

TC 1.5 Internet Subcommittee
MINUTES Sunday, January 26, 1996
Philadelphia Marriott room 413

Richard Linton, Subcommittee Chair (rtlinton@facstaff.wisc.edu)

ACTION ITEMS

The Chair will continue discussions with Steve Comstock at ASHRAE on the ASHRAE Home Page. In particular the following items will be discussed:

1. Creation of a "Virtual ASHRAE Chapter"
2. How to get TC 1.5 minutes and information on the page as a prototype for other TCs
3. Status of activity and what the Internet subcommittee can do to assist
4. Invite appropriate ASHRAE staff to the proposed Forums so that they may have first-hand knowledge of what members want/need from the ASHRAE home page.

The Chair will draft a proposal for teaching a short course at the Boston ASHRAE meeting titled, "How to Develop a Web Page". This will be presented at the full TC meeting Monday night for approval. If approved it will be forwarded on to the Education Council meeting Tuesday morning.

The Chair will send, as part of the minutes, topics for the subcommittee to consider and address before the next meeting in Boston:

1. What is a "virtual chapter" and how should it be structured, organized, and run?
 2. What is a "virtual region" and how should it be structured, organized, and run
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Meeting called to order at 3:35 p.m.

Introductions by attendees (22), and a summary of the purpose of the committee was presented by the chair.

A sign-in sheet was passed through.

NOTE: The pre-printed sign-up sheet of past attendees was not returned to the Chair. If anyone has this please return it to me!

Gene Stamper of the Ad Hoc Electronic Publishing Council was in attendance and gave a description of that body (the Council will be meeting on Tuesday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Conference Room 1 in the Marriott. Gene invited everyone to attend.

There was one seminar at Philadelphia and Dave Branson, the session chair for the seminar, summarized the program:

Seminar 07 - Internet and HVAC - - Integrity; Ethics; Security

Chair: David J. Branson, P.E., Member, Compliance Services Group, Inc., Lubbock, Texas

1. Internet Integrity in the Professional Office - A Case History
James E. Madget, P.E., Associate Member, 3D/International, Houston, Texas
2. Internet Ethics
Walter T. Grondzik, P.E., Member, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida
3. Secure Correspondence on the Net
Fariborz S. Mahjouri, Ph.D., Thermomax USA, Columbia, Maryland
4. Appropriate Use of the Internet at Work - An Informal Survey
Richard T. Linton, Associate Member, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin

About 100 people attended. James Madget was unable to present and he e-mailed his notes to a co-worker, Jim Buckley. Overall it was a good seminar, there were many good questions and had to stop the questions after each speaker in order to stay on schedule.

The Chair reported on action items from San Antonio:

1. Results of investigation of ASHRAE membership Web desires (*see attached*)
2. Results of discussions with ASHRAE on the ASHRAE home page (*see attached*)

On the topic of the ASHRAE home page there was considerable discussion by the attendees and by Gene Stamper. ASHRAE is investigating a password protected area on the home page accessible only to ASHRAE members as well as a separate domain name for ASHRAE members. One area that ASHRAE is sensitive about is privacy, ASHRAE does not want to give out detailed member information but would still like to have some access for the Society. ASHRAE spends considerable time and effort in creating member lists for people. The biggest source of revenue for ASHRAE is advertising in the Journal. Keeping the membership list away from competition

protects this revenue. ASHRAE is improving the security of the site to allow credit card use for bookstore purchases.

The ASHRAE Handbook committee met on Sunday morning. ASHRAE is very keen on the direction of electronic and internet publishing and is seeking some guidance. The TC 1.5 Handbook Subcommittee will address these issues in more detail (areas such as: format, browser issues, author guidance, style guidelines, publishing requirements, etc.). The Internet Subcommittee will most likely be involved with this effort with the idea of the TC 1.5 chapter as a prototype. Other TCs are facing the same issues and these are being addressed by the Electronic Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee is "out of business" in June and will need all input by then.

