



OITC
"Access Anytime,
Anyplace, and Anyway"

Technology Times

Office of Information Technology and Communications

Director's Corner

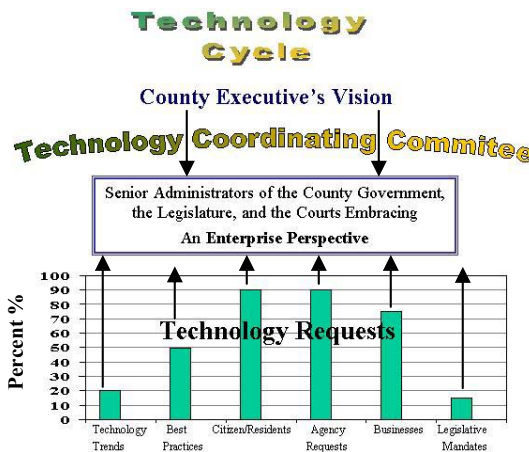


Terri Ware,
OITC Director

Welcome to another information packed issue of the *Technology Times*. As promised in my July article, I plan to highlight the County's Technology Coordinating Committee (TCC) in this issue of the newsletter.

Technology initiatives, opportunities, and developments are key factors in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery of organizations. On a daily basis, OITC encounters many different technology-based products and strategies that promise to increase productivity and improve operations. Many more suggestions come from citizens, businesses, technology providers, and others as well.

The chart on the right provides a comprehensive view of key components of the County's Technology Cycle. Notice that the County Executive's Vision is a critical component which frames the strategic direction and drives the activities of the TCC. Comprised of senior administrators of the County Government, the Legislature, and the Courts, TCC members provide an "Enterprise-Wide Perspective" underpinning and focusing on technology opportunities and solutions for the County. Finally, the graph represents a rough estimate of the magnitude of technology requests coming from various sources. Also, shown are the approximate percentages of requests that concern issues of emerging technology trends and industry best practices that are indicative of matters considered by TCC members.



Unfortunately, given the limited resources in staff, time, and money, OITC is unable to embrace many of the potential technology solutions that we come across. Here is where the TCC will play a critical role.

This diverse and experienced body of senior level administrators are tasked to set the strategic direction that will advance efforts to find Technology solutions that help County Government to serve and deliver services to County citizens and residents. As a direct result of this body's deliberations

and directives, the objectives and goals of OITC's operations and activities for the year will be appropriately adjusted.

As a service agency, OITC's primary mission is to support the technology activities and equipment (many in critical areas) of the County's agencies, departments, and entities. However, deciding what gets accomplished, what receives priority, and what gets delayed until the next fiscal year are tough calls that have risks. The TCC helps make these difficult

decisions, evaluates the return on investment of existing technology, assists in getting resources, and provides guidance that defines how and what technologies are to be used.

In closing, I encourage you to send your comments and suggestions to OITC. We value all opinions and opportunities that will help us to better serve our County customers, citizens, and residents.

Terri Ware

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Core Area Managers and Contractors:

- Core Area 1, Mainframe Data Center Operations and Systems Support**
- C. Fred Johnson, Government Manager, email: cf.johnson@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.

Chief Technology Officer's Perspective

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery



Kimberly Ellison-Taylor,
OITC-CTO

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery.

Only a few months into FY 04, our prudent planning in these two areas has proven extremely useful.

In August, the entire Country was taken by surprise by a power grid outage that affected citizens in 7 states and Canada. While Prince George's County was not impacted, the event prompted the Administration to review its county-wide plan for power outages.

This promoted OITC to look across the organization and ask "What if?" Using our threat level assessment document as a foundation together with a "people, process, technology model" focus, we found it prudent to take the following actions:

- Evaluate our communication mechanisms.
- Analyze our service level agreements.
- Review the emergency contract maintenance options.
- Enhance mitigation strategies for key hardware.

Less than a month later, a storm resulted in power outages throughout the County. And on the heels of that storm, we were challenged by Hurricane Isabel with yet

more power outages. However, across OITC's service areas — Network, Telecommunications, Mainframe, Applications, Enterprise Services, and Geographical Information Systems—we were able to maintain and support the County's essential operations, adding tremendous value to the emergency response plans of other departments. Furthermore, our Management Information Systems Coordinators worked closely with the Department's Information Technology Coordinators to ensure that OITC's staff understood the system priorities and emergency escalation processes of each department.

