Motion to withdraw from technical co-sponsorship of the IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing

Background

The IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON MOBILE COMPUTING (TMC) has a unique sponsorship structure, apparently put in place when the journal was founded, *circa* 2001. There are four financial sponsors– the Computer, Communications, Circuits and Systems, and Signal Processing Societies— and eight technical co-sponsors, including the Information Theory (IT) Society. The journal is actually produced by the Computer Society.

I have not yet seen a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that defines the benefits and obligations of the sponsoring societies, but apparently the governance is in the hands of the financial sponsors, who enjoy all the financial benefits and risks. Each of the financial sponsors names two members to the TMC Steering Committee (TMC-SC). I have recently learned that as President of the IT Society I am a nonvoting member of the TMC-SC, but communications from them have been sporadic. Apparently we are also entitled to ensure that there are least two IT members among the (55!) Associate Editors; although in practice we have not been consulted, I expect that there have always been at least two such editors. Finally, our members are entitled to subscribe to this journal at member rates, and apparently 109 of them do, although almost all are surely also members of other sponsoring societies.

Since TMC is well launched and in practice there is no involvement by our society in its affairs, I have recommended that we terminate our technical co-sponsorship of TMC, and the officers of the IT Society and Publications Committee Chair Ezio Biglieri have unanimously agreed.

TMC response

On August 28 I was invited to present our views in a teleconference with the TMC-SC. I said that we had no issues with TMC, but for the reasons given above we felt that it was time to withdraw our technical co-sponsorship. The TMC-SC then discussed the matter in executive session. Subsequently Tom La Porta, TMC-SC Chair (and founding Editor-in-Chief) sent me an e-mail message as follows:

> Dear Dave,
>
> Thank you for your time on the TMC Steering Committee call. We understand your positions but ask you to consider the following before making your final decision:
>
> 1) Over 100 people from your Society enjoy a discounted rate for TMC. Some of these people may belong to more than one Society, but it is clear that some of your members will lose this benefit.
>
> 2) While we agree we can have people from your society involved in TMC even if you are not a Technical Co-Sponsor, your involvement serves as a forcing function. We are happy to hear more ways in which your society can be involved.
>
> If you decide to drop co-sponsorship, you must wait one year after your notification for doing so (I include an excerpt from the MoU below). This was put in place because of the time required to change the brochures and subscription rates for the Journal.
>
> Please let us know what you decide.

***********From MoU*****************'

"Therefore, any sponsor— Financial Sponsor or Technical Cosponsor— wishing to withdraw from this Agreement shall announce this fact to the Financial Sponsors no later than one year prior to the expiration of the Agreement.

Following such notification, no other action for withdrawal shall be required; any monies due and owing to a withdrawing Financial Sponsor, both surplus and remainder of share of the reserve, shall be paid to that Financial Sponsor no later than 31 March of the year following withdrawal. Notification shall be made by the remaining Financial Sponsors to the IEEE Technical Activities Board."

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Regards, Tom

I circulated this response to the IT Society officers and Ezio and reiterated my recommendation to withdraw, and they have all agreed.

Motion

I therefore propose the following motion to the IT Board of Governors:

The IEEE Information Theory Society resolves to withdraw from technical co-sponsorship of the IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing, effective January 1, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

G. David Forney, Jr., President