

Message from the Vice Chair – Steven Walton

We recently received an email from a member about the recent dues increase and local chapter activity. I wanted to take this opportunity to share these discussions.

EMAIL: "IERG is doubling renewal dues this year. How will this money be spent? Certainly not on chapter meetings. We have had fewer meetings this past year than any in recent history. At one point there was discussion of hiring a full time Director for IERG, but I haven't seen this happen or any further ongoing discussion of the subject."

We did raise the membership effective January 1, 2015 that was communicated in a memo to the IERG community on December 17, 2014. We realize that not everyone may have seen the memo, so here is some important background:

- At \$100 annual dues, IERG was losing money, but we held off increasing the membership rate pending completion of the new web site. IERG leadership (Board and Chapter Chairs), agreed to increase the dues from \$100 to \$200 once the site was completed and operational. The increase was made effective 2015. Please note the service credits below.
- After we pay chapter expenses, admin, website, supplies, phone and "Go-To-Meeting" we break-even at the \$200 fee.
- IERG is very transparent in our financials; any member wishing to see the budget can do so on our website under Archive/Organizational Documents: <http://tinyurl.com/IERG-2014-2015-P-L>

IERG is a volunteer organization. The quality of our chapters, programs, and SIGS, which are run by outstanding individuals who put in many hours often without thanks or recognition, is based on the contribution of time and expertise of members. If you feel a program can be improved, please get involved and help make it better. If you would like to see us build bigger cash position to purchase additional paid staff or services all of us need to recruit new members more actively. If you want more services from IERG and have ideas about these we welcome you to get involved and make a difference!

Membership Drive - Venu Chepur (Chair)

Somebody once asked me what I have gained from IERG
I said "ACCESS"! Yes, ACCESS.

Access to such an exemplary group of accomplished global business leaders itself is the first gain... and the rest of the benefits follows.

I am not aware of any other group that is so

- Family-like (non-aggressive, doesn't inundate your inbox)!
- Easy to reach (responsive to your calls/emails)!
- Ready to share (leads/knowledge/contacts)!

Please call your friends to be one of us. Invite them to your chapter meetings and/or simply forward this link for them to fill out the Membership Application online:

<http://tinyurl.com/IERG-Membership-Application>

Here are links to **material to share with your friends:**

Who are we?: <http://tinyurl.com/Who-is-IERG>

Benefits of IERG to Prospective Members:

<http://tinyurl.com/IERG-Benefits-of-Membership>

It is easy and rewarding for you to sponsor your friend.

Credits for Service to IERG

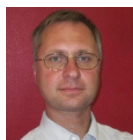
Members have the opportunity to reduce their annual membership renewal fees based upon their contribution to the organization as follows:

- BOD Chair Vice Chair \$200
- BOD member and Chapter Chair \$150
- Chapter Vice Chair (up to 2 per chapter) and SIG chair \$100
- Committee Chair and SIG Vice Chair (BOD Approved SIGS, Committee and Groups) \$50

A Word from John Lowe - Chapter Chair (CA)

It has been my privilege to meet and work with great executives during my years with IERG, and many colleagues have become my good friends. As global executives, we all understand the value of trusted relationships in navigating the complexities of international business. We openly share our knowledge and expertise with our colleagues. I place the highest value on the recommendations and referrals from my IERG colleagues. I try to handle them carefully with respect, and I always try to reciprocate. For us, networking is a serious business. IERG members "get it!"

Meet a CT Member – Robert Kovacs



Robert is a native of Austria and resident in the US since early 2011. He has an engineering and business background. Robert started three companies: one in Austria and two in the US. Since 2012, he

has helped five companies to enter the US market. Robert conducts his business nationwide. He and his family live in Ridgefield, CT.

Since mid-2012, Robert is the CEO and president of Columbiz, a nationwide management firm establishing US-branches and initial market penetration for companies from Europe. With the special concept of Columbiz, a European company can get started in the US much faster and at a lower cost. If anyone is interested or knows of somebody who is interested in this service, please contact robert.kovacs@usa.com.

An Early History of IERG – Michael Bluth

When I attended my first IERG meeting in June 1999, I was both very happy and shocked. Happy as I had found a group of like-minded internationalists but also shocked to see only five other members sitting around the table. Although the group had been in existence for a few years at that time membership had eroded due to a number of internal and external factors. However, during the meeting we all agreed that we needed to take action to identify and recruit additional members or the value of the organization would be lost. Although each of us at the table came from different backgrounds and disciplines, we were consistent in our belief that IERG needed to grow or it would not survive.