However, the real work is just now beginning. In FY '04, we must continue efforts to ensure that business continuity options are proactively planned during our analysis, design, and implementation activities. Business continuity, in this context, is the ability to maintain operations in the event of a disaster while disaster recovery is the ability to recover from a specific disaster. Both are complementary, however, throughout the IT industry, more effort and greater emphasis have been placed on disaster recovery. Typically, the focus of

such activities are related to: performing daily and weekly backups, maintaining an adequate supply of replacement hardware, identifying primary and back up support personnel, securing maintenance contracts with 4 hour restore service level agreements, and the like.

OITC must now turn its attention to those business continuity issues that will give it the ability to:

- Support high volume, concurrent remote user access to the County data systems in the event of an emergency or pending disaster.
- Provide an uninterrupted power source that can keep systems operating beyond the typical 1-hour power outage timeframe.
- Find better ways to integrate application information and analysis capabilities to improve data management and reporting.

Later, in the January issue of the newsletter, I will provide details about the considerable progress that OITC has made to improve many of the services offered to our customers. I will also highlight some of the FY'04 initiatives related to Enterprise Architecture, Program Management, eGovernment, and Information Systems Management.

Kimberly Ellison-Taylor

Are You a Civic-Minded Information Technology Professional? Volunteer for the 2004 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTIONS!

Robin Downs, Elections Administrator for Prince George's County, has announced that due to the renowned success of 2002 elections using County Information Technology Coordinators and contractors as Technicians, she would like to use this approach again for the 2004 elections.

The coming elections and dates include: the Presidential Primary election to be held on March 2, 2004, and the Presidential General election to be held on Novem-

ber 2, 2004. We all remember the many challenges experienced around the nation in the last Presidential election of 2000.

In contrast, Prince George's County proudly proclaims and would like to preserve its reputation for having very successful election operations.

In preparation for the elections, 45 technology savvy individuals are needed to ensure our continued

success in 2004. (More details to follow in the coming months.)

If you are an IT professional and have an interest in volunteering for the 2004 Elections, e-mail the Board of Elections at election@co.pg.md.us or call 301-952-3270.



Enterprise Services Perspective

Shelby Henderson, Manager

Enterprise Services News

Inventory Project

The Asset Management Unit is continuing the Physical Inventory project that began last summer. Due to the summer interns returning to school, the Inventory Team of Dwight Talley, Garrett Sanders, and Maria Johnson are currently looking for volunteers, among those agencies being inventoried, to assist with the project. Once an agency has completed the physical inventory, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled with the agency's IT Coordinator to review and discuss any issues concerning the inventory report. The agency will be asked to certify the inventory report. The inventory figures appearing on the report will become that agency's official inventory stats of record in the Office of Management and Budget.

System Specifications

Asset Management continues to monitor and change configurations to accomplish OITC strategic goals. One such goal is to prepare the County for wireless technology. Specifications for configuring County desktops and laptops with wireless functionality are currently underway. To view the recommended configurations for PCs, laptops, and printers for the County, go to Outlook's public folders and select the following options: Public Folder>All Public Folders>OITC-Asset Management.

New Dell Specifications

Dell Computer Corporation recently announced that the Dell OptiPlex GX260 system and the OptiPlex 1702FP monitor are no longer being manufactured. Once the in-stock systems and monitors are depleted, Dell OptiPlex GX270 systems and Dell 1703FP monitors will become the new configuration. The major difference

between the GX260 and GX270 is that GX260 has 2 memory slots and GX270 has 4 slots. The most significant difference between the 1702FP and 1703FP monitors is that 1703FP occupies less desk space.

New Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 9000mfp Available

Currently, HP is offering a high-performance, multifunctional printer and copier. HP asserts that this printer can improve workgroup productivity, save floor space, reduce duplication costs, and more. The HP LaserJet 9000mfp is equipped to provide reliable network printing, copying, color scanning, document finishing, and digital sending services.

