

Editorial



The main event of the season so far undoubtedly was the election of the FITCE.BE Young ICT Personality of the Year. On 20 April we had a cheerful crowd gathering on the Agoria premises for the final act of the contest which we organised for the very first time. The happy winner, Steven Van den Berghe of UGent - IBBT poses here in front of our banner with a ticket for the congress in Athens in his pocket. All three candidates did an excellent job but there can only be one winner.

But there was so much more going on and we still have the year's climax to come: the congress in Athens. Read about all these activities in this newsletter and hopefully you will be inspired to participate in the congress or some other future event.

Marc Lambert

General Assembly



About 30 members and partners gathered for this year's General Assembly on 11 March in Leuven. After a visit to the impressive high tech library of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, we took a tour of some of the seven marvels of the city of Leuven. The weather was not cooperating as it commonly is on those occasions but that did not get us down in the least, especially as carnival was sweeping through the city.



As we were visiting the town hall, Thomas and Stefanie took advantage of the occasion to renew their marriage vows in the exact spot where they got married in the first place.



And then we proceeded to the formal general assembly. The process was duly initiated by our secretary Georges Devroey (right) and continued with reports on the activities during the previous period by our president and various members of the board. The financial report by our treasurer Gerard De Catelle (left) and the budget for the next period were reviewed.



A general discussion on the workings of the association and how to best use the available resources kept from the successful congress in Ghent led to the decision to create a task group to investigate ways of further



improving the dynamics of the association and safeguarding its future.

After hearing the report by the auditors Serge Temmerman and Karl-Lambert Johnen, the accounts were approved and both auditors were confirmed in their function for another year.

Three members of the board were at the end of their mandate: Georges Devroey, Marc Lambert and Edouard Lekens. All three mandates were renewed. One member of the board resigned: Etienne Blomme. One new member of the board was welcomed: Filip Simoens (above), General Manager BELUX at Imtech Telecom.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the membership fees have been kept again at their old level: individual - €45, corporate - €150 and supporting - €1000.

All in good keeping with tradition, the meeting room at the **Time Out on the Square** was then transformed in a dining room where we had a good meal and further improved our spirits with some excellent Irish music by a genuine Flemish band **Black Velvet**.

Innovation Management

Evening Lecture



On 15 March, Mr. Thierry Van Landegem, Director Alcatel Belgium Research and Innovation, Chief Technology Office, addressed the ever intriguing subject of **Innovation Management** in a lecture titled **The Leverage of Regional Knowledge Clusters for Innovation**.

The speaker first addressed the dynamics of the telecom environment today. In terms of numbers, the most striking phenomena continue to be the growth in both mobile and broadband. In the face of growing diversity of services, devices and connectivity, users aspire at a simple experience which the network should provide for.

Next Mr. Van Landegem addressed general aspects of innovation@Alcatel. In 2005, with a workforce of 58,000 in 130 countries, Alcatel generated sales at €13.1 billion and an operating income of €1,189 million. The 6 Research and Innovation Centres and 23 major Development Centres counted 16,000 R&D engineers and spent €1.5 billion (12% of sales). Alcatel owns 17,000+ patents and generates 700+ new patents every year. R&D is key in building competitive advantage. Of particular strategic importance are make/partner/buy decisions. Innovation is managed through a combination of objective setting and monitoring in close cooperation business divisions. For new business opportunities, internal ventures are used to speed time-to-market. Such high risk activities are entrusted to small dynamic teams and can ultimately result either in the integration into mainstream business, lead to a spin-out or be stopped.

Finally, the speaker discussed the concept of knowledge cluster and its importance to the corporate position of Alcatel's research and innovation centre in Belgium. The presence of national/regional research institutes like IMEC and more recently IBBT which both have an **Alcatel Research Partner** status provide ample possibilities for cooperation at academic level. Financial support for R&D from regional, national and European institutions is crucial in the struggle to keep a leadership role. There is no



room for complacency as European spending in R&D (1.93% of GDP) trails that of both the US (2.59%) and Japan (3.15%) with China expected to equal European spending as of 2010.

45th FITCE Congress in Athens



The 45th FITCE Congress with the thematic title: "**Telecom Wars: The Return of the Profit**" will take place 30 August to 2 September 2006 in the [Hilton Athens Hotel](http://www.hiltonathens.com), 46 Vas. Sofias Ave., 115 28, Athens, Greece. You can find all details and can register both for the congress and accommodation via <http://www.fitce2006.gr/>. The deadline for early registrations is 1 July which is getting close. Do consider attending the congress which is the annual climax of FITCE's activities. Next to the technical contents of this congress which covers a wide spectrum of matters of interest to the telecom community, there are the social events, the setting in a capital of tremendous cultural appeal and of course an attractive programme for accompanying persons.

