CNSL Update on the eDirectory

Stuart Gansky, University of California, San Francisco *

After some early implementation challenges, the eDirectory of statistical consultants is operational. Supreme thanks go to Ryan Bell at ASA for all his hard work planning and implementing the system. Please log in to the ASA Members Only site and enter your statistical consultant profile (My Consultant Profile). Being listed is a benefit limited to Statistical Consulting Section members. (Detailed instructions from the Summer 2007 newsletter are repeated at the end of this newsletter.)

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Executive Committee of the ASA Section on Statistical Consulting

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Past Chair: Stuart Gansky, stuart.gansky@ucsf.edu
Program Chair (for 2008 JSM): Jamie Grady, jgrady@utmb.edu
Program Chair-Elect (for 2009 JSM): Stephan Ogenstad, sogenstad@statogen-consulting.com
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Council of Sections Representatives:
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In addition, the eDirectory search function has been enabled and is open to anyone. Search from the ASA homepage (www.amstat.org) by mousing over “Professional Needs” on the left hand side menu bar and selecting “ASA Directory of Statistical Consultants.”

A new committee is being formed to publicize and sustain these efforts. If you are interested in participating on the committee or have feedback on the system please contact Stuart Gansky (stuart.gansky@ucsf.edu) or Brenda Gaydos (blg@lilly.com). We especially want feedback from independent consultants. For example, a CNSL member suggested the search results be randomly ordered instead of being alphabetical.

JSM 2008, Denver: Sessions and Roundtables Sponsored by CNSL

Jamie Grady, University of Texas *

This year, our section is sponsoring three invited sessions, four topic contributed sessions, a coffee, and two roundtable luncheons.

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Invited Sessions

- Communicating Statistics: Speaking Out and Reaching Out
- Consulting Service Models for Academic Medical Centers: What Works, What Doesn’t Work
- Statistical Consulting and Collaboration in Private Industries

Communicating Statistics: Speaking Out and Reaching Out
Organized by Stephan Ogenstad

Description: Unlike other disciplines, statistics does not develop from itself. It needs motivation from new problems arising in all areas of life. The future of statistics lies in communication of statisticians with other researchers in other areas of learning. Statisticians trained at our universities tend to be more technique-oriented than application-oriented. Most statisticians are not educated thoroughly in application-oriented problem solving in their formal training. Nonetheless, they have powerful tools to solve problems. The world is rapidly becoming quantitative and data focused. Many professions depend on numerical measurements to make decisions in the face of uncertainty. Statisticians need quantitative abilities, statistical knowledge, and communication skills to work in challenging fields.

Consulting Service Models for Academic Medical Centers: What Works, What Doesn’t Work
Organized by Shelley Hurwitz

Description: There is increasing acknowledgment of the value of statistics in medical research by investigators and the public. Consequently the demand for statistical services is growing. Each presenter will describe the unique consulting service model at their individual institution, and will report on their successes and failures. The models are surprisingly different, and presenters will report on the features that work well and the features that do not work so well. The theme for JSM 2008 is “Communicating Statistics: Speaking Out and Reaching Out”, and the presenters will focus on educating investigators and research teams, and reaching out to those in need of statistical support. Attendees will benefit from the presenters’ experiences and will be better motivated and equipped to create successful consulting services at academic medical centers, filling the increasing need, promoting the necessity of statistical rigor, and improving our profession’s image.

Statistical Consulting and Collaboration in Private Industries
Organized by I-Li Lu

Description: To discuss the “reactive” vs. “proactive” form of statistical consulting and collaboration, and to identify the commonality and differences in statistical consulting in these industries. In this session, we will talk about the role of a statistician at large consulting firms such as the Boeing Company, and CRO’s such as Rho, Inc. We work with colleagues with expertise in different fields such as mathematics, engineering, medical, marketing, and product development. Not only do we have to learn the language of our colleagues, we also have to be able to communicate statistical ideas and results. The work is challenging and rewarding at the same time and we will talk about some of these challenges and rewards.
**Topic Contributed Sessions**

- Communicating Statistics Through Collaborative Problem Solving
- Generalized Linear Mixed Models with Applications in Biometry
- Statistical Consulting in Civil Litigation
- Where Training Diverges: Nontraditional Paths to Statistical Consulting

**Communicating Statistics Through Collaborative Problem Solving**  
*Organized by Janet Myhre*

Our Collaborative And Value-Creating Problem Solving Process  
Arnold Goodman

Collaborative Problem Solving Case Studies  
Janet Myhre

Teaching Consulting And Collaboration Skills In A Graduate Statistics Program  
Daniel R. Jeske

