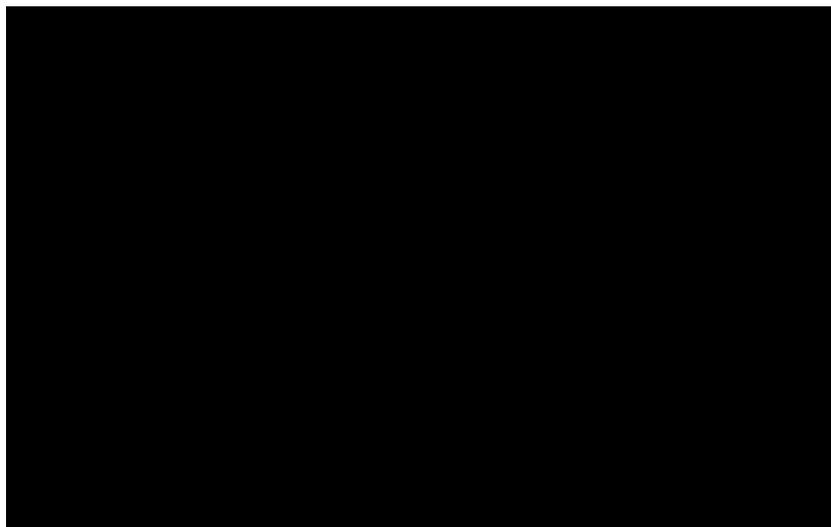


# INNOVATIONS

**The Center for Technology in Government**  
**1995 Innovations in American Government Award Winner**

## Personal Information Management Systems



Theresa Pardo, CTG Project Coordinator, and graduate assistant David Connelly discuss details of the Electronic Records project. (see page 3)

“Information overload is not a function of the volume of information out there. It’s a gap between the volume of information and the tools we have to assimilate that information into useful knowledge.”

Paul Saffo, Institute for the Future, Menlo Park, California

Information existed before the personal computer, and office workers managed to organize all the paper information that came their way. The preferred method was usually piles and files. We haven’t seen the paperless office yet, but more and more information is being stored digitally. The problem is that it’s hard to make electronic files and piles that act like paper ones.

According to researchers, the piles of paper people set out on their desks or office tables serve several purposes. They’re holding bins until an item is acted on (such as an order or a request), and they remind their owners to do something. Researchers have found that piles also stack up because of the difficulty many of us have in thinking of the proper filing category.

Then, there’s the matter of finding an empty file folder, making a label, and actually getting the item into a filing cabinet.

### PIMS

Help is at hand with Personal Information Management Systems (PIMS). PIMS are PC-based software packages that help you plan, organize, and manage complex personal information. Here are just some of the functions a PIMS can serve:

#### Job Manager

Simple planning and updating  
 Streamlined analysis  
 Reporting and graphics

#### Human Relations Manager

Business card managing  
 Personal memo attaching  
 Automatic labeling  
 Direct phone connecting

#### Resource Manager

Simple word processing  
 Easy data merging  
 Quick data interchanging  
 Flexible data classifying and sorting

#### Personal Scheduler

Job priority  
 Graphical time scheduling  
 Scheduling by time period and job type

[from the Doosan Co. Web site]

(See PIMS, page 2)

**PIMS, continued from page 1**

According to Kathryn Alesandrini, "each year US businesses generate 60 billion faxes, 1.6 trillion pieces of paper, and trillions of email messages." (Computer Shopper 2/96) Most PIMS combine appointment books, task managers, phone books, notepads, and other capabilities to organize all this data. Alesandrini says that Lotus' Organizer 2.1, Sidekick Deluxe, AnyTime for Windows 3.0, and Day Runner Planner for Windows are good PIMS choices for novice users.

Inspiration is a powerful PIMS-like electronic writing and organizing tool for brainstorming ideas, gathering and organizing information, and creating outlines, flow-charts, and webs. It allows the user to organize information in both graphic and outline mode. In graphic mode, symbols are used to illustrate relationships between information and ideas, and all

changes made graphically are automatically reflected in the outline mode. At CTG we use Inspiration to map Web site categories, to outline projects, and to express other information and work relationships graphically. To view an Inspiration application, go to CTG's Web site <http://www.ctg.albany.edu> and click on the "Projects" button and then on "How CTG Projects Work" to see an example.

Exchange, CTG's new electronic mail system, provided by Microsoft, is more than a mere mailer:

MS Exchange is not a PIMS per se, but it has many PIMS features. With Exchange's "public folders" can have pop up messages for all staff, and it provides links to other documents. Files can be layered inside mail, so that information already available on the network can be organized into paper-like folders. There is a repetitive task reminder and a forms function, so that users can fill out a form for frequently repeated tasks and mail it. We are

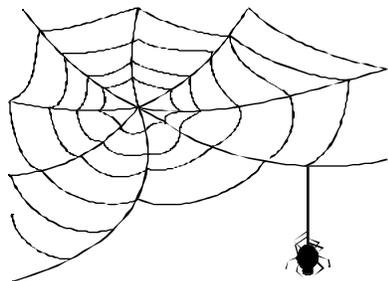
investigating Schedule+, a calendar program that is an extension of Exchange so that schedules and appointments can be linked with mail.

Software developers are also designing organizing tools for special applications. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory offers Intelligent Archive for scientists so that they can access and organize data, distributed resources, and shared information, including commercial software, Web browsers, and search engines. The Colorado Bar Association's Law Office Technology Committee is researching applications that support legal work. One of their educational programs teaches attorneys how to choose and use personal information management software.

