



i-UG - Vendor Advisory Group Meeting 10 September 2019 (Union Jack Club, London)

Attending the meeting:

Mike Ryan - Chairman (**MR**)
Steve Bradshaw – Technical Director (**SB**)
Colin Spofford - Secretary/Treasurer (**CS**)

CSI – Lelah Stevenson (**LS**)
Falconstor – Steve Ashurst (**SA**)
Fresche Solutions – Gill Mogg-Smith (**JMS**)
Macro 4 – Jim Fisher (**JF**)
Redbourn Business Systems – Steve Cast (**SC**)
Syncsort – Alexander Trekin (**AT**)
On Conference Call: ARCAD - Nick Blamey (**NB**)

Distribution: As above +

Bob Naismith	Applied
Paul Tinker	Applied
Marie Basson	Arcad
Stuart Stebbings	Arrow
Charlie Hawkins	Bluechip
Stuart Hayden	Bluechip
Andy Weir	Chilli IT
Ben Williams	Chilli IT
Mike Ledwith	Chilli IT
Thomas Taylor	Chilli IT
Tom Bingham	CSI
Chad Bradney	Dynamic Solutions
Teresa de Onis	Falconstor
Andrea Murray	Fresche Solutions
Jonathan Bailey	Fresche Solutions
Catherine Murphy	Frontline Consultancy
Ash Giddings	Help Systems
Clare Monk	Help Systems
Simon Sherwood	IMS Solutions
Nicki Smith	KFA
Richard Austin	KFA
Stu Bramley	KFA
Annie Hampson	Logicmate
Tracy Eastwood	Logicmate
Bruno Taverne	M81
Ian Masters	M81
Sam Dix	Macro 4
Kevin Harper	Maple



John Amans	Maxava
Jordan Peterson	Maxava
Charlotte Lloyd	MITL
Nick Rees	MITL
Jemma Thompson	MKT
Martyn Walsh	MKT
Rob Sutherland	Northdoor
Tom Richards	Northdoor
Dave Pickburn	Proximity
Paul Rufus	Proximity
Alan Calvert	Recarta
Guy Tweedle	Rocket Software
Jamie Devlin	Rocket Software
Patrick Griffiths	Rocket Software
Steve Fowler	Rocket Software
Daniel Race	Spacetec
Angela Greaves	Syncsort
Andrew Nicholson	UTI/400
Steve Close	UTI/400

Note:

These minutes should be read in conjunction with the PowerPoint Presentation used in the meeting which is attached to the e-mail sent out with these minutes.

1. Introduction

MR opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming.

2. i-UG / NC Communications Marketing

NC Communications owner of PowerWire continue to promote i-UG & particularly International i-Power

i-UG database is around 850 individuals.

i-UG continue to work with Dreamscape to assist with Social Media marketing.

Twitter & Linked-in seem to be working well.

3. Review of International i-Power June 2019

We reviewed this in detail:

- ✓ It was a good venue/location.
 - ✓ Good food
 - ✓ Easy to get to
 - ✓ Ample parking
 - ✓ The Gala Dinner
- There were 87 delegates in 2019
 - This compared with 100 delegates in 2018.
 - This was lower than our target of 120.
 - We were late in beginning the marketing this year which probably didn't help the number of delegates
 - The previous year was a special year with 30th anniversary of AS/400 & 25th anniversary of i-UG which helped with marketing effort in 2018.
 - 2018 was also the first year of the SiD Lectures which attracted more developers.
 - We should analyse the attendees to see how many new delegates there were this year.
 - We always show figures for true delegates but it would be also useful to show total numbers (including sponsors & speakers).
 - Every sponsor was allocated 2 FREE tickets to invite customers. However only one sponsor made use of this.
 - There were some "holes" in the sponsorship this year due to there not being a food sponsor or a sponsor for the after the gala dinner drinks. **SC** said that we should have highlighted this to give sponsors an opportunity to step in.
 - We struggled to get execs. to come to the Round Table although those who attended found it really useful to get answers on strategy & direction from IBM.
 - There was a problem in some of the workshops because the attendees didn't bring laptops with them. They were sent emails beforehand but in future we should ask the workshop presenters to contact the attendees (on behalf of i-UG and the conference) by phone to give them instructions of prerequisites for the workshops.



4. Final Event of 2019 – Wolverhampton

The final event of the year will be on **Thursday 7th November** at the **Mount Hotel in Wolverhampton**.

