



Plots of Consultants' Fees and Annual Earnings

Prepared by R. H. Gauger, P.E.
May 2003

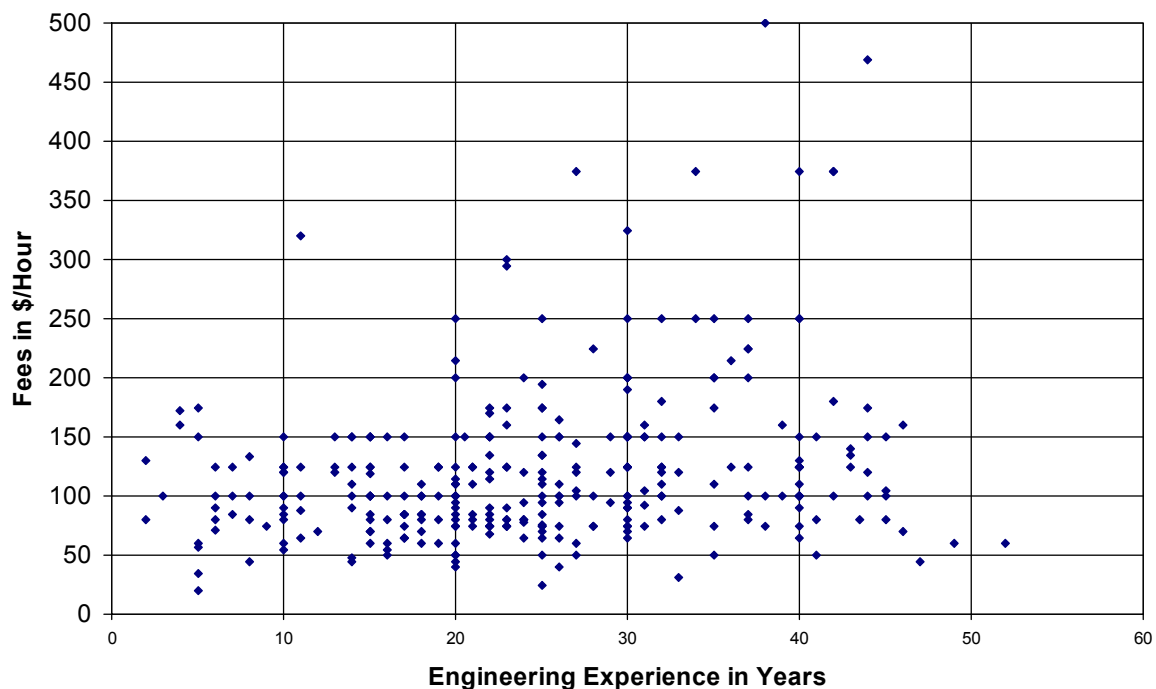
In 2002, the Alliance of IEEE Consultants' Networks (AICN) conducted a nation-wide survey, querying more than two thousand of IEEE consultants about their consulting practices. Their responses regarding fees and their annual consulting earnings are reported in more detail in several other 2002 fee survey reports on the IEEE-USA Consultants' Services web page (www.ieeeusa.org/business/aicn.menu.html). These four plots are not included in the other reports and are intended to provide a quick overview of the consultants' fees and earnings.

325 IEEE consultants who are self-employed or *independent consultants* provided the data for this survey. To be classified as *independent*, less than half of the consultant's engineering income could come from contract engineering (job shopping) or as an employee of another company.

As might be expected, some consultants considered their total earnings to be private, so their earnings are not shown. Scatter plots have been used here, as they provide more visual information than can be obtained from the previously-published tables that show only the median and average values.

Consultants' Hourly Rates Plotted by Years of Engineering Experience

Fees of Independent Consultants by Engineering Experience



In order to provide as much detail as possible, the y-axis has been capped at \$500 per hour. Three consultants reported hourly rates greater than \$500.