Human Challenges To The Collaborative And Value-Creating Problem Solving Process  
Doug Zahn

**Generalized Linear Mixed Models with Applications in Biometry**  
*Organized by Jun Zhu*

Modeling Mosquito Abundance In Thailand Using GLMMs  
Linda J. Young and Robert H. Zimmerman

Analysis Of Hatch Data In Poultry Science: Moving From The Arcsine Square Root Transformation To Generalized Linear Mixed Modeling With SAS Proc GLIMMIX  
Kevin S. McCarter

Generalized Linear Mixed Models And Resource Selection Analyses  
Kenneth W. Horton and J. Richard Alldredge

Modeling The Regeneration Of Grass In Golfing Divots Using GLMMS  
Bruce Craig

Spatial-Temporal Generalized Linear Mixed Models  
Yanbing Zheng, Jun Zhu, and Brian Aukema

**Statistical Consulting in Civil Litigation**  
*Organized by Duane Steffey*

Measures Of Discrimination And Protocols For Evidence  
Steven M. Crunk and William B. Fairley

Issues In The Use Of Survival Analysis To Estimate Damages In Equal Employment Cases  
Qing Pan and Joseph Gastwirth

How Can Statisticians Help Improve The Quality Of Construction Defect Litigation?  
Louis A. Cox

Use Of External Data Sources To Demonstrate Control For Potentially Confounding Factors  
Rose M. Ray and Madhu Iyer
Abstract: The identification and use of large data sources for medical device epidemiologic studies are important. This information helps improve knowledge for public health, regulatory decisions, and progress in clinical research. Limited information about both government and private data sources are available (Torrence, Epidemiology, 2002; Brown et al, Wiley, 2007) but they are not sufficient for generating ideas for clinical research, especially for young investigators. A proactive role by the biostatistical consultant in gathering the type of research work already performed and dialogue about what more can be done could help start new projects. These projects are typically better quality as the statistician is involved from the beginning and can control the quality. A scenario in the context of joint replacement (knee, hip, and shoulder) will be discussed. Other examples are welcome.
Teaching using Real Consulting
Tim Hesterberg

Abstract: This roundtable is for people to discuss the use of real consulting projects in teaching. For example, I’ve taught a capstone Practicum course, in which teams of 5 students worked together for a semester to solve substantial consulting projects I’d solicited from local Industry and government. I’ll share some stories from those courses. I also found stories from consulting valuable when teaching more normal classes. I encourage those with other experiences in using consulting in teaching to share them.

Winners of the 2008 Travel Awards

Jamie Grady, University of Texas *

Congratulations to the winners of the 2008 travel awards to the JSM in Denver, CO! Each winner will receive

- a waiver/reimbursement for their JSM member registration, and
- a $500 check to cover travel expenses, presented at the section business meeting.

The winners are:
Janet Myhre, for organizing “Communicating Statistics Through Collaborative Problem Solving”
Duane Steffey, for organizing “Statistical Consulting in Civil Litigation”
Dale Glaser, for organizing “Where Training Diverges: Nontraditional Paths to Statistical Consulting”

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How Statistical Consultants Can Leverage Social Networking to Grow Their Business

Stephan Ogenstad, Statogen Consulting *

Introduction

The potential market for social networking is enormous. Tens of millions of businesses worldwide are members of local chambers of commerce. Add to that all the marketing, business development, and non-retail sales professionals, plus hiring managers, recruiters, and job seekers, and the number gets very large. Generating revenue and supporting other business processes via relationships are as compelling reasons to connect as finding old schoolmates or potential dating partners.

Just about anyone can hang up a shingle and say, “I’m a consultant”. But in truth, to be a consultant is primarily others knowing you and to do a reputable job. The ability to communicate what you know to others is the very essence of consulting. Avail yourself of every opportunity to write or speak about your area of expertise. That others know you puts you in a social networking with them. To network is not about asking for a job, but about developing long-lasting mutually beneficial relationships. Within six degrees, every other person on this planet connects to you. This means that it may not be whom we actually know, but whom our contacts know that leads us to our next venture.

What Is a Social Network?

