

Executive Memo

February 2003

Focus on Technology

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Linux: Why It's Such a Hot Operating System for Associations

by Jay Farschman

Let's begin with what Linux is and then move on to the deeper question of why one might choose Linux as an Internet server platform for your association or business. Linux is an Open Source, free Operating System created by a 22-year-old University of Helsinki student named Linus Torvalds. Linus was frustrated by his lack of access to a UNIX server so he wrote his own. Wanting to get some feedback on his work, he made his code free and available for download on the Internet, so others would be able to comment on how he could improve his operating system. Since then, users and programmers around the world have given not only their feedback, but also their time and knowledge to produce an operating system that is both robust and stable.

So Linux was born out of the free spirit of sharing on the Internet. But, why should you use it?

Affordability

Most Linux software is released under the General Public License (GPL), which means it's free. This contrasts sharply with the traditional software model where you pay a fee for the software, installation, users, maintenance and, yes, a fee for technical support when it inevitably breaks. But is Linux really free? Well, the software is free; you still may need to find a consultant to help you set it up. Still you should see a hefty savings typically in 40–60 percent of the cost of a traditional solution.

Software and Hardware Availability

Linux is a popular platform with developers. Virtually any type of Internet service you wish to run—such as a Web server, chat server or e-mail server—is freely available for download...if you use Linux. Other popular operating systems offer only commercial software. By now you are probably asking yourself, "Are the best things in life really free?" Actually, the most popular Web server (Apache) and e-mail server (sendmail) are both available free of charge and prized for their reliability.

One of my favorite things to do is recycle. It seems like every three for four years our staff needs a new desktop PC. If we don't keep to that schedule, we quickly become frustrated with the speed of the old PC. Strangely enough I can take an old PC, add a second hard drive, load Linux and we have a formidable file server. You'll find that Linux works great on older "slower" machines, lending new life to the old PC. It costs very little to do and keeps everyone happy.

Stability

The Linux system was developed with stability as a key design goal. That can translate into a system that runs for days, months or even years without needing a reboot. In most cases, if anything does happen to crash, self-healing mechanisms are built into the system to correct the problem without manual intervention. Maybe that's why IBM and HP have big TV ad campaigns extolling the virtues of

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Executive Memo

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President's Message

Technology: Help or Hindrance?

—by Karen M. Wojdyla, CSAE President



The focus of this month's newsletter is Technology. How do you react to the term technology? Do you get excited about the latest developments? Or, do you grimace at the thought of having to try to figure out how to use it? Many of us look forward to the thought of technology making our jobs and lives easier, but in practicality, there are only so many hours in a day to teach ourselves new skills.

CSAE has a number of resources to help keep you up-to-date in the technological arena. CSAE can also help you navigate through the information to learn how technology can help you within the Association environment.

To start, take a look at the CSAE Web site, www.csaenet.org. Here, you can find out the latest information on what is happening within the organization. By going to the Web site and clicking on "Calendar of Events," you can plan ahead for CSAE activities. And, while you're there, you can register online for any of our upcoming programs, saving you valuable time.

Do you want to learn how to become a CAE or maybe you are looking for a new position or an employee to fill an open position? The career center is where you need to go to find what you're looking for. If you're interested in advertising in *Executive Memo*, you can also find that information on the Web site. Do you have a friend who you think would benefit from becoming a member of CSAE? E-mail them our link to learn more about the benefits of belonging to CSAE. And, it's easy for them to join—they can just click on the "Join CSAE" button, complete the information and become a member. Remember the more you visit the Web site, the more you'll find that the CSAE information you need is right in front of you!

CSAE bulletin boards and listserves are up and running. These online "CSAE-only"

chat areas are a great way to talk to or ask questions of CSAE members and to share information. If time is a constraint, you can participate any time—day or night.

If information technology is right up your alley or if you want to learn more, Technology Committee Chair, Alan Browning has put together an IT networking group. There were close to 40 attendees at the first meeting. Clearly, the positive response for this networking group indicates that there is a great need for our members to learn what others are doing within their own organizations and to utilize the experience and expertise of others. For more information on when the IT networking group meets, go to the CSAE Web site!

Another great learning opportunity is the *2003 Technology Solutions Conference* on Tuesday, March 25, 2003. This one-day educational conference will give you the chance to learn from experts in the technology field. You will also be able to see and learn about the latest in programming and equipment at the vendor showcase. Register now by going to our Web site, www.csaenet.org.

Although we are all on different levels with respect to technology, CSAE is your resource to help understand how technology fits within our industry and how it can help us do our jobs more effectively and efficiently. As always, CSAE will continue to help you and provide networking opportunities for you with respect to technology, as well as other industry issues.

Remember, CSAE—Your Career Deserves It!

Karen M. Wojdyla
President

Bulletin Boards & ListSerts: What they are and the basic legal issues

Electronic communication has become a fixture in business and associations. Two types of electronic communication which associations can provide value-added services are bulletin boards and listservs. These are especially effective in quickly sharing knowledge on specialized topics.

Bulletin boards and listservs are nothing more than forums to share information. Each has their pro's and con's, but both can be beneficial if used appropriately.

