Message from the Chair

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When talking to ordinary people, the term "graphical communication" usually conjures up images of paper media with static drawings or charts. This interpretation, however, is only a subset of conveying information by (what can be more accurately described as) "visual" means. The terms "graphical" and "visual" became synonymous due to the tools and techniques that were historically available to create such presentations. Throughout history, the wider purpose of visual communication has been to transmit the maximum amount of information possible in the shortest time possible, with as great an understanding as possible and with as few errors possible. We have obviously evolved beyond traditional media. The ever increasing power of computing and display technologies have initiated searches for new, more effective way to communicate visually, as well as new applications for visual communication tools. CAD, for example, was developed by computer scientists in research laboratories, but has now gone main-stream. We cannot imagine engineering design today without the use of this wonderful tool. Paper media seems to be slowly disappearing, replaced by other visual media, including three-dimensional and time-based presentations in the form of, for example, augmented reality and virtual reality on electronic and holographic displays. Although currently used mostly for presentation of geometry, visually-based three and four dimensional presentations can also be extended to the organization, retrieval, and interpretation of data.

Our Division must place itself in a position develop and implement these technologies, and use them to their full advantage in engineering design when they go main-stream. I can already see this happening, as articles that are being submitted to this *Journal* are slowly turning from studies on tools for building three-dimensional models toward techniques for higher level visual communication and understanding this type of communication. The variety of new topics being presented at our conferences and submitted to our *Journal* is refreshing and exciting, and we must do our best to encourage more of this material. I'll even go as far as proposing that we reconsider using the terms "graphics" and "graphical" in our Division Bylaws and even in the name of our Division to relieve us of the historical burden that these terms carry, and to encourage a broader scope and mission for our Division. This proposal seems to be an appropriate challenge for next year's Board of Officers for the Division, led by incoming Chair Kevin Devine, and supported by Lulu Sun who is new to the elected Board as the Director of Communications.

Thank you for your support this past year. I hope you can attend the 69th Annual Midyear Conference at Illinois State University in Normal, IL, where the site Chair will be Kevin Devine and the Program Chair will be Judy Birchman.

Dennis K. Lieu