Consultants' Hourly Rates Plotted by Years of Consulting Experience

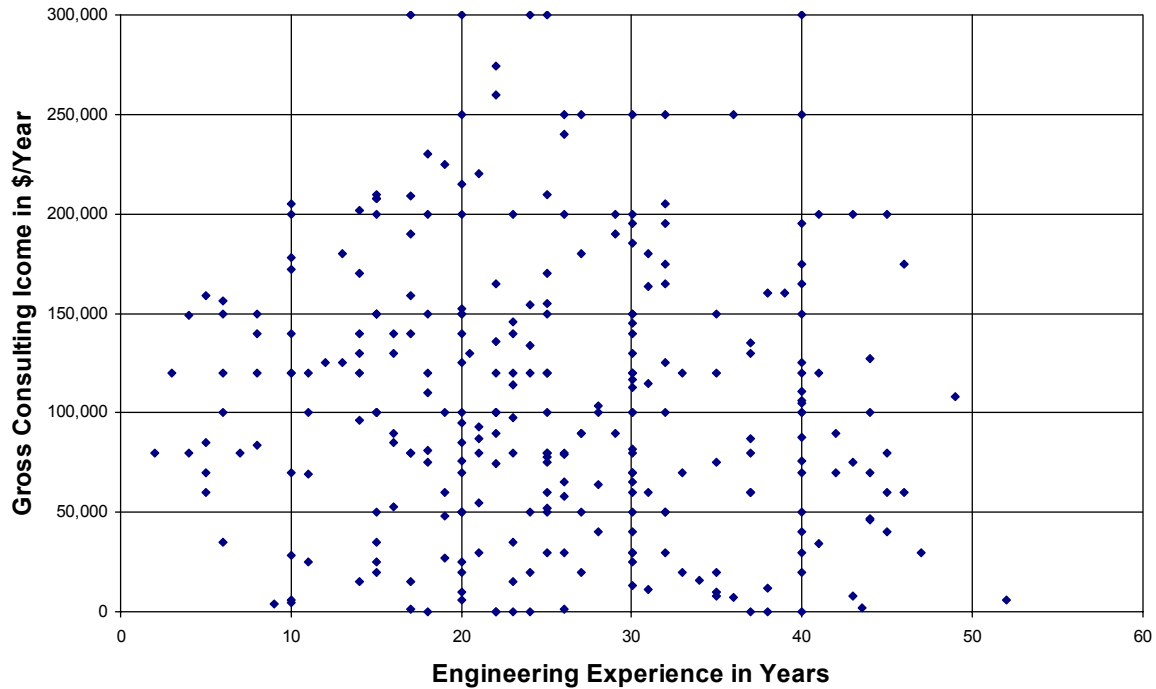


The above chart shows the same fee data as were plotted for the years of engineering experience. In the prior case, the data were plotted against the engineer's years of experience as consultants and showed a general increase with experience. In this case, there is very little increase in the fee as the consulting experience increases. As before, three consultants reported fees over \$500 per hour and are not shown.

Consultants' Annual Consulting Earnings Plotted by Years of Engineering Experience

This is the first IEEE Consultant Survey that asked for annual earnings as a consultant. As might be expected, some considered this information to be private. Six percent of the consultants chose not to report their gross income from consulting. The chart below shows the results obtained from those who did respond to the question

Earnings of Independent Consultants by Engineering Experience

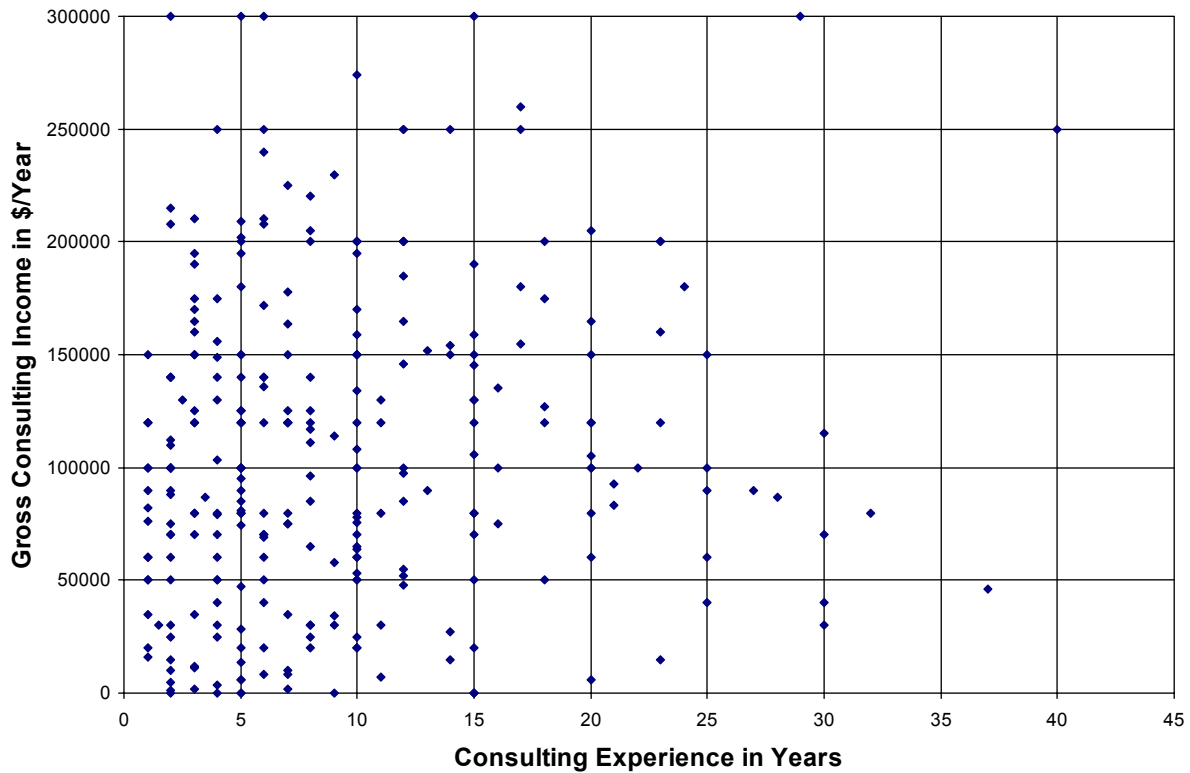


In order to show as much detail as possible, the earnings are capped at \$300,000 per year. Fourteen consultants are not shown as they reported earnings of more than \$300,000 per year.

Thirteen of the consultants reported consulting income of less than \$5000 per year. These data points are plotted and can be seen near the x-axis.

Consultants' Annual Earnings for Various Years of Consulting Experience

Earnings of Independent Consultants by Consulting Experience



These are the same annual earnings data as were used above, but in this case, the earnings are plotted vs. the engineers experience in the consulting field.

The years of consulting seem to have little influence on the total earnings.

Factors Influencing Earnings

These four graphs are meant to provide a quick overview of the range and trend of consultants' earnings. For a more detailed study of some of the factors (degree, location, registration, field or specialty, and age), see the **Profile of IEEE Consultants** and **Consultants' Fees and Business Practices** on the IEEE-USA Consultants' Services page.