A social network has come to mean a personal or professional set of relationships between individuals. Social networks represent both a collection of ties between people and the strength of those ties. Often used as a measure of connectedness, recognizing social networks assists in determining how information moves throughout groups, and how trust can be established and fostered. It can be an effective marketing method where you create business opportunities through social networks of companionable business people. The number of degrees of separation an individual lies from another individual in the network is the measure to which the person is directly connected, or in other words the number of introductions needed for the person to be directly connected. For that reason, it is the number of people who a person connects to indirectly through his or her direct links. As an example, let us say that you have 800 direct connections (i.e., 1 degree of separation or away from you). These are your “closest friends”. But lo and behold, you might have a startling number of 300,000 people two degrees away from you; people that your “closest friends” have as “closest friends”. If now your “closest friends” would introduce and try to connect you with their “closest friends”, you now have the potential to have 300,000 “closest friends”.

Several social networking organizations create models of networking activity that, when followed, allow you to build new business relationships and generate business opportunities at the same time. Web sites such as LindedIn, Konnects, Craig’s List, ecademy, Plaxo, XING, and Facebook may be helpful resources. Easy to use and cost effective, these online tools help locate and communicate with long lost contacts, keep track of them when they move on, and facilitate the introduction to new potential business partners or alliances.

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What Does the Social Network Do For You?

Many business people assert social networking is a more cost-effective method of generating new business than advertising or public relations exertion. This is because social networking is a low-cost activity involving more personal commitment than company money. Members of a social network may agree to meet weekly or monthly with the purpose of exchanging business leads and referrals with fellow members. To complement this activity, members often meet outside this circle, on their own time, and build their own one-to-one relationship with the fellow member. As these relationships strengthen, the exchange of business usually increases as well.

Most people use a social network to find someone in order to make a sale, form a partnership, or get a job. It works well for these purposes because it is an online network of sometimes tens of millions of experienced professionals from around the world representing hundreds of industry sectors. Social networking is the key to many things, including your job security. Would the uncertainty of your next project put you in the doldrums? Yes, it is true that jobs come and go. But, does working for one company, give you job security? Does the company guarantee that you will always have your job with them? An alternative is that you create your own job security, and not leave it up to others to “make your life safe”. You can start right away by enhancing your relationships with others. For instance, where else can you with no trouble search for people by industry, geography, title, and personal interests?

Nearly every social network site lets you create a profile for free, and you can use all the free exposure it can give. It enables you to ask for advice online. The tools allow you to broadcast your business-related questions to both your network and an extended network more than one degree away. While no one likes inappropriate approaches, you will find people in networking sites more receptive to an informational phone call or email exchange. Usually forbidden in the discussion boards or blogs is barefaced advertising. Though, making a sales pitch by just sharing your expertise will not be hauled over the coals but rather welcomed. The ability to see your second and maybe third degree away connections, and to determine whom you know that can make an introduction to the person you zoom in on, are very powerful and have no direct parallel in face-to-face interaction.

In the social networking sites, there is a built-in audience looking for groups to join. Groups have a visibility within the larger environment that simply does not exist with an independent community. Creating a discussion forum on your own site is no easy task. Though, people will start signing up almost immediately after you create your group, if you offer them value. Forming a group around a topic related to your business is a great way to build credibility as a thought leader in your field.

How to Use a Social Network?

The purpose of social networking is to connect with people. One of the key differences between traditional networking and online networking is the ability to have a strong personal profile that is publicly accessible. That profile is an unceasing invitation for other people to connect to you, and you want to do everything you can to make yourself eye-catching online. So before you sign up for any online networking site that has user profiles, be prepared with your profile and photo. Many sites keenly favor those with photos, and all zealously favor those with well-built profiles.

Begin by just putting your network contacts into the tool. That is a great start since you can begin to see with how many people you have developed relationships. You can categorize these contacts, put tags and labels on these people, and track the persons that referred you to each contact. Those relationships you need to work on. It allows you to track the relationship with each person, log important information about your contacts, and manage the relationship as it enhances. Keeping track of these relationships, and proactively working on your network may be the most
By adding connections, you increase the likelihood that people will see your profile first, when they are searching for someone with your expertise. In addition to appearing at the top of search results, people would much rather work with people who their friends know and trust. Including all companies, you have worked for in your profile you greatly extend your possibilities connecting with new people and former colleagues. Make your profile look like you would write up an executive resume, including past companies, education, affiliations, and activities. You also benefit including a link to your profile as part of an email signature. The link enables people to see all your credentials directly from your email.