This will be the 5th successive year here and is popular.

Registration is now open via the i-UG web page

<https://www.i-ug.co.uk/i-ug-event-registration-page>.

We are just putting the final touches to the agenda. It will include sessions from Paul Tuohy, John Taylor and David Spurway. We will also have an update on the i-STEM initiative. The format will be dual stream & the agenda will be published shortly.

Expo Area for 5 Sponsors at the back of the Great Hall this year.

All Sponsorship Booths are now taken:

- CSI
- Falconstor
- Meridian
- Syncsort
- Utilities/400

Note:-

We have an on-going problem with hotel rooms at the Mount due to a block booking made we believe with Wolverhampton FC. We are working with the hotel to see if some rooms can be released but have compiled a list of alternative local hotels which are reasonably priced and quite close.

- *Premier Inn Wolverhampton City Centre - 15 mins.*
- *Premier Inn Wolverhampton North - 17 mins*
- *Mercure Wolverhampton Goldthorn - 10 mins*
- *Patshull Park Hotel - 16 mins*

5. Membership & Attendance

- We discussed the need for the vendors to be proactive in marketing the group and its goals. This could be in the form of mentioning our events in newsletters, tweeting about the event and the user group and simply by word of mouth to clients.
Some vendors are very proactive in this. Some vendors are not.
- Any sponsor of International i-Power can bring along **up to two non-member clients free of charge** as part of the package.
- If a Vendor knows a company who may be interested in becoming a member of i-UG, we always offer the opportunity for them to come along to one of the other three events for the first time completely **FREE of CHARGE**.



6. International i-Power 2020

Venue

We will be returning to the Wyboston Lakes Conference Centre in Bedford next year. Recently completely refurbished.

This has an on-site hotel & ample parking.

Everyone is encouraged to book hotel rooms early to avoid disappointment.

Dates: Tuesday 9th–Wednesday 10th June

- Workshops on Day 1 & Conference Sessions on Day 2
- The Gala Dinner on evening of Day 1 will be repeated with 3 sponsors/speaking slots
- Keep “Speed dating the sponsors” at “20 seconds of fame”
- We will look at repeating the System i Developer (SiD) lectures on Day 1.

Delegate costs are unchanged once again

Delegate Pricing	Day 1 Workshops	Day 2 Sessions	Both Days
i-UG Member	£150	£50	£200
Non i-UG Member	£200	£100	£300
Delegate registering via an Event Sponsor	£175	£75	£250

Sponsorship

1. The Lanyard sponsorship has already been taken by Redbourn (**£800**)
2. The Delegate Bag sponsorship has already been taken by Rowton IT (**£2,000**)
3. Conference Food & Beverage Sponsorship (**£1,500**)

4. The cost of the Gala Dinner is very expensive and to keep it as a feature we need to ensure we can cover the additional costs. It was felt that the format works well and we spoke at length at ways of helping to fund it and came up with the following plan:
 - Increase cost of Booth Sponsorship by £100 from £2,200 to **£2,300** each.
 - Have 3 Gala Dinner Sponsorship opportunities at a cost of **£2,800**. Each of the 3 Gala Dinner Sponsors would have a 10 minute speaking slot during the sit down meal. Each Gala Dinner Sponsor will be offered a free booth in the Expo Hall.
 - If a Booth Sponsor decides they would also like a Gala Dinner Speaking slot and there is one still available, there would be an additional cost of **£500** (Total cost £2,800).
 - Because we are limited to only 3 Gala Dinner Speaker Slots these would be allocated on a **first to pay basis**.
 - We will still keep the drinks in the bar directly after the meal.

