

CONCLUDING SUMMARY OF THE SESSION ON GENERIC PLANNING AND HARDWARE ISSUES

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Abstract

This summary covers the presentations of *Ch. Petit-Jean-Genaz* on “Conference Planning”, *I. Andrian* on “Processing Requirements”, and *H. Langenbach* on “Hardware Issues”. It includes some remarks about EPAC 2000, followed by final conclusions.

1 CONFERENCE PLANNING

Tasks – Deadlines – Committees

(presented by *Ch. Petit-Jean-Genaz*)

Planning of an EPAC conference starts about 2 years before the event. The first year may be reserved for “dreaming”, but the second year is critical for a successful “running up”. Restricting to issues relevant w.r.t. publishing, the following deadlines are important: ¹

- *C - 12 (June '99)*:
 - Draft “First Announcement and Call for Papers”
 - Call for tenders for production of the proceedings (printed book and/or CDROM)
- *C - 11/10 (July/Aug '99)*:
 - Website with instructions for the submission of abstracts
 - Abstracts database (ORACLE)
- *C - 9 (Sept '99)*:
 - Mail “First Announcement and Call for Papers”
 - 1st meeting of the Editorial Board
- *C - 5 (Jan 2000)*:
 - Deadline for the submission of abstracts
 - Abstracts database extracted for the Scientific Program Committee (SPC) and the Organizing Committee (OC)
- *C - 3 (March 2000)*:
 - “Conference Guide”
- *C - 2 (April 2000)*:
 - Website with instructions for the submission of papers
- *C - 1 (May 2000)*:
 - “Abstracts Brochure and Programme”

- *C - ϵ (June 2000)*:
 - Pre-conference submission of papers via FTP
- *Conference*:
 - Reception, processing and checks of papers
- *C + ϵ (July 2000)*:
 - Post-conference processing and checks
- *C + 1 (July/Aug 2000)*:
 - Quality checks finished → move to CERN
 - Preliminary WWW version (without index)
- *C + 2 (Aug/Sept 2000)*:
 - CDROM and finalized WWW version
 - Preparation of printed book

Careful planning is the key to a successful conference. Remember: don't try to re-invent the wheel; build on the experience of others; pay careful attention to detail.

2 PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS

Experiences from ICALEPCS '99

(presented by *I. Andrian*)

The server was located at the venue and mirrored by Unix at Elettra. It was used for WWW, FTP and as a File server. Originally a Mac-G3, it was replaced by a PC-P II (Win-NT). IIS caused web administration problems and was eventually replaced by multi-platform VNC. Suggested better solution: either running Linux and Win-NT on 2 separate machines, or running Linux and VMWare (virtual Win-NT) on only 1 machine. The database must be online and accessible via WWW. FileMaker-Pro is simple, but limited and not very reliable.

At the venue there were Win-NT, Mac-OS and Linux PCs. Having prepared one well-configured PC, DriveCopy (PowerQuest) was used for “cloning” hard-disks, even over the network. Software: PitStop is a must, Tailor may be useful, LaTeX runs best on Unix/Linux. International systems/keyboards are to be preferred.

Trends observed from EPAC '96 to EPAC '98 to ICALEPCS '99: Win (95/98/NT) increasing, Mac-OS and Unix/Linux decreasing; MS-Word increasing, LaTeX decreasing (this latter trend is surprising).

It is important to have on-call experts for problems with PCs/Macs and networking.

¹C - 12 is shorthand for “conference minus 12 months” etc, the absolute dates are those for EPAC 2000

3 HARDWARE ISSUES

Experiences from PAC '99

(presented by H. Langenbach)

The FTP/File server (Unix) was located remotely at BNL. An original HP-9000 was replaced for better performance by an HP-C360 with 21 GB disk space (but only 13.5 GB actually used). Anonymous FTP compliant to CIAC guidelines (Los Alamos). TAS (Syntax Corp.) used for TCP/IP access from PCs and Macs.

At the venue, 44 PCs (Win-95), 6 Macs and 4 laser printers were rented in addition to 1 Unix workstation, 1 NT server, 2 laptops (for network monitoring by SNMPc and troubleshooting), several PCs (for secretarial use), the hubs and cat.5 cables supplied by BNL.

Network connection between the venue and BNL was by two independent T1 links (1.45 Mbit/s), and to the Internet by two independent ISPs. Shortcoming: in case of problems the culprit was often not fixable.

Lessons learned: Pre-conference checkout as much as possible. Redundancy is good. You can never have too much disk space. Network monitoring & troubleshooting tools are essential. Virus check all laptops & floppies. It'll take more time & effort than anticipated.

4 REMARKS ABOUT EPAC 2000

At the venue two separate Ethernet 10BaseT LANs are planned to be set up: (1) for the Proceedings Office; (2) for Internet access of conference attendees. Both will be connected via two separate fixed-line ISDN links (64 kbit/s each) and dedicated routers to the Ethernet LAN at the organizing Institute (HEPHY), which is itself connected to the Internet by optical fibre.

The File server (Unix/Linux) must be located at the venue's LAN #1. But the FTP server can be located permanently at HEPHY's LAN, which will facilitate pre- and post-conference network logistics.

The Proceedings Office will be divided into the Reception Room (controlled access area) and the Processing Room (closed area). Hardware equipment will be a number of "fat" PCs (Win-NT, Mac-OS or Linux) and laser printers, as requested by Christine.

Most of the PCs should be equipped with 3.5" floppy and CDROM drives, some in addition with internal or external 250 MB Zip drives.

Software: FileMaker-Pro, MS-Office, LaTeX, Adobe publishing suite (including Acrobat), PitStop, Tailor, Telnet, FTP, Netscape and anti-virus tools.

Attendee's Internet access will be provided in an open gallery by a number of "thin" PCs (Win-NT) running only Telnet, FTP and a web browser.

5 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

5.1 FTP Server

To be set up weeks before the conference. Not necessary to be moved to the venue. Minimum 5 - 10 GB disk space ? CDROM burning for backups.

5.2 File Server and Database

Must be moved to the venue. Database software: Oracle, FileMaker-Pro, etc. Minimum 10 - 15 GB disk space ? Frequent backups necessary.

5.3 Reception & Processing Office

"Fat" PCs (Win-NT and Mac-OS) as fast as possible. Unix/Linux for LaTeX: local PCs to be preferred over X-terminals to a remote host.

Need of laser printers, at least one color.

Software: publishing (MS-Word, LaTeX, Acrobat, Pit-Stop, Tailor), graphics (necessary ?), networking (Telnet, FTP, web browser), tools (anti-virus, Norton).

5.4 Attendee's Internet Access

"Thin" PCs (Win-NT). One laser printer (b&w). Software: networking only ? What about a few "fat" PCs given controlled access for paper correction ?

5.5 LANs at the Venue

Ethernet 10 or 100BaseT (class 5 cables, hubs, etc) is de-facto standard. Two separate LANs, one for the Proceedings Office and the other for attendees' Internet access, has distinct advantages: better stability of the former; bandwidths of Internet access split.

Link(s) to the Internet via dedicated hardware routers or routing bridges (e.g. Cisco) to be preferred over software emulation on a Linux-PC.

Connection of laptops: take care of proper handling of IP number assignments.

Networking needs professional support !

5.6 Logistic Issues

Think about easy move back to the home institute after the end of the conference.