The following are some of the new and exciting productivity features of the HP LaserJet 9000mfp taken from HP's promotional materials:

Productivity Savings - Using the e-mail "Send To" function and the optional digital sending software you can:

- Send color files in JPEG, TIFF, M-TIFF, or PDF formats.
- Send documents via e-mail and get confirmation of receipt and digital signature application.
- Eliminate the need for an analog fax machine, plus the high phone bills, and user frustration that accompany analog faxing optional features.
- Capture paper-based documents and convert them into electronic documents that can be managed more efficiently and effectively.

- Reduce or eliminate the costs associated with storing paper documents.
- Create a centralized online repository for blank forms and automate the process for submitting, routing, and approving forms.

Visit the HP Web site <http://hp.com> to get more details about HP LaserJet 9000mfp features and benefits.

Online Training Lab Resource Center

OITC customers have informed us that it is difficult to take the Online Training courses while sitting at their desks. As a result, OITC has set up an Online Training Lab Resource Center located in Largo Government Center - Room 106. Equipped with PCs, the lab provides a quiet environment for taking Online Training courses. The lab will be available on the following dates between the hours of 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM:

October Dates

Thursday, October 02, 2003

Wednesday, October 08, 2003

Wednesday, October 22, 2003

November Dates

Tuesday, November 11, 2003

Friday, November 14, 2003

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Rules for using the Online Training Resource Center

- Visitors must have permission from their supervisor.

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Enterprise Services News (Continued)

(Continued from page 3)

- Visitors must pre-register before using the resource center.
- Visitors are limited to a maximum of 4 hours per registered training session.
- No food or drinks allowed in the resource center.
- Cell Phones and Beepers MUST be on vibrate.

Please call Sandra Longs at 301-883-5992 or e-mail Sandra at selongs@co.pg.md.us to schedule a time to visit the lab or to get more information about Online Training courses.

MAGIC Total Service Desk Training Class

OITC is offering a MAGIC Training Class on November 19, 2003. MAGIC is the County's integrated help desk solution used to facilitate problem resolution and tracking. Typically, requests are entered as Help Desk Tickets and Tasks submitted by OITC staff or agency IT Coordinators. The MAGIC class is open to all OITC staff/contractors and all IT Coordinators and their delegates. You must have a MAGIC ID in order to use the system.

Please call Sandra Longs at 301-883-5992 or e-mail Sandra at

selongs@co.pg.md.us to reserve a seat or to get more details.

Active Directory Migration and Windows 2000 Desktop Migration Projects

All County Personal Computers are in the process of being migrated to Active Directory and to the Windows 2000 Operating System. The following lists show the current status of migration projects for all affected agencies:

The following Agencies have completed the Active Directory Migration:

- Office of Finance and Treasury
- Office of Law
- State's Attorney's Office
- Department of Corrections
- Citizen Complaint Oversight Panel
- Office of Personnel and Labor Relations
- Circuit Court
- Clerk of the Court
- Office of Law

The following Agencies have completed the Windows 2000 Desktop Migration:

- Office of the County Executive

- Office of the County Council
- Soil Conservation
- Department of Community Relations
- State's Attorney's Office
- Citizen Complaint Oversight Panel
- Office of Personnel and Labor Relations
- Office of Law

The following Agencies are currently engaged in Migration activities:

- Circuit Court
- Office of Central Services
- Office of the Sheriff

The following Agencies are making preparations for Migration activities:

- Board of Elections
- Human Relations Commission
- DPW&T
- Police Department
- Office of Management and Budget

Shelby Henderson

Core Area I Mainframe Data Center Operations/Systems Support C. Frederick Johnson, OITC Core Area I Government Manager

Mainframe Technology - Unexplored Regions of Reality

As many of our customers know by now, the Office of Information Technology and Communications (OITC) has undertaken a massive effort to move our mainframe technology into the 21st century. This effort among others will have the effect of en-

hancing OITC's overall service. The Data Center staff has successfully upgraded the mainframe operating system with only a few remaining problems to be solved by the time this newsletter is distributed. All of us thank you for your consistent support

and cooperation during this period of transition.

Change in the IT world is a constant. Our goal is to keep up with technology as much as our resources will allow and our creativ-

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Core Area 1 (Continued)

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ity can extend. We are relentless in pursuit of our goal, that is "excellence" in customer service to government entities, citizens, and residents.

