Henry Elliott & Company

Ken Wagner

by Ken Wagner as interviewed by Pam McIntyre

Henry Elliott and Company has been a Distinguished Member since 1993 and is currently a Gold Distinguished Member. The following interview was conducted with Ken Wagner, President of Henry Elliott & Company.

MTA: What does Henry Elliott & Company do?
Wagner: Henry Elliott & Company, Inc. specializes in the placement of both temporary contract M programmer/analysts and permanent employees throughout the U.S. Our consultants work on the customer site as well as remotely. We also locate M professionals looking for permanent employment throughout the U.S. The level of expertise varies from entry level to director of information systems.

MTA: Who is Henry Elliott?
Wagner: There isn't anyone named Henry Elliott that I am aware of. The company name was derived from my grandfather, Henry and my father Robert Elliott Wagner.

MTA: How and when was Henry Elliott & Company founded?
Wagner: I founded the company in 1992 and shortly after began hiring staff to focus on contract temporary programming and permanent placement of M Technology professionals.

MTA: In general, how great is the need for people with M skills?
Wagner: The need for M professionals greatly outnumbers the supply of qualified M candidates. This is true for individuals with one to ten years of experience and who are hands-on and write software. The need for management professionals is not as strong. The reason for this is because most companies will promote from within and back fill at the programmer or senior programmer/analyst level.

MTA: What type of companies or industries have the greatest demand for M skills?
Wagner: The greatest need for M skills is with healthcare providers, hospitals, large medical centers, HMOs, and laboratories. There is a secondary need with software vendors and service companies.

MTA: Are companies willing to train people in M?
Wagner: A few of the large companies such as IDX and LabCorp will train people in M Technology. Most other companies will not train.

MTA: Is there a demand for people who can interface M with newer technologies (UNIX, NT etc.)?
Wagner: The demand is more for M Technology first. If candidates have Visual Basic or other technical skills, that can be useful. However, they would need to have M *and* a specific skill required by a client company. The chances of that are small. Companies realize this and try to focus on the technology that is used the most. In addition to M, Visual Basic is widely used. UNIX, NT, C++, and client server experience are in high demand from software vendors. I am also seeing a greater need for individuals who can place databases on the Web.

MTA: In what direction is M Technology moving?
Wagner: M is expanding and is being used in conjunction with technology of all kinds. People with a strong work ethic who write clean, well-documented code will always be needed.

MTA: What is the availability of people with M skills?
Wagner: The availability of M professionals is tightening because companies that use M are expanding and the available M professionals are being hired more quickly. Companies that cannot afford to wait will need to hire contract programmer/analysts, or train and set up mentoring programs for less experienced programmers. The demand for M programmers is just as great as the need for programmers with non-M skill sets.

MTA: What advice would you give to someone with M skills who wants to be competitive in the job market?
Wagner: If you want to be competitive in the job market, you should always try to maximize the opportunities with your present employer. Once you are no longer able to

learn, then it is time to move on. You can maximize the opportunities with your present employer by moving from project to project and team to team. Attend seminars and classes whenever offered. Always take advantage of learning opportunities on your own.

MTA: What types of salaries do M people command, and how does this compare to people with other technical skill sets?

Wagner: Typically, M salaries are about 10% below other technologies such as C, C++, and client server. Government-related organizations and community hospitals typically pay the lowest. Software vendors, HMOs, and major medical centers are more in line with salaries for professionals with other technologies. Across the board, M professionals are still paid about 10% less. This is unfortunate because M professionals are in just as high a demand as other information technology professionals. **M**

Ken Wagner is president and founder of Henry Elliott & Company, Inc.

MTA Nominations Open 1998 Board of Directors

Open two-year positions:
   Chair
   Executive Director
   Two At-Large Seats

MTA members may nominate any member in good standing, including themselves. Deadline is March 17, 1998. Call, fax, mail, or email nominations to:

   Nominating Committee
   M Technology Association
   Suite 205
   1738 Elton Rd.
   Silver Spring, MD 20903
   Phone: 301-431-4070
   Fax: 301-431-0017
   Email: MTA@mtechnology.org

Current Board and Terms of Office

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Vice Chair, Dave Holbrook (1997-1999)
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