



CULMINIS APAC - LEADER UPDATE

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Culminis APAC Leader Update

The following is a Culminis APAC Leader Update for October 2005.

CULMINIS EXCHANGE SUPPORT NETWORK (CESN)

The ***Culminis Exchange Support Network (CESN)*** is a global program specifically designed to help build and promote the Exchange User Group Community. There are five major objectives of the CESN:

1. Assist interested individuals in starting up Exchange User Groups and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in their local communities
2. Increase the number of IT Professionals participating in the Exchange User Group Community
3. Provide a direct feedback channel between IT Pros and the Microsoft Exchange Product Team
4. Improve the level of satisfaction of IT Pros with Microsoft Exchange
5. Build awareness of the Exchange User Group Community

Benefits and Features:

Administration and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Exchange User Group Start-Up Guide ? Hosted collaboration portal (per group), including message boards, document libraries, event schedules, and contact lists ? Rebates from the Group members' purchases of IT products and services from the Culminis IT Shop
Training and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Access to training materials on Exchange Server ? Downloadable technical presentations from the Microsoft Exchange Team ? Free hands-on labs (HOLs) ? Access to pre-recorded presentations, whitepapers and exclusive content
Advertising and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Software packages for raffles and giveaways ? Royalty-free marketing templates ? Joint marketing and promotional opportunities at TechNet Briefings, workshops, seminars, and conferences ? Listing in the Culminis User Group Locator ? Discounts on Exchange-focused products and services
Feedback Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Participation in beta activities prior to the general public ? Feedback opportunities directly with the Exchange Product Team ? Exclusive forums moderated by Exchange technology specialists
Career Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Access to the Culminis Career Portal, including job bank and resume database ? Listing in the CESN Exchange Administrators Database

Community Outreach	? Invitations to support community projects requiring messaging technology specialists ? Access to community outreach database of organizations looking for assistance
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For more information on how your organization can join the **Culminis Exchange Support Network (CESN)**, or to inquire about starting up an Exchange User Group in your community, please email us at info@culminis.com.

CULMINIS SPEAKERS BUREAU (CSB)

The Culminis Speakers Bureau (CSB) provides organizations (public, corporate and academic) the ability to request the top speakers in the IT industry to present at their meetings and events. Based on the feedback of both user group and industry leaders, Culminis is revamping the CSB to include a wider selection of speakers (e.g. local, national, and global) and topics (e.g. product, vendor, technology, and career field).

As part of this effort, we would like to invite you and any interested members of your group to apply to be speakers in the Culminis Speakers Bureau. This will give your members the chance to share their expertise with the rest of the IT Pro community.

The benefits of being a speaker in the CSB include:

- ? Access to the largest support network of IT Professional User Groups in the world
- ? Promotion of your speaking services through an online Speaker Profile posted to the leaders-only portal, Culminis Connections
- ? Speaking opportunities at major events hosted and/or co-sponsored by Culminis
- ? Affiliation with a global organization and IT Pro community supported and endorsed by leading IT solution providers

To learn more about the CSB, please visit the Events section of the Culminis connections web site www.culminisconnections.com or email speakers@culminis.com.

The following speakers were added to the APAC Speaker Bureau.

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Technology</i>	<i>Microsoft Products</i>
Byeong Guk Ku (Richard)	Rep. Of Korea	Messaging	Exchange Server, Live Communications Server
Chiu Kiang Phua	Malaysia	Database	SQL Server, BizTalk Server
Michael Jenkin	Australia	Generalist	Small Business Server (SBS)
Sukhdev S	Singapore	Database	SQL Server

Speaker Bureau Interview



Culminis Speaker Bureau consists of the top experts in various technology spheres. This month we interview our speaker Sukhdev S, from Singapore, who specializes in SQL Server.

Question 1: What excites you most about the new SQL Server 2005?

Too many things and too little space to write. One of my favorites is the BI enhancements with Perspectives in Analysis Services 2005 which makes it so easy to create multiple 'views' of the same data for different people.

Question 2: What challenges do you foresee for organizations looking at adopting SQL Server 2005?

Nobody wants to be first i guess. Hopefully when they hear at the launch about successful deployments by early adopters, they would be more than ready to say "Yes, lets go for it too !". The benefits of upgrading or migration are clear, so the question of SQL Server 2005 adoption is not if ... but how soon will organizations adopt it.

Question 3: From the perspective of an IT Pro who is looking at upgrading his skills to SQL Server 2005 what would be your top 3 recommendations?

It's a monster product compared to the previous version. SQL Server 2005 can be categorized into 3 areas - Infrastructure , Developer Productivity and Business Intelligence. So my tips would be

1. Pick your area of expertise (likely to be Infrastructure) and focus more time in the improvements there.
2. Next, start looking at the developer enhancements that will affect you as a DBA, like Service Broker, CLR , etc.
3. Next, learn SQL Server Integration Services as it could be a useful tool for you Extract, Transform and Load your data from various data marts into your SQL Server Data Warehouse.

Question 4: What tips could you share with other aspiring speakers?