Some of the exciting things that are on the horizon as a result of the progress already made include:

- Upgraded Mainframe operating system that is now fully compliant and supported under the conditions of IBM maintenance contract. Prior to this upgrade, the older version of the operating system was not supported. More importantly, the upgraded operating system will allow OITC to take advantage of IBM's new and future hardware

architecture and disaster recovery processes.

- Plans to upgrade CICS (Customer Information Control System), our transaction processing system, with expanded functionality in the future. This upgrade will enable our customers to view and access information from the mainframe using Web browsers such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

Also, with the ability of our customers to view mainframe application reports online before printing, we anticipate that this will significantly reduce the number of pages printed and substantially lower the operating costs of the Data Center.

And, if these new capabilities weren't enough, new hardware from IBM will enable us to provide web hosting services to disseminate mainframe data through the County's website or Intranet.

Yes, the mainframe team has embarked upon a new era of mainframe service that will improve the manner and speed that data and services can be delivered to our County customers, citizens, and residents. The mainframe team will continue to explore new and better ways of keeping our commitment of making the mainframe environment second to none.

C. Frederick Johnson

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

Network Security and Systems Updates

Core 2 in conjunction with Enterprise Services has successfully migrated numerous County agencies to the new Active Directory and Windows Environment. This is an ongoing effort that will take several months to complete.

Protecting the Network Against Virus Threats

Efforts are underway to better protect our Network from external and internal threats. Unlike the Mainframe and Citrix environments that are built to managed and distribute large quantities of software to thousands of computers, Client-Server environments (managed by Core 2) are much more difficult. McAfee, Lan-desk, and SUSADMIN are software tools that provide County users with the best possible protection with minimal impact on network performance and resources.

Core 2 appreciates the concerns about Virus threats and the alerts forwarded to us by our user community. To provide some clarity about the chain of events leading up to a virus attack, the pattern is as follows:

1. A security hole/breach is discovered, publicized, and a patch is made available for distribution.
2. Within 20 to 30 days following the notification, virus attacks generally occur against those networks that have not installed the patch and left unprotected.

Software Tools and Best Practices for Simplifying Network Updates

Keeping all systems updated with the latest protection is one of the most difficult aspects of managing network security. **ePolicy Orchestrator** by McAfee makes it less difficult. At the click of a button,

you can: find whether or not your software is up-to-date, and, have the updates delivered across your entire network. In addition, networks with intelligently designed architectures can significantly reduce or relieve server resources of the updating burden. With these tools and practices deployed, network traffic can be reduced and performance increased. Updates such as McAfee Security DATs, Engines, Service Packs, Extra.DATs, Hot fixes or Patches are also useful tools that can provide manual and automatic network updates.

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Core Area 2 (Continued)

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Protecting Mobile Users using ePolicy Orchestrator

McAfee's ePolicy Orchestrator ensures that your mobile devices are protected and updates are easily managed as part of the network security policy. By enforcing the policy on a mobile device such as a laptop, the device can be updated whenever a connection to the Internet is sensed.

Because the mobile user demands greater flexibility, ePolicy Orchestrator automatically allows mobile users to update from the nearest, most bandwidth-efficient repository. Mobile users also have the flexibility to postpone and to resume an update.

Using Microsoft's Software Update Services (SUS)

Using **SUS**, you can:

- Download the latest Microsoft patches to an Intranet server.
- Select the patches you want to deploy to specific computers.
- Deploy the patches in a timely and efficient manner.

SUS provides dynamic notification of critical updates to Windows-based computers, whether or not they have Internet access. It also provides a simple, automatic solution for distributing "critical" updates to networked clients and servers.

LANdesk will be performing this service on the County's clients/servers during the November-December 2003 time frame, assuming the "Patch Management Service" release is made available.

Suspect a Virus on Your Machine

OITC is making every effort to protect Prince George's County's Network from disruptions or harm. When a Virus is suspected on your machine, do the following:

Immediately contact the Customer Service Center by email at HelpDesk@co.pg.md.us or call 301 883-5322.

Todd Addis

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

Choosing the Right Database Product for Your Needs

Due to recent discussions about databases, this article covers some of the issues and practical ways to help you and the vendor make a good decision in choosing the right database product for your needs.