The most effective way of getting referrals is word-of-mouth. Leaders of networks are excellent lighthouses. If the most renowned blogger in your field likes what you do, you will create a powerful evangelist for you. By building relationships with relevant and influential people, you will receive more support in achieving your business objectives. Oftentimes, the long-term benefits of a specific relationship may be unclear at the outset. The focus needs to be on the relationship itself, not just the short-term objectives you may achieve with that person. If becoming an expert in your field is part of your marketing strategy, social networks give you a much more accessible outlet than the media. You can speak up in a mailing list, discussion forum, or blog, and reach hundreds or thousands of people. Say something useful, original, and profound and you will get quoted and linked to, reaching even more people.

Conclusion

Successful consultants have earned their excellent reputations. Online social networking helps you manage more relationships with less effort. Connect with others around the world that may share the same interests as you and promote your business and services. Look for other business professionals, bloggers or writers and add them to your friends. You can then interact with them by sharing advice and more. Reconnect with former classmates and colleagues. Share your success or expertise with other statistical consultants. Find new projects or search for potential long-term customers. You can subcontract work and thereby increase your capacity and breadth of services.

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**Success of Volunteer Statistical Consulting Service Leads to Expanded Network**

Andrea Rau, Purdue University *

Among professional and student statisticians alike, the initiative to do statistical consulting work as a community service has gained increasing weight in recent years. The benefits of such work are multi-faceted, whether to the organizations receiving help, to the students or professionals providing assistance, or to the profession of statistics in general. As an increasing number of statisticians have become involved in community work and organizations have realized how statistics can be used to improve their services and decision-making, *pro bono* statistical consulting has thrived. In particular, the success of Statistics in the Community (STATCOM), an entirely student-run

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service that provides free, professional statistical consulting to local governmental and nonprofit organizations, has motivated an ever greater number of students to learn about such pro bono work, as well as to become more deeply involved in their communities.

Originally established in 2001 by a statistics doctoral student at Purdue University, Nels Grevstad, STATCOM has continually grown each year to meet the demand for statistical consulting on a local level. Since 2005, STATCOM has expanded from a single organization at Purdue University to a network of eight individual STATCOMs at universities both in this country and abroad, and this number continues to grow each year. Today, the STATCOM Network is made up of programs at Purdue University, the University of Washington, Cornell University, the University of Michigan, Iowa State University, The Ohio State University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the University of Hasselt in Diepenbeek, Belgium. In addition, several other new programs are currently in development.

The goal of the STATCOM Network is to serve as a resource for local nonprofit and governmental groups looking for pro bono consulting organizations in their area, and more importantly, to connect volunteer student statisticians involved in individual programs. This network structure has provided student participants a variety of opportunities to become involved in inter-university collaborations and leadership roles. In this way, students involved in the STATCOM Network around the country have an ideal forum to share information and advice about service-oriented statistics. In particular, students new to this type of community work may take advantage of the experience and resources of more established programs.

In addition to the diverse and exciting projects taken on by individual STATCOM organizations within the network, there have been several network-wide developments in the past year. In 2007, the continuing expansion of the STATCOM Network led to the creation of the position of STATCOM Network Outreach Coordinator to facilitate communications among STATCOM groups and to assist new STATCOM programs with questions and concerns. This central role is instrumental to maintaining an open dialogue among STATCOM programs at different institutions, particularly through a semi-annual web-based newsletter with an update of each programs activities. As new STATCOM members within the network become established, this position will rotate from one university to the next, allowing students throughout the network to benefit from taking a leadership role within the STATCOM Network.

The first STATCOM Network Newsletter recently became available in January 2008, and can be found on the ASAs website, www.amstat.org/education/statcom/Newsletters.htm. This newsletter is an excellent means of communication, not only for members within the STATCOM Network, but also for the general public interested in pro bono community work. It features information about the wide-ranging consulting projects taken on over the past semester by members of the STATCOM Network, including work with a local cancer support group, the Volunteer Center of Story County (VCSC), the Illinois State Police, and a Chicago charter school. It also highlights the efforts of members of the Chicago chapter of the ASA to establish a multi-school city-wide STATCOM program.

The annual Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM) of the ASA provide an ideal forum for students around the country involved in the STATCOM Network to share information about student-driven community work at their respective institutions, as well as their ideas for the future of the STATCOM Network. At JSM 2007 in Salt Lake City, students were able to meet at the STATCOM Network Business Meeting to address individual program needs, highlight accomplishments, and discuss and vote upon network operations and maintenance, including the STATCOM Network Mission and Vision Statements. The STATCOM Network will continue to hold annual meetings at JSM in the future to discuss our activities, how others can get involved in their communities, and
details of projects taken on by individual STATCOM programs. As it becomes available, be sure to check the online program for JSM 2008 in Denver at www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2008 for details about STATCOM meetings.

