**February 2012**

IEEE Signal Processing Society

# Conference Organizer **Newsletter**

## Message from the VP-Conferences

*By Wan-Chi Siu*

Twenty-eight years ago, in March 1984, a less experienced electronic engineer, new to the signal processing community, attended his first ICASSP in San Diego USA. More than two decades later that young man became the General Chair for ICASSP 2003 and then ICIP 2010.

The first day at his first ICASSP he was excited and impressed by the high quality and professional presentations and posters. It was a life changing event for him and many young researchers from all over the world. Then to be honored with the Chairmanship for two of the Society's most well-known conferences, that was a career changing event.

Now, that young engineer has become the Vice President - Conferences for the IEEE Signal Processing Society. This is a true story, readers. I can vouch for its veracity personally – I was that excited engineer. And I was very glad I did attend ICASSP that first time and have missed very few since then. I have met some great people at every SPS conference I have attended, several of whom to this day I call my friends and speak to regularly. I must also give a vote of thanks to my predecessor, Prof. V John Mathews, who led the Conference Board of the Signal Processing Society fantastically with great success and a harmonious atmosphere. The Society has changed over the years, but the high-quality technical program and the collaboration and networking at its conferences are getting better each year.

The past year has been the most extraordinary time for IEEE Signal Processing Society that I have ever seen in my entire career. That said, the past is merely prologue. We are just at the beginning of a period of change, changes that hold great promise for the Society, the scientific community and for humanity.

But great changes can also bring great risks. Navigating successfully through this period of change will, more than ever before, require decisions based on observation, dedication and determination. We must raise the bar for our conferences and re-focus our energies on our leading-edge technologies and other research trends.

ICASSP and ICIP for example have established itself as the pre-eminent conferences for signal processing. I look forward to building on that success and growing both the membership base and conference offerings for the Society.  But to do so, I will need your help.

I hope that, in my new capacity as VP-Conferences, I will not only sustain but enhance my existing relationships with all of the friends, colleagues and members I have been privileged to know in my career. I also hope to make many new friends in this new role.

Over the next few weeks, in advance of ICASSP 2012 in Kyoto, Japan, and at the conference itself, I hope to identify areas for improvements to existing SPS conferences and listen to your ideas on potential new ones as part of my charge to broaden and upgrade current conference offerings.

While I have some ideas, I want the voice of the members to drive these decisions.  Please send me your ideas to enwcsiu@polyu.edu.hk, and please join me at ICASSP 2012.  I look forward to speaking with you.

Thank you.  It's truly an honor to be here and a privilege to serve the Society that has served me so well for almost 35 years.

# ICASSP 2012

25 – 30 March 2012

Kyoto, Japan

## See you there!

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# Meeting Planning in Difficult Economic Times

*By Linda Skeahan*

We are all feeling the effects of the struggling economy. The effect on you, the SPS conference organizer, is that while your primary goal is to produce a successful conference -- you now find yourself in a position of having to manage the conference budget more tightly and you are forced to find ways to accomplish more with less.

Here are a few tips from other conference organizers for getting the best deals from hotels and convention centers:

- Contact the local convention and visitor's bureau (CVB). They can save you time and energy by identifying which properties in the area are right for your conference. They can also help by offering services for free or at greatly reduced rate. Watch out for CVBs who operate solely on hotel commissions. Some of these kinds of CVBs will not secure the best room rates for your conference.

- If you have your eye on a specific hotel but it is out of your budget for the dates you want to hold the conference, consider shifting the dates to a time of year that is considered "off-season". For example a hotel room in Arizona in August is $50 to $100 less expensive than the same room in October.

- Another option is to be flexible with your arrival and departure dates. A conference can lower rates by starting just one day later or earlier. Ask the hotel representative what you can do to create a better piece of business for the hotel, i.e. checking in on a Sunday instead of a Tuesday could make a significant difference.

- Sometimes a hotel will negotiate with you to create a better deal if they have other bookings from your company. Check with the SPS staff to see if there are any planned IEEE events at the chosen hotel.

Other cost saving things you can do include:

- Lock in food and beverage menu prices during the contract negotiation and have any potential increases included in the contract -- an increase of up to 3% per year is standard.

- Keep track of the contract deadlines such as food and beverage guarantees and room block audit dates. When you can, adjust the numbers to help keep costs within the budget. The hotel will appreciate knowing what to expect and are more likely to negotiate better terms and rates if it becomes necessary.

- Look for sponsors to help support the conference in exchange for showcasing their product or service to your attendees.

- Evaluate the number of breakout sessions you need. Reducing breakout rooms can save meeting room fees and audio-visual charges.