Until recently, ORACLE was the County's "database of choice." Currently, OITC is recommending SQL-Server database to the agencies and for OITC's internal development projects. The primary reason is the *COST*.

The following table shows the comparative costs of the two database products:

Database	Enterprise License Per CPU	Standard License Per CPU	Monitoring Tools Per CPU	Yearly Renewal (Enterprise edition/tools) Per CPU	Support
ORACLE	\$40,000	\$8,000	\$27,000	\$7,000*	Included
SQL Server	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$1,225 for 5 incidents

Purchase costs for the *Standard* edition's renewal and tools are not available at this time.

* Renewal price quoted is based on the total number of CPU licenses and may change based on discounts.

The difference between Standard and Enterprise editions are the database's capabilities to span multiple disks and servers and to perform data mining. Currently, the County has purchased all Enterprise licenses and tools because of a single application requirement. As a result, we are looking at the costs of moving the other databases to either the ORACLE Standard Edition or SQL Server, but a decision has not been

made yet. In addition to the per CPU costs, ORACLE also offers "per User" licenses. For additional information and prices, access Oracle and Microsoft Web sites using these hyperlinks: <http://www.oracle.com/> and <http://www.microsoft.com/sql/>.

With SQL Server, yearly license renewal is not required but sup-

port must be purchased separately. Several support plans of varying price ranges are offered with SQL. Core 3 has selected SQL's "Professional" support plan costing \$1,225 for up to 5 reported incidents. Core 3 has been running the SQL Server database for some time without any problems. Among the notable features

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Core Area 3 (Continued)

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of the *Professional* support plan are: one-on-one telephone support, e-mail notification/resolution, and Web-based tools.

Bottom line

If you have the option of going with either ORACLE or SQL Server, consult with your MIS Coordinator and Core 3 staff. They can help you make an in-

formed decision on the best database for your needs based on the costs, software features, and support options.

John Jacobson

Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

Migrating Geographic Data Toward Building an Enterprise GIS Solution

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is nothing new for Prince George's County. Since the late 1980's, the County has been capturing spatial data, creating maps, and building applications—all of which helps government agencies to better serve the public.

Currently, GIS is independently run by County agencies. Aside from being costly, running multiple GIS units impedes the sharing of GIS data among County agencies and others, therefore, making GIS operations in the County less efficient. With this in mind, OITC's GIS team has launched an effort to create an Enterprise GIS solution. Such a solution will allow County agencies in the future to use an Enterprise GIS in which to share GIS data, create maps, and build needed applications at lower costs.

Progress Made Thus Far

Planning began in 2002 and specifications for a proposed Enterprise GIS were developed. By the summer of 2003, the hardware infrastructure (consisting of an ISA Proxy server, an application server, two data servers, and a GIS web server) was acquired and installed. GIS data of the various agencies were identified, organized, and loaded on the new infrastructure by the OITC GIS team through the following activities:

- Identified two hundred critical data layers and organized them into 32 datasets
- Documented each data layer in a

data dictionary including the source codes, map projections, and source data scales used

- Built production and development environments on separate servers.

As expected, the production server will host the up-to-date information that users can browse, query, and retrieve GIS production data using Web-based applications. The development server, on the other hand, will host the environment for newly created applications and maps, enhancements, and fixes to existing GIS data and applications that will be regularly refreshed on the production server. Both servers will store data using the Oracle 9i database and will manage data using the ESRI's ArcSDE 8.3. GIS management software.

Upgrade of ESRI's Arcview 3.X to ArcGIS 8.3

Efforts to upgrade County agencies mapping software from ESRI's Arcview 3.X to ESRI's ArcGIS 8.3 will begin in FY'04. The ArcGIS 8.3 upgrade is a step toward enabling data sharing among County agencies using GIS. Arcview 3.X users will still be able to access the County's

data layer structure under OITC management, which now resides on the new development server. This structure will stay in place until all Arcview 3.X users have been upgraded to ArcGIS 8.3.

The ArcGIS 8.3 upgrade is powerful enough for GIS professionals to run queries and perform analysis, yet user-friendly enough for novices to create simple, professional-looking maps. ArcGIS 8.3 can be customized to create complex applications to perform any task needed by an agency.