The growth of the STATCOM Network in the past two years has been truly impressive, and as more universities and student volunteers continue to become involved, the enduring benefits of STATCOM involvement in local communities around the world can only become more pronounced. To learn more about the STATCOM Network or how to become a part of it, please visit www.amstat.org/education/statcom, or contact the current STATCOM Network Outreach Coordinator, Andrea Rau, at statcom-outreach@stat.purdue.edu.

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**Comments from the Chair**

*Brenda Gaydos, Eli Lilly*

Happy spring! My tulips have yet to bloom, but I believe they are thinking about it. In the meantime, the executive committee members and section volunteers have been hard at work on new and old initiatives to benefit members. We have held 2 teleconferences in the first quarter of 2008. I want to thank Stuart Gansky, our past chair, for donating a lot of his time to help prepare me to take on the role of Chair, and also for the work he has done to ensure that we continue to support our ongoing initiatives. A key ongoing initiative is the Consultant Referral Website. As you can see from Stuart’s article, more work needs to be done, but we are making progress.

It is my pleasure to provide a summary of two new initiatives discussed and solicit your feedback. These initiatives have developed through discussions with members at our JSM open business meeting in 2007. The first initiative is to develop informational resources that would be useful for statisticians in private consulting practice. To do this, I need to appoint a committee. If you have experience in private practice and can volunteer time to give back to the section, please contact me or a member of the executive committee. Contact information can be found on our section web site at http://www.amstat.org/sections/cnsl/index.html. Thank you, Chuck, for your continued work to keep the information updated.

The second initiative under development is to create a Frequently Asked Questions document to be located at the above web site. Please keep your questions coming. We need to hear from you to serve you better. The strength of this section comes from its volunteers. There are many ways to get involved. Please consider volunteering. I can be reached by email at blg@lilly.com.

Best wishes,

Brenda

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Notes from the Editor

Christopher Holloman, The Ohio State University†

With the new year fully underway, it looks like this will be a good one for the consulting section. Our new president is working on several initiatives, and the eDirectory of Statistical Consultants is operational. Hopefully, our members will stay involved in the section and we can keep growing stronger.

The new year has also brought a change in editorship of the newsletter; I’ve taken over from Karen Copeland, and Sarah Butler has taken over the Assistant Editor position from me. I want to thank Karen for getting me involved in the newsletter over the past two years and setting such a fine example. I hope to keep the quality of the newsletter at the standard she has set.

Also, as always, I would like to thank the contributors for this newsletter: Stuart Gansky, Jamie Grady, Stephen Ogenstad, and Andrea Rau. If you have anything you would like to contribute for future newsletters, please contact me (holloman@stat.osu.edu). In future editions of the newsletter, I hope to introduce a forum for discussing some of the issues of current interest to statistical consultants. Two topics currently planned include professional accreditation for statisticians and the role that pro bono consulting should play in the professional world. If you have suggestions for other issues you’d like to see addressed or if you just want to let us know your thoughts, please send me an e-mail or give me a call.

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website address:

www.amstat.org/sections/cnsl/

You'll find all information relating to the Section on Statistical Consulting, including our charter, officer list, section activities, past issues of *The Statistical Consultant*, minutes of past meetings, and more.
Update your Consultant Profile in the Directory of Statistical Consultants of the ASA Section on Statistical Consulting

1. go to ASA homepage: www.amstat.org
2. click Members Only
3. login on Members Only login page
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4. at Members Only homepage click **My Account**

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   We have recently reorganized this site. When you are logged in to ASA Members only you can access your online subscriptions to ASA Journals, the Current Index to Statistics and to the JSTOR archives. You can also access your ASA account by selecting the My Account link above to update your address, change your login and password, view local events, and more.

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6. Update your **General Information**, **Areas of Expertise**, **Application Specialties**, and **Language Fluency** and Submit

ASA Directory of Statistical Consultants Form

Use this form to update your profile in the ASA Directory of Statistical Consultants.

The ASA Directory of Statistical Consultants was launched to:

- Help members, especially the sole practitioner or small practices, advertise their services;
- Provide a source for referrals when requests come to the ASA office or to ASA members, and
- Help statistical consultants identify partners when special expertise is needed on a project.

*You may specify whether or not you would like your profile to appear in the public directory. The default is set to yes.

**General Information**

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