

INNOVATIONS

The Center for Technology in Government

1995 Innovations in American Government Award Winner

New York on the Internet

Testbed Helps Partners Go On-line

"The Internet is changing the world. The projects at CTG are designed to look at how this technology can deliver services."

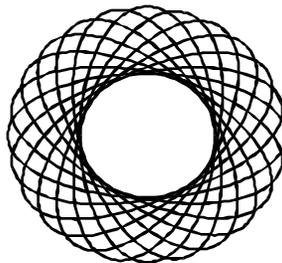
Sharon Dawes, CTG Director

New Yorkers are becoming Internet savvy, and organizations in the Empire State want to inform constituents on-line. To help groups establish services on the Internet, the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) has begun an Internet "testbed" project. The project will help New York use the Internet as a strategic business resource.

In the Internet Services portion of the testbed participants are learning how to plan and evaluate as well as

design and construct World Wide Web sites. CTG staff members are organizing workshops, serving as consultants, and helping those who wish to use the CTG Solutions Lab test software or experiment with design.

Nine NY government organizations are participating in this part of the project so that they can give better customer service, save money, and improve business operations in general. Fran Pinto, from the NYS Office of Real Property Services (ORPS), wants to give assessors and county directors of real property services on-line access to the Assessors Manual. ORPS has so much information to transmit that the staff sees the Internet as a way to communicate the latest information easier, faster, and more economically. Eventually, they hope to have an on-line discussion forum to cover frequently asked questions about tax assessment as well as provide software distribution on the network to local assessors and property directors.



Ed DeFranco, Director of Operations and Technical Services for the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse

Services (OASAS), sees great benefit in the group work that is integral to the testbed project. Bringing the agencies together to plan Internet applications has resulted in a systematic method thereby helping OASAS focus on service to both internal and external public information customers, that will serve as a prototype for future expansion of the use of the 'net.' OASAS will expand its current limited use of the Internet for reporting and retrieval of client information by its more than 2,000 treatment and prevention programs throughout the state. Using a secure Internet for these purposes will save critical resources and vastly improve the return on investment currently being made in those systems.

In addition to ORPS and OASAS those participating in the Internet Testbed Cadre include: the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee; Hamilton County and the NYS Performance Measurement, Reporting, and Improvement System Project; NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal; NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs; Empire State Development Corporation; Office of the NYS Comptroller; and the Town of North Hempstead.

Internet Technologies are the focus of the second part of the Testbed. Watch for the results in future stories on security, interfaces, and "intranets."

A Documentation Partnership or, Life as a Corporate Partner

by Henry Woodbury,
Documentation
Strategies, Inc.

When my boss asked me to work with CTG on the NYS GIS Cooperative Project, I was immediately intrigued. One of the real perks of my profession of technical writing is exploring (and writing about) new technologies. The GIS project includes several of these - geographic information systems (GIS), the Internet, spatial data management - all very current and fascinating topics.

My employer, Documentation Strategies, Inc., supplies technical writing and training services to businesses and government agencies in New York State and the Northeast. We write everything from software user manuals to catalogs of scientific apparatus. One important way we meet our clients' needs is by remaining up-to-date about new information technologies. For this reason alone, we were excited to work on the GIS project.

So what did we do at our first meeting in the CTG computer room? We jumped on the World Wide Web and called up the Dilbert site! Actually, our Web browsing soon brought us to the prototype NYS Spatial Data Clearinghouse home page, which was already running on-line. Ann DiCaterino, CTG's Manager of Project Support, showed us the Clearinghouse and explained its features.

At this meeting, we identified several of the project's writing needs. My assignment was to write a brochure explaining the background, use and benefits of the Clearinghouse. A second document would be written by Martha Burns of Full Circle Communications, a technical writer who often works for Documentation Strategies. Her document would cover the technical aspects of the Clearinghouse's index database and be published on the Clearinghouse itself.

From that point, we worked directly with the CTG staff members who needed our documents. It was a truly collaborative process, in which our abilities dovetailed neatly with the professional experience of our CTG partners. For example, for the brochure, I worked with Assistant Project Coordinator Winsome Foderingham-Hérard. We reviewed the information we wanted to include and brainstormed on the best ways to present it.

Martha worked with Ann DiCaterino to document how she developed the Clearinghouse's database index and search tools. Graduate assistant Paul Husek also helped. The resulting document, titled "Building the Database Search" is located at <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/gis/srchdoc.html>. Several other GIS sites have linked to this page, including the Wisconsin GIS Clearinghouse, whose webmaster comments, "The Center for Technology in Government...has done a nice job documenting [the] technical detail[s] for their Clearinghouse site."

