

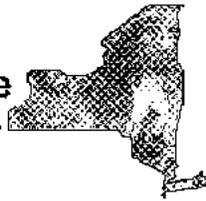
INNOVATIONS



The Center for Technology in Government, an Innovations in American Government Award Winner

Volume 3 Issue 4
November 1997

New York State GIS Clearinghouse



A Service of the New York State Office for Technology

From Prototype to Statewide Resource

Unknown to her colleagues, Janice Thompson decided to pursue Geographic Information Systems in her school district. She believed she could revolutionize the school bus routing system, determine population demographics and calculate aid based on the regions in her district. Her school board, not familiar with GIS, had brushed aside the idea claiming it was too risky and carried far too many costs. Thompson, the superintendent of a heavily populated suburban school district in New York State, decided to search the local library to see if she could locate GIS best practices from other states. Carrying home the limited material obtained at the library, she walked in to find her twelve year old son Ben using her computer. She asked about his serious demeanor and he matter-of-factly replied that he was searching the Web for information about nuclear physics for his science project. Thinking that this little Einstein could help her, she asked him to search the Internet for "Geographic Information Systems." To her surprise, Ben found 70 sites that illustrated GIS uses. The number one site was the New York State GIS Clearinghouse, a repository of metadata, and a communication tool for statewide GIS users. She hit the jackpot.

This story, although fictitious, is not unlikely. Hundreds of state and local officials deal with GIS questions and concerns everyday. Fortunately for them, NYS has spearheaded a movement to coordinate GIS use. School and government officials can network with other GIS users by using the Clearinghouse - they can access data, inquire about technological advances, and become a part of the GIS Data Sharing Cooperative. All of this is made possible by the New State Library, through the support of the New York State Office for Technology and the State Archives and Records Administration.

The NYS GIS Clearinghouse is an offspring of the Center for Technology in Government's Spatial Data Clearinghouse prototype developed in 1995. CTG's partners in that project included the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Temporary Council on GIS, Erie County Water Authority and several other government agencies. The project produced a prototype metadata repository accessible over the Internet, a modest inventory of spatial data resources around the state, and a set of policy and management recommendations for a permanent data cooperative.

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NYS GIS Clearinghouse
<http://nysgis.nysed.gov/gis>

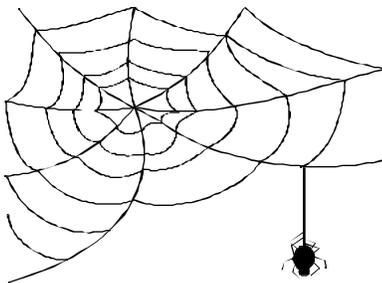
Later, recommendations from the Temporary Council on GIS and the Office of Real Property Services led Governor Pataki to issue a Technical Policy on Geographic Information Systems, which established the parameters for a statewide GIS initiative. The NYS Office for Technology, then the Governor's Task Force on IRM, was charged with the task of locating a site to maintain and coordinate GIS efforts throughout New York State. The logical move was to expand upon the award winning spatial data clearinghouse developed by CTG. The transfer of experience and technology allowed the NYS Library to build on that foundation.

The NYS GIS Clearinghouse disseminates information on the statewide coordination program and provides access to various GIS data sources. One of the realizations of the NYS GIS Clearinghouse has been the unexpected benefit of having a multi-dimensional Web site. Bruce Oswald, NYS Office for Technology, says, "The Clearinghouse began as a metadata repository but then became much more, including a communication node containing GIS information, education, training and conference information." A way of gaining momentum for GIS users, the site helps state and local officials tap into what others are doing and learn the best practices in the field.

Taking CTG's spatial data prototype to the next level and beyond required an enormous amount of planning and coordination. The NYS Office for Technology, several working groups, and the NYS Library spent numerous hours gathering information and developing the Web site. The success of the clearinghouse depended on some critical factors which Oswald, identified as "having the staff time and enthusiasm, the desire to complete the project and the commitment to be responsive to users," all of which he felt were "superbly displayed" by the NYS GIS Clearinghouse development staff.