Every audience is different. So even if you are presenting the same topic - ask "Who am i presenting to?". What should the audience walk out with at the end of my presentation ?"

Make sure you tailor your presentation to them & Everything else will fall into place :)

Call for Volunteers

CULMINIS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST WITH THE MICROSOFT IT ACADEMY PROGRAM

Culminis has partnered with the Microsoft IT Academy to help revamp the 4-year old program by building an innovative component known as ***IT Immersion***, which is designed to immerse students in the real-world of IT by connecting academic institutions (high schools, colleges, and universities) with the IT Pro Community via Culminis Member Organizations worldwide. The program will include:

- ? Building a training and education portal for Microsoft IT Academies around the world, which will be used to support students and faculty
- ? Recruiting user group members as local ***mentors*** for academic faculty via discussion boards, email and campus visits
- ? Assisting IT students and faculty in joining local Culminis Member Organizations for training and networking opportunities
- ? Recruiting companies that have internship opportunities for students enrolled at Microsoft IT Academies
- ? Providing real-world IT Pros as speakers for IT classes being held at Microsoft IT Academies

Culminis has been working on the infrastructure over the past few months, and the new Microsoft IT Academy Program is expected to launch on Oct 1, 2005.

Culminis is now recruiting Culminis Member Organizations that would like to participate in the IT Immersion Program and support local Microsoft IT Academies. Participating Member Organizations will receive a number of special benefits in return for their support of this worthwhile community initiative.

If you are interested in learning more about how your organization can help, please send an e-mail to academics@culminis.com

Leader Profile

The following section highlights key achievements of Culminis leaders. We hope these will inspire others to share their stories and help encourage the community spirit. Share your stories by dropping an email at info@culminis.com

The following 3 stories have been provided by Michael Jenkin, a member of the Culminis APAC Council.

LEADER STORIES

Disability or enablement?

Imagine you are young, reckless and newly married. You love to Ski, travel and see the world. You are then in a very bad accident. You awaken to find you are a paraplegic with no prospect of recovery. You are still young, newly married and have the rest of your life ahead of you.

You are confined to a motorized wheel chair. You have nothing to do day in and day out. You have an interest in I.T. and through the long hard lonesome hours, start to teach yourself to type using a pencil between your teeth.

You learn various flavors of Linux, Window Server and Novell Netware. You have adapted to strapping a phone to your chair and rigged up ways to communicate through it. You are finally starting to become independent, you apply for a I.T. administrators job with people you trust, the Disability centre in your local City. You win the position but need help.

This is a true story. The help came from a Small Business Server MVP in the same City. This is one of my stories where community spirit can overcome all. This disability centre is run by disabled people who provide resources and help achieve goals for other disabled people. They have built servers, installed modem racks and arranged home bound people to start to communicate through the dialup network. They have received free hardware and software from Microsoft and the wider community. They have wired it all together with my help. They have started to use voice activation on PDA units and most notably with the help of Microsoft, have started gaining access to tools they normally would not have access to in Australia (E.g. Microsoft Voice command for Pocket PC).

Through my help, the MVP program and community, this organization is reaching many other disabled people and helping them make something of themselves. Just because they are disabled does not mean they want to be idle.

It is the community minded people who put in their own time, weekends, after-hours and holidays. The people who think outside of the square to modify things to assist. Without the community input, people like these struggle. It is with the community spirit that the overcome, succeed and excel.

To this point in time, this site has a library full of computers, office computers, nine servers, 30 dial in modems, a website, bulletin board and handheld communication

systems to rival large corporate companies. Through the hundreds if not thousands of donated hours, the rewards have become obvious and these people are no longer disabled, rather enabled.

I was able to help this company before I became an MVP. Now I can do so much more. Help from the community, user groups, companies and even individuals is highly valued and helps give you experiences and exposure that is normally too expensive or hard to train or prepare for.

Jamboree on the air.

Scouts throughout the world have a joint celebration of communications over three specific days of the year. Traditionally this has been through various radio means including shortwave, UHF, packet radio and even amateur television broadcasts. They come to learn about Morse code, semaphore and sign language.

Times are changing. They no longer talk to people in the next state. They now use the internet to chat to scouts around the world. This introduces some complexities and scouts traditionally do not have I.T. staff on hand to assist or plan.

In South Australia, we share in this annual event with the rest of the world. We have between 300 to 500 kids, teenagers and parents come and visit the event at our site. During this three days there will be close to 50 such sites across South Australia alone. The Scouts are a not for profit organization and start preparing this event from nothing. I am not a scout leader and have no connection with the scouting movement except that I contribute with other community members to make sure the scouts have a great time. This is the story of our site and how I contribute to making the event a large success.

The event normally has the meeting hall and food donated for the three days. I would then lead a small team of scouts interested in I.T. to start asking relevant parties for sponsorships. We approach an Internet provider for internet and email services. We approach antivirus vendors and web monitoring and censorship software companies. We ask for free licenses for the chat software and hardware donations. Typically we have 30 workstations connected to a Small Business server and a dial up internet connection. We then have a further two workstations connected directly and using Web cams and Netmeeting.