For Documentation Strategies, the corporate partnership brought several rewards. According to Ann Moynihan, President of Documentation Strategies, the GIS project gave her writers valuable exposure to new technologies - GIS and the Internet - as well as experience in online publishing. Ann also appreciated CTG's flexibility. We had some concerns that working as a corporate partner might take time away from other (paying) jobs. This was not the case. CTG shared their resources, quickly responded to our questions and happily worked around our schedules.

When asked if she would consider such a project again, Ann said, "Absolutely. As a consulting business, our writers occasionally have time between contracts. If they can do a useful job for the Center for Technology in Government, I know they will gain valuable experience. And, I know their work will be of real value."

All in all, it is a partnership that benefits everyone.



Corporate Partners bring State-of-the-Art Technologies to CTG

These web sites give information about CTG's technology partners.

Mine their web pages for valuable tips, ideas and news you can use.

Allied Telesyn	www.dataflex.com/catalog/vendor/A/ALLIED_TELESYN_INC
Anixter	www.anixter.com/homepage.html
Applied GIS, Inc.	www.appliedgis.com
Bellcore	www.bellcore.com/demotoo/index.html
Blue Moon Training Systems	www.bmtsinc.com
Borland	www.borland.com/
Computer Sciences Corp.	www.csc.com
Digital	www.digital.com.au/
DRT Systems	www.wji.com/rt.systems/homepage.html
EMI	www.emi.com/
ESRI	www.esri.com/
Excalibur Tech	www.xrs.com/
Harlan Wallach	www.mcs.net/~wallach/personal.html
Hewlett-Packard	www.hp.com/
IBM	www.ibm.com/
Lotus	www.lotus.com/
Microsoft	www.microsoft.com/
NCR (formerly AT&T GIS)	www.ncr.com/
Novell	www.novell.com/
Nynex	www.nynex.com/
Oracle	www.oracle.com/
Panduit	www.panduit.com/
Precision Systems	www.talkpsi.com/
RealTech	www.realtech.com/
Silicon Graphics	www.sgi.com/
Sun Microsystems	www.sun.com/
Synoptics/BayNetworks	www.baynetworks.com/
Wordperfect	www.novell.com/ (click on Business Applications)
Xerox	www.xerox.com/
Xyplex	www.xyplex.com/

Microsoft Corporation

"Microsoft understood CTG's potential from its inception. The Center is a valuable, centralized vehicle for presenting, demonstrating and running Microsoft-based solutions and we look forward to our continued partnership."

Connie Mitchell Dean
Microsoft Corporation

In the Center's earliest days, when corporate partnerships were a new and untried idea, Microsoft's Connie Mitchell Dean was willing to invest in our mission and philosophy. Since then, the software giant has played an integral role in providing a full suite of products to make CTG's computers hum. In simple dollar value, Microsoft has led all other corporate partners, with contributions of products valued at more than \$1.8 million. Since most of Microsoft's investment is woven into our infrastructure, its value is multiplied many times over by the sheer volume and variety of use. For both Windows and Macintosh machines, Microsoft has generously granted licenses for a variety of applications, including MS Project, Foxpro, FoxBASE, MS LAN Manager, MS SQL Server, MS Works, MS Office, Visual C++, and Visual Basic.

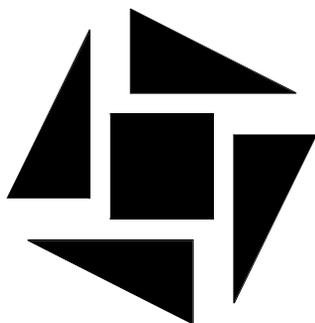
Microsoft products have been important in producing the proto-

types for two major CTG projects. MS Word allowed us to build a customer correspondence feature into the Title Imaging project, developed with the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles. Visual Basic, the programming language that creates a graphical user interface, allowed us to develop an intuitive, easy-to-use, interface for the decision support system, built in cooperation with the Office of Mental Health and the Center for Policy Research, to support psychiatric assessments in emergency rooms.

Today the technical staff, researchers, and all project partners count on Microsoft applications as an ever-present part of our infrastructure. It's hard to imagine a CTG presentation without the visual support of PowerPoint, and it's impossible to think of doing business without other Microsoft software. Microsoft - from "starting it up" to "The Road Ahead," is a key technology partner supporting CTG's award-winning projects.

