

Dear cac anh,

See below for my responses.

Ban

1) Membership fee: Should we institute a membership fee for VACETS? why or why not?

- Institute a membership fee is important to VACETS as an organization with two main objectives - to cover on going administrative cost and to show commitment/support from its members. There should be two tiers of membership fee (professionals and students). Suggested yearly fee should be in the range of \$5 to \$10 for students and \$20-\$40/year range for professionals. Compared to other associations, this is in the low range which can help attract new members, thus increase membership base in the long run.

2) How to encourage others to participate in VACETS activities? Most members of VACETS (may be except student members) are accomplished professional with busy work and family life's, what can VACETS do to attract and keep them involved and interested? And how do we start?

- First, one has to oneself as to why anyone would want to join VACETS in particular. First, it's the only national and international Vietnamese American Technical Professional organization currently known out there. Its founders, board, and advisory members consist of a number of prominent and accomplished scientists and professionals who have been recognized not only by our own community, but by the community at large. Secondly, one would want to join VACETS or any organization for three main reasons - 1) improve knowledge, 2) networking, 3) exchange ideas. Personally, I like the VTIC format of having a gathering of accomplished professionals in one place to foster professional friendship among Vietnamese Americans. The Chinese, Indians, Japanese have done it. Why not us?

- To market VACETS and its activities start with the local chapter. Quarterly seminars, informal networking events, and joint-functions with other technical organizations are a few examples to build awareness of the organization. As a the first step, I would recommend revamping our website to reflect the true mission of our organization, and to make it news worthy with interesting contents such as achievements, awards, publications, promotions, job listings, to name a few. Listing key names in the Advisory Committee is another way to show case our organization.

3) VACETS is mostly an Internet organization, and for that to work, we need a better presence on the Internet. In the past we have our website and the many forums (fora ?). Most of the time the website is out of date (and the look is kind of boring) because we don't have dedicate resource to maintain and support it. Most of the forums are also dormant because of lack of interest or lack of resource to keep it interesting. How would you propose we correct this?

- There has been a number of conference calls and communications among core members to set this as a priority. Changes are in the work as we speak. Our website is an important marketing tool to potential new members and sponsors. Also, it can be used as a communication piece through newsletters to be broadcasted to its members. Given the limited resource, I would recommend first highlighting the VTIC event in SJ as the most recent successful activity put together by VACETS.

4) No funding source: without a membership fee or any other source of funding we have been struggling to organize any activity (e.g. VTIC & Technical Journal) and have been depending on volunteers and hit/miss corporate sponsorships. What are your plan for future activities and how do we pay for them?

- We have been running on a very thin budget in the past years enough to cover any administrative cost, and still have some excess. The biggest expense has been the VTIC event which is always covered through sponsorship dollars. This strategy has been successful and will not change in the future. The proposed institution of membership fee will give us additional reserve to help cover any unplanned administrative cost. We will explore other fund raising sources such as grant, advertisement, corporate foundations, etc. This can only be done once we have some track record to show to potential funders.

5) Marketing: Most of Vietnamese professionals do not know VACETS. We have been recruiting them mostly by words of mouth. It is a chicken and egg problem: without a good membership we will not be known but if we are not known then it's difficult to attract the membership. How do you propose we break this cycle?

- To successfully market VACETS would require time and effort. One of my recommended strategies is to organize events at local universities whether it be done once a quarter or twice a year. One of the organization goals is to encourage participation of the younger engineers/scientists and the newly graduated. Therefore, our first marketing effort should be focus on those target markets (i.e. local VSA student organization). We had great media exposure in Northern CA including the national publication of Nha' magazine covering the last VTIC event. With that momentum on our side, I would recommend having another small event in SJ to introduce new board members, and to renew interest in VACETS among local students and professionals.

1. What do you think should be short-term (6-mo or so) objectives for Vacets? What steps should be taken for us to get there? Please be specific.

- Continue to recruit new board members and volunteers with specific skills set
- Develop core group with new and old board members
- Revise website
- Build membership
- Identify local members who help organize 4th quarter activity (SJ, LA, DC)
- Establish a working agenda and task assignment

2. How would you go about recruiting new members considering Vacets' limited resource? Some brought it up and rightfully so that we need to attract college students etc.
In your view, what do we have to offer them?

- same answer as above question #2 & #5

3. Vacets has noble cause but good cause alone can't move an organization. We need means for participation. Besides tech conferences, what other programs or activities on or off line do you think can attract interest of, if not galvanize, geographically diverse (and busy) members?

- same answer as in above question #2 & #5