Bulletin boards are basically a place where users can post messages. These users can be anonymous or authorized by a login and password feature. In either case the user posts a message and other users can view that message. It's just like that college bulletin board where people posted all kinds of information. Online bulletin boards can be setup to only

allow users to view messages by accessing the board online or send an e-mail to the user every time a message is posted.

Automated e-mail groups are commonly known as listservs. ListServ is actually a type of software, not the actual technology. Various other types of software similar to ListServ also provide the ability to automate an e-mail group. This means when a subscriber sends an e-mail to a predetermined e-mail address, all the other subscribers to that list automatically receive the e-mail. Preferences can be set, so subscribers need to be authorized before joining the list or so that subscription approval isn't necessary for an anonymous user.

The legal issues surrounding bulletin boards and listservs are for the most part the same. This technology is fairly new, and the legal

implications are still developing.

The basic complications with an online forum, whether a listserv or bulletin board are related to defamation, copyright infringement and antitrust laws. The Communications Decency Act of 1996 allows for both types of online forums to be moderated by the association for violation of these issues.

The depth of monitoring depends on the resources of your staff and the amount of traffic the forum receives. No matter the scope of moderation, be sure to enforce the terms of the user agreement. If prompt action is not taken to remove copyrighted material, the result may be contributory liability for the association. Moderation will keep the forum on task and thus hold its value to the members.

When developing a user agreement for these types of

technology include the following:

- ◆ The requirements for eligibility and use of the technology
- ◆ Focus of the forum and unacceptable content
- ◆ How your association is monitoring the content
- ◆ Require the user to agree not to use the forum illegally
- ◆ Have users indemnify. Defend, and hold the association harmless for any claims brought as a result of the forum
- ◆ Disciplinary actions that will be taken by the association as a result of violations of the user agreement

Additional information on user agreements can be found on www.asaenet.org. Be sure to consult your legal counsel when implementing these technologies and developing user agreements. ◆

CSAE's Third Annual Technology Solutions Conference March 25, 2003, Denver Merchandise Mart

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Linux

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Linux. There is no Linux equivalent of the “Blue Screen of Death” where the entire machine locks up and must be manually restarted, inconveniencing association staff, volunteers and members.

Summary

Should you use Linux? Yes. If superior reliability, affordabil-

ity and the availability of a tremendous suite of software products is something you need. If you like the idea of recycling your old PCs into powerful servers, or if you want to offer the latest powerful Web technologies, but you don't want to fuss over crashing servers. If the price tags you are seeing for new technology is getting to you, then you should find a way to integrate Linux. Whether your association is venturing into the realm of technology

for the first time or upgrading a current system, consider Linux. ♦

Jay Farschman is vice president of technology for ExecSavvy — www.execsavvy.com—an association management and software company. He is also senior consultant with HiTechSavvy, www.hitechsavvy.com, a technology consulting firm. He can be reached via email jay@hitechsavvy.com or phone 303-282-7978.

Saving and Storing Your Files

Finding the right storage solutions for your files

When creating a file, understanding how it will be used is an important indicator of the storage medium you should use. There are a variety of storage devices, all of which have their advantages and disadvantages. Here is a review of some of the more commonly used mediums.

Floppy disks—These are the most commonly known storage disks. They are called “floppies” and are approximately 3.5 inches tall. They are easily transferable from computer to computer, but unfortunately can only contain up to 1.4 megabytes. Since files sizes have dramatically grown over the last few years, floppies are most useful for on-the-go, smaller-size files. You can read and write data to a floppy repeatedly using a floppy disk drive.

Compact discs (CDs)—Quickly becoming one of the most popular storage mediums is the compact disc. CDs are read using a CD ROM drive. There are different types of compact discs:

CD-R: A CD that can be read, but only written to a single time. They can store quite a bit of data, approximately 700 megabytes. Good for large files and can go easily from computer to computer.

CD-RW: A CD that can be read and written to multiple times. Can also store approximately 700 megabytes. Good for large files, but not necessarily readable by all computers.

DVD-ROM: Needs a special DVD-ROM drive to be read. Used mostly for video files, as they are very large. Can store massive amounts of data—about 4.5 gigabytes.

ZIP disks—ZIP disks are a beefed up floppy disk that

can be read and written to over and over. Some ZIP disks are made to store up to 100 megabytes, others 250. They are best for large, on-the-go files. Since ZIP disks need a special ZIP drive to be read, these disks are best for those who have ZIP drives.

Hard drives—A hard drive is a different type of storage media. Most hard drives are internal, kept inside your computer. When you save files, this is most often where they get stored. Sizes of hard drives vary, but most are anywhere from 20 gigabytes to 80 gigabytes. Used for documents of any size.

Other types of storage media include tapes, external hard drives, and removable disk drives. Once you have evaluated your needs, you'll find there is a storage device to fit any need. ♦

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Technology Improves Guest Service

by David F. Grushey

As Internet and computer use continues to weave itself into the fabric of our everyday lives, many technological advancements have dramatically improved the overall service levels and guest experience provided by hotels and resorts worldwide. Benefits are realized in all stages of hotel planning, including:

◆ **Destination Research**—The Web gives you immediate access to complete destination information including property maps, hotel fact sheets, transportation directions, photo galleries, rate and availability information, convention space diagrams, some even provide live Web cams and virtual tours.