



OITC

"Access Anytime,
Anyplace, and Anywhere"

Technology Times

Office of Information Technology and Communications

Director's Corner



Terri Ware,
OITC Director

Welcome to Technology Times. The OITC organization continues to be very busy providing service and support throughout the County. Before I go any further, I just want to remind everyone that OITC is responsible for a host of services which includes: computer resources, software support, telephones, cellular telephones, pagers, GIS, and the website. Every County Department has an Information Technology (IT) Coordinator that OITC interfaces with on a routine

basis. I urge department staff to use their designated IT Coordinator to coordinate actions requiring OITC services. This will help to minimize efforts to gather and document requirements as well as to schedule and implement the required tasks as quickly as possible.

Currently, as many of you know, we are rolling out the Microsoft Windows 2000 migration throughout the County. Microsoft will no longer support the earlier operating system versions that many County agencies are currently using. Embarking on a conversion effort of such magnitude is both challenging and perhaps a little painful.

We are making final adjustments to LANDesk. LANDesk is

the tool used by OITC to implement and automate installation of all networked PCs. This will allow OITC's technicians to rapidly diagnose and troubleshoot PC problems throughout the network. We will provide more details of this technology in future issues of this Newsletter.

Our first Newsletter received very favorable reviews, helpful feedback and comments from our readers and customers. Please keep the comments and ideas coming; you may see them as the subject in future articles. We enjoy hearing from you!

Terri Ware

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Chief Technology Officer Perspective

Access Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere!

More than just a passing fancy, the concept of access anytime, anyplace, and anywhere is here to stay. Implementation of this concept will improve productivity and provide increased customer service whether it be government to citizen, government to government, or government to business transactions.

Not long ago, OITC was busy ensuring that the County's systems were Year 2000 compliant. Now OITC has a loftier goal in sight. Imagine if you will, citizens and residents accessing, transparently, County services at 2:00 in the afternoon or even 2:00 in the morning. What if the County's websites were accessible regardless of a web



Kimberly Ellison-Taylor,
OITC-CTO

visitor's location? Taken a step further, what if citizens and residents could check on the status of a request made to the County via wireless technology or by
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Core Areas Managers and Contractors:

Core Area 1, Mainframe Data Center Operations and Systems Support

- C. Fred Johnson, Government Manager, email: cfjohnson@co.pg.md.us
- LMIT, Contractor

Core Area 2, Network Management and Technical Support

- William (Todd) Addis, Government Manager, email: taddis@co.pg.md.us
- ACS, Enterprise Solutions, Inc., Contractor

Core Area 3, Applications Maintenance and Development

- John Jacobson, Government Manager, email: jjacobson@co.pg.md.us
- Ingenium Corp., Contractor

To speak with any of the Core Area Managers, call (301) 883-7378.

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Internet connection? What if the majority of County services, both internal and external, could be automated through secure, reliable, and accurate technology vehicles?

This doesn't mean that other channels for service delivery would need to stop. Citizens and residents would still write, fax, call, and walk-in to receive services. However, given the full benefits of technology realized, County Departments will have the

capability, for instance, of tracking a service call phoned in by a citizen on Monday, responding to the same request for service via fax on Tuesday, and provide information to the same request via a letter on Wednesday.

In this way, the Office of Information Technology and Communications aligns its operations and objectives with the County Executive's strategic initiatives. OITC, enthusiastically, looks for ways to use technology to better serve and to expand ser-

vices offered to its customers. Currently, efforts are underway to establish standards, processes and procedures that will enable OITC to have a robust architecture that will be the building blocks for the access anytime, anyplace, and anywhere concept.

Throughout the OITC organization, the focus is to pursue, aggressively, ways to add value in satisfying our customer requirements and in improving OITC's services.

Kimberly Ellison-Taylor



Core Area 1 Mainframe Data Center Operations/Systems Support Fred Johnson, OITC Core Area 1 Government Manager

"Behind the Glass Door" (a periodic look at the Data Center underworld)

Management of the Data Center remains focused on paper reduction as a primary interest. The biggest area of concern is the huge amounts of copy paper consumed by department reports. Changing times seem to indicate that most reports can be reduced to manageable sizes, thereby, reducing the costs of paper and maintaining hardware on printers.

