Results of the Survey of Chapter needs for 2011

Author: Anne Lord, Sabrina Wilmot
Date: 9 November 2010

Executive Summary
Every two years, the Internet Society (ISOC) conducts a survey of its Chapters. The purpose of the survey is two-fold: to understand the priorities and needs of Chapters in furthering the ISOC mission and to review, assess and prioritize the support and resources provided by ISOC to help Chapters be successful.

With a response rate of 53%, the results of the 2010 Chapter survey showed no measurable change in the Chapters’ priorities from those expressed in 2008. At the top of the priority list is the need for a reliable and scalable funding framework, a desire for greater member engagement in and support of ISOC’s work, and the desire for ISOC-branded materials, information, and training to support the work of Chapters.

Other key outcomes suggest that ISOC should be doing more to increase promotion of its programmes and other resources that offer financial assistance; close the gap between awareness and use of the ISOC resources that can benefit Chapters and assist with cultivating an active, growing and diverse pool of Chapter leadership.

A high percentage (81%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with ISOC’s resources, suggesting that the general direction of the Chapter Development Programme is good, with some room for improvement.

Response Rate and Demographics
Sixty responses to the 2010 Chapter survey were received from 44 Chapters, representing an 11% increase in the number of Chapters participating in the survey from 2008 and an overall response rate of 53%.

The regional breakdown of survey participation as a percentage of the active Chapters1 in each region, was: Latin America and Caribbean region 87.5%, Africa 62%, Asia 53%, North America 42%, Europe 42% and the Middle East with 33%.

Most of the respondents described themselves as Chapter presidents or Chapter leaders (37%), Chapter board members (23%), and Chapter officers (18%). In addition to their formal titles, respondents described themselves as actively involved in policy (48%), event coordination (47%), and membership management (40%), showing a high degree of “multi-skilling” by Chapter officers. This suggests there may be a need to help and/or encourage Chapter leaders to further engage and delegate tasks to volunteers.

1 Active chapters listed at http://www.isoc.org/isoc/chapters/list/?status=A&view=chapterdetails.
Of those surveyed, 27% indicated that they had served as an officer of an ISOC Chapter for more than one year but less than 3 years. At the other end of the spectrum, 18% of respondents said they have served as an officer of a Chapter for more than 8 years. While positively, this may be an indicator of loyalty, it also points to a need for improved succession planning.

RESULTS

Priorities for Chapter leaders

Participants were asked to rank their top five priorities (as they relate to the Chapter Development Plan). The results are presented as combined and weighted totals for each area of work and are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of importance</th>
<th>Code Letter</th>
<th>Area of work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Develop a responsible funding framework for ISOC Chapters, including skills transfer and ‘how to’ information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Enhance support of ISOC activities in Public Policy, Education, Standards and Strategic Initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Develop a common set of information to support the work of ISOC Chapters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Develop ways to recognise and promote successful projects and activities of ISOC Chapters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Create sustainable support for translating ISOC communications into multiple languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Support Chapter needs with individual contact, mentoring and guidance to Chapters as necessary in particular to support dormant and “struggling” Chapters into rejuvenation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Enhance the ISOC Chapters presence on the web and develop the collaborative on-line ISOC Chapter community and identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Continue to build trust, improve 2-way communication, consultation and peer-to-peer consultation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The top three areas of priority show no change from the priorities identified in 2008. The results suggest that additional programmatic effort should be directed at enhancing funding opportunities for Chapters, along with improved support of Chapter integration into ISOC’s activities in public policy, education, standards and ISOC’s Strategic Initiatives, complemented by supporting information.

**Awareness, usage, and importance of ISOC resources**

Results (as shown below) for the awareness of ISOC’s resources, usage of those resources in 2010, and planned usage in 2011 tend to indicate that staff effort should be directed at closing the gap between awareness of an ISOC resource or service (such as the NGL programme, the Chapter toolkits, and bulk emails in the AMS system) and take-up and use of that resource, especially around the time of the launch.