Solutions Sessions

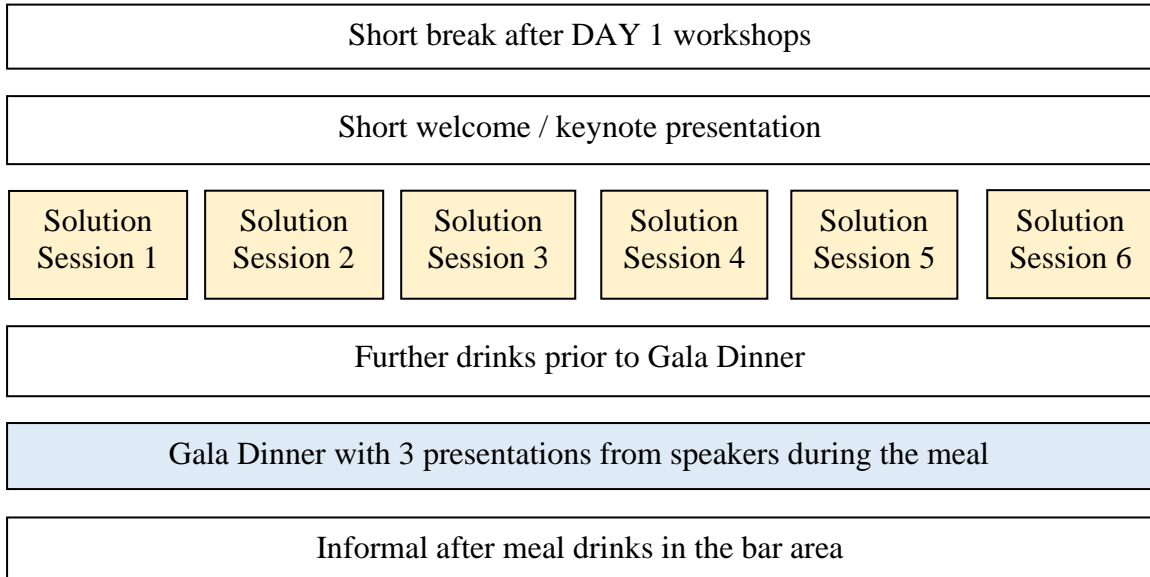
It was agreed that the Solution Stream sessions run by the Sponsors didn't really work in 2019. They were generally poorly attended, mainly due to popular sessions running concurrently (e.g. Alison Butterill – Hidden Gems).

We came up with a way of ensuring that there are no competing sessions running concurrently with the Solutions Sessions:

- Move the Solution Sessions to the evening of Day 1
- After the educational workshops have finished have a short break
- Have a brief Keynote session/introduction to the evening
- Facilitate a maximum of 6 Solution Sessions to run concurrently with no other sessions running, each lasting 15 to 20 minutes.
- First drinks will only be provided in the 6 rooms. So a delegate wanting to have a drink will have to attend one of the 6 Solution Sessions.
- Drinks will be provided by the hotel in each room.
- After the Solutions Sessions have finished, other drinks will be generally available outside of the rooms.



- Solutions Sessions would be offered to all Booth Sponsors. We would add a small additional cost for facilitating the workshops. Allocation would be on a first paid basis.
- The sessions will be listed on the event web site and in the brochure but marketing for each individual Session would be up to the individual sponsor.



Other Ideas

- Offer facilities with a one on one meeting (30 minutes?) with IBM or a Vendor in addition to Round Table.
- The conference centre can provide a wide selection of additional activities (e.g golf) which some sponsors may want to take advantage of and add on to the beginning or end of the conference. The cost would be borne by the individual sponsor.
- If we can we should flash the agenda up on screens around the event showing what is coming up in which room.
- Possibly think about sponsorship of a room on Day 2 & this room could then be “hosted” by that sponsor. They could take attendee numbers. This would mean that the stream would need to be very specific e.g. Security, Cloud, System Admin etc.
- Look at introducing a commercial stream.
- To encourage more IT Manager/Business Manager level delegates at the conference we should include a stream in the agenda to purposely attract them.

7. Other meetings in 2020

Thursday 20th February 2020 – i-POWER South

[IBM Client Centre, Southbank, London](#)

- This will be a single stream meeting
- There will be no sponsorship opportunities
- This will be the first time that the first event of the year will be held in London.

Thursday 5th March 2020 - i-POWER North

[The Mercure Norton Grange Hotel, Rochdale](#)

- This will be a single stream meeting
- There will be no sponsorship opportunities
- The agenda from first London meeting will be repeated in Rochdale.

8. A.O.B.

NB pointed to an issue at the Common Europe Conference (CEC) in Berlin in June where he felt that ARCAD had had unfavourable comments made by one of the presenters during one of the sessions.

CS explained that although i-UG are members of Common Europe, we have no control over the running of the CEC. We would however be prepared to make them aware of this.

We are also not aware of this ever happening at an i-UG run event but will look at the i-UG speaker guidelines and make sure that they are robust enough to discourage such an occurrence in the future. A draft copy of the proposed amended document is supplied with these minutes.

9. Next Vendor Advisory Group Meeting

Wednesday 19th February 2020 - [IBM Client Centre, Southbank, London.](#)

This will be on the afternoon before the London meeting