With the hardware infrastructure and data loaded, the future for building in-house, web-based applications is within reach. Development is currently underway to build a web portal that will do the following:

- Allow persons with Internet access to view, retrieve, and print GIS produced maps and applications from a central Website or Intranet
- Allow public access to GIS applications that provide information about property, crime statistics for a specified area, the closest elementary school, and polling place nearest their home.
- Enable the County to sell GIS data and maps online.
- Create maps and perform

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GIS (Continued)

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analysis on historic data

The ideas for applications are endless! Prince George's County intends to make

the GIS data available to everyone. While many other local governments have talked about creating an Enterprise GIS, this

County is moving aggressively toward fulfilling that goal.

Patrick Callahan
Senior GIS Analyst

Security Perspective

9 Ways to Protect Your ID

The risk of fraud and ID theft are growing concerns for Internet users. Everyone should periodically obtain a copy of their credit history and report any inaccuracies. But this is after the fact. What is needed, are some proactive, protective measures such as those recommended by McAfee, a leading security and virus protection software company. McAfee experts has offered the following series of proactive guidelines that have been endorsed by notable law-enforcement and regulatory agencies:

1. **Never purchase e-mail, advertised products.** Aside from encouraging the spammers, this also proliferates your e-mail address and any personal-identifiable information to other spammers, such as your name, address, phone number, credit-card numbers and more.
2. **Always protect your personal information.** When making purchases, only share your credit card, Social Security number, or other personal information with a company or financial institution

that you know and trust.

3. **Never respond to requests for personal information via e-mail.** A legitimate source will never ask you for a password, credit card, or Social Security number via e-mail. Beware of official-looking notices that require you to "give up your personal information or face dire consequences."
4. **Verify every transaction.** Look for a phone number on the Web site and contact the organization to verify that it is valid, if any of following conditions exist:
 - The Web site address looks different from the name of the organization that you're dealing with.
 - You have any concern whatsoever about your transactionDo not do business with any organization that doesn't clearly identify itself on its Website, including a physical address and phone number.
5. **Beware of get-rich-quick schemes.** If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

6. **Never pay "up front" for loans or credit.** Legitimate lenders never "guarantee" a loan or credit card before you apply.

7. **Refrain from replying to a spam e-mail.** Legitimate companies will remove your e-mail address as requested, but disreputable senders use this as validation that your e-mail address is, in fact, "live." They can then sell your address to others. A better response is to forward spam e-mail to the Federal Trade Commission at uce@ftc.gov.

8. **Set up a separate "public" e-mail address for use online.** Use a separate, free e-mail address for online subscriptions or participation in newsgroups, contests, or other purposes.

9. **Use an e-mail filter to help eliminate unwanted spam.** Secure your computer against other risks, such as viruses, hackers, etc.

Manoj Manomohan

TO: OITC Customers

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

MIS Coordinator's Corner Ernie Shepherd, Manager

The Valued Qualities of Information Technology (IT) Coordinators

In the previous newsletter I discussed what could be expected of a MIS Coordinator, in essence, what are their qualities and how they could benefit you, the customer. This quarter, I will seek to identify some of the qualities and responsibilities that the MIS Coordinator hopes to find in their counterpart, the IT Coordinator.

An IT Coordinator should be and possess the following qualities:

- Someone who is respected and trusted by all in their agency.
- The focal point of all IT initiatives undertaken by their agency.
- Someone who understands technology and can use this knowledge to the benefit of their agency.
- The first point of contact for any problems experienced by their agency and able to articulate the problem accurately to the proper OITC resource.
- Able to enter a MAGIC ticket whenever necessary.
- Able to attend the bi-weekly IT Coordinator meeting hosted by OITC.
- Someone who will work closely with their MIS Coordinator to ensure that their agency receives whatever IT resources are necessary to fulfill their agency's mission.
- Someone who is willing to assist OITC with any and all IT initiatives which will impact their agency.
- Someone who will strive to ensure that their agency adheres to the current policies and procedures which govern IT in Prince George's County.
- Someone who maintains an open line of communication with their MIS Coordinator.
- Someone who can pass vital information from OITC to other users in their Agency in a timely manner.

Ernie Shepherd

Office of Finance

GEAC Training Class

Coming Soon! More Details to Follow!