Electronic Records - Here to Stay

**CTG, NYSFIRM,
SARA, University
partners in
national project**



Project goals:

- Identify best practices in system design for networked and distributed environments
- Identify and evaluate methods to incorporate record keeping requirements
- Develop a prototype model, applicable to diverse business processes
- Promote the use of the model

Thanks to a \$140,000 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the Center for Technology in Government and the NY State Archives and Records Administration (SARA) will be investigating the issues and problems involved in managing electronic records. The New York State Forum for Information Resource Management will be another project partner. The goal of the project is to produce practical approaches to electronic records management and preservation in New York. The project team will make recommendations for a system model that incorporates the most effective electronic record keeping and archiving applications and requirements.

What are the questions surrounding electronic record keeping? Electronic record keeping is efficient; it saves time and human resources, however, there are technical questions surrounding the practice that are not necessarily easy to resolve.

One problem area is the obsolescence cycle of technologies. Try to print out a record that was saved on a 5 1/2 inch floppy disk, formatted for the CPM operating system on an Osborne computer from barely ten years ago. It may not be an insurmountable problem, but one that would take precious people hours to solve.

Another problem is one of distributed computing power. Bringing power to the desktop allows the user to create letters, memos, and reports without ever saving to a central source. This means that a letter can be created, printed and sent in the mail without a permanent record ever having been made. Immediate direct service is usually the first priority in most state agencies and local governments, so thinking of keeping electronic records is seldom the first thing on the mind of the letter writer or service provider.

When paper was the universal medium for correspondence and

other documents, carbon copies were made or documents were photocopied and placed in file cabinets. With electronic records, ensuring permanency is a much more difficult issue.

Today there is no universal standard medium for archiving electronic records. Records are saved on nine-track tapes, TK50 tapes, and 8mm or 4mm DAT tapes, or compact laser disk storage. The use of networks complicates the electronic landscape even more. Ask which archival medium is best, and you'll hear different answers from system administrators.

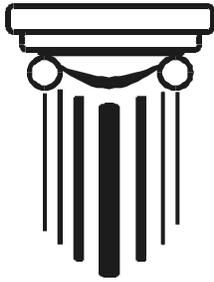
There is a national framework for archiving electronic records under the leadership of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The NHPRC views research as critical in making long-term preservation of electronic records a reality. The CTG project builds on research conducted at the University of Pittsburgh from 1992-1994.

Dr. Phillip Eppard, acting dean of the School of Information Science and Policy, will serve as academic consultant on the project. Dr. Eppard recently wrote "Guidelines for the Management and Preservation of Electronic Text Documents" for another NHPRC project.

New York is in a position to conduct an increasing amount of business electronically over networks. According to the NYS Forum for Information Resource Management, in 1994 at least one-third of New York State agencies had a basic infrastructure of workstations and networks to support agency-wide electronic communications. Since most agencies or local governments have neither the staff nor the expertise to treat record keeping as an isolated additional activity, the project will help them integrate record keeping requirements into their application development plans.

Key to success in the project will be creating a model for systems development in a networked environment.

CTG staff member Theresa Pardo is the Project Coordinator. She can be contacted at 518-442-3892 or at info@ctg.albany.edu.



NYS Forum A Primary Partner

by
Meghan Kieman

The New York State Forum for Information Resource Management (NYSFIRM) is a membership organization that strives to provide direction for managing information in New York State Government. The Forum's goal is to help New York State policymakers and managers make more informed information technology decisions, emphasizing cooperation between public and private entities. The Center for Technology in Government works closely with the Forum on projects, events, and special interest groups.

Forum activities include educational programs provided to its members and the state's policymakers about

the value of government information and the opportunities and challenges inherent in the management of public information. The Forum's newsletter, *Open Forum*, highlights information technology breakthroughs and informs members of developments in information resource management in New York State. Its Information Resource Directory provides an inventory of information technology assets and uses in state government, and Forum research white papers give government agencies an unbiased view of information technology trends to assist them in making informed decisions.

Both the *Open Forum* and research white papers are posted on the Forum's electronic Bulletin Board System for electronic access by Forum members and other interested individuals. The Forum is also in the process of developing a World Wide Web site for Internet access to information.

CTG originated as a joint project of the Forum and the University at Albany. In 1993, information policy makers and managers saw the need for an organization able to develop information technology prototypes to test new potential technology solutions to critical service delivery problems. Forum ideals of intergovernmental and public/private cooperation laid the

foundation for CTG, and the two organizations now work harmoniously to provide state government entities with the best possible scenarios to manage information technology. CTG and the Forum coordinate projects and research together, and the Forum's CTG Standing Committee acts as an advisory committee.

