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Foreword to Proceedings of the INTERNET 72 Third International Congress on Project Planning by Network Techniques, Stockholm, Sweden, May 15-19, 1972

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Editor's note: This Foreword to the Proceedings of the INTERNET 72 Third International Congress on Project Planning by Network Techniques by Roland Gutsch was provided by Russell Archibald as a reference for his 1972 INTERNET'72 paper entitled "Management Information Systems for Projects and Organizations, A Comparative Overview," also republished in this edition of PM World Today. One of the most influential early leaders of the PM profession in Europe, Roland Gutsch was a founder of the German Project Management Association and of INTERNET (IPMA) IN 1967. Please also see the list of INTERNET'72 Sponsors, Participating Organizations and Team Members at the end of this Introduction.

FOREWORD

Ever since the first network systems have been developed, this instrument has constantly been improved and perfected. It was tried to satisfy the demand of the users to the greatest extent possible, in order to provide them with an efficient instrument for planning and control. At the same time, further problem areas were envisaged and different solution methods employed. I refer to the problems such as capacity leveling, time-cost-optimization, time-cost-capacity optimization, the efforts for a further development of the originally stochastic PERT concept etc. A large number of mathematical models and algorithms were designed and actively discussed in specialist circles. The interest of almost all specialists was in particular directed to the further development, improvement and perfection of the method itself.

It is thus no wonder that the first two INTERNET congresses, 1967 held in Vienna and 1969 held in Amsterdam, were principally based on the presentation and discussion of theoretical models. There is no doubt that the ideas outlined on this occasion and the knowledge gained from mutual discussion resulted in an expansion of planning possibilities and promoted the employment of the network technique in the planning and control of complex projects.

As early as on these occasions it was, however, realized that the problems involved in the network technique cannot be solved by the improvement of methods alone, that the perfection of the instrument alone does not guarantee a successful employment in practice.

Experience has shown that although efficient network systems were available, difficulties and setbacks occurred during the planning and implementation of projects. It had to be realized that the network technique can only represent a tool to be employed within the performance of the complex project management tasks and that its efficiency depends essentially on its correct application. As a consequence, many network specialists felt quite rightly that too much theory was presented at the first INTERNET congresses and that the problems arising in practice did not receive adequate attention. It was felt necessary to discuss in an international framework also the different aspects of practical application.

When preparing this third International Congress on Network Techniques, for the purpose of which we have met here in hospitable Sweden, care was taken to hear also the views of our practitioners.

To this end, a conference of international experts was held in summer 1971 at Ruschlikon in Switzerland. It was the purpose of this meeting to examine and discuss the various desires and suggestions for INTERNET III. On the meetings of this conference, in which more than 130 specialists from all over the world participated, several groups were formed which developed and formulated ideas on the various problems of project management. It turned out that, from the practical point of view, especially the following subjects contain unsolved problems waiting for further clarification by broad discussion:

Network technique in action

- When employing the network technique, it must be clear how this instrument can be handled most suitably.
- To guarantee a successful project control, it is important to know in which project phase the network planning is to be initiated, which degree of detail is to be selected and in which intervals the actual data are to be supplied. There was general agreement that this problem and other problems, such as the most suitable training of the network specialist, should be discussed on the INTERNET congress.

As the application of the network technique in different economical sectors gives often also rise to different kinds of problems, an exchange of views on the application of the network technique in different sectors of economy seems necessary. This is so because housing projects are governed by other rules than development projects, maintenance is based on other principles as series production, public authorities are organized in a different way than industrial enterprises. I hope that the exchange of experience during this congress will yield important knowledge of this subject.

As has been mentioned before, the network technique is not an isolated instrument for the planning and control of projects. It must rather be regarded as an integrated part of the project management and the project information system. The principles of Project management and project information systems on the basis of the network technique will therefore be discussed here. The following questions should be clarified

- how can the planning team be integrated in the project organization?
- what can be and should be the significance of the network technique in the project information flow?
- which are the interfaces between a Project Information System (PIS) and the overall Management Information System (MIS).

The practical necessities of the employment of the network technique influence, of course, the demand of software. An efficient application of the network technique can only be guaranteed if

efficient programs, which take the demands of the users into account, are available. In this light, a discussion on **Computer programs and NT** in the framework of which demands of the users and the available programs are confronted, can contribute essentially to the progress of NT-software.

Let us finally mention a further subject. In the course of progressing national and international cooperation in the implementation of projects a uniform standardization of terms must also be found in the field of planning. A great many cases have shown that an **International standardization of terms and symbols in network technique** is an absolute necessity. Existing national standard definitions will be outlined in the framework of this congress. I hope that ways for a standardization in the international framework will also be found on this occasion.

A great number of papers have been submitted for this congress. A whole variety of new knowledge and interesting suggestions can be expected. The discussion will certainly contribute additional knowledge, so that I am convinced that each participant in the congress will take back home a whole lot of new and beneficial ideas and suggestions for every-day practice.

I should like to conclude with some indications on a plan which is to be realized within the framework of this congress. During the expert conference at Ruschlikon it was suggested to establish a permanent network technique organization on an international basis. This organization is suggested to be named INTERNET.

The constitution of INTERNET is suggested to take place during this congress. The national delegates should also be elected on this occasion.

The organization to be founded will be of great benefit for the communication of network technicians of all countries. The progress of the network technique can thus be promoted even more effectively both in the field of theory and in the field of practical application.

Roland W. Gutsch
International Steering Committee, INTERNET
Stockholm, Sweden
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INTERNET 72

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON PROJECT PLANNING BY NETWORK TECHNIQUES

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