![ISOC resources - usage and awareness](image)

When measured against the importance Chapters place on ISOC resources (see diagram on the next page) to the overall success of their Chapters, the results clearly indicate that resources and programmes that possess a financial component are among the most important influencers. Those scoring high “importance” scores include the Community Grants programme, the Travel Fellowship programme and the Event funding/Membership rejuvenation programme. A special note must be made of the Internet Society newsletter, which scored the highest rating for “important”.

Staff effort also should be directed towards helping Chapters take advantage of the resources that they feel make the most impact on their success.

---

2 For the purposes of this survey, ISOC “resources” is defined as the list of programmes, tools and documentation in the graph titled “ISOC resources – usage and awareness”.
Satisfaction

Eighty one percent (81%) of those who replied were either satisfied or very satisfied with ISOC’s resources. However, 13% of respondents described themselves as neutral and an additional 6% described themselves as less satisfied and/or not satisfied. This would indicate that the general direction of the Chapter Development Programme is good, while leaving some room for improvement.
Satisfaction with specific ISOC resources, such as the Internet Society newsletter, the Chapter Handbook, and the Internet Society calendar of events, scored the highest number of ‘satisfied’ responses. Programmes that offered the possibility of financial assistance were again the ones that scored as “very satisfied”. Full details of the results are in Appendix A.

Attitudes and suggestions for new programmes

The survey results indicated strong support for the introduction of new programmes, such as a mentoring programme (75%), an awards programme (77%), and on-line leadership development training (82%).

In the ‘Additional comments’ section of the survey, respondents were invited to describe programme ideas and suggestions not covered in the survey. Results included suggestions for collateral and other materials to be made available to Chapters to help with outreach. Other suggestions reinforced funding as a priority area, indicating a desire for financial assistance to help Chapters reduce operational costs, enhance their participation in Internet community events and processes, and to support Chapter collaboration.

Survey responses and impact on 2011 planning

With the survey responses described above, the impact to the 2011 planning is as follows: funding assistance will be provided with a new programme that will cover costs associated with domain name registration and web hosting. The highly successful travel fellowship, event funding, and community grant programmes will all be continued, with additional effort directed towards improving take-up. Cross organisational effort, in many cases organised regionally through the regional bureaus, will be directed towards deeper engagement with ISOC Chapters and their members. This will be supported by the addition of two new toolkits: one on IPv6 and one on the Next Generation Leaders Programme (NGL), bringing the total number of toolkits to five and a comprehensive “Chapter Guide”. In response to the strong support for leadership development and training, a multi-channel training programme will be developed which will be made available on-line, in print, and through face-to-face interaction through the continuation of regional Chapter workshops. Lastly, additional resources will be directed towards the development of an ‘outreach’ kit to support Chapters needs for improved visibility and recognition in their local communities.
**Conclusion**

To summarize, in order to enhance the success of ISOC Chapters, the results of the survey provide three key areas for focus in the context of the Chapter Development Programme. First is the need to provide additional opportunities for funding support, while ensuring that the gap between the low awareness of and take-up of existing funding opportunities is closed. Second is the need to enhance Chapter membership participation and support of ISOC’s programmes and across the strategic initiatives, and finally, to improve access to ISOC branded materials, information and training to support the work of Chapters in taking the ISOC mission forward. An exciting year lies ahead, and we look forward to working together successfully to advance the ISOC mission.

Sincere thanks to all those who participated in this survey.

**See next page for Appendix A.**
APPENDIX A

Question: How satisfied are you with the performance of each resource in meeting your local Chapters needs

![Satisfaction with ISOC Resources graph]

AMS Membership system
Email templates for bulk mails in the AMS
Chapter Wiki (blogs and document sharing)
Chapter Toolkits eg “Mobilising Volunteers”
Internet Society Identity Guidelines
Chapter face-to-face meetings eg. at ICANN
Chapter Handbook
Chapter conference calls and seminars
Internet Society Newsletter
Event funding/Membership rejuvenation programme
Community Grants Programme
Travel Fellowship Programme
Next Generation Leaders Programme
Regional Chapter discussion list
Chapter delegates discussion list
Sphere Consultation process
Chapter workshops
Internet Society Calendar of events
Internet Society technical information (eg. DNS, IPv6)