

Engineering Power

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Our Two Organizational Cultures

The communication among scientists and engineers through their professional and learned societies and clubs has a tradition of more than two centuries in Croatia. At the beginning of nineties, nearly a hundred and fifty various, mainly disciplinary societies have influenced regional and national development and progress. Through international co-operation, many of these societies have supported the transfer of knowledge and skills, and promoted internationally the scientific and professional achievements of their members.

The numerous members of these societies have a wealth of knowledge and experience — knowledge that would probably suffice to solve all the various difficulties of the economy of new Croatian state *in status nascendi*. However, this knowledge has been dispersed and has not been organized to carry out such a function. One of our premises was that an individual's knowledge should be harvested and converted into "group knowledge" (or "organisation - available knowledge"). We recognized that a sort of clearing house is needed in which distinguished individuals of various professions could be motivated to investigate the possibilities of multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary co-operation, and find appropriate methods of knowledge-management in the service of the economic development of Croatia and the creation of a competitive market position for Croatia.

In the autumn 1991, we founded the very first multi-disciplinary society: The Croatian Systems Society (CROSS), which has successfully united distinguished engineers, economists, sociologists as well as professionals from other disciplines to work on numerous programmes and have contributed to a new spirit of progress. The foundation of CROSS coincided with the recognition of Croatia as an independent state. We believed that the demonstration of the potential of our highly-educated and knowledgeable people through the society's activities would demonstrate the Croatian Government's recognition that our members contribute one of the most important input in the construction of modern and vital state, encompassing the development of a competitive economy.

There is a belief that the times in which we live are of unique historical significance. This is particularly so for people of Croatia, who in the last decade of twentieth century after nearly a millenium of semi-independence, finally became citizens of an independent state. One of our key questions is what our reference in the development of a modern civil state should be, and how we should plan our future, since a previous age, (culture and social arrangements), is coming to an end and another has not yet begun. This is a real challenge!

Encouraged by the positive response to the CROSS and its successful beginning, and knowing of the particular need for the unification of our fragmented engineering community, we decided, in 1993, to establish a learned society for engineers. It was called the Croatian Academy of Engineering, and is compatible with the traditions of the Croatian Academy of Science and Art, which was established in the last century.

During the five years of its existence and work which has been assisted by CROSS, the Croatian Academy of Engineering has grown into a recognized institution, which today successfully combines two organizational cultures — technical and learning. The Academy produces a combined expert and generative power. The engineering power is identified with knowledge, skill, expertise and ingenuity, but also with the desire for quality, change, and improvement. Its positive influence on the wider engineering community facilitates the understanding of economic and social changes, and the cognition of the impact of the rising *Information Society*. The aim of publishing our bulletin *Engineering Power*, is to communicate to the international engineering community, ideas, viewpoints and the results of our work, but it is also to publicize the scientific and professional successes of the Croatian engineering community.

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