GIS users can look forward to additional advancements in the statewide initiative. The metadata repository is adding new information, the Data Sharing Cooperative is gaining new members and new avenues for sharing information, and the number of people forming partnerships as a result of the Web site is growing. JoAnn Rydzinski, who divides her time between the Office for Technology and the State Archives and Records Administration, sees on the horizon for GIS in NYS "enthusiasm from the primary data holders and collaboration among the state agencies." A concentrated effort is underway to introduce primary data holders to information sharing through downloadable data set. Oswald sees great advances in the year ahead when he expects "data sharing will be implemented, the metadata repository will be populated, and the NYS GIS Clearinghouse development staff will assist agencies in their efforts to share and exchange GIS information."

Web Sitings



Here are just a few GIS related sites:

NYS GIS Clearinghouse <http://nysgis.nysed.gov/gis>

Federal Geographic
Data Committee <http://fgdc.er.usgs.gov/fgdc.html>

State Archives & Records
Administration <http://unix6.nysed.gov/services/local-gov/gisres.htm>

Office of Real Property
Services <http://www.orps.state.ny.us/gis/index.htm>

NYS Office for Technology <http://www.irm.state.ny.gov>

The Mining Company <http://geography.miningco.com/mlibrary.htm>

New Corporate Partner



AEQ, CTG's newest corporate partner, will be working with the Managed Care project team in the upcoming months. AEQ, LLC. is a developer and marketer of informational software and integrated hardware solutions for the healthcare industry. It was formed in 1994 to bring to market AEQ Medical Information Manager, a medical practice management software system developed for the acquisition and management of patient and administrative healthcare information. Their Web site is located at: <http://www.aeq.com>

Recent Publications

The State-Local Information Systems project produced three publications: an executive briefing paper, a guidebook of fundamental principles, and a final report which presents recommendations for mitigating the constraints encountered by state-local efforts.

Tying a Sensible Knot: A Practical Guide to State-Local Information Systems: Demand is high for this guidebook and its companion executive briefing paper. The handbook, a practical tool developed to help state and local project managers define and develop coordinated information systems, is the culmination of the State-Local Information Systems project at CTG. The project was sponsored by the Local Government Subcommittee of the NYS Office for Technology and involved over 150 state and local government officials. Its findings are based on the experiences of eleven intergovernmental projects from across New York State. Released in September, the handbook summarizes exemplary practices evident in these projects, and illustrates them with real-life examples. This document is available at:

<http://www.ctg.albany.edu/resources/pdfrwp/iis1.pdf>

Partners in State-Local Information Systems: Lessons from the Field: The project report discusses the complex environmental factors that make state-local efforts so difficult and recommends actions to counteract them. Scheduled to be released in December of this year, a downloadable copy will be available at:

<http://www.ctg.albany.edu/resources/pdfrwp/iisfnlrp.pdf>

1997 Annual Report, The Center for Technology in Government: An overall look at CTG's projects, accomplishments, and achievements for 1996-1997. The handbooks, reports, and documents generated by completed projects are featured. CTG International references the extensive contacts CTG undertook with government agencies and researchers throughout the world. Project Partners showcases the contributions of academic, corporate, and government partners. The report is available at:

<http://www.ctg.albany.edu/resources/news/ar97.pdf>

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

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Information Sharing Strategies & Tools for Medicaid Managed Care

Kick Off Event held September 1997

When a child is born blood tests are performed to test for disease and genetic abnormalities. Unfortunately, the results are not always released before the child leaves the hospital. Parents are sent home without vital information and left wondering if their child is healthy, or has a treatable or terminal disease. Children are sometimes forced to have the blood tests repeated resulting in unnecessary costs and paperwork for both the hospital and the family. The delay in the reporting of the test results is caused by the hospital and lab each having stand-alone information systems. Employing a Health Information Network, such as Wisconsin's WHIN, would allow the test results to be accessed immediately day or night. Marsha Radaj, President of the Wisconsin Health Information Network (WHIN), explained how WHIN corrected this problem by having the lab and the hospital join the Health Information Network. WHIN is a for-profit company that provides a communication network for 16 hospitals, seven payers, 1500 physicians, a pharmacy group and several thousand users. Subscribers to WHIN can access clinical, demographic, eligibility, enrollment, and various other types of data at any time of the day or night.