An Introductory Course covering: (1) the log-in process, (2) navigation techniques, (3) frequently used screens, and (4) requisition-to-receiving process

The Office of Finance will be offering training on GEAC (the County's Financial Application). Here are some of the details:

- Training will be offered to all the County agencies beginning in October 2003.



- Persons attending Training will be required to attend two 1/2 day sessions.
- Agencies will be contacted by the Office of Finance about scheduling training for their staff.
- Training calendars and more details to follow.

Employee Spotlight

On Hugh C. Alexander



Hugh C. Alexander

This quarter, our Employee Focus column will highlight Hugh C. Alexander.

Prince George's County has been

nationally recognized as a pioneer in the implementation of Electronic Voting Systems. The County also has the distinction of being the first jurisdiction in the Mid-Atlantic region to transmit results on election night to a central tabulation center during the 2002 Gubernatorial Elections. Much of this recognition is owed to the collaborative efforts of the County's Board of Elections and OITC staff. Hugh, as project manager, Dave Knauber, as programmer extraordinaire, with a team of technicians, temporaries, and IT volunteers were OITC's contribution to the successful implementation of the 2000 voting units referred to as the Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting system.

As a result, County elections officials and Hugh have been the most sought after speakers around the nation, busily telling the Prince George's Election Success Story. Hugh has made presentations at the Maryland Association of Election Officials Annual Conference in Rocky Gap, MD; the 2003 Meeting of the International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers (IACREOT) in Denver, CO; and other public forums.

On August 15, 2003, Hugh accompanied Ms. Robin Downs, the County's Elections Administrator,

to Miami, FL to accept the Professional Practices Award from the Election Center, a non-profit association of voter registrars and election administrators throughout America. The award was given for the white paper co-authored by Ms. Downs and Hugh entitled: *A Holistic Approach to Technical Support in the Implementation of New Voting Technology in the 2002 Elections*. In addition, Hugh sits on the State Board of Elections Phase 2 Implementation Committee charged with assisting Maryland's remaining 19 counties in implementing the new DRE voting system.



Says Hugh, "The road to success in this instance was to build a disciplined team having a shared vision, working collaboratively, and executing a well thought-out plan." Especially, in light of the recent 2000 Presidential elections and the "hubhub" that accompanied the Florida elections, the team was well aware of the significance of an accurate and beyond-reproach voting system. So for several months in the huge, drafty, cold-in-the-winter, and hot-in-the-summer warehouse, Hugh and team busily:

- Performed acceptance tests on all 2000 touch-screen voting units. Hugh took this opportunity

to learn as much about the new equipment as possible, and to pass this knowledge on to his technicians.

- Produced a Technician's manual providing in-depth instructions on: how to prepare equipment for an election, and how to support the new technology on Election Day. Parts of the manual would later be adopted and used by Diebold Elections Systems, Inc. (the vendor providing the voting equipment). Hugh was also a major contributor to portions of the Election Judge's Training materials.
- Raised security concerns about usability and integrating the DRE into polling place procedures to Maryland's State Board of Elections (SBE). As a result, a collaborative effort between the University of Maryland's: Center for American Politics and Democracy and it's Center for Human-Computer Interaction developed a voter usability test plan.
- Ordered extra testing of the equipment, processes, and the technical support strategy to further perfect the election process.
- Suggested using the County's Information Technology Coordinators and Contractors as field technical support on Election Day. Hugh conducted numerous training sessions at the warehouse to prepare for troubleshooting of anticipated problems encountered by technicians and volunteers.

While proud of the great things that have been accomplished in Elections, Hugh is quick to acknowledge that he is only part of a great team, relentless in its purpose, and deserving of the accolades for its accomplishments.

End

Telecommunications

Edward D. Jones, Core Area 2 Telecommunications Manager

\$\$ Dialing for Dollars \$\$ Saves Your Agency and the County Money!

Spread the word, "\$\$ Dialing for Dollars \$\$" saves your Agency and the County money!

Read on and see just how easy it is!

With over 5,000 phones in the County Government, the County needs to find ways to keep phone costs down. "Dialing for dollars" is a reminder that users of the County's phone system can help reduce costs and provide significant savings to their Agency and Prince George's County.

