

Society Name Change—It Is the Time to Do It to Respond to and Reflect the Dynamic Changes in Industry

By Wahab Almuhtadi

Dear members, let me first thank you for being valuable and active members of our Society.

I would like to bring to your attention a brief history and the evolution of our Society's name.

Our Society's roots can be traced back to the time of Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell and when a group of electrical engineers formed on 13 May 1884 in New York City as the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE). In the first half of the 20th century, the invention and development of radio communications led to the formation of the Institute of Radio Engineers (IRE) in 1912. During the late 1940s and 1950s, our parent organization was known as the IRE Professional Group on Broadcast and Television Receivers (PGBTR). In the early 1940s, IRE was a relatively small engineering organization, but the importance of communications and the emergence of transistor electronics in the 1940s produced an unprecedented growth of the field. On 1 November 1949, the first meeting of the IRE PGBTR/Consumer Electronics Group (CEG) was held. In 1952, a publication started under the name *Transactions of the IRE Professional Group on Broadcast and Television Receivers*, and in 1955, the title was shortened to *IRE Transactions on Broadcast and Television Receivers*. The merger of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE) and the Institute of



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Radio Engineers (IRE) was accomplished in January 1963 to form the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

In 1963, due to the creation of the IEEE, the AIEE Committee on Television and Aural Broadcasting Systems (CTABS) and the IRE PGBTR melded into the IEEE Professional Technical Group on Broadcast and Television Receivers (PTGBTR). In 1964, the name was shortened to IEEE Group on Broadcast and Television Receivers (GBTR), and during that time, its publication name changed to *IEEE Transactions on Broadcast and Television Receivers*. Later on, the name changed to IEEE Professional Technical Group on Broadcasting (PTGB). The Society name of Consumer Electronics Group (CEG) began to be used in 1974 with W.H. Harrold as president,

who was followed in 1975 by Harris O. Woods (Philco Corp.). In 1976, the IEEE was restructured into Technical Societies. Also in 1976, the IEEE Professional Technical Group on Broadcasting merged with the Committee on Video Techniques and the Television Systems to form the IEEE Broadcast, Cable, and Consumer Electronics (BCCE) Society. The Consumer Electronics Group ran as a separate subgroup under the BCCE Society from 1976 to 1982. In 1982, the CE Group requested, and was granted by IEEE headquarters, to become a Society on its own. In 1982, the IEEE Consumer Electronics Group became a Society—the IEEE Consumer Electronics Society (CES) (with Howard Prosser as president). In 1983, the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB) approved the dissolution of the IEEE BCCE Society and the formation of the IEEE Consumer Electronics Society (CES) and IEEE Broadcast Technology Society (BTS).

As mentioned in my previous "President's Message" (*IEEE Consumer Electronics Magazine*, January 2019) the consumer electronics industry has experienced continuous growth as a result of the advancement and rapid changes in consumer electronics technology and the global demand for smart devices and smart systems, such as augmented reality with mobile computing, the IoT, AI, blockchain, SmartTV, smartphones, games, autonomous cars, smart cities, etc. All these rapid changes are reflected on our IEEE CES. We strive to be the premier

technical Society in the area of consumer technologies and to advance the theory and practice of engineering. To respond to these changes and maintain the Society as a leading technical organization, *it is time to change the name of the Society*. The Society Board of Governors (BoG) initiated the discussion of the Society name change at its face-to-face board meeting back in May 2014 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and followed with many discussions during these past years. On 13 April 2018 in Mountain View, California, the Society's Executive Committee (ExCom) met, discussed, agreed, and passed a motion on the necessity of the name change. On 12–13 January 2019 in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Society's BoG had its two-day face-to-face meetings to discuss the current and future state of our Society and one of the important issues, as a reflection to these dynamic changes, adaptability, and transformation, was that our Society needed a name change.

A motion was put forward to change the name of our Society from *IEEE Consumer Electronics Society (CES)* to *IEEE Consumer Technology Society (CTSoc)*, and the motion was unanimously supported and passed by the BoG. Here is the rationale for the necessity of the name change:

- ▼ To have a name that does not limit the perceived scope of the Society.
- ▼ To better align the Society area of technical interest with changes in the industry.
- ▼ We have been witnessing the evolution of the consumer electronics as a hardware driven community to a more evolved software-driven and user-experience-orientated community.
- ▼ To change the perception that "IEEE Consumer Electronics Society" is a hardware- and circuits-only Society.
- ▼ The Society's field of interest has become highly multidisciplinary, reflecting the fast-changing industry that integrates emerging technologies.

- ▼ To attract new members while maintaining the retention of the current members.
- ▼ To avoid confusing the IEEE CES with CES of CTA (Consumer Electronics Show of Consumer Technology Association).

We filed a notice for the name change with the IEEE TAB. The notice has been sent to all presidents of the Societies and Councils. The case for our Society name change for TAB approval will be presented at the upcoming Presidents' Forum and TAB Meetings on 21–22 June 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Your support is very important to move the Society forward.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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