Summary of discussions and recommendations

SPS Industrial Technical Working Group meeting on topic "How to increase the attendance and the benefit from industry in SPS flagship conferences."

Meeting on November 5th, 2020, 8:00 PST, via WebEx

1 PARTICIPANTS

Xavier Mestre, Iole Moccagatta, Roxana Saint-Nom, Hsun-Hsien Shane Chang, Ivan Tashev, Ziyue Xu, Xinmiao Zhang. The meeting was also attended by Tulay Adali, chair of the Technical Directions Board, IEEE SPS.

2 INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES

2.1 INTERESTS FOR SPONSORING AND PARTICIPATION.

2.1.1 Hiring
The main reason companies sponsor IEEE SPS conferences and having a booth is hiring.

2.1.2 Advertising
Good forum for general advertising through materials or booths. Announcement for course change or new products, or new features.

2.1.3 Keeping the personnel up to date
Conferences are important component for training the personnel.

2.2 WAYS TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION.
- Booths and advertising materials for sponsors are essential.
- Continue and expand the practice for side meetings, similar to "Women in Technology", expand with "Machine learning for signal processing", "Hardware for signal processing", etc. where companies which do not organize their own recruiting event (most of the big companies do) can come and talk with potential job seekers.
- Hiring elevator pitches for graduating PhD students looking for a job, like 3 minutes PhD presentations in EUSIPCO.

3 PARTICIPANTS FROM THE INDUSTRY

3.1 INTERESTS IN PARTICIPATION

3.1.1 Staying current in the area of expertise
Main business justification for the trip.

3.1.2 Hiring
Hiring high quality employees is pretty much a priority for companies since engineers are the most important assets in high tech industries. When attending a conference, employees have a duty to attract talents. Attending conferences becomes more on a personal level when the company doesn't have a booth or sheets among the printed conference materials. This might also be a business justification for the trip. View shared by pretty much everyone.

3.1.3 Contacts, personal discussions, share ideas
A reason pretty much for everyone to attend conferences.

3.1.4 Summaries and trends in industry
This is part of the job in the industry. Will be very helpful if such overviews and trends for various branches are shared and discussed in workshops, panels, special sessions, keynotes.

3.1.5 Presenting papers
View not shared by everyone. Presenting papers is not a necessity for industry and is dependent on the roles. People's work leaning towards products or trade secrets are hard to present papers, although some industrial research labs (e.g., IBM Watson, Microsoft Research, Facebook AI Research, etc.) favor paper presentations. In very small number of industrial research organizations presenting papers is required or is part of the job description. And when it is not mandatory – it is difficult to find time for writing a full paper, hence availability of a short paper option in conferences like ICASSP is desirable.

3.2 WAYS TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION FROM INDUSTRY.
- Keep the participation hybrid – both in person (after the quarantine is over) and on-line (eventually with a smaller fee).
- Continue the practice of inviting people from industry to give keynotes, talks, tutorials, workshops.
- Show and Tell and similar demonstration sessions: good forum for quick presentations of new products and technologies.
- Industrial forums and panels: set of talks about the trends in near, medium, and long term in given section of the industry.
- Get your sponsors be part of the program. For example, they can organize workshops within the conference.
- Workshops that are part of the program or sessions with short paper presentations targeting participants from the industry. Short papers, easier to write and present, important communication component, another business justification for the trip. A possible format is setting a maximum number of words (e.g., 2000) plus allowing one figure.

- Reaching out to members from industry as well for the organization of challenges and competitions, like SP Cup, VIP Cup, and SPS Challenges. Key for success of the challenge is a clearly stated problem, good dataset, and evaluation tools. This guarantees the participation from both industry and academia and can be complemented with a nice special session.