Terry Maxwell, Executive Director of the Forum, believes the biggest benefit of having CTG as a partner is that it "expands the range of options open to governments in trying to deal with difficult information issues. The combination of the Forum's network of expertise within and outside New York State government and CTG's technical savvy and project focus adds real value to our shared customers."

The partnership between the Forum and CTG is a unique strategic asset to help New York State become a national leader in the use of information technology in government.

CTG and Forum projects:

- Voice Response Systems
- Geographic Information Systems
- Human Resources Information Sharing
- Groupware Testbed
- Internet Testbed

Academic Partner

"CTG's focus on creative, technology-based solutions to the management of government's information assets is a perfect match for the Information Science doctoral program's focus on applied, rather than theoretical research."

Dr. Thomas Galvin, Director
INF Ph.D. Program

CTG's main academic partner is the University at Albany's Information Science doctoral program, an academic degree designed to prepare leaders in the information professions. Today, when information technology and policy have become critical to conducting business effectively and to providing quality public service, Information Science Ph.D.'s are in demand. Faculty in the program represent the School of Business, the Departments of Communication, Computer Science and

Geography in the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Information Science and Policy, and the School of Public Affairs.

The graduate students, who bring diverse academic backgrounds and professional work experience to the Ph.D. program, contribute talent and hard work to projects sponsored by the Center for Technology in Government. The students benefit as well with the opportunity to work with state-of-the-art technology and to investigate current research questions.

Changes in Tech Staff

Which CTG staff member was born in Jamaica and also became a 13-time NCAA Division III All-American runner? Her name is Winsome Hérard, CTG's new Center's Technology Solutions Laboratory Manager. Her job includes overseeing the internal and external user support function, including tracking and prioritizing requests, supplying equipment to the lab, and generally keeping communication current among the CTG staff, and the corporate partners. Of her new position, Winsome says "You learn something new on a daily basis."

"The job is adventurous."
Winsome Hérard

She sees special value in the graduate students who work at CTG. "They have new ideas; they offer new insights, and help us get away from the mundane, offering variety in our daily work."

The Solutions Lab is like "our [CTG] living room," Winsome says. The lab is where the staff "live," that is, spend plenty of hours, as well as where they work.

Winsome, who has a B.S. degree in psychology and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Albany, lives in Schenectady with her husband. She enjoys tennis, golf, reading, and studying the Bible.

Productivity Awards

Kai Larsen and Ethelyn Thomason's baby Kai Wesley Thomason Larsen was born January 16, 1996. Derek and Vicky Werthmuller's baby Jonathan Derek was born January 14, 1996.

You have to like the person who says his job is to "help staff make software and hardware work as it should." Those are the words of Derek Werthmuller, CTG's new Systems Administrator.

"Computers are tools, but not the only tool."

Derek Werthmuller

Before coming to CTG Derek was the lead technician and network specialist at Siena College where he helped student and faculty members' do academic work on the campus network. He has an associate degree in electronic technology from Schenectady County Community College and a B.S. in computer science from Siena College.

A lifelong resident of New York State, Derek grew up in Indian Lake, located in the Adirondack Park. He describes himself as a homebody who enjoys downhill skiing, biking and hiking, and reading books by his favorite author William Stallings.

Making Connections

December 1995

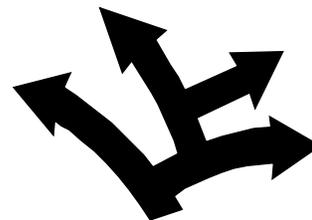
University Trustee Erland E. Kailbourne toured CTG with Interim University President Karen Hitchcock and Vice President for Research Jeanne Gullahorn. CTG Director Sharon Dawes and CTG Research Director Peter Bloniarz presented an overview of CTG and demonstrated the prototypes of the APA, GIS, and OMH prototypes.

January 1996

Sharon Dawes met with the Adirondack Park Commission in Lake George and gave a presentation on the results of the APA

project to park commissioners and interested members of the public. Sharon was also a panelist at the Brookings Institution, Washington, DC for "The Devolution Revolution" meeting. She spoke on the information policy and technology implications of block grants and other delegations of responsibility from the federal government to the states.

Kristine Kelly, CTG Research Associate, spoke to town supervisors, assessors, and citizens of the Adirondack Park, as well as staff from several state agencies at the Newcomb Visitor Interpretive Center, on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) coordination, the CTG GIS Cooperative Project, and the New York State Temporary GIS Council. Kristine also facilitated a meeting on an information infrastructure to support bottom-up community development.



