21)
- January 2007 (18)
- December 2006 (4)
- November 2006 (18)
- October 2006 (16)
- September 2006 (23)
- August 2006 (28)
- July 2006 (26)
- June 2006 (36)
- May 2006 (28)
- April 2006 (30)
- March 2006 (38)
- February 2006 (41)
- January 2006 (28)
- December 2005 (28)
- November 2005 (8)
- October 2005 (8)
- September 2005 (2)
- August 2005 (7)

Comments

linker99 said:

Teresa, I believe that in large measure you and I have similar experience and philosophies about the aims of UG's. Fundamentally UG's are about "sharing": sharing knowledge, sharing experience, sharing contacts. With that in mind I have been investigating ways to broaden the knowledge/experience sharing. I quite often receive emails from people who are having difficulty in getting to meetings or live too far away (sometimes several hundred miles) to be directly involved with VANTUG. It is very easy to forget the benefits that you have when you live near a large metropolitan area compared with people who live in smaller communities and don't get the opportunity for regular, high quality input. I think that it is time that we try to use current technology to take the meeting to people that can't get to the meeting.

When I suggest that people tend to think in terms of webcasting a meeting, that would be nice but access to a high speed internet connection and the associated cost would be largely impractical, at least in our case. That is before you even consider the A/V side of things. An alternative that I have been investigating is the idea of recording meetings so that they can be viewed as streaming video as and when desired. To do this effectively requires a fair up front investment in A/V equipment and the ability to post process (edit and compress) a large video file (probably 30GB) for practical streaming purposes (such as often used by news teams).

The aim here is not just to satisfy VANTUG members but to make this freely available to all. Why should the fact that VANTUG members get the opportunity to have a valuable presentation by someone locally be confined by geography? In the past technology and prohibitive costs were the limiting factors. I don't believe that such a move would inhibit attendance at meetings since there are other clear benefits from being there, like networking and getting your own questions answered. However, it would still help those who cannot be there. Right now we post presenters' PowerPoint slide decks but that is very limiting in communicating the meeting.

At this point I really don't know if VANTUG can afford or justify the expense of purchasing the A/V equipment. I am hopeful that our fund sponsors for the post processing and hosting the video streaming. Educational establishments are a good target for post processing and streaming because they often already record lectures for the students.

INETA via their webcast series is doing its part to leverage speaker opportunities and I would like to see UG's eventually try and leverage their speaker opportunities. Every time someone with something of value to say speaks we need to capture it for everyone's benefit. A side benefit that it would be a great way to give UG member speakers real feedback on how they performed so that they can get better.

As much as I would like to see this happen in the near future it will probably take some time to put in place. Deciding where limited funds should go for the overall benefit of UG members is always a challenge.

Cheers

Graham J.

June 1, 2007 8:10 PM

Leave a Comment

Title (required)

re: [Interview] Part 11: Teresa Hennig, International MS Access Authority

Name (required)

Your URL (optional)

Comments (required)

Large empty text area for comments with a vertical scrollbar on the right side.

Remember Me?

Submit

Comment Notification

If you would like to receive an email when updates are made to this post, please register [here](#)

Subscribe to this post's comments using [RSS](#)

