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## Profile of Barbara Warren

Mary Frost

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Barbara Warren has spent 17 years working in the area of Space Radiocommunication Regulations. Today she is a systems analyst at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The ITU plays a vital role in the global management of the radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits and she is, working on software to maintain the Master Register of Assignments to the Space Services as well as software used by administrations to file coordination and notification requests. Before that she was working for a Canadian consulting firm on contracts with the Canadian Government, Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the International Telecommunication Union.

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1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

Pure chance! My Consulting firm won a contract to place several consultants at the International Telecommunication Union. One of the consultants that was scheduled to go dropped out at the last minute and I was sent to replace him for three months.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

Changes in Space satellites and technology require changes to the International Radio communications Regulations and changes in the regulations require changes to the software that manages Space services.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

The fact that administrations must use the ITU software to prepare requests for coordination; means that entry errors in preparing filings could lead to dismissal of their filing and no protection against frequency interference. This makes it a definite challenge to develop user-friendly software for use by the satellite industry throughout the world. The rules for submission and coordination may change as the Radio Regulations are changed, after virtually every World Conference; so the software developers need guidance on how to implement the changes and the users need help in learning how to use the new software. Participating in seminars and workshops to help users learn the new software is another great opportunity. Working in a multi-cultural organization is an experience I particularly enjoy. Learning French is a painful but rewarding opportunity.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The cultural differences can be an obstacle. Coming from North America it was often difficult to understand and adapt to hierarchical culture of other countries.

So I've had to learn to accept and appreciate cultural differences. When I first arrived in Geneva, I offended a colleague when returning a listing of one of his programs by saying "here is your stuff". He didn't speak to me for several months.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

As the need for Satellite communications continues to grow, the space in the spectrum will become more and more precious and the role of International Radiocommunication Regulations will become ever more important.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

Working for a consulting firm gave me an opportunity to work on a variety of different projects, different governmental agencies and private companies. I think it's an experience that has helped me to adapt to many situations. Go for opportunities even if they appear frightening.