Help is needed in three areas for an electronic handbook:

1. What is the "best" way to present the information?
2. Standards and format for the electronic author
3. Interlinking of papers where the target may require review but the source may not.

Currently no policy or guidelines on these issues.

A research work statement is winding its way through TC 1.5 on multimedia applications, it was suggested that the Electronic Ad Hoc Committee be made aware of this to improve the probability of funding.

On other topics discussed:

Creation of a virtual ASHRAE chapter. Issues of how would it be organized, structured, and who would take care of it were discussed with no results. Attendees will contemplate what a "virtual chapter" and "virtual region" are and how they should be organized and run.

One idea was that there would be a Webmaster from each chapter. Since ASHRAE already has allocated space on the home page for each Region then this could be extended to a Webmaster for each Region. This person would be appointed and would be responsible for publishing information on the ASHRAE home page.

Program topics were discussed and the following were voted and passed on to the Program Committee:

Forums:

1. "What ASHRAE Members Want/Need from Manufacturers' World Wide Web Sites"
Boston (June 1997) Walter Grondzik
2. "What do ASHRAE Members want from the ASHRAE Home Page?"
Boston (June 1997) Richard Linton

Seminar:

"The Use of Internet for Collaborative Design" - Boston (June 97), Dave Branson

Short Course

"How to develop a web page" - Proposal to be developed by Chair.

No research topics or ideas were developed.

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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Item 4.1 - Results of investigations of ASHRAE membership Web Desires

Following is a list of comments I have obtained as well as the notes from Forum 48, "What do ASHRAE members want/need from the WWW?" from Tuesday, June 25, 1996 (courtesy Walter Grondzik)

In other conversations that I have here are some comments on what people would like to see on the ASHRAE home page:

1. An index of all magazine articles (title, author, date)
2. Index of papers presented (title, author, date)
3. Index of ongoing research projects (what, by whom)
4. An up-to-date file of standard interpretations
5. Index of standards available
6. Index of texts and reports available
7. Ability to download (print) item 4, and others as possible

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Items 4.2 - Discussions with ASHRAE on Web page

On January 16, 1997 I had a telephone conversation with Tony Giometti and Steve Comstock of ASHRAE to discuss the ASHRAE home page and the Internet subcommittee. As preparation, I sent them the minutes from the Internet subcommittee meeting in San Antonio as well as the comments from Forum 48.

Steve is the Director of Communications and Publications and is in charge of the "Electronic Communication Ad Hoc Committee". This committee is responsible for all electronic communications of which the web page is part. Other members of the committee include Jeff Haberl and Al Hallstrom (sp?). Committee is dealing with policy issues such as:

- should advertising be allowed, if so, how should it be done and at what cost?
- Should members e-mail address be available (problem of potential privacy issues)?

Actual web content is done by everyone there is not a single staff person responsible. The Librarian ensures that content is complete (links and the like) mostly a debugger. For complex work use an outside vendor (search engine). No group or person is dedicated to the web page. Content is handled by group meetings of staff and a process flow chart exists although no style manual currently exists.

Currently ASHRAE uses FrameMaker for the page makeup software. This has an HTML creation option. ASHRAE will be converting to using Microsofts FrontPage software for the web page.

Changes underway:

- Bookstore section will change to improve the ordering features and capabilities (nothing specific mentioned).
- Changes to the page are generally by suggestions, examination of current printed forms, and try to anticipate what the Society needs.
- Will be audio taping the public session and put it on the web. Lost cost (about \$5K) and should appear within a few weeks.

Issues being examined for new content:

- Area on the page for each Region. Would require a responsible person for checking and uploading information as well as definitions what can and what can not be stored.
- Area on the page for each TC. Again, would need guidelines, etc.

ASHRAE is converting the server from WfW to Windows NT 4 to provide for a more secure server (scheduled to occur during ASHRAE meeting). This will allow for secure electronic commerce.

