

Outreach and Communication for the ILC

Karsten Büßer
DESY, Notkestr. 85, 22607 Hamburg, Germany
EUROTeV-Report-2005-014-1

External and internal communication are important tasks on our way to bring the ILC forward from the planning stage to the realisation. While external communication, i.e. outreach activities, need to be organised in a strategic way, also a global strategy for internal communication is needed.

1. OUTREACH

Outreach is one of the key disciplines we have to master when we want to realise the ambitious ILC project. Explaining to the worldwide public the benefits and features of the ILC is a necessary pre-requisite to any attempt of its realisation: We have to explain to the global public why it should invest money into our project.

1.1. The ILC Communication Group

The ILC Communication Group forms the core of the official Working Group 6 of the ILC Workshop series [1, 2]. The Communication Group represents the particle physics community in America, Asia and Europe and comprises a mixture of hard core lab communicators and other persons interested in outreach and communication matters for the ILC:

Jonathan Bagger, Johns Hopkins University, USA
Philip Bambade, LAL, France
Phil Burrows, Queen Mary, University of London, UK
Neil Calder, SLAC, USA
Giorgio Chiarelli, INFN-Pisa, Italy
Karsten Büßer, DESY, Germany
James Gillies, CERN, Switzerland
Judy Jackson, Fermilab, USA
Michael Kobel, Universität Bonn, Germany
Sachio Komamiya, University of Tokyo, Japan
Francois le Diberder, IN2P3, France
Youhei Morita, KEK, Japan
Jim Siegrist, Berkeley Lab, USA
Harry Weerts, Michigan State University, USA

1.2. The Strategic Communication Plan

One important goal of the ILC Communication Group is the development and implementation of a Strategic Communication Plan for the ILC. A first version has already been drafted and can be downloaded from the ILC Communication Webpage [3]. The Strategic Communication Plan defines the *Goal* and the *Strategy* and *Tactics* proposed to reach this goal. While the goal is clear, namely to build the International Linear Collider, the underlying strategy and the tactics which are needed to follow this strategy need to be defined.



Figure 1: Screenshot of the ILC Communication Webpage at <http://www.interactions.org/linearcollider>.

The limited resources force us to use a strategic approach to reach our goal. The strategy of choice here is to use collaborative strategic communication to build support for constructing the ILC. The keywords in our strategy are *collaborative* and *strategic*.

- *Collaborative* means we plan and carry out communication together on a global scale combining resources and coordinating regional communication efforts.
- *Strategic* means we keep our eye on the goal and put our communication resources where they will do the most good.

To reach our goal while keeping our strategy in mind, we think of a number of *tactics*, which are measures like developing websites, creating brochures, organising news letters, etc. In the following a number of these planned or already existing measures are described in more detail:

1.2.1. The ILC Communication Webpage

The ILC Communication Webpage (c.f. figure 1) is hosted by the Interactions Collaboration and can be found at the URL <http://www.interactions.org/linearcollider>. This webpage is intended to be the central ILC webpage dealing with communication purposes. It should serve the ILC community as well as the broader public and contains features like

- a central picture database,
- a repository of ILC related talks, reports and documents,
- a central calendar showing all future and past ILC related meetings and conferences,
- a collection of ILC related links around the world,
- a news section, and
- the GDE Director's Corner where Barry Barish's weekly messages to the ILC community are published.

The ILC Communication Website serves the ILC community and it therefore offers the opportunity to publish all ILC related communication issues, like talks, news, etc. emerging from the ILC community. A dedicated webmaster, Mieke van den Bergen (mieke@interactions.org), takes care of the webpage and all suggestions for publications on this page should be sent to her. It is expected that the ILC Communication webpage will be related closely to the planned central GDE webpage.

1.2.2. The ILC Newsletter

The ILC Communication Group proposes to publish a weekly ILC Newsletter for the ILC community. The main purpose of such a newsletter would be to help the team building process in the distributed worldwide collaboration. This newsletter would come to your electronic mailbox and it would inform about recent developments in the ILC business and feature interesting stories from the community. While the audience of this letter are mainly people inside the community, it could also be forwarded to members of the broader HEP community or even to funding agencies and scientific media.

The publication of a weekly newsletter seems an ambitious project, but experience exists that even on shorter periods such newsletters can be published. An excellent example is the *Fermilab Today* newsletter [4] which is published daily.

1.2.3. The Regional ILC Communicators

The ILC Communication Group proposed to hire three dedicated Regional ILC Communicators who should act as the editors of the ILC Newsletter and furthermore should serve as 'plug-ins' to the regional GDE teams as indicated in figure 2. This group of communication professionals should evolve into the official communication channel of the GDE. Their responsibilities besides the edition of the newsletter would be the design of the ILC webpages, the creation of posters, exhibits and press releases.



Figure 2: How the local Communicators fit into the GDE organisation.

The plan of the Communication Group has been endorsed by the GDE and the respective bodies and funding agencies. While these proceedings are published, the three communicators should be in place.

2. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is not only important in the external relations of the ILC community. Also internal communication procedures have to be brought in place to facilitate the building of the global ILC collaboration. Communication procedures comprise methodologies as well as tools needed to exchange information on a worldwide scale. As the communication efforts evolve quickly, there is a feeling by a lot of colleagues that an approach to a more coherent way of communication should be followed. Especially there is a need for common tools like mailing lists, agenda servers, calendars, discussion forums, and common data and document repositories.

2.1. Existing Tools

A number of the aforementioned tools exist already and are in use by at least parts of the ILC collaboration. Among those are

- the discussion forum at <http://forum.linearollider.org>

- the archived BDS mailing list hosted at KEK: <http://ilcphys.kek.jp/mail/bds>.

These are two examples of existing tools which are used actively by parts of the ILC collaboration. They could easily be extended to the needs of other working groups and the whole collaboration.

2.2. Collaboration Tool Proposal

The GANCOMM working group of the ILC@DESY project proposed a common approach to the communication task by suggesting the development of an integrated collaboration tool [5].

2.2.1. Collaboration Tool Concept

The idea of this proposal is to collect the existing tools and to develop the missing items and bring them all together in one integrated environment. The backbone of this environment would then be an electronic document management system where all documents like talks, papers, discussion items, meeting agendas, etc., would be stored in one central place or at least would be acquired in a central search index (c.f. figure 3).



Figure 3: Schematic of an integrated collaboration tool.

This kind of approach would ease the search and access of documents via all the means, e.g. via a discussion forum or a workshop agenda.

2.2.2. New Ingredients

As a start for the realisation of this project, two until now missing ingredients of such a collaboration tool have been introduced to the community in the last months. An ILC agenda server has been installed at DESY which can be used without restrictions by the ILC community for the organisation of meetings, workshops and conferences. The agenda server is based on the CERN CDS Agenda Server technology and can be reached at

- <http://ilcsupport.desy.de/cdsagenda>.

Additionally a virtual ILC meeting place has been introduced to the virtual room video conferencing system at www.vrvs.org. Four virtual rooms have been added for the use of the ILC community only:

- two regular meeting rooms *ILC-Vroom1* and *ILC-Vroom2*
- the ILC-Casino
- the ILC-Cafe

While the regular meeting rooms can be booked through the *VRVS* reservation system, the ILC-Casino and the ILC-Cafe are always on and are intended to serve as virtual leisure meeting rooms. While the ILC-Casino is password protected (*pw: geneva*), the ILC-Cafe can be reached without authentication methods. To book the ILC virtual rooms the *VRVS-Community* in the user profile has to be set to *ILC*.

2.2.3. Methodology

The Collaboration Tool Proposal contains also two suggestions to improve the communication methodology inside the ILC community. These suggestions are driven by the inflation of meetings which is seen in these stages of the ILC collaboration. While the number of meetings probably cannot be reduced at least a concentration process could be initiated to reduce the number of venues and with that the travel required.

The first proposal is the introduction of the *ILC-Week*. An ILC-Week could be held in regular intervals, e.g. every two or three months. Each ILC-Week will be hosted by a different lab following a permutation of venues around the world. The role of each hosting lab is simple, it just has to provide enough seminar rooms, a list of accommodation facilities nearby and, of course, it should supply coffee. Specific groups in the ILC collaboration (e.g. the ILC working groups) can reserve time slots within an ILC-Week for workshops and meetings. Parallel meetings can be accommodated up to the capacity of the hosting institute. This kind of bunching of meetings would reduce the travel as one can attend several meetings which take place in close timely and spatial relation. Additionally synergy effects between the different working groups can be exploited.

The second proposal is the introduction of the *ILC-Day*. Following the example of the ILC-Week the ILC-Day is a common time slot which can be used by working groups for virtual, i.e. telephone- or video-, conferences. This time slot would rotate in a fashion that not always the people in the same region of the world have to get up at night to attend the meetings. If these time slots could be agreed upon and made publicly available well in time, they can be accommodated as standing items in the personal agendas of the ILC protagonists.

3. SUMMARY

The ILC project poses a colossal job of communication on all of us. While the external communications, i.e. the outreach activities, are extremely challenging in this worldwide endeavour, the ILC Communication Group tries to tackle these problems and organise the efforts by developing and following up the ILC Strategic Communication plan.

Internal communication, i.e. the methods and tools needed to work together on a global scale, are extremely important to guarantee the success of the project. Promising efforts have been started to improve the exchange of information across continents. A more coherent approach to these efforts might be needed to succeed these important tasks.

Acknowledgments

This work is supported by the Commission of the European Communities under the 6th Framework Programme “Structuring the European Research Area”, contract number RIDS-011899.

References

- [1] “First ILC Workshop – Towards an International Design of a Linear Collider”, KEK, Japan, 2004.
- [2] “Second ILC Accelerator Workshop”, Snowmass, USA, 2005.
- [3] “ILC Communication Webpage”, <http://www.interactions.org/linearcollider>
- [4] “Fermilab Today”, <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/>
- [5] “Proposal for a Collaboration Tool”, http://ilc.desy.de/ilcactivitiesatdesy/ilccommunicationactivities/index_eng.html