

JANUARY 2008 -- Boston Conference Progress Report – Bob Eberlein, John Sterman, Rogelio Oliva, and Roberta Spencer

## FINAL REPORT ON 2007 BOSTON CONFERENCE

**BOSTON WAS A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE.** The Boston 2007 conference was our biggest conference ever with 586 registrants and 58 guests. We had an active conference team with Conference Partners: PA Consulting Group and Kolbenschmidt Pierburg AG; Conference Host: System Dynamics Group, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management; Conference Chair: Robert L. Eberlein; Program Co-chairs: John D. Sterman and Rogelio Oliva; Workshop Chair: Jack Homer; and hundreds of other volunteers. 75% of our participants were members and 28% were students. 58% of the registrants were authors and 25% were (self-reported) newcomers.

**THE PROGRAM WAS WELL BALANCED.** The Business thread had the highest percentage of papers in Boston at 11.4%. It was followed closely by Public Policy at 10.7% and Health at 9.8%. The other threads' percentages were as follows:

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Energy 8.5%   | Alternative Methodology 4.4%     |
| Methodology 7.9%  | Strategy 4.4%                    |
| Environment and Ecology 7.6%                            | Education 4.1%                   |
| Organizational Dynamics 6.6%                            | Security 2.8%                    |
| Economics 5.7%  | Psychology 2.5%                  |
| Operations Management/Supply Chain 5.4%                 | Military 1.9%                    |
| Complexity/Agent-Based Modeling/Nonlinear Dynamics 4.4% | Information Science 1.3%         |
|   | Qualitative System Dynamics 0.6% |

The rejection rate for papers was 20.25%; the overall rejection rate was 19.5% (includes all submission types). This was the highest rejection rate of any SD conference. Many attendees noted that the quality of the program was higher than in the past and encouraged future conference organizers to be at least as selective and to continue to raise standards, thus making the conference more attractive for attendees and increasing the likelihood that new attendees will return.

The online submission and review system worked well. A total of 477 submissions were handled through the online system, including

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 17 Workshops                      | 6 Duplicates (no decision)                   |
| 140 Posters                       | 29 Roundtables/Special Posters (no decision) |
| 81 Rejected                       | 25 Meetings (no decision)                    |
| 146 Parallel                      | <b>477 TOTAL</b>                             |
| 9 Plenaries                       |  |
| 24 Withdrawn (w/program decision) |  |
| 417 Subtotal                      |  |

NEW PROGRAM EVENTS AT THE BOSTON CONFERENCE included the Poster Symposium and Buffet, Beer Game World Championship, and Diagram Slam, plus a Display of Historic Photos, a Silent Auction and a Raffle.

Successful continuing events included the Chapter and Special Interest Group Poster Session, "Getting Started With ... " Software Workshops, Society History Talk, PC "Meet and Greet," Prospective Conference Host Meeting, and the Navigator Program.

THE BOSTON CONFERENCE MADE ABOUT \$36,000 MORE THAN THE "REALISTIC" BUDGET. The overall **unaudited** profit for the 2007 conference was just over \$57,000 (this number will change somewhat after the annual review by our CPA). Budgeted realistic profit at 578 registrations (plus 22 day passes) was estimated at \$21,034. Actual registrations were 585 plus 1 day registration. Because of the work of the conference team, our conference sponsorship income exceeded the budget by over \$34,000. We had fourteen new sponsors and an impressive four returning sponsors who have been loyal conference sponsors for **ten years**. Additionally, seven sponsors have joined the conference for five to eight years, and five sponsors have been active for two to four years.

The Silent Auction revenue is earmarked for future conference sponsorship, and that amounted to \$3,800.

We had a very generous local host, System Dynamics Group, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management, and Conference Chair, Bob Eberlein, who both contributed in numerous ways before and during the conference. As always, we could not have done it without Roberta.