Idea of virtual conferences came up. Would like to put the ASHRAE conference (or parts of) on the net. Very interested CIBSE's effort. CIBSE will be having a virtual conference in September. Jim Velore (sp?) the vice chair of planning has been invited to assist in the conference.

Potential forum/seminar:

- "Is there a virtual conference in ASHRAE's future?"
- "What do ASHRAE Members want on the ASHRAE Home Page?" Address issues of priorities and pricing as well as information.

Issue of paying for information. Described EPRI's solution of two home pages, one free (www.epri.com) and one subscriber only (www.epriweb.com). Makes life easy when you know that simple information can be obtained freely and yet the option exists for subscriber based information.

Richard Linton

TC 1.5 Internet Subcommittee

Additional notes for Philadelphia meeting (January 1997)

Re: Publishing Council Subcommittee on Electronic Communications

These are additional notes to be distributed to the attendees of the TC 1.5 Internet Subcommittee.

I attended the Publishing Council Subcommittee on Electronic Communication on Tuesday afternoon (Jan 28, 3-5pm). This is an ad hoc committee that "dies" after the June meeting. Gene Stamper is the Chair (Gene attended the Internet subcommittee meeting on the previous Sunday).

I was simply an outside observer. During introductions I did introduce myself and briefly talked about the Internet subcommittee. Other than that, all I did was observe and take a few notes.

Intellectual property

A new copyright law covering electronic information is currently in front of the US Senate for ratification. This should handle copyright issues when dealing with electronic information. The committee will wait for the Senate to ratify the treaty.

Distance Education

Robert Suggs of the Program Committee is very interested in working on electronic remote video presentations (example of ASME satellite transmissions). Interested in the costs and mechanics. The committee decided that they did not need to be involved. I talked with Robert on the side and the Program Committee is very interested in using some method for distance meeting/education either satellite or video conference. TC 1.5 may want to investigate using the Internet for video/tele conferences.

Advertising

The current policy allows for a chapter to charge for a "business card" on a chapter's home page. The question brought up was if the policy allows for a link from the ad to the advertiser's home page. The ad may have the URL listed but it may not be a link.

Links

There was extensive discussion on links on a chapter's home page with particular emphasis on "indirect links". Any link on a chapter home page would have to be approved by ASHRAE except for return links to some other page. The return links would be unlabeled except for the word, "return" or "back".

Region Pages

ASHRAE will be establishing a location on the ASHRAE web page for each region. One person would be appointed by the Region Chair to post information on the ASHRAE FTP site. Steve Comstock (Director of Communication at ASHRAE) would then review the information and move it to the appropriate location on the ASHRAE site.

Doing the same for TCs is deemed very cumbersome but ASHRAE has not decided whether to or not establish home pages for TCs on the ASHRAE home page. Currently, TCs are responsible for their own home pages. Can have a link to ASHRAE and an return link (labeled "return" or "back"). No other links are allowed on the page.

ASHRAE server

The ASHRAE server was being replaced with NT 4.0 during the ASHRAE meeting and will incorporate software for secure transmission for better handling of credit cards.

Currently use Microsoft's FrontPage for web page development

Home page content

Planning on an ASHRAE member only section of the home page. Undecided on whether to use a separate domain name or just a separate section of the current page. One idea that has promise is to use the member number and a PIN. Would allow access to more detailed ASHRAE information.

Questions: What information would be available and could a member change information?

Current ASHRAE membership information is on the mainframe (due to be replaced in 12-18 months). Chapters currently publish rosters with e-mail address (158 chapters). Issue of privacy: how to prevent non-ASHRAE people from generating a mailing list (electronic or postal)? ASHRAE welcomes comments and suggestions about their homepage with particular attention to flow (how to get from one page to the next). Anyone with constructive comments should e-mail them to Steve Comstock, Director of Communications and Publications, at comstock@ashrae.org.