

ENZCon 2007 Convenor's Report

Dale Carnegie

The fourteenth Electronics New Zealand Conference (ENZCon 2007) was hosted by the Faculty of Engineering and the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences at Victoria University of Wellington on the 12th and 13th of November 2007.

An icebreaker event was held on the preceding Sunday night at The Establishment in Courtney Place, with a bar tab and platters of food provided. Approximately 30 people attended this – which provided for an intimate gathering and a chance to become reacquainted with colleagues from throughout NZ.

As per the ENZCon tradition, every attempt was made to reduce registration costs, particularly for students. In order not to sacrifice quality, significant sponsorship was obtained, \$3000 from the Faculty of Engineering, \$3500 from the MacDiarmid Institute, and 5 trade displays sponsors at \$600 each comprising Farnell, RFTestSolutions, Nichecom, Hoare Research Software, and Wireless Design. Such sponsorship allowed us to have some great catering, an expensive banquet diner and high quality conference bags complete with water bottle (an ENZCon first)!

We decided to follow the precedent established by ENZCon'06 in requesting a full paper submission. We received 73 submissions – which I believe might be an ENZCon record. From this, we accepted 35 papers for oral presentation and 24 for poster, an acceptance rate of approximately 80% (and the lowest acceptance rate of any ENZCon – ENZCon'06 had an acceptance rate of 90% which in itself was a record low). We fully believe that this process resulted in a significant improvement in paper quality, and indeed the convenor has seen a paper rejected by ENZCon subsequently accepted by an international conference! The refereeing process employed 23 referees from throughout New Zealand, with most papers reviewed by 2 referees. It was decided to produce a printed proceedings, and the convenor is to this day amazed at the lack of ability (or inclination) of authors to follow submission instructions and formatting requirements. Sigh! However, almost all authors contacted made formatting corrections and resubmitted their final manuscript within 48 hours of being requested to do so. To maintain (and increase) this quality, at the AGM a resolution was passed requiring all ENZCons to request full paper submission and to send submitted papers to external referees.

To keep oral presentations to time, the electronic timer developed by the University of Canterbury and employed at ENZCon06 was employed. This is an extremely useful device, giving the presenters a clear indication of when their time is running out, and to limit the number of questions posed. We also kept the Canterbury precedent of giving each poster author a 1 minutes segment to introduce their work to the ENZCon attendees prior to standing by and discussing their poster.

Traditionally ENZCon Inc., provides three prizes; best student, best overall presentation, and either best novice student or best poster. For ENZCon 2007 the IET sponsored two student prizes, and RFTTestSolutions provided the prize for best poster and best overall presentation. The best novice student paper was taken out by Geoffrey Smith, the best student paper by Andrew Dawson (both of Victoria University of Wellington), the best poster was by Thomas Roehr (Victoria University of Wellington) and the best presentation by Fred Johnson. It is important to note here, that despite three prizes going to Victoria University of Wellington students, none of the 7 judges were VUW staff.

The conference dinner was held on the Wellesley – a boat that once housed Princess Diana (admittedly two decades ago, on a river in another country!). The Wellington nor-wester was in full flight however, and a number of dinners turned a bit green within minutes of stepping on board, and regrettably several left soon afterwards. However, within 20 or so minutes, the wind settled down, the boat stopped rocking, and an extremely good meal, complete with copious quantities of raw oysters were served. At the conclusion of the meal, the wind had died sufficiently for the Captain to cruise over to Petone and back – a relatively calm and pleasant trip.

The final registration figures comprise

Full attendees	46 plus 2 guest speakers and partners paid by ENZCon 07
Student attendees	43
Trade delegates	9
Total	98 registrations

Extra Dinner tickets 8 plus 2 guest speakers' partners

It was pleasing in the extreme to have this conference so well supported, and I sincerely thank all attendees, programme committee members, and the executive for all their assistance.

Financial Details

Income

Sponsorship	\$9,500.00
Registrations	\$13,380.00
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$22,880.00</i>

Expenditure

Dinner	\$7596.50
Day Catering	\$6363.00
Conference Bags	\$2450.00
Lanyard	\$230.00
Water Bottles	\$335.00
Freight	\$246.80
CDs	\$100.00
Pads and Conference holders	\$344.00
Conference Proceedings	\$3000.38
Web service during conference	\$7.15
Discs	\$94.37
Icebreaker	\$611.50
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$21,378.70</i>

Appreciation gifts to significant assisting staff: \$300.00 (Falchi, Wilson, Tanfield)

Profit **\$1201.30**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Celia Falchi – my co-coordinator for undertaking the registration duties, arranging and coordinating the sponsors, and for a myriad of behind-the-scenes details. She was hugely assisted in this by Liza Wilson who filled in for Celia on the desk and with the organisation in the final week whilst Celia was studying for an exam. Shaynie Jones was also extremely helpful with administration and organisational duties, and Debra Tanfield was wonderful fronting the registration desk on the first day. Johnny McClymont looked after the needs of the trade sponsors, Jason Edwards performed a large number of ancillary duties, Scott Forbes provided the IT support. Without the efforts of all of these people, ENZCon 2007 could not have been the success that it was. As a footnote, Celia has constructed templates for posters, fliers, sponsorship letters of intent and contracts, an ENZCon logo and a variety of other organisational material which we hope will be of significant use to future ENZCon convenors.

