ANOTHER YEAR OF BONDING MERRIMENT

THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT

In 2007 I enlisted as a Beijing Olympics volunteer, yet I was unable to attend the qualifying written examination as I had to be out of town. This lead me to assign a project by my company to organize some athletes gear for our sponsored national athletics teams for the games. With this opportunity, I visited Beijing again after my last marathon running there two years ago.

My last experience in the Beijing Marathon was not too pleasant as a consequence of the severe air pollution. However, this time I was impressed by the changes which have taken place in Beijing: the gorgeous new and contemporary architecture such as the “Bird’s Nest” sporting venue and the National Aquatic Center and the improvement in the quality of the air due to the strenuous efforts which Beijing government had exerted so far. The talk of the town, of course, was about the Olympics Game. You can hear about "Olympic this" or "Olympic that" everywhere.
The Beijing residents are all proud of China and themselves for hosting this stunning event. Although many people have had to work extremely hard to prepare the Games, they have not complained because they treat all assigned work as contribution to the national team effort. I appreciated all these changes. As a Chinese, I am also proud of my country when I witness the achievement and commitment made.

Being the President of the HKU MEICOM ALUMNI for the 2008-9 term, I share a feeling similar to that felt by many members of the Beijing organizing committee hosting the Olympic in 2008. On the one hand, it is an incredible honour to be synonymous with the Games. On the other hand, it requires a strong commitment and responsibility to continue and develop the HKU MEICOM ALUMNI further. However, like the Olympics, success belongs to the sole effort of one person; it must come from the teamwork, with support from all members.

In the HKU MEICOM AGM this year, I met the board members. Some of them are experienced Board Members (Re-appointed for different positions this year). Sincere thanks to them for their unwavering assistance. I am sure that the board members are new faces because they are still current students. I hereby bid them here welcome as they provide the exciting new blood we needed.

Patrick Chan
President 2008-2009
MEICOM Alumni Association

P2P: A NEW PARADIGM OF DISTRIBUTED COMPUTING

Highly empowered individual users computing and sharing files on their personal devices has fundamental changes in our daily life because mainstream users miniaturized their PCs into popular devices. Decentralized data processing power in an environment with P2P is so omnipresent that it is ubiquitous, i.e., any device using P2P, be it a desktop computer or a handheld PDA (personal digital assistant), has a free data storage space that is inconceivably merely a decade ago, in terabytes. Accessing over the Internet is relatively fast, amount of storage and reliability. Indeed, computing now consumes much less power (e.g., off the “edge” of networks). Network infrastructure systems have also made tremendous strides, thanks to the ever-increasing bandwidth of communications. Advancement in computing and communication, computing on demand and distributed computing, with the advent of new form of distributed processing: peer-to-peer computing, or P2P for short.

As its name implies, P2P computing involves users (or their machines) on equal footing because there is no designated server or client, at least in a persistent sense. Every participating user can be a server and a client, depending on contexts or situations which can refer to a cooperative peer to determine whether they can be an initiating peer or not. For example, in a file sharing application, it can be difficult for a cooperative peer to accept a file sent from a remote peer who may not be trustworthy.

Secondly, as a P2P system scale up, performance quickly becomes an issue. Indeed, many popular file sharing P2P systems can have hundreds of thousands of users participating at the same time. The response time perceived by each peer is therefore critically determined by how efficient the P2P network can deliver the requests and results. One major factor is the network topology, which governs how the participating peers are connected with each other. Specifically, there can have a structured topology, an unstructured topology, or a hybrid between the two. Nevertheless, for all P2P systems, topology control is always needed to dynamically adjust the connectivity among peers in order to optimize the performance of the P2P applications.

P2P is a new and exciting development, and it will provide a very different and difficult challenge to operators of electronic commerce.

Associate Professor
Ricky Kwok,
MSc(Elec&Comp)
Guardian Director

MEICOM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
DIRECTORS 2008-09

Patrick Chan - President
Vicky FONG - VP
Ernest LEE - VP - Membership & Social Activities
Leilla NGAN - Secretary & Student Affairs
Clarke WONG - Treasurer
Karl CHAN - Directors, Social Activities
Janice CHOU - Membership & Professional Affairs
Jack Li - Service
Tommy MAO - Service
Bobo PAK - Director, Website Maintenance
Nelson CHUNG - Director - Charity & Social Responsibility
Adam HO - AGM - Director, Website Maintenance
Wai Wei LIM - Director, Social Activities
Alpoge MA - Director, Sports & Website Maintenance
Edwin NG - Director, Sports
Miranda NG - Director, Sports
Michael TSUI - Immediate Past President

MEICOM Connect

Training in Beijing

Annual event at the Ladies’ Recreation Club

Tokyo Marathon 2008