On 7 April, the paper selection committee met in Athens to screen the proposed abstracts, select papers and establish the preliminary technical programme. Our representative was Marc Verbruggen of the FITCE Belgium board. The number of Belgian submissions selected reached an all-time record height of no less than 9 papers:

An event-driven LBS for public transport: design and feasibility study of GSM-based positioning – Nico Deblauwe, VUB

Estimation of the achievable DSL service – Carine Neus, VUB

Children are joining the ranks of telecom researchers – Bart Van Der Meerssche, Alcatel

Adding cost-drivers to the pricing process by a bottom-up cost-allocation approach – Raf Meersman, COMSOF and Jan Van Ooteghem, UGent

The return of the profit does not guarantee the return of the Telecom Jedi – Marc Godon, Alcatel

IPTV Deployments: trigger for Advanced Network Services - Tim Wauters, UGent

Data retention – Eleni Kosta, KU Leuven

Re-regulation of the Info-Communications Market. Delivering Content Services under the new European Framework for audiovisual media: fair play or unfair competition – Peggy Valcke, KU Leuven

Mobility for moving users through thin clients: hype or future ? – Matthias Strobbe, UGent

FITCE.BE Young ICT Personality

Innovation in Electronic Communications



Members of the jury and public alike were captivated by the passionate expositions of the candidates



Steven Van den Berghe, winner of the first ever FITCE.BE Young ICT Personality of the Year during his exposé



Eric Rosier, president of the jury announces the results of the deliberation

The competition for FITCE.BE Young ICT Personality of 2006 ended on 20 April with a memorable session on the premises of Agoria that strongly supported this new initiative from the beginning.

The goal of the contest was to allow young ICT professionals to share their ideas and views on a specific telecom topic with a larger audience of professionals and leaders from the industry. A jury of academic and industry professionals held a couple of pre-selection rounds in which the candidates presented a subject of their choice. This resulted in the following shortlist of three:

Belgian Telecom Laws, An Engineer's View - Dieter Platel, Advisor ICT, Agoria

Policy-driven Network Architecture for Building the Next "Next Generation Networks" - Steven Van den Berghe, Senior Engineer UGent, IBCN-INTEC, IBBT

Creative Co-Design, Inviting Users to your Table - Bart Van Der Meerssche, Research and Innovation Team from Alcatel & K.U.Leuven

These three best ranked candidates then competed in the final round on 20 April during a public FITCE.BE evening event where a jury of distinguished ICT leaders selected the final winner. The criteria for selection were the originality, innovativeness and relevancy of the topic and the knowledge exhibited by the candidate. FITCE Belgium was very fortunate to be able to obtain the cooperation of these well-known personalities of the ICT community to staff the jury:

Eric Rosier, NEC Philips Unified Solutions, President AGORIA COMMUNICATION SOLUTIONS, President of the Jury

Frank Robben, General Manager Federal Administration - Crossroads Bank, CEO SmalS-MvM

Eric Van Heesvelde, Chairman of the Council BIPT

Prof. Jos Dumortier, K.U.Leuven

Prof. Leo Van Biesen, VUB

The prize for the winner Steven Van den Berghe is a fully paid trip to the congress in Athens where he should also get an opportunity to expose his ideas to the wider FITCE community. Our sincere congratulations to Steven for his fine performance and we wish him success in his future undertakings. But the other candidates just as well deserve our respect and thanks for participating. The words of Willem 'de Zwijger' van Oranje are a balm for the soul of anyone who may be disappointed by the results of his/her efforts: "Point n'est besoin d'espérer pour entreprendre, ni de vaincre pour persévérer".

The next issue of Forum will contain a more complete account and more pictures of this successful event. All three presentations on 20 April can be retrieved from www.fitce.be.

Lunch Meetings on Radio Frequency Identification



With the presentations on 26 January and 2 March, the season's series of lunch sessions came to an end. With RFID as a subject, we clearly hit on a hot topic. The sessions were well attended and led to lively interchanges. We are looking forward to the report by Professor Leo Van Biesen of VUB later this year.

On 26/1/2006, Ing. Luc Pleysier, Expert VIL, Flemish Institute for Logistics, spoke on **RFID: investing in Supply Chain Efficiency?** VIL started up in 2003 as an initiative by a few logistics companies with financial support by the Flemish government. The main purpose is to create, disseminate and encourage innovation in logistics. The speaker clarified the crucial role of VIL as a knowledge creator for safeguarding the privileged position of Flanders as a logistics centre for Europe. VIL established an RF-Tag program which produced in 2004 the basis for pilot programs. The position of RFID in the supply chain and the drivers for its success were identified. The many added values of RFID served as a backdrop for an extensive discussion of case studies.



On 2/3/2006, Mr. Eddy Van Herbruggen, CTO Zetes Group, talked on **RFID: possible applications to make our world more secure and ethical aspects.** The talk concentrated on the new possibilities offered by RFID to "control and protect". The speaker first discussed the various identification technologies going from barcodes and voice over e-ID cards and biometric methods to RFID with one of its applications RTLS (Real Time Location System). No single technology is a panacea. The solution to some problems calls on multiple technologies as exemplified by the application in the automotive industry. The talk then went into more details regarding people Identification. With the SIS card and now the eID card, Zetes has achieved a key position in electronic identification in Belgium. Identification systems get ever more sophisticated with as an example the addition of biometric data to the eID card to allow secure authentication of the bearer. Such recent developments like electronic licence plates on vehicles (under test in the UK) and the use of implant chips for employees by some companies are aspects that are sure to draw fire from public action groups that fight for more privacy.