

Dear Sir/Madam,

I came across the Lambert Review whilst browsing through the Government web-site, and thought that it might be useful to alert you to our experiences with technology transfer.

We run a small, but highly regarded and commercially successful technology transfer activity, called the Advanced Control Technology Club. Companies pay an annual subscription fee to become members of this activity and get access to a wide range of services. Further information about our technology transfer activity can be found on our web-site:

<http://www.isc-ltd.com/actclub>

The ACT Club was established in 1990 with initial 3-year funding from the the DTI, to promote technology transfer and training for industry in the field of control and automation. However, unlike many other similar initiatives, we have continued to be successful and even grow our activity after the end of our initial funding.

This is probably due to a number of key points:

- we are a commercial activity, and as such one key motivator is to give our customers (i.e. industry) what they want. This is much more of a driver than is found in similar (but often unsuccessful) technology transfer activities that may have been established within academia.
- we have an excellent team of well respected employees with enthusiasm for this activity.
- our subject area, control engineering, is often regarded as a "black-art" by industry and there exists a gulf between industry practice and academic theory.

However, over the last few years we are aware that our industrial clients are finding it increasingly difficult to justify their membership fee based on the perceived value of technology transfer. Consequently, we have moved to providing more services of immediate benefit to our industrial clients, such as the provision of training and consultancy help. Such activities can be more readily justified to the people holding the purse strings. This is having an consequent reduction in the amount of true technology transfer activity that we are providing.

I hope this short note is of interest, and if you do need any further clarification then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

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