

The IDQ Conference 2008: A Quick Look Back

By Daragh O'Brien, Director of Publicity and Recruitment

As I start to write this, I'm sitting at umpteen thousand feet watching the heartland of America roll by under the wing of a Boeing 737. I'm tired but content; and to borrow the words of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, "I feel the hand of destiny on our shoulders."

This year's conference was amazing! From the tutorials on the first day to the panel discussion on the last day, each waking hour was crammed with content that was relevant, stimulating, thought-provoking, and full of "take-away" points you could immediately apply back at the office. Kudos to all the speakers!

Perhaps it was the closeness of the venue (the sessions were not spread throughout a large hotel); or perhaps it was the Association's core values of Community and Collaboration reaching a critical mass. Whatever the cause, this year's conference felt less like a formal convention and more like a big family reunion where we happily welcomed new "cousins" for the first time.

Christian Walenta's Presidential Address at the IAIDQ General Meeting on Monday evening set the tone that the delegates seemed to carry with them for the rest of the week. As IDQ professionals, we are faced with challenges on a number of fronts. But these challenges are opportunities travelling in disguise, and our profession is well placed to be the agents of significant and sustained change in business. To perform well as change agents, we need to recognise our heritage, build on strong foundation principles, and be open to opportunities for continuous improvement in our profession. Only then can we hope to meet or exceed the expectations of our stakeholders.

That theme of continuous improvement as an "engine" of growth was clear in the keynote from Stephanie Fetchen and Kimberly Russo of Teletech/KFR Services, who gave a thought-provoking and very entertaining presentation about their experiences with information quality improvement and its role in their business, which is providing information to telecommunications companies to support billing functions. As a "telco guy" I understand the challenges they were facing and also the business value to Teletech's customers of even 1% improvement in the quality of their data. Their example of what can be done and the clear value proposition for information quality management was one of the best (if not the best) I've seen in recent years

Another highlight of the conference was Erin McKean's presentation on lexicography and all things lexicographical. At one point in her keynote, I laughed so hard I thought my head would fall off. Not bad for a serious conference about serious things and serious topics. The relevance of the science of lexicography and the way in which language can be used and abused to information quality is clear... after all, the effort most organizations go through to define what a 'Customer' is would make even French Existential philosophers weep in frustration.

Finally, on Thursday morning, Harry Hertz, Director of the Baldrige National Quality Program at the US National Institute of Standards and Technology gave a brief but fascinating overview of the history of Quality. He then contrasted “Big Q” and “little q”, emphasizing the need to choose system over tools, organizational results over process results, enterprise focus over process focus, today and tomorrow over today only, and strategic quality over quality strategy. This was valuable advice indeed, for every informational quality professional seeking relevance and support. Hertz also explained how ISO 9001, Six Sigma, Lean and CMM can co-exist peacefully within an overall “Full Systems Perspective” such as the Baldrige criteria. All and all, this was an insightful reminder of the strong foundation of our information quality discipline and was an excellent way to kick-off the last day of the conference, tying in so well as it did with some of the themes raised by Christian Walenta in his President’s Address on Monday evening.

All throughout the conference, I met people who were serious about their work, but who also welcomed the opportunity to blow off a little steam in a relaxed atmosphere. It was the perfect venue for learning how to solve today’s problems and how to meet tomorrow’s challenges.

I’m hopeful that the Association and our members will continue to develop this conference as a place where like-minded people can let their hair down a little, connect with each other, and develop our profession. I think Dave Wilson would have been proud of this year’s event.

As ever, we are indebted to the vendors who sponsored the conference for their continuing support of the IDQ Conference. In particular I’d like to mention the teams from Dataflux, IBM, Operari, Pervasive and AMB-PDM who joined us in San Antonio and contributed to the conversations and sharing of knowledge. Thanks are also due to the numerous other supporters and sponsors of the conference.

If you have thoughts on any of the presentations or the conference in general, do share them with us at the blog: idqconference.iaidq.org. Join us in sharing the value of this conference with the world (and send your boss the URL as well).

Venue and dates for IDQ2009 will be announced soon, so keep your eyes open. I’m already looking forward to it!

[Editor’s note: Conference proceedings from the 2008 IDQ Conference are available for purchase online at \$395 per copy. Visit <http://idq2008.wilshireconferences.com/reg.cfm> for details. Conference photos are also available at <http://tinyurl.com/idq2008-pics>.]

News from Members



DON CARLSON has accepted a position within Bank of America as the Data Management & Governance Executive supporting Enterprise Performance Measurement and the Finance Systems Roadmap. This new role includes the implementation and oversight of data policy, standards and governance processes developed to support the implementation and operations of the Finance Systems Roadmap.



DARAGH O BRIEN was recently awarded a Fellowship of the Irish Computer Society (ICS) at their Annual General Meeting in recognition of his contribution to the development of the Information Quality profession and to the Irish Computer Society in general.

Editor's note: If you are an IAIDQ member and have news to share with the association, we would like to hear from you. We are interested in hearing about recent career achievements, changes in your job or role, promotions, completion of professional or academic studies, and other similar news. Please send your news to editor@iaidq.org

Member Discounts

FORTHCOMING IQ EVENTS

The up-to-date Calendar of Forthcoming Activities is online at calendar.iaidq.org. Please visit our online calendar for a more complete listing.

Please send information about other IQ/DQ events to our webmaster for inclusion in the calendar.

3-6 Nov 2008	Data Management and Information Quality Conference 2008 3 Co-located Conferences on Data Management, Information Quality and Metadata Management 10th Annual Conference <i>10% discount to IAIDQ members</i>	London UK
12 Nov 2008	IAIDQ Ask the expert forum — World Quality Day Guests: Proj John Talburt and Dr Walid el Abed	Phone conference
3 Dec 2008	IAIDQ Ask the expert forum Guest: David Loshin	Phone conference

Due to the fluid nature of events scheduling, the Newsletter's Editorial Board and the IAIDQ does not and cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information contained in this Calendar.

Call for Contributions

to Future Issues of the IAIDQ Newsletter

IAIDQ Members are invited to send in their contributions to be considered for future issues of the IAIDQ Newsletter.

WHEN: December 10, 2008 (Wednesday) Submission Deadline

WHAT: Articles (800-1200 words)
IQ Stories (600-850 words)
Tips / Best Practices (400-650 words)
Recent DQ News (40-500 words)
Member News (50 to 80 words with optional headshot)
Association News in Photos (single photo with a one-paragraph caption)
Upcoming DQ Events (event title, location, link to more information)

HOW: Send contributions in editable electronic medium
(preferably MS Word)
via email to editor@iaidq.org

Do any of this issue's articles bring your own IQ experiences to mind? If yes, we'd like to hear from you!

Detailed submission guidelines are available at the IAIDQ website:

http://iaidq.org/main/idq_news_guidelines.shtml

We also welcome any comments or suggestions you may have regarding our Newsletter. Please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Dy [michelle.dy@iaidq.org] or Arnt-Erik Hansen [Arnt-Erik.Hansen@iaidq.org].

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This Issue's Editor(s): Michelle C. Dy, Grant Robinson

If you are interested in joining the Newsletter Working Group, please contact the Editor-in-Chief via email [editor@iaidq.org].

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