

# IFIP Council

March 2006 – Palma de Mallorca, Spain

## Report from Technical Committee 6 (Communication Systems)

Prof. Dr. Otto Spaniol (TC6 chairman)

Date: February 22, 2006

TC6 Web page – <http://www.ifip.tu-graz.ac.at/TC6/>

### 1. TC6 meetings held since last report for General Assembly 2005 in Botswana, Gaborone

Meeting 2005/2 – Wroclaw, Poland – October 29+30, 2005

### 2. TC6 meetings scheduled

Meeting 2006/1 – Coimbra, Portugal – May 19+20, 2006 (after Networking 2006).

Special meeting concerning developing country problems – Santiago de Chile (in conjunction with WCC 2006) – August 2006.

Meeting 2006/2 – Paris, France – September 29+30, 2006 (after WAC 2006).

### 3. Changes in Membership and Officers

The Italian delegate (Giancarlo Prati) has resigned and has proposed a name of a successor. No formal appointment has been made until today.

WG 6.11 held elections (after the chairmanship of Volker Tschammer came to an end). The working group is since January 2006 chaired by a “triumvirate” consisting of Wojciech Cellary (Poznan; acting chairperson), Wilfried Lamersdorf (Hamburg) and Reima Suomi (Turku).

Chairmanships of WG 6.8 and 6.10 will have to be renewed soon.

Plenty of IFIP member countries do not have delegates for TC6 or, if they have one, the delegate is inactive. A few countries have recently nominated a delegate but in practically all those cases we have not yet seen this delegate. There is a relatively stable list of delegates who attend meetings and who contribute ideas more or less regularly – but a reasonable amount of new blood is missing. This is of big concern for the committee.

### 4. TC6 events

TC6 continues to be active in organising conferences, working conferences, workshops,... As in the past, the flow-in of event request forms (in particular: correctly filled such forms) is far from being perfect.

Concerning event structure, we believe that we can observe a changing trend:

- Some years ago there was a tendency to subdivide events into several more specialized ones that have competed with each other.
- Nowadays, we can observe the opposite trend: Several “subconferences” are recombined once again in order to create a more powerful single event. This effect appears to be due to the fact that for several reasons the participation to specialized events (in manuscript submission and in registration numbers – and also in quality of submitted papers) became too low in many cases.

It is expected that this trend for re-unification will continue.

### 11. Specific problems

Two things have been (and still are) of major concern for the committee:

- IFIP’s strategy
- Publications, in particular the way towards a suitable Digital Library.

The feeling of the committee and some concrete proposals are perhaps best summarized in the following contributions which have been written down by Harry Rudin, the TC6 delegate from Switzerland:

**IFIP strategy:**

I think our main purpose in life is to support technical researchers in the field: development as well as academic "researchers".

WCC: I feel we should drop this conference. The WCC, in my opinion, in this age does nothing for IFIP's prestige. The WCC is almost a guaranteed financial loser. I think we have to go back many years to find a WCC that has made money for IFIP while the losses have been substantial. It is true that sometimes we have been able to find someone else to cover the loss but losses there have been! Using hard words, the WCC is a dinosaur conference and sooner or later will pass the way of the dinosaurs. The earlier this happens, the less damage to IFIP. (The ICCG was such a meeting and I have to credit its governors for realizing that its time had passed.)

Distinguishing IFIP: At least in TC6 we have long gone to lengths to make our technical information available to developing countries at low or no cost. The ideas we have had about digital libraries (perhaps hosted by Google, for example), making all of IFIP's technical literature available on a cost-free, open-access basis might be a distinguishing first in our part of the technical world. I am thinking that the ACM and IEEE charge for these services. IFIP could be a trendsetter in this dimension.

Financing: Dropping the WCC will help IFIP finances but we have to find a replacement for publishing royalties --- which I feel will rapidly decline in any case. One idea circulating in TC6 is putting an increased effort into the most popular TC6 conferences, aimed at producing a significant financial gain.

**Digital library:**

1) A copy of the document drawn up by the IFIP Digital Library Task Force was sent to TC6 delegates. Much of the content parallels our own discussions in TC6 and in our own subcommittee.

2) I finally have made contact with a very much alive person at Google. This is Cathy Gordon, Director of Business Development for Google. My understanding is that, in principle --- barring copyright problems!! --- Google would be willing 1) to put our conference papers on their Web server system, 2) at no cost to us, 3) giving IFIP a sort of "branding" through display of the IFIP insignia, and 4) perhaps even producing a small amount of revenue for IFIP.

What happens further depends on us and on IFIP. I would think it interesting to find one of TC6's top conferences and provide only such a Web-based distribution for its papers and see how this all works. But this clearly needs negotiating at a higher level: TC6 at least, perhaps even at the IFIP management level.

4) Roger Johnson has asked about an IFIP version of eWiC (a Web presentation of technical papers from BCS, the British Computer Society) and with URL <http://ewic.bcs.org/> You might want to have a look at this; my feeling is that we would be better off with Google and Google might send some funds to us rather than our having to pay BCS, as I understand the arrangement.

5) A good part of the world wants to move in the direction of open access. As Swiss Editor for ERCIM News, I have seen its current issue develop. At [http://www.ercim.org/publication/Ercim\\_News/enw64/](http://www.ercim.org/publication/Ercim_News/enw64/) you could have a look at it. There is a section entitled "THE ROUTES TO OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING" with a number of interesting, short articles on this theme. Springer has an interesting alternative, described there.

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**Prof. Dr. Otto Spaniol**  
(TC 6 chair)