PIMS still have a long way to go to be organizing agents or true assistants, but developments are moving rapidly to make them effective tools.

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## Web Site-ing



For more information about Personal Information Management Systems and organizing information, see the National Center to Improve Practice in Special Education site which includes a description of organizing tools and a write up on Inspiration software

[http://www.edc.org/FSC/NCIP/OT\\_Products\\_Inspir.html](http://www.edc.org/FSC/NCIP/OT_Products_Inspir.html)

Doosan Co., producers of Gooday PIM software can be found at

<http://dsn31.doosan.co.kr/dic/gooday.html>

Find out about Microsoft Exchange on Microsoft's Web site

<http://www.microsoft.com>

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Intelligent Archive site is located at <http://www.llnl.gov/ia/sc95/sc95ia.html>

The Colorado Bar Association's site is available at

<http://www.lawyernet.com/members/jimfesq/wca/22/technologyforlawfirms.html>.

The New York State Forum for Information Resource Management has a new Web site that includes many links to other information management sites. The URL is <http://www.nysfirm.org>

CTG's Internet Security site has been revised to provide full audio-visual presentations from April's Internet security seminar: The URL is

<http://www.ctg.albany.edu/projects/inettb/security.html>

Handouts, slides, and audio from the seminar are all available.

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## Organizing Electronic Documents for the Web



Through CTG's work on the Internet Testbed Project and through our own Web site development, we have found that publishing on the Internet requires a whole different way of thinking than publishing on paper: Web documents have linking capabilities, so that readers can move through the thread of an idea without having to move sequentially through chapter and verse. When a new piece is ready for the Internet, the author must stop and consider linkages. We find ourselves constantly considering where links should be constructed and where connections should be made that would help enrich the information's content.

Webmasters and Web designers must think about graphics differently than graphic designers do for print. The type of graphic used, its

color and placement, may depend on how quickly the graphic will load through different Web browsers. No matter how beautiful a picture may be, if it takes minutes to load, the frustration factor may be too high to make it practical for a Web site.

Another consideration concerns audience. When publishing on the Web, authors must keep in mind that the information is available to the world. Higher public visibility means that the presentation, ease-of-use, accuracy of content, and overall attention to detail become more important.

CTG is producing a set of recommended practices for developing and delivering government services on the World Wide Web. For more information call 518-442-3892 or e-mail us at [info@ctg.albany.edu](mailto:info@ctg.albany.edu)

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## Managing Electronic Records

CTG, the State Archives and Records Administration, and the Adirondack Park Agency are investigating how system development methods should be changed to incorporate sound records management principles. The project will look at how process analysis, systems development and record-

keeping principles can be combined to produce not only information systems and databases, but electronic records that support and document the legal and business needs of agencies. CTG's new Project Support Manager, Darryl Green, will have major responsibility for this federally-funded project.

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## NASIRE Recognizes NYS Clearinghouse

The National Association of State Information Resource Executives (NASIRE) has recognized the New York Spatial Data Clearinghouse as an outstanding achievement in the field of information technology for 1996. The Center for Technology in Government developed the Clearinghouse with a host of partners, including the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the

NYS Temporary GIS Council, ten corporate partners, and over 400 information professionals throughout the state. The Clearinghouse is a prototype that demonstrates how spatial data sets can be shared over the Internet. The prototype is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/gisny.html>

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## New Corporate Partner

CTG is proud to announce that Bluestone Inc. has recently joined the ranks of our growing list of Corporate Partners. Visit their Web site at <http://www.bluestone.com>. They've contributed Web-to-legacy software to our Internet Technologies Testbed project.

## Making Connections

### June

Kristine Kelly, David Andersen, and Peter Bloniarz presented a session titled "Evaluating Information Technology in the Public Sector" at the Interdepartmental Committee on Electronic Data Processing (ICEDP) Annual Conference held at Empire State Plaza.

Jim Bottum, the Deputy Director of the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois

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.

Urbana-Champaign visited CTG to explore opportunities for working together:

Prof. Ik-Jae Chung visited CTG from the Seoul National Polytechnic University to gather information in preparation for establishing a CTG-like Center in South Korea.

### July

Sharon Dawes was a panel member at the annual meeting of the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators in Washington, DC that addressed the topic "Partnerships in Information Management."

Sharon also gave a presentation "Maximizing Value, Minimizing Risk" to members of the American Library Association's Government Documents Round Table at their annual meeting held in Manhattan. She spoke about the lessons CTG has learned through the Internet Testbed Project.

### August

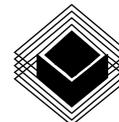
David Filbert presented "Information Technology and the Politics of Inequality: How Will the Cities Be Affected?" at the American Political Science Association Conference in San Francisco.

Kristine Kelly spoke at the Association for Information Systems conference in Phoenix. Her presentation "GIS in Economic Development and Business Decision Support", was well received.

**Innovations** is published quarterly by the Center for Technology in Government.

Editors:

Claire McInemey  
Sharon Dawes  
Sally Goodall



Phone: (518) 442-3892  
Fax: (518) 442-3886  
Email: [info@ctg.albany.edu](mailto:info@ctg.albany.edu)  
WWW: <http://www.ctg.albany.edu>



**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Center for Technology in Government  
University at Albany, SUNY  
1400 Washington Ave PAC 264  
Albany NY 12222