CTG, along with the NYS Office for Technology Subcommittee on Human Services have joined forces to work on a project that will evaluate health information networks and other approaches to administer Medicaid through managed care models. The Kick off event "Information Sharing Strategies and Tools for Medicaid Managed Care" provided members of the health care community with the opportunity to participate in framing the project. The participants were provided with an update on the rapidly evolving environment of managed care in New York State and with the opportunity to hear from their colleagues in other states about efforts to implement information sharing systems. Participants shared their perspectives, concerns, and recommendations on an information sharing system that would support their efforts in implementing Medicaid managed care.

Next Steps: The CTG project team will integrate the results of the workshop with input from the NYS Office for Technology Human Services Subcommittee. The subcommittee has been assessing the direction of Medicaid managed care for several months and will add its insight to the direction of the project. After a framework is set, the project team will specify the goals, objectives, and workplan of the project.

For more information about "Information Sharing Strategies and Tools for Medicaid Managed Care," or if you are interested in becoming a project partner call the Center for Technology in Government at (518)442-3892.



People at CTG

If you think you've seen her before, you have! Meghan Kiernan, the newest member of the CTG team interned for the New York State Forum for Information Resource Management (Forum) from 1995-96. Meghan, now CTG's Information Coordinator, completed her Masters degree in Public Administration and fulfilled her internship requirement as liaison between the Forum and CTG. Since graduating in the spring of 1996, Meghan has been working for a local trade association managing their professional development program. Her year and a half in the building materials industry proved successful as she developed and managed a certification program for students in the building materials industry.

As Information Coordinator, Meghan will work as co-editor of Innovations, write articles and press releases for CTG projects, and coordinate the general information flow between CTG and other organizations.

Meghan feels very much at home at CTG stating "I've always believed in CTG and its commitment to information technology innovation. I am thrilled that I have another opportunity to work with such a dedicated group of people."

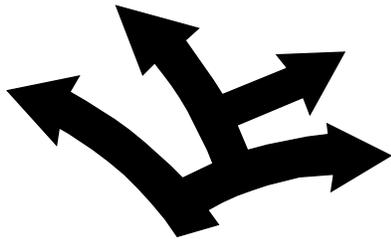
Welcome back to Mballou Kaba, a student in the Masters program at the UAlbany School of Business who recently joined the CTG project team. Mballou worked at CTG last year as a student assistant with the operations team. As a graduate assistant for the project team, Mballou is researching Medicaid managed care for the project "Information Sharing Strategies and Tools for Medicaid Managed Care." Her duties include: understanding how technologies, such as electronic data interchange and other sharing tools, can facilitate communication between providers, MCOs, and government agencies. Mballou feels that the experience at CTG is extremely valuable to students saying, "Through a unique partnership with business, government, and education, students can get a good experience that can be used both in the public and private sectors."

Enhanced Web Site

Online Order form: Web surfers can now order any CTG report or document online. Simply go to the CTG Web site at <http://www.ctg.albany.edu> and click on "Order Form." Your request will be instantly sent to CTG and we will promptly send you a paper copy of the documents. Of course, all reports are available as downloadable documents.

Register Online: Can't find where you put the registration form for the next CTG event? Don't fret, just surf to the CTG Web site and register online! Once registered, all registrants will be entered into our database. CTG has made it quick and easy for you to participate in our events. You can find all event announcements by clicking on "What's New."

Making Connections



June 1997

On June 24, 1997, the Corporation, Authorities & Commissions Committee of the NYS Assembly hosted the Telecommunications & Technology Exposition in the Legislative Office Building. Assemblyman Al Vann and his staff invited technology providers, manufacturers and developer organizations in New York State to meet and present their business and products to more than 200 legislators and their staff who frequent the halls of the Legislative Office building daily. CTG hosted an information booth and Research Director Peter Bloniarz presented the results and lessons from some of the most recently completed projects such as the Internet Testbed Project and many more.

Kai Larsen, CTG Graduate Assistant, visited his homeland to speak at the Norwegian Computer Society's Special Interest Group on Methods and Internet. His presentation was entitled "An Alternative Model for Development of World Wide Web Services."

Sharon Dawes spoke at the Annual Archival Institute sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission held at the University of Pittsburgh. As guest faculty member Sharon presented "Practical Approaches to Information Policy."

Sharon also spoke with representatives of the Egyptian People's Assembly about the Center for Technology in Government and its' programs. Sharon led a group assessment session on possible information resource initiatives to be taken in Egypt. The gathering was sponsored by University at Albany Center for Legislative Development.