Currently, Core Area 1 staff is evaluating software that allows

mainframe reports to be viewable from a web browser (e.g., Internet Explorer, Navigator). As a result, a user would have the flexibility of printing only the selected pages that are actually needed. In addition, printouts can be routed to network printers and printed on demand. This would be a welcomed improvement as opposed to the inconvenience and delay experienced with central Data Center print-

ers, currently.

Ultimately, it is OITC's intent to provide users with secured access to mainframe online resources. Currently, OITC is striving to reduce (if not eliminate) the use of group logon names, and replace them with individual user access and accountability. This is a fairly long-term effort that has the endorsement of OITC's Director, the Chief Technology Officer, and the security team.



Core Area 2 Network Management and Technical Support Todd Addis, OITC Core Area 2 Government Manager

Our Achievements Through New Technologies and Customer's Feedback

2003 will be an exciting year for the Office of Information Technology and Communications. The Institutional Network (I-NET) project has proceeded as scheduled allowing a substantial num-

ber of County users access to OITC's high-speed data network. Likewise, OITC's deployment of LANdesk and the Windows 2000 migration has proceeded ahead of schedule and exceeded expecta-

tions. Thanks to the careful planning and implementation strategy of County IT Coordinators and the OITC's Enterprise Services unit, the Office of Finance was suc-

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successful and satisfied with the deployment results.

In these times of tight budget restraints, OITC is looking to consolidate resources with new technologies. Currently, OITC's staff manages three separate directory structures (i.e., NT4, Novell, and MS Exchange). Ultimately, it is OITC's intent to migrate these three directory structures into a

single Microsoft Active Directory. In fact, OITC plans to start this project by late April and have it fully implemented by mid-summer of 2003.

OITC appreciates the patience that its user community has shown to the new Customer Service Center. Admittedly, the Center has experienced some "growing pains," but OITC hopes to have a remedy by May 2003. Customer's feedback plays a "critical role" in identifying

problems and finding solutions. So please, do not hesitate to call us at 301 883-7378 with your ideas and suggestions. OITC welcomes and seeks ways to better serve its customers and to improve its operations.

With this objective, OITC will be able to do "one-stop-shopping" when it comes to account maintenance and file management.

Core Area 3 Applications Maintenance and Development **John (Jake) Jacobson, OITC Core Area 3 Government Manager**

New In-house Application: Project and Task Tracking System (PATTS)

During the past two months, Core Area 3 *Applications Maintenance and Development* has been developing an in-house application, PATTS (Project and Task Tracking System). This application will help OITC to track and respond to the numerous requests received through MAGIC, phone calls, or internally generated projects for applications development, support, and DBA activities. Phase 1 of this project has been completed and is being used by Core Area 3.

What is PATTS? PATTS is similar to MAGIC; it is a central repository of work to be performed and completed. However, PATTS allows multiple people to be assigned to a project, estimates the starting and ending dates, and tracks estimated versus actual hours per task/per person. PATTS has the capability, to track who is actively working on tasks, to identify any backlogs, and to ascertain what resources are available to help work on the backlogs.

Currently, PATTS is used only in

Core Area 3. However, efforts are underway to make PATTS available to IT Coordinators for querying tasks they have submitted, for checking the current status of work performed, and for ascertaining when the expected project or task is to be completed and delivered.

In the foreseeable future, Core Area 3 staff will customize PATTS for Core 1, Core 2, Enterprise Services, and any other group within OITC that needs to track projects.

Technology Trends and Updates

Why Upgrade to Windows 2000 Professional

Windows 2000 Professional is the upgrade to Windows NT Workstation 4.0, and was designed to replace Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT Workstation 4.0 on all business desktops and laptops. Engi-

neered on the proven Windows NT Workstation 4.0 code base, Windows 2000 added major improvements in reliability, ease of use, Internet compatibility, and support for mobile computing.

Windows 2000 Professional makes

hardware installation much easier than earlier versions of Windows by adding support for a wide variety of new Plug and Play hardware, including advanced networking and wireless products, USB devices, IEEE 1394 devices, and infrared devices.