- Work with the hotel to serve foods that are in season to cut cost of the food. You can also ask your hotel to plan a menu based on your food budget. Other ways to save on food and beverage include; offer drink tickets (two per person is standard) to reduce consumption and serve smaller versions of croissants and bagels for breakfast. SPS conferences typically require a lot of audio-visual equipment which is expensive. If the hotel or convention center has an exclusive AV vendor, get a quote before just assuming that is the best deal. Some hotels may allow you to hire a non-exclusive AV vendor for a small fee which can be cheaper than hiring the hotel's vendor.

The best practice of all is to have a good working relationship with the hotel or convention center. A quality hotel wants your conference to be successful so that you will consider holding the next conference there and/or you will recommend their property to a colleague. A good conference is the best advertising they will ever get.

# Plagiarism – The Threat to Quality

*By Lisa D. Schwarzbek*

There were more reports of plagiarism in 2011 than in any year prior.  The level of plagiarism found  was also more severe, with full papers having been copied word-for-word,  submitted, and in one case published by a conference.  The increase in the number and severity of plagiarism cases is a serious threat to the quality of SPS's conferences and IEEE Xplore®.

We can explain why plagiarism is on the rise by examining the main reasons authors plagiarize.

**It's Easy** - Authors plagiarize because it is easy, with the growing amount of content on the Internet it is relatively easy to steal other's works.

**They Think They Won't Get Caught** - Authors believe that there is so much content out there that they won't be caught if they borrow some.

**To Make More Money** - Authors plagiarize because there is a financial incentive to publish.  An author applying for a grant who has published is more likely to receive the grant if he/she has published.  In some cases there is a financial bonus given to scientists who publish.

Consequently a greater number of authors choose to plagiarize.  This in turn means that more plagiarized papers are going to be submitted to conferences.  And more conference papers will be plagiarized. A plagiarized paper should not be disregarded and merely rejected.   The authors of the allegedly offending paper needs to be brought forward and dealt with properly.  As it says in the IEEE Policy, "Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and is considered a serious breach of professional conduct, with potentially severe ethical and legal consequences."

IEEE has the reputation and vast amount of material that makes it the ideal target for plagiarized work. As a result, the Intellectual Property Rights office at IEEE has established a procedure for handling allegations of plagiarism to make sure that all cases are handled justly and equally.

If you suspect plagiarism in a submitted conference paper, contact the Technical Program Chair (TPC).  The Technical Program Chair should notify the VP-Conferences, Wan-Chi Siu and the Manager Conference Services, Lisa Schwarzbek.  Lisa will notify the IEEE IPR office with a copy to the VP-Conferences and the Technical Program Chair.

Once the notifications are complete, the TPC will form an ad hoc committee of three or four trusted members who are qualified to evaluate the accused work.

The committee will:

1. Issue a notice to the offending author (if you prefer to have Lisa do this that is acceptable).  The IPR office has a standard letter that should be used.  The committee will receive the authors' responses and evaluate the responses.

2. Review the complaint, read both the original work and the accused work.

3. Assign misconduct level – see list on page 6.

4. Recommend corrective action with the advice of the VP-Conferences and the IPR office

5. Report to the VP-Conferences along the way making sure he is aware of how the case is progressing and the ultimate conclusion.

The next steps depend upon the level of misconduct that is assigned.  The entire process will be directed by the IPR office with guidance from the VP-Conferences.

# PDF eXpress Step-by-Step

*By Nicole Allen*

What is PDF eXpress?

PDF eXpress or PDF eXpress Plus, is an online based tool that converts authors PDFs to a compliant format compatible with IEEE Xplore®. PDF eXpress PLUS has the same functions as PDF eXpress with one additional feature. Each author deposits his or her validated PDF on the site for collection by the technical program chair. The tool is free to IEEE Conference Organizers. As a conference organizer, you can apply for a PDF Express or PDF Express Plus site once you have submitted the IEEE Conference Publication Form and received your Letter of Acquisition (LoA).

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For more information on PDF eXpress and PDF eXpress Plus, please visit the link below. http://www.ieee.org/conferences_events/conferences/

# Levels of Plagiarism

Acts of plagiarism are categorized into five level, or degrees, of misconduct, ranging from the most serious (Level One) to the least serious (Level Five).

**Level One:** The uncredited verbatim copying of a full paper, or the verbatim copying of a major portion (greater than half of the original paper)

**Level Two:** The uncredited verbatim copying of a large portion (less than half of the original paper).

**Level Three:** The uncredited verbatim copying of individual elements (e.g., paragraphs, sentences, figures)

**Level Four:** The uncredited improper paraphrasing of pages or paragraphs

**Level Five:** The credited verbatim copying of a major portion of a paper without clear delineation (e.g., quotes or indents)

Please visit www.signalprocessingsociety.org.  There you can find past issues of this newsletter, upcoming conferences calendar, and much more useful information for conference organizers.