July 1997

David Connelly, CTG Graduate Assistant, presented the paper "Toward A Theory of Government Contracting with Non-Profits: Principle Agent Models and Network Models" with two other students at the ASPA conference in Philadelphia.

Kristine Kelly, CTG Project Research Manager, gave a presentation on the Models for Action project at the URISA conference in Toronto. The presentation focused on the need to identify and implement records management procedures at the information system design stage. Kristine described some of the preliminary project products and their use in an application with the New York State Adirondack Park Agency.

August 1997

Darryl Green and Peter Bloniarz spoke at the Annual Institute on Mental Health Management at the Omni Hotel in Albany. The presentation consisted of two parts - Using the Center for Technology in Government's "World Wide Web Starter Kit" and "Developing and Delivering Government Services on the World Wide Web: Recommended Practices for New York State."

Claire McNerney and Kai Larsen presented "Using a Cohort Model in Development of Web Sites and Web Policies" at the Third Annual Association for Information Systems Americas Conference in Indianapolis.

Sharon Dawes and Theresa Pardo visited the Ulster County Office of Mental Health for a site visit for the Information Sharing Strategies and Tools for Medicaid Managed Care project. The fact finding mission was to explore the Service Treatment Authorization process.

Theresa gave a presentation to the New York Electronic Data Interchange Coalition on the direction of the proposed Medicaid Managed Care Project.

September 1997

Sharon Dawes and Peter Bloniarz took part in planning sessions for the Education, Outreach, and Training portion of our new role with the Partnership for Advanced Computational Infrastructure sponsored by the National Science Foundation. The sessions took place at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

CTG was very active at the Government Technology Conference (GTC East). Sharon Dawes moderated a panel discussion on the "Emerging Role of the CIO." Panelists included the Chief Information Officers of Virginia, Massachusetts, the US Dept. of Education, and the City of Boston. Sharon also presented the major findings of the State-Local Information Systems Project as a member of a panel on Best Practices in Electronic Commerce. Theresa Pardo presented findings from the State-Local Information Systems Project in a session focused on partnerships. She detailed the fundamental principles illustrated in the guidebook, *Tying a Sensible Knot: A Practical Guide to State-Local Information Systems*.

Theresa Pardo spoke with a team of personnel and training officials from the Government of India. The half day visit consisted of an overview of CTG and a discussion on how our projects help government deal with information technology issues.

"Making Smart IT Choices" Goes to School

Information Technology (IT) innovation is risky business in any organization. Individuals must work through the complex and challenging processes of analyzing an information problem or need, identifying and evaluating possible technology-based solutions, and ultimately selecting the information technology that will respond to the need in the most cost-effective and satisfactory way.

The Center for Technology in Government and the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy's Graduate School of Public Affairs (GSPA) have partnered to provide "Making Smart IT Choices," a one-credit course designed to evaluate IT innovation. Students will learn how to assess the organizational, policy, technology, and economic risks associated with IT innovation in both the private and public sectors. For more information contact Karen Baum at (518) 442-5396 or visit GSPA's Web site at:

<http://www.albany.edu/gspa/>

Research Workshop

As the capstone activity of our two-year grant from the Ford Foundation which accompanied the Center's Innovations in American Government Award, CTG was recently the host of an invitational workshop of leading researchers in the study and application of information technology in government. The workshop, entitled "A Step Beyond Research: Fostering IT Innovations in Government," was held on October 26-28 to focus attention on how research being conducted at universities and research centers around the world has supported, and can continue to support, the innovative application of information technology in government. We hope that this gathering will lay a foundation for long range applied research relationships that will contribute to innovative and effective government far into the future.

Planned together with Jerry Mechling, Director of the Strategic Computing and Telecommunications Program at Harvard's Kennedy School, and John King, Editor-in-Chief of Information Systems Research, and Professor at the Center for Research on Information Technology and Organizations at the University of California at Irvine, the workshop brought together more than thirty international scholars who are actively working in government information policy, technology, and management to discuss the effect and future direction of their research. After a welcome by UAlbany President Karen Hitchcock, the discussions at the workshop were organized as a forum to identify and discuss recent and current research, key contemporary issues from the world of practice, and ideas for effectively linking research and practice now and in the future.

Watch for future articles detailing the workshop results.



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