There are a lot of concerns online these days. I arrange the Netmeeting PC's to never go onto the internet so that undesirable people on the internet can not affect the Scouts web chats. I also implement all sorts of filters using ISA and Websense. I deploy policies to lock down workstations and deploy antivirus, shockwave etc. We even allow for Macintoshes to come onto the network. I spend the next three days awake, monitoring the network and constantly checking for efficiencies (Dialup connections running 30 copies of MIRC are usually fine but surfing can be slow).

After the three days are over, I compile a souvenir CD of the event for the scouts and we donate the PC's to various scouting movements. Three months later, we meet again to plan for the next event in 9 months.

As an MVP, this event has allowed me to share with other community minded people about the MVP program, get assistance for these people and start getting user group interaction with community groups like the scouts.

Being a part of the community, helping the community, helps the community help you.

NCYC 05

2,000 people meeting for 8 days on two school campuses. The site had a dry riverbed in the middle. It had construction work going on and the data feeds between the two sites had been severed during the work. The river was to serve as a presentation point and had staging erected with computers and projectors. It rained and flooded. Presentations were to take place where there were no data points, no projectors, no communication and no laptops. There is no media team. No radio team. No network.

Who can deal with these issues? Community minded teams. This event was a national event in Australia for the Uniting Church. The events administration team had been working on the project for 3 years. The members of the I.T. team installed a WiFi solution, Dect handsets, couriers on push bikes with laptops and a registration intranet (Database driven). We built a 90 computer internet centre, 20 computer administration centre, 5 computers in the medical surgery / emergency response centre and overcame every issue.

The IT team started collecting digital photos and video to form the Media team. I was the proud leader of this team and am proud to reflect on the enormous amount of assistance I received from the community, Microsoft and attending delegates. As an MVP, I was most impressed with the community spirit alive in people who had been given so many issues every day, and with their wills beaten to an inch of their lives, kept going.

I also inherited the radio systems and actually learnt new skills. I had the transmitter in place, various FM radios around the site and live Netmeeting feeds for seminars broadcasting live.

If you are community minded, try new things, you will learn new skills. This was one of the most personally rewarding projects of my life.

Leader Interview

Culminis Leaders come from diverse backgrounds bringing their own unique experiences in shaping and growing their groups and communities. This week we interview Dean Calvert leader of the Adelaide SBS Users Group.

Question 1: What keeps you going in your current role as leader of your group?

I enjoy a challenge and I get a buzz out of helping people. I get to experience both of these leading a group. I also learn a lot through leading the group, particularly as I prepare the presentation for the month. I want to be able to provide quality information to the meeting attendees so I like to get good content that's relevant and valuable to the attendees and me, so we all learn at the same time.

Question 2: How does your user group address the needs of the IT Pro community, is there something unique you've done recently?

In conjunction with some of the other Australian SBS group leaders, we've worked with Microsoft Australia to get subsidized training for our groups. This helped to provide timely, cost effective and quality training for the group members. Whilst we don't do anything particularly "unique", as such, the group members get to have a say in the content we cover in meetings to ensure it's useful to all.

Question 3: With growth of your user group what new challenges have you encountered?

The first challenge we had was space - fitting everyone in. We started meeting in my office but outgrew it as we got more members. At the same time there was communication between group members. We established a Yahoo group mailing list which resolved that issue. Once we got these overcome, it's been a matter of having content that's useful for all members which requires a mix of asking meeting attendees and guessing!

Question 4: Could you list the top 3 best practices which would help other leaders?

Don't be afraid to ask for help. This could be either asking group members or connecting with other group leaders to share ideas and lighten the load - helps you avoid "reinventing the wheel". Secondly, try to establish a framework for each meeting to follow. This helps to make it easier to plan meetings and builds in predictability so attendees feel more comfortable and if you get stuck attending a meeting as leader then it's easier for someone else to take over. Thirdly, keep it fun. If you don't enjoy leading the group then perhaps it's time to hand the reigns over to someone else.

New Initiatives

CULMINIS HOLDS FIRST EVENT IN GREATER CHINA REGION

From the 23rd to the 25th of September Culminis participated in TechEd in Beijing China. This was the first time that Culminis entered the region. A council of leaders was created for China. Over 100 people visited the Culminis booth. With the encouragement from Culminis, Council member Xu Xiaozhuo started an offline Mobility Usergroup in Shanghai. His membership application for ALLIANCE is being reviewed. The group currently has 11 members and the first meeting is on Oct. 28. He plans to introduce Culminis to his members during this event. Similarly Council member Leo Shi planned to start a new IT Pro user group in Nanjing. Overall an exciting new beginning to help promote and grow the IT Pro community globally.

FIRST MOBILE IT PRO GROUP IN CHINA

Post Culminis presence at TechEd, Xiaozhuo launched Miviva on October 29th. A group dedicated to Mobility. It was attended by 40 IT pros. This marks a new beginning for the IT Pro community in China. Here are some pictures from the first meeting.