Technology Trends and Updates (Continued)

FOSE Sessions on Enterprise Architecture (EA): Your Catalyst for Transformation

OITC management and staff are constantly looking and exploring ways of making better use of technology. Such an opportunity was recently experienced at the April 2003 FOSE Management Conference held at the Convention Center in Washington, DC. Generally, the FOSE sessions addressed:

- How to forge new relationships between business owners and technology
- How to create a working Enterprise Architecture
- How to employ a proper balance of people, planning, and funding
- Emphasis on following best business practices
- Identifying lessons learned
- How to Bring the Enterprise Architecture to life

Among the many training sessions offered was a two-day session on Enterprise Architecture (EA) attended by several OITC management and staff. The following is a brief summary of the Enterprise Architecture sessions.

Background

The Federal Government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) mandated that Federal Government Agency's Information Technology projects must fit into a government-wide architecture. If Information Technology projects do not fit into the Enterprise Architecture they stand the chance of being terminated.

Enterprise Architecture Goals

The primary goal of the Enterprise Architecture is to facilitate efforts to transform the Federal Government into one that is:

- Citizen-centered.
- Results-oriented.

- Market-based.

Enterprise Architecture Definition

Enterprise Architecture is a business-based framework for cross-department, government-wide improvement:

- It provides Agencies with a new way of describing, analyzing, and improving the government and its ability to serve the citizen.
- It improves the way information technology is planned and implemented.
- It focuses on Department driven requirements for technology that are common across the enterprise.
- It is the bridge between business and technology expressing technology in business terms and business in technology terms.
- It creates a more effective enterprise architecture because it helps to align business and technology.
- It provides the vehicle for describing to an Department how you are going to deliver what they want.

Enterprise Architecture Benefits

- Aligns IT support with Department objectives.
- Creates Department-focused processes for IT development.
- Provides a unified enterprise-wide IT vision.
- Applies enterprise-wide IT standards and processes.

- Presents a consistent framework to better support future technology decisions.

- Provides a means of making more effective IT investments at a lower total cost of ownership.

- Makes Information Technology available Better, Faster, and Cheaper.

Best Practices/Lessons Learned

Enterprise Architecture's must:

- Be clear (how will EA be used, who will use EA, and what is the EA end goal)
- Be actionable, scalable, and somewhat inflexible
- Be focused on value and deliver benefits early in the process
- Have defined business process, applications, and data relationships
- Be supported by business focus and good infrastructure
- Have buy-in from senior management/executives
- Have a phased approach
- Manage expectations
- Have a methodology

Enterprise Architecture forms the tactical approach to implementing the "Visions for a Transformed Government" that is beneficial to the County and OITC customers.

Enterprise Services Highlights

Shelby Henderson, OITC Government Manager

Windows NT/2000 Migration

In the fall of 2002, OITC began the migration of the Prince George's County desktop operating system platform from the Windows 9.x platform to the Windows NT and Windows 2000 environment using Intel LANDesk.

Given the variety of the County desktop configurations and the general challenges experienced with Operating System migrations, this process is time consuming, labor intensive, and complex.

LANDesk is the tool OITC is using to perform the migration. With LANDesk, OITC can evaluate desktop configurations, deploy desktop

images, install or restore applications, automate monitoring/maintenance activities, expedite service resolution, manage assets, manage security structure, and expose unauthorized/illegal hardware and software.

To date the following Agencies have been successfully migrated to the Windows NT/2000 environment: Office of the County Executive, County Council, Conference and Visitor's Bureau, OITC (CAB location), Office of Finance, Soil Conservation, and the Department of Corrections.

OITC is currently planning the Windows NT/2000 migration for the following agencies:

State's Attorney's Office, Redevelopment Authority, Circuit Court, Clerk of the Court and Office of Community Relations.

In the summer months, OITC is planning Windows NT/2000 migrations for County agencies to include the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Personnel, Family Services, Board of Elections, CCOP, DPW&T, and Human Relations.

For more information on the Windows NT/2000 Migration Project, contact your MIS Coordinator.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance (QA) is a relatively new unit to the OITC organization. OITC's commitment to excellence is why OITC has designated a full-time analyst to manage the QA process.