February 1996

Peter Bloniarz, Sharon Dawes, Terry Maxwell, Executive Director of NYSFIRM and David Andersen, Faculty Fellow, served as consultants in Lebanon, helping to plan the country's information infrastructure.

The U.S. Agency for International Development project was conducted through UAlbany's Center for Legislative Development.

Grad Students Become Research Colleagues

Mark Nelson is a graduate student in the Information Science Ph.D. program and a former CTG graduate assistant. His research interests are in strategic information systems, marketing decision support systems and database marketing. His dissertation will likely examine factors affecting the use of marketing information in the banking industry. Mark earned a Bachelor's degree in computer science from Saint Michael's College in Vermont.

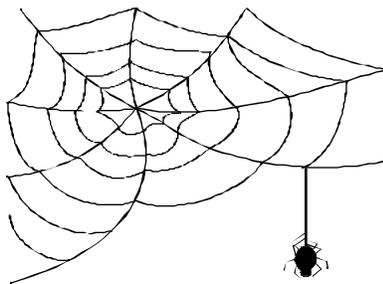
In addition to CTG project reports, Mark has written an article for the journal *Technology Trends*, "Pool the Risks, Share the Benefits: Partnerships in IT Innovation," with Dr. Sharon Dawes, and "We Have the Information You Want, but Getting It Will Cost You," that appeared in the Association of Computer Machinery's *Crossroads*.

Currently Mark works in the Business School with Dr. Lakshmi Mohan, assisting her with research.

Meghan Kiernan, a second year graduate student at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, is the liaison between the New York State Forum for Information Resource Management (NYSFIRM) and CTG.

Meghan, a public administration student, assists both organizations in public relations activities and coordinating public events for CTG projects. In addition to planning joint CTG-Forum events, Meghan also assists with information technology research. She is currently working on a report that will assess the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in New York State.

Meghan hopes to pursue a career in information technology specializing in strategic planning for public-private partnerships.



Notable Web Sites

Innovations in American Government - For information about previous winners, application materials, research on innovations, please check this site:

<http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/~innovat/>

Search Systems

Searching for information on the World Wide Web is like quenching your thirst by drinking from a fire hose. It can be a daunting experience!

Search tools make web searches much easier. Our two favorite search tools at CTG are ALTAVISTA and LYCOS. They are both easy to use and available through an Internet browser. With both systems the user types the search terms in a box on the screen, presses the enter key, and the search engine does the rest.

ALTAVISTA is a product of Digital Corporation. It indexes 21 million Web pages, over 10 billion words and 13,000 news groups. This is a mega search system! Despite the amount of material it indexes, it is very quick and easy to use. ALTAVISTA's address is <http://altavista.digital.com>

LYCOS was developed at the Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Machine Translation by Dr. Michael L. Mauldin. According to the Lycos system administrators, it has indexed 92% of the Web and over 10 million web sites from throughout the world. Lycos claims to be the fastest search system in operation. Net magazine said it is "simple to use...a great way to search the web." LYCOS can be found at <http://lycos.cs.cmu.edu>

Working Smarter CTG Reports Tell the Story

CTG's Project Report, "Sharing the Costs, Sharing the Benefits," was recently released. It documents the NYS GIS Cooperative Project conducted in collaboration with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and many other academic and corporate partners. The report contains information about the geographic information systems (GIS) Internet-based prototype (The NYS Spatial Data Clearing-house) that was developed.



CTG also recently made the project report "Balancing Environmental Quality & Economic Vitality in the Adirondack Park" available. The project explains the development of an "electronic reference desk" prototype that brought together document records, legal jurisdictional rulings, and geographic data in one system.

Other available reports are:

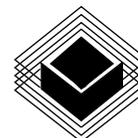
- ◆ Title Imaging Project
- ◆ Supporting Psychiatric Assessments in Emergency Rooms
- ◆ Groupware Testbed Project
- ◆ Voice Information Response System Project

If you would like a copy of any report, contact CTG at (518) 442-3892 or info@ctg.albany.edu. All Center project reports are available for downloading on our World Wide Web site.

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CTG OPEN HOUSE

CTG conducts a monthly open house designed to introduce the Center to government managers, corporate representatives, and members of the academic community.

The open houses are held from 3:30-5 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in our Government Technology Solutions Lab. The next open house will be on April 11, 1996.



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