Here are important details about our County phone system and what County phone users can do to save the County money. Your office phone lines are known as Centrex lines. What are Centrex lines, you ask? Verizon Centrex lines are popular with governments and organizations because of the phone features offered and, most importantly, because of their cost-effectiveness. Among the popular, cost-effective features of Centrex lines are:

- Quick and easy to dial 4-digit (campus) phone numbers.
- Free calls using VPN (virtual private network) feature.

4-digits (Campus) Dialing

If you are calling someone in your building or on the same 'campus', simply:

- Press your **Outgoing** button.
- Dial the last 4-digits of the phone number.

4 digit Dialing

(e.g., Upper Marlboro Campus)

- Courthouse
- Annex
- CAB
- Lakeside
- ABS Building

For example, if you work in Upper Marlboro Campus, you can make calls

to the Courthouse, The Courthouse Annex, the CAB Building, the Lakeside offices, and the ABS (Chrysler) Building, all by the last 4-digits of the phone number.

VPN (virtual private network) Dialing

If you are dialing someone outside your campus but within the County phone system, use the County's VPN (virtual private network) by taking the following actions:

- Press the **Outgoing** button.
- Dial * 9 and the 7-digit phone number.

You do not need to dial the area code. When calling another County office in this manner, you are making an internal (FREE) call! If *9 is not dialed, such calls may accrue local long distance charges on agency phone bills. Over time, this can add up to considerable savings.

Using *9 when dialing

- A County Government Building
- Voice Mail System

Don't forget, this applies to the County's Voice Mail number as well! Remember to:

- Dial * 9 883-8000 when dialing to check your messages.

Calls Made Outside County, VPN, and International

Of course, everyone sometimes needs to call someone outside of the Prince George's County Government or VPN. If so, you will need to do the following:

1. Press the **Outgoing** button.
2. Dial 9.
3. Enter the area code and 7-digit phone number.

If dialing a long distance call:

1. Dial a "1" before the area code and the 7-digit phone number.
2. Follow the voice prompts to enter

the long distance access code that your agency/department has assigned to you.

Long-distance calls should be made to conduct County business, only. Ultimately, the County agencies will be billed for any long distance calls made by their staff and contractors.

Restricted Calls

The County has placed some restrictions on calls, namely, *Directory Assistance* "411" and International calls:

- If you need to use 411, do one of the following:
 - Look-up the number in the phone book.
 - Use the Internet site www.411.com to find the number.
- If you need to make an international call and you have your agency's permission, do the following:
 - Please call the Help Desk .
 - Put in a MAGIC ticket.

You will be notified by phone that restrictions have been lifted so that you can place the call.

For additional information, phone training requests, or questions, please call Nancy Hoffman at *9 499-8077 or Kenny Braxton *9 499-8002 in Telecommunications.

"Dialing for Dollars" may sound like a game, but it can represent significant savings to our County when users dial correctly and eliminate any unnecessary charges.

Now that you are aware of the correct ways to dial, **make sure that your co-workers know how to dial correctly too.**

Spread the word, "\$\$ Dialing for Dollars \$\$" saves money!

Edward D. Jones

OITC Mission Statement

To provide timely, accurate, secure and reliable technology solutions and services to enable agency missions through 10 core initiatives:

- Customer Relationship Management
- Strategic Partnerships
- Efficient Resource/Task Management
- Knowledge Management
- High Availability/Performance
- Effective Security/Data Integrity
- Proactive Strategic Planning
- Continuous Process Measurement
- Business Continuity Planning
- Staff Development

Coming Attractions

- Top 2004 Initiatives
- Briefings on Selected Agency Applications
- Network Security Enhancements
- E-Gov Security
- Enterprise Services DMO Initiatives

Office of Information and Telecommunications

Prince George's County Government
OITC
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

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

OITC
Customer Service Center

Call 301 883-5322 for Assistance

OITC

We would like to hear from you!

What topics would you like to see addressed in the Technology Times?

Let us know how you prefer to receive you next issue of Technology Times. Indicate your preference:

hardcopy email distribution

Are there others who should receive this newsletter?

Name: _____

Let us know, send your feedback and comments by email to OITCNewsletter@co.pg.md.us or by inter-office mail to: Norma Braveboy, OITC, L6C—Room 250.

Thank You!