There were many obstacles to be faced in our decision. We each had to commit to bringing in new members, we needed to find ways to contribute to the group and we needed to find a structure to direct our forward progress. We did find members fairly quickly who met our high standards. But, we debated 'contribution'. Was it only leads? Alternatively, could it be networking contacts, finding speakers or training sessions? There were plenty of heated discussions. However, we never lost sight of the need to dedicate ourselves to meeting our goal to grow IERG. Moreover, management of the group and the meetings, which began on a rotation basis among the members, ended in a consensus for an appointed chairman. I was the only nominee. These were heady times as we grew the membership from single digits to 60+ in less than two years, provided regular quality speakers from the recruitment and business communities, training in resume creation, interviewing practice and networking and engineered high impact meetings that delivered personal value to the attendees.

That is just a thumbnail review of the early history of IERG's transition. It was really an incubator for the great

organization that it has become today. *However, I firmly believe that the reason that it has prospered is that the membership has continued to dedicate itself to the teamwork that is necessary. All of the members have found a way to be committed to the mission and not just to our own personal success. This is the spirit I hope will always continue at IERG.*

For Your Appreciation – thanks to Suz Garber

The United Nations calculated that over 1.1 billion trips were taken internationally in 2014. No doubt, IERGers contributed to that number. Moreover, with so many people traveling, it is likely that some are bound to become ill while abroad. Headlines were rife with sickness spreading throughout regions whether Ebola, West Nile Virus, or influenza and travelers were no less susceptible than locals were. How can one take appropriate precautions to stay healthy while traveling? One popular tactic is ensuring adequate medical insurance that covers you while outside your home country. If your current provider doesn't offer coverage overseas, there are a plethora of choices available. An aggregator of these options can be found at www.insuremytrip.com, and travelers can compare and choose from dozens of choices that best meet their needs--financially, medically, and internationally. In any event, prior to heading out, travelers are advised to check the level of medical care at their destination and even pre-determine the facility or facilities that would best meet their medical needs, should that need arise.

Chapter Events

The CT chapter held its summer social at the *Barcelona Tapas and Bar* in Fairfield, CT. We had great attendance, saw some old friends, were able to welcome back [Bryan Hussey](#) into IERG after a long hiatus. A great time was had by all!



[Fred Feuerhake](#)

[Milton Chin](#)

[Peter Wrampe](#)

“Mark Your Calendar”

9/17 – The **IERG California Chapter** will hold a luncheon meeting in the Southbay area **jointly with the LA Chapter of MENG** at the Lido do Manhattan restaurant in Manhattan Beach, starting at 11:30 am. Members and guests are welcome. Contact: [John Lowe](#)

9/30 - NYC – [Shaun Higgins](#), former VP of Coca Cola, will speak at our event on life’s “Third Chapter of Life” - preparing for an “encore career. He will discuss a roadmap for thriving in this “third chapter” of life.

9/28 Boston - Business networking meeting

10/13 – NYC - will host the **India Conference** organized by the **Emerging Markets Institute of the Cornell Johnson School of Business**. Contact: [Jaap Ketting](#)

10/22 – NYC - The speaker at our chapter meeting will be Jaime Figueroa Navarro, who will discuss "Doing Business in Panama". Contact: [Jaap Ketting](#)

11/11 CA - IERG Webinar with [Faruk Bhagani](#) - an overview on the Iran market for the automotive, retail fashion and consumer products. Focus will be on opportunity for U.S. Companies.

Mid-November - The **Chicago Chapter** is planning its 5th International Forum: **“How Global Competition is Changing the Business Landscape in the Midwest”**. It will be held in mid-November in downtown Chicago. The Chapter’s target audience is heads of local Midwest headquartered organizations whose businesses will be most impacted by foreign competitors. [Bill Stranberg](#), Event Chair is working with local IERG members and active non-members alike on panelist identification and recruitment, location details, selection of an event moderator and marketing and promotion. Previous annual Chicago Chapter International Forums have included panel discussions on Social Responsibility for Businesses, Colombia, China and Brazil.

Reminder

Special Interest Groups

Private Equity SIG – Interested? Contact Co-Chairs: [Joe Falcao](#), [Scott Meyer](#), or [Mike Lorelli](#) Chairman Emeritus

Reminder

*“The International Executive’s Resource Guide: Stories Of International Business Success Across Geographies, Industries, and Cultures” is **now available** as a free download on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/Int-Execs-Resource-Guide>. Many thanks to the ten contributors. [George Farina](#) and [Suzanne Garber](#). Interested in contributing to future editions of this e-book? Contact IERG Board Member [Suzanne Garber](#)*