Quality Assurance activities, to date, have been focused in Core Area 2, Network/Support due to the urgency of the Windows

NT/2000 Migration Project. These activities include in-house testing of Windows Images, onsite testing/verification during Windows migrations, and post-migration customer follow-up.

QA has a wider mandate that encompasses improving the production environment, creating/modifying test plans, web testing, establishing/maintaining

change control procedures, and conducting many other testing and quality control tasks.

Upcoming initiatives for Quality Assurance include implementing a configuration management database, analyzing Core Area 1 (Mainframe) process and procedures, Core Area 3 Applications testing, and GIS web testing.



Asset Management Frequently Asked Question

Asked of Asset Management: "What do I need to include in a Magic ticket request for a new desktop?"

Response: Typically, Asset Management will be able to complete a Magic Ticket request for a desktop, if the following information is provided on the request form:

- Identify the make/model of the equipment to be purchased
- Provide the Fund/Account/Center maintenance charge code
- Enter a contact person and phone number
- Attach an Asset Deployment Form to the Magic Ticket request
- Enter the quantity of desktops being requested
- Enter the full address where the equipment will be delivered

Enterprise Services Highlights (Continued)

HIPAA and OITC's Role

HIPAA is the acronym for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. OITC's focus is on Title II, the Administration Simplification Provision, of HIPAA. The intent of this provision is to lower the overall administrative cost of health care in the United States and to standardize electronic transactions and medical data code sets. Due to an extension granted to the County government, this standardization must be in place by October 16, 2003.

OITC's role will be to review each department's business processes and determine if agencies are transmitting "Individually Identifiable Health Information." The term 'individually identifiable health information' means any information, including demographic information collected from an individ-

ual, that is created or received by a health care provider, health plan, employer, or health care clearinghouse; and

- relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual, the provision of health care to an individual, or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to an individual, and identifies the individual; or
- with respect to which there is a reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify the individual.

Any health information that is created or received by Prince

George's County and is electronically transmitted or maintained at some point during its retention, including information printed as a hard copy from the electronic data, is subject to HIPAA regulations.

OITC will alter all identified HIPAA impacted software application programs. This process involves the application developers/programmers rewriting software applications based on HIPAA guidelines. OITC will then test the re-written applications and work with the impacted department for acceptance testing. After the testing phase, OITC will again work with the department to implement the revised applications. The final phase is support and follow-up.

GIS: PGPD Crime Statistics Mapping on the Web Eric Weller, GIS Team Lead

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) applications have become widespread and almost commonplace in law enforcement agencies nationwide. Since the 911 aftermath, GIS mapping has become a critical component of Homeland Security and employed worldwide. A significant increase in GIS applications has further served to widen the use of GIS in crime mapping. Information on demand is at the core of what makes GIS mapping, a valued

crime fighting tool of consequence.

Given GIS mapping informational value combined with today's technology, Internet access to crime data is possible and critical in raising public awareness of area crime statistics and incidents. The County Police Department makes this website resource available to Prince George's

County citizens, businesses, and other interested parties with the help of OITC's GIS unit.

Citizens can search for crime data in their neighborhood by typing in an address and by choosing a specific crime type. The data will be updated once a week and will contain data for the past 120 days from the date of previous data update.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications (formerly Voice Communications) is working aggressively on several initiatives to include the clean up of County cable closets and the processing of outstanding billings. OITC is working on centralizing and automating its billing functions to alleviate future billing backlogs. Initial steps have been taken to enable County-wide Department staff to view monthly phone bills from their web browsers. Also, OITC with the help of the Office of Finance is reviewing the

phone-billing process to determine if further consolidation and cost savings can be achieved. County-wide Department staff can assist OITC in this effort by reviewing their phone bills to determine if all of the phone lines listed are functional and used by the Department.

Another internal change in Telecommunications is the pending retirement of James (Jim) Oakley, manager of OITC Telecommu-

nitions operations. Jim will be missed tremendously, given his considerable knowledge and service to the County that spans over 31 years. Meanwhile, Jim has been working with Ed Jones and other OITC team members to ensure a smooth (if not seamless) transition in the management changeover of Telecommunications operations.

