

Minutes of the COIN-OR Foundation, Inc. Strategic Leadership Board Conference Call

November 30, 2010

1 Scheduled Agenda

1. Election of Foundation officers.
2. Approval of minutes for official meeting November 2, 2010.
3. Teleconferencing options?
4. Colocation, hardware, network, and server performance
5. Switch to EPL.
6. Progress on web site.
7. Associate membership issues.
8. Corporate membership/sponsorship for AIMMS.

2 Minutes of the Meeting

The meeting was called to order by the President at 1:10 pm ET. In attendance: Bob Fourer, Lou Hafer, Ted Ralphs, Paul Rubin, Matt Saltzman. Absent: Kevin Furman, Randy Kiefer, Alan King, David Jensen. A quorum was present.

2.1 Election of Officers

Randy Kiefer was consulted prior to the meeting and stated that he was willing to continue as Treasurer. Matt Saltzman stated that he was willing to continue as President, and Lou Hafer stated that he was willing to continue as Secretary. There were no other nominations.

Motion to approve the slate of officers (Rubin, Fourer) adopted (unanimous).

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the official meeting of November 2, 2010 (Hafer, Ralphs) adopted (unanimous).

2.3 Other Agenda Items

With the official business concluded, discussion turned to the remaining agenda items.

IBM Cplex and Laci Ladanyi have agreed to allow the SLB and TLC to use a teleconference line for the immediate future until a more permanent arrangement can be made.

There was incremental progress with respect to the switch to EPL, AIMMS, and establishing a DMCA contact agent.

Full membership seems to be back on track following a Fall membership drive. Lou Hafer will track down the discussion notes and relevant policy material for associate memberships and post them for subsequent discussion.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to an extended discussion of the interrelated issues surrounding hosting the COIN server. Points raised in the discussion included:

- * The COIN server consumes sizeable bandwidth and backup resources. The INFORMS office connection was upgraded from DSL to T1 and COIN traffic is still the largest fraction of the total load. Backup is a growing problem (the COIN repository does not shrink). Capacity of the current server is a growing problem, as is reliability (the INFORMS office simply does not have the infrastructure backup found in dedicated colocation facility).
- * We have a range of options for alternative hosting:
 - * Informal arrangements with essentially zero cost, good bandwidth, and excellent control of the server, but no backup and minimal support.
 - * Various open-source hosting services, of unknown quality. The impression is that these would be relatively low cost, would provide backup and some support, but bandwidth and control of the server might be issues. More investigation is required to nail down details.
 - * Institutional or commercial hosting, with medium (\$1,000/yr.) to high (\$7,000/yr.) operating cost. Capital cost is inversely proportional; low operating implies we supply the hardware (roughly \$5,000), while high operating implies the colocation facility supplies the server (possibly as a virtual machine). The degree of support provided varies but is generally fairly high. The degree of control over the server also varies. More investigation is required to nail down details.
- * INFORMS has hard decisions to make as they decide where to allocate their budget. We need to get across to them that both COIN and INFORMS gain from INFORMS support. COIN can also work through individuals' involvement with new initiatives proposed by Bjarni Kristjansson, newly elected as INFORMS VP Information Technology.
- * One possible alternative for tangible support from INFORMS would be web development help, but there are problems: we would need to return to EasyPublish (after making a decision to go with WordPress); it's unclear whether INFORMS staff have spare capacity; it's unclear what their ongoing contribution would be after initial design.
- * COIN needs to continue to work on developing a steady income stream through sponsorships from corporations using COIN software. Conference sponsorships typically start at \$5,000.
- * There's an issue of maintaining infrastructure and core software that also needs to be addressed. Maintaining repository infrastructure, build infrastructure, and core software is not glamorous but stability, responsiveness to bug reports, and steady upgrade is key to attracting and retaining commercial users. COIN needs to find a way to provide this.
- * The issue of developing a steady income stream for hosting and infrastructure maintenance issues should go on the SLB agenda for further discussion.

Ted Ralphs left the call at approximately 1:45 pm ET.

Discussion concluded with brief consideration of the SLB ticket backlog. It was agreed that quite a few of them are past their best-before date.

A motion to adjourn (Rubin, Hafer) was adopted (unanimous). The conference call ended at 2:05 pm ET.

3 Summary of Resolutions

- * Motion to approve the slate of officers (Rubin, Fourer) adopted (unanimous).
- * Motion to approve the minutes of the official meeting of November 2, 2010 (Hafer, Ralphs) adopted (unanimous).