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Instant Web Sites

Now you see it, & Now you SEE it.

WebWare® Magic Saves Time, Money, and Effort

What if you could reuse all of the content that you worked so hard producing for the ACIS in another environment that would not only save you time but also create consistency throughout your public information? WebWare® can make it happen. WebWare® is an affordable formatting service that turns your ACIS investment into a valuable recycled resource.

Very similar to our text conversions for the TDD accessible system, Tele-Works takes all of the content that resides on your ACIS in audio and reformats your word processing files into Web Pages. More than just integrating HTML tags into the text to make it readable with a web browser, Tele-Works sets up a "web brochure" that includes hyperlinks to all of the individual scripts. After selecting a category, you can then select a message, which displays the exact content of the ACIS message it mirrors. Because ACIS systems are comprehensive sources for city-wide information, the service provides an excellent turnkey web site service for those looking to enhance their web presence.

The WebWare® Service can be your quick and easy answer to getting worthwhile content on your web site. Below are the addresses for some recent WebWare® conversions, check them out:

<http://www.tele-works.com/brochures/Bedford/BedfordIntro.htm>

<http://www.tele-works.com/brochures/CarsonCity/CarsonCityIntro.htm>

To learn more about WebWare®, contact us at twsupport@tele-works.com or 540-953-2631.

Tax or Fee?

E-irony creating middlemen

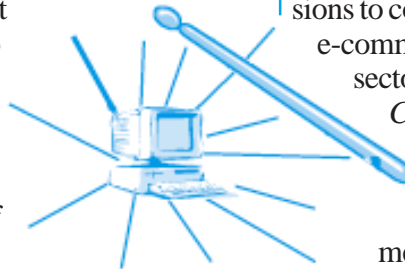
The e-irony soon to face many local governments is that, in the midst of a rapidly evolving electronic economy, some agencies will have problems just raising operating capital. While Internet commerce threatens to lower sales tax revenues, many local governments are considering outsourcing their payment collection services to private sector e-commerce firms. I must admit that some of the service offers sound too good to be true. Actually, I do not doubt the offers are true. I just doubt that these offers are good for local governments and end-user citizens.

There are many issues and repercussions to consider when out-sourcing your e-commerce solutions to the private sector. In this editorial, and in future *Communicator* articles, we will review financial, technical, customer service, and public policy issues related to e-commerce to better inform our clients and our staff. For example, as electronic traffic increases, how will your organization disassociate itself from e-advertising? Will government be promoting conflict of interest allegations? If "guilt by advertising associations" were not true, then Joe Camel would not have had such a hard time.

Paradoxically, although e-commerce suggests a system free of middlemen, e-commerce is also creating opportunities for corporations to assume the role of a new type of middleman. Because of how the Web makes money (See "How the Web Makes Money"), being an e-middleman between service provider and end-user can be extremely profitable.

Middlemen position themselves in the middle for good reason; the practice is as

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Continued from page 1

old as buying-and-selling itself. Consumers are attracted to the Web for convenience. Thoughts of "buying direct," eliminating middlemen, gaining control, and saving money and time in the process entice many into conducting business on the Web. Plainly, the Web has actually created a market for such intermediate processes as consumer invoicing itself. For example, if a business can position itself between you and your citizens, then, as money transfers hands, that business will receive a service fee. Your citizens may react adversely to "convenience fees" and, instead, demand that the agency provide convenient payment methods without a middleman markup. After all, automation is designed to save processing costs for the organization. How do you explain an increase in fees to your citizen?

Of course, I am an advocate for local government service. It is our business too. Tele-Works wants to provide you with the products, services, and know-how necessary to capture e-commerce transactions for your community. My vision consists of e-government sites that could charge a service fee that would not only pay for administration and maintenance of the site, but also provide capital improvement and other operational funds that may end up reducing taxes and fees, or enhancing other areas of government/citizen relationships. If fees need to be a part of the system, the system should be designed so that the revenue stays within the community.

In the end, you must decide what is best for you, your staff, and your citizens now and for the future. Governments are adopting more and more private sector techniques to further their community services. It is time to take the next step, to embrace the free-market and leverage e-commerce solutions in-house.

When governments are faced with loss of revenue to the new electronic economy, it is not the time for them to embrace a concept that languishes control of your trump card, *the invoice itself*. Do not hand your e-power to another. Rather, embrace the economic change, and merge technology, your services, and the resulting e-commerce stream into a powerful economic force beneficial to both government and citizens.

Chris Schellhammer,
President Tele-Works, Incorporated



Product Watch: Citizen ID

Similar to *CallerID* for residential use, the Tele-Works CitizenID product helps identify your callers to assist you in providing your current services and expanding into new service areas. For example, if a citizen transfer occurs from an active e-government web page using the Tele-Works Voice Response module, the designated support staff will receive a standard web hyperlink in a 'screen pop' on their desktop as well as the phone call from the citizen. Now support personnel can immediately identify the caller and take service one step further by interactively completing the transaction with the caller using the same web page as the caller. The advantages of this method over traditional CTI interfaces are that this method includes open standards that are low-load on client and server. This makes the most of your current infrastructure and maximizes the value of your investment in Tele-Works. Contact Tele-Works for more information regarding this product, including projected release dates.

How the Web Makes Money



Success on the web involves not only the selling of goods and services but also by receiving traffic or "hits." These "hits" translate into a user audience. A web site's audience is very similar to a radio station's audience of listeners. As the listeners to that station increase in quantity and variety, the radio station can approach business and advertisers with a valuable product: consumer traffic. Consumer traffic attracts advertising like honey attracts Winnie the Pooh. As traffic funnels from a host site to an advertiser's site, the host is paid a commission for the traffic emerging from their portal.