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OITC is taking an enterprise-wide perspective towards aligning Telecommunications and Network Man-

agement operations that is consistent with the increasing convergence of voice and data. Given this strategy, OITC plans to maximize effec-

tive and efficient use of available resources and technology.

Ed Jones

MIS Coordinator's Corner **Ernie Shepherd, Manager**

I'm sure many of you will remember when there were only two MIS Coordinators to support the whole County. Believe me, those weren't the good old days! Well, now I can finally report there is an adequate number of MIS Coordinators to coordinate Information Technology

(IT) resources in support of all three Branches of Government, including Agencies, Departments, Boards and Commissions, as well as Municipalities.

As MIS Coordinators, our goal is to make everyone successful, and if everyone is successful, then every-

one is happy, and if everyone is happy, then our job is easier. If you're not successful or happy, please call your MIS Coordinator. They will listen to you, and do their best to get you back to feeling successful and happy.

Ernie Shepherd

Security Perspective **Manoj V. Manomohan, OITC Security Analyst**

How secure are we? What security is already in place? Are there security challenges? Do we have security policy and procedures? Is it adequate? What, when, and how can we make our security better? These questions are but a few of those posed by the County-wide Security Team and OITC's security analyst, Manoj V. Manomohan.

As a result, OITC has taken the

following security actions within the past six months:

- Authored and presented the Homeland Security: Threat Alert Management System (TAMS) for review by County Homeland Security Office
- Authored and implemented an "enterprise-wide" security checklist
- Evaluated security software

tools and proposed an enterprise-wide risk auditing/management solution

- Recommended security guidelines

Although more needs to be done, these actions are illustrative of OITC's commitment in moving as rapidly as possible towards securing our data, systems, and network.

Giving Back to Our Community

Volunteering at High School Career Day Activities

OITC staff and contractors are committed to making a difference in our communities. Civic-minded members of OITC Ingenium contract professionals, Emelda Angu and Carlton Fowler, participated in Career Day activities for high schools students at Crossland and Oxon Hill high schools in Prince George's County this year.

Says Emelda Angu, "my presentation focused on education as the key to any career opportunity. I

emphasized the factors to be considered when choosing a career path, how to prepare for an interview and expectations of employers, the challenges faced in succeeding in any career, and how to overcome these challenges.

I was encouraged to hear that 3/4 of the class had career goals such as becoming a pilot, an engineer, a P.C. Technician, a Pharmacist, a nurse as well as being entrepreneurs.

After our discussion, a student asked if I could be a mentor to some of the students in the school. Flattered by her request, I explained that I am currently a mentor to Benjamin Tasker Middle School and High Bridge Elementary students."

Carlton's experience was similarly rewarding and both plan to continue volunteering in support of young people.

TO: OITC CUSTOMER'S
WANT TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS ON TECHNOLOGY,
OITC SERVICES, INTERNET, EMAIL, AND MORE

"FROM A CUSTOMER VIEWPOINT."

**WHY NOT SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO
TECHNOLOGY TIMES NEWSLETTER!**

HOW!

- **WRITE A 300-500 WORD ARTICLE
(INCLUDE A HEADING)**

- **EMAIL YOUR SUBMISSION TO:**

OITCNewsletter@co.pg.md.us

Attn: OITC Newsletter Editor

**Coming
Attractions**

- What good are MIS Coordinators?
- Enhancement to Datacomm/DB
- Overcoming Your Resistance to Distance Learning
- Windows NT/2000 Migration Project Update
- Active Directory And Exchange 2000 Migration Results
- HIPAA Status Update
- LIS Web
- DATTS is here!
- Quality Assurance/Configuration Management Automated Environment

**Office of Information Technology
and Communications**

Prince George's County Government
OITC
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive

Phone: 301-883-5440
Fax: 301-883-5229
Email: OITCNewsletter@co.pg.md.us

OITC
Customer Service Center

Call 301 883-5322 for Assistance

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Let us know how you prefer to receive you next issue of
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Name: _____

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mail to: Norma Braveboy, OITC, LGC—Room 250.

Thank You!