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.  
The Boston Conference Team

**Budget Comparison - 2007 Conference**

|  | Proposed Budget | Actual (Un-audited) | Difference Budget vs Actual | Budget w/ actual numbers | Difference at budget w/ actual numbers vs Actual | Budget-ed Head-count | Actual Head-count | Difference |                          |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Registrations                                      | 578             | 585                 |                             | 585                      |  | 271                  | 256               | -15        | Members (Early)          |
| Day Passes   | 22              | 1                   |                             | 1                        |  | 53                   | 38                | -15        | Non-members (Early)      |
| Guests   | 45              | 58                  |                             | 58                       |  | 98                   | 122               | 24         | Supported (Early)        |
|  | Budget          | Actual              | Difference                  | @585                     | Difference                                       | 35                   | 31                | -4         | Members (Mid)            |
|  |                 |                     |                             |                          |  | 10                   | 15                | 5          | Non-members (Mid)        |
| Part A - Revenue and attendance                    |                 |                     |                             |                          |  | 9                    | 14                | 5          | Supported (Mid)          |
| Total Revenues in \$                               | 243,584         | 269,343             | 25,759                      | 234,061                  | 35,282   | 10                   | 11                | 1          | Members (Late)           |
| Total Participants Revenue                         | 199,442         | 188,195             | -11,247                     | 189,012                  | -817   | 2                    | 1                 | -1         | Non-members (Late)       |
| Guest Income                                       | 3,118           | 5,058               | 1,939                       | 4,025                    | 1,033  | 7                    | 11                | 4          | Supported (Late)         |
| Sponsorship Income                                 | 39,402          | 74,250              | 34,848                      | 39,402                   | 34,848   | 45                   | 53                | 8          | Sponsors                 |
| Miscellaneous Income                               | 1,622           | 1,840               | 218                         | 1,622                    | 218  | 22                   | 21                | -1         | Organizers               |
| Total Revenues in \$                               | 243,584         | 269,343             | 25,759                      | 234,061                  | 35,282   | 16                   | 12                | -4         | Scholarship              |
|  |                 |                     |                             |                          |  | 578                  | 585               | 7          | Registrants              |
| Part B - Expenses                                  |                 |                     |                             |                          |  | 45                   | 58                | 13         | Guests                   |
| Total Expenses                                     | 222,550         | 212,150             | 10,400                      | 220,546                  | 8,396  | 623                  | 643               | 20         | Total Registrants/Guests |
| Bank Adjustments/Bad Debt/Exchange Rate            | 0               | 113                 | -113                        | 0                        | -113   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Brochures (CfP and Registration)                   | 3,834           | 3,918               | -84                         | 3,834                    | -84  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Contract w/ Ualbany (Salaries-Services w/Overhead) | 84,486          | 78,130              | 6,356                       | 83,600                   | 5,470  | 22                   | 1                 | -21        | Day Pass                 |
| Credit Card Costs                                  | 5,137           | 5,751               | -614                        | 5,023                    | -728   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Chair Related Expenses                             | 5,000           | 0                   | 5,000                       | 5,000                    | 5,000  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Conference Awards (DM)                             | 1,040           | 588                 | 452                         | 1,040                    | 452  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Conference local/on-site expenses                  | 29,591          | 27,985              | 1,606                       | 29,577                   | 1,592  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Conference Souvenirs (bags, pens, pads)            | 3,713           | 3,738               | -25                         | 3,628                    | -110   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Facilities on location insurance)                  | 237             | 740                 | -503                        | 237                      | -503   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Food   | 73,304          | 70,219              | 3,085                       | 72,597                   | 2,378  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Mailing/Postage Shipping                           | 1,346           | 1,365               | -19                         | 1,346                    | -19  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Publications-Proceedings                           | 1,992           | 3,671               | -1,679                      | 1,992                    | -1,679   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Supplies - Other                                   | 404             | 863                 | -458                        | 400                      | -463   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Travel (preconf, preplanning and event travel)     | 1,896           | 1,072               | 824                         | 1,879                    | 807  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Professional Fees/Misc Help at Peak Time           | 10,569          | 13,997              | -3,429                      | 10,392                   | -3,605   |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Total Expenses                                     | 222,550         | 212,150             | 10,400                      | 220,546                  | 8,396  |                      |                   |            |                          |
|  |                 |                     |                             |                          |  |                      |                   |            |                          |
| Gross Conference Surplus/Loss \$                   | 21,034          | 57,193              | 36,158                      | 13,515                   | 43,677   |                      |                   |            |                          |