Field Notes

From Washoe County, NV... Tele-Works would like to share a creative strategy that creates a win-win-win situation among your agency, staff, and citizens. The Employee Recognition Committee of Washoe County administers a program that distributes awards and certificates of recognition to staff members who submit suggestions that demonstrate cost savings for the County. Over 20 employees were recognized and over \$4,000 has been distributed to staff. The program has saved the County over \$145,000 to date.

Tele-Works western representative Steve Critchfield adds, "governments are taking entrepreneurial approaches to improving services, saving operating costs, and rewarding employees... A similar program surfaced in Sunnyvale, CA, a few years ago with similar results." For more information about Washoe's program, contact Bob Harmon at 775-328-6145 or e-mail: bharmon@mail.co.washoe.nv.us.





Pico Rivera Right on time with new ACIS

Aptly named, Pico Rivera's *Anytime Line* will be providing information to citizens and businesses anytime, day or night, every day of the year. The system was deployed in just over 6-months thanks to the staff's commitment to the project. One particularly useful feature of the *Anytime Line* is the ability to offer information services in the evening hours and on weekends when questions are most likely, and ironically, when City Hall is closed. "The system will not replace existing person-to-person contact, but will enhance our ability to provide information to residents and business owners at their convenience," said City Manager Dennis Courtemarche.

The system includes approximately 300 informational messages with options to request related fax documentation. The system also offers five Public Opinion Surveys covering such issues as housing and departmental services satisfaction.

The *Anytime Line* logo, designed by Los Angeles-based *Soap Design*, not only provides the name and number to call (562-801-CITY), but also the conceptual basis for the public service – convenience. Tele-Works applauds the Pico Rivera staff for their timely implementation efforts, and the creative introduction of the service to their public.

With a name like Anytime Line, their system may not get a moments rest.



A Few *Anytime Line* Messages:

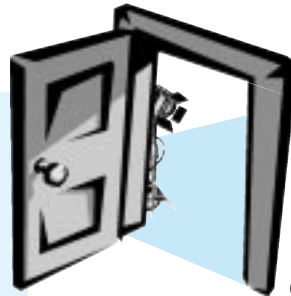
(Call 562-801-2489)

Parking Tickets and Fines	2942
Employment Application Procedures	3402
Mulch/Firewood Distribution	3522
Utility Services	3610

Let It Snow: System Focus

In late January, the eastern states found themselves wrestling with 20 plus inches of snow, which fell in less than 24 hours. Everyone was caught off guard, and the ACIS was recruited for notification purposes. The Emergency Service Message, standard on all ACIS systems, was used by users such as Hopewell, Durham, and Prince William County. Some governments, with Call-Out functionality were able to notify lists of staff and community leaders regarding closings and procedures.

To make the most of your system in emergency circumstances like this, perform regularly scheduled drills so that when a situation like this presents itself you and your staff are ready to leverage the ACIS functionality to meet your needs.



Behind the Scenes

New Talent

In November 1999 Ms. Joan Nelson was appointed CEO/CFO of Tele-Works, Inc. Joan joins Tele-Works with over 20 years of management and expansion success with corporate and banking operations as VP of a prominent financial institution. Tele-Works Board of Directors, by the direct instruction of shareholders, created this position to facilitate and lead Tele-Works in the new millennium. Tele-Works supporters of all levels applaud the move and appointment.

Web Site Deployment

Please visit us on the web at "www.tele-works.com". We hope you enjoy the new content, format, and design

Credit Where Credit Is Due

If ACIS and TVR projects were published academic pursuits, the accreditation would certainly be shared and co-authored by you, our clients. We like to think that we have all the answers and technological solutions to the challenges of citizen-government communications, but, simply put, we could not do what we do without your assistance. Your needs and goals are a welcome prerequisite to our work. This interaction with you is more rewarding than a passive product-payment/vendor-client relationship. Our staff sends a collective thank you and sincere appreciation for your business and your trust.



New Projects On-Line:

Carson City, NV ★WEBWARE®
Bedford, TX ★WEBWARE®
Durham, NC
Gwinnett, GA ★UPGRADE TO V4.0!
Olympia, WA ★WEBWARE®
Pico Rivera, CA
Phoenix, AZ ★NEW CUSTOMER

Soon To Come:

La Plata, CO } Intergovernmental
Durango, CO } Joint
System

Columbia, MO
Diamond Bar, CA
San José, CA

At a glance...

Mission Possible

If you, or maybe some of your colleagues, are wondering about upgrading existing information and fax services to meet new service demands (such as interactive voice response or transactional web services), don't give it up as impossible: just look at what Tele-Works did for the *Phone Phoenix* system.


For a very short time, users of *Phone Phoenix* were greeted with "temporarily out of service". Now, Phoenix citizens are enjoying increased service from a newly upgraded system. A quick call to 602/262-6262 shows that the content of the original system was maintained and transferred seamlessly onto the new, more powerful and reliable Tele-Works system.

"Mission accomplished."

What do you think?

Please tell us. We at Tele-Works and your peers would like to know. We would like to provide a spot on these pages for you.

Whether your thoughts are in response to an article published here, elsewhere, or you just have something to say, 'Letters' and a 'User Column' hope to accommodate even previously published articles related to government technology and public information. Please submit your thoughts to Chris Schellhammer at the following e-mail: Chris_Schellhammer@tele-works.com. You can also mail your thoughts to:
c/o Chris Schellhammer, Tele-Works, Inc., P.O. Box 663, Blacksburg, VA 24063.

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