

Internet Groups associated with the Executive Group

We currently have two different groups set up on the web to assist us with our networking activities. In the meeting on September 17, we had a discussion about participation in those groups. This note is to provide some correction and clarification to that discussion.

Yahoo Group: This group was the first to be created and is used to send out notices about meetings to all members. That is an automatic email feature of the group configuration. Emails sent from this group arrive in the member's mailbox as ordinary mail. In the meeting, I said I did not believe one had to be a member of the group to receive these messages. That is not accurate. In order to enable the automatic mailing of information from the site, each member has to be registered with the group.

I have recently re-sent invitations to all members of the executive Group to provide a mechanism for people to join this group. As of this writing, we have 25 members in the Executive Group and 11 members of the Yahoo Group.

Other features of this group of interest to us are a calendar, the ability to store files that are accessible to members, ability to poll the membership, and, perhaps, a few others that we have not explored.

LinkedIn Group: This is a networking service that grew up on the web after our Yahoo Group was established. It is created as a business oriented networking operation that is quite different from the Yahoo setup, which is much more general. This group now has 13 of our 25 members registered.

The attraction of this group to us is primarily the networking orientation and its connections to others across a broad spectrum of the business community. Attractive features include the ability to send messages within the group and to establish an internal discussion that the group members can participate in. There is a group mailing feature that can be used to distribute messages, but there does not seem to be any ability to automate that as a regular mailing. LinkedIn listings are also searchable on the web and contribute to our overall web presence.

LinkedIn does not appear to support polling, file storage, or calendar functions.

There are two other web presences that we have established:

Execgroup.org: We maintain a one page web site to establish our own distinct presence on the Internet. We have a logo and a little information about our group on this page. We pay for the domain name registration and the hosting service for this site. This page contains a link to our other presence on the web...

Business Networking Group: This is a web page maintained on my web site at http://www.small-business-consultants.net/business_network.htm. This is our primary presence on the Internet and ranks on searches like "business networking Houston", "executive group Houston", and many other common search terms. We regularly receive inquiries from people wanting to join our group. This page is used to

maintain a roster of the membership, description of the group, map link to our meeting place, and relevant documents available for download. I provide this page as a free service to the group because it contributes to the content on my site as well as benefitting from the presence that my web site has already established. As a result of the presence that this page has established, members can be found here by Google searches, and some have actually received inquiries through the web from this source.

Each if these four groups/services requires a certain amount of regular maintenance work to keep functioning. In order to be really useful to us, everyone in the Executive Group needs to participate in each of these groups. Our web page is the exception, as there is practically no maintenance done there on a regular basis.