AGM 2004: Managing Director's Report

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Rev a.				

This report covers the time since the 38th AGM in June 2003. I have to add, this is the first full period covered by me.

Council Meetings
Since the AGM in Aarhus IPTC meetings were held in Leipzig in October and in Athens in Spring, the last day of this meeting was dedicated to touring the Press Centre and some sites of the Olympic Games 2004.

Membership
Currently 55 members have drawn shares from the IPTC, 28 are Nominating Members – they have drawn a total of 36 full shares, 27 are Associate Members – which equals to 9 full shares.
Eight members joined the IPTC since the AGM 2003 and 2 members left the IPTC. In total this is 1 1/3 shares up since the previous AGM.
Interest in IPTC membership is high, I sent invitations to join our company to more than 30 companies or organizations all over the world.

Finance
Accounting is done by me, the formal 2003 accounts have been completed and audited and a formal report has been prepared by our appointed auditor R A McLeod and is awaiting approval at this AGM.

Secretariat
The set up of the secretarial services remains the same: the registered office at 8 Sheet Street in Windsor is maintained by a solicitor, the trade office at Royal Albert House, 11 Sheet Street in Windsor is operated by a service provider (HQ Offices) – they provide mail, telephone and fax forwarding to my private office. I, as Managing Director, still work out of my home office in Vienna (Austria) as part-time employee.

External Communication:
The IPTC co-hosted the so called "News Standard Summit" in December 2003 in Philadelphia, Pa. (USA). Despite the lack of improvement in collaboration of the "news standards community" it improved communication between the organising parties of this event at least and that were besides the IPTC OASIS and IDEAlliance.
Another presentation on IPTC standards was given by me at a seminar on "Technology and Business Challenges" of the European Alliance of News Agencies in Budapest (Hungary) in May. The audience there were primarily general business and marketing managers of news agencies. And the latest presentations given by me and other IPTC members were only a few days ago at the Chinese NewsML Community Conference here in Hong Kong.

The means for electronic communication were improved in this period. A common design and structure for all IPTC web sites has been developed and implemented. Now it is quite easy find information about our standards and even easier to navigate from one site to the other and to

understand that there are different standards but they are all maintained by a single body – the IPTC.

We still use Yahoo mailing lists respectively discussion forums, primarily for public discussion, some of them gained in user count, others maintained their level of usage.

This spring a web based forum software for IPTC internal discussion was set up on the IPTC web server, but as it appears some discussion on how to use it best to meet our requirements is needed.

A consistent high light of our external communication are our newsletters "Mirror" and the annual "Spectrum". The Mirror is produced and circulated only electronically as PDF document ten times a year. The Spectrum is produced and circulated the same way, but beyond that also colour-printed and sent to people outside our regular readership by mail. The editor and producer of both newsletters is still Hugh Johnstone.

Internal Communication

I put some effort into improving and supporting our internal communication. Telephone conferences have increased a lot since last year and we acquired our own rented facilities. We have now regular conference calls of the Working Party chairmen and the EventsML and the NewsML 2 Working Groups use this way of communication regularly. I join all these conference calls – but my understanding is not to be a highly involved developer, they should come from our membership, but to maintain a strong "cross-working group" communication as I consider this as very important to the IPTC as a whole.

I also go to meet IPTC members whenever there is a good occasion – without additional travelling – to learn about their use of IPTC standards and their basic business requirements and for using standards in their technical operation at all. These meetings provide an important background for giving presentations on the use of IPTC standards.

Standards support and maintenance

A lot of effort was put into a proper technical administration of our metadata - those about 25 topic sets we currently maintain. I created a database and web based repository for them, as a result they are now all available on our web site and if translated also in different languages. The next step is now increased support on the user side, this will be done by a new "IPTC TopicSet Viewer" which is developed by Johan Lindgren as successor of the "SubjectCodeViewer" and we both work closely in terms of implemented features and the layout.

In the course of upgrading our web sites I also created a lot of new documents and ZIP-packages for our standards to provide easy download and set up at prospect implementor's sites.

Finally I have to add: I reply to a high amount of e-mails regarding our standards and also the most frequent issue of telephone calls are questions concerning the standards.

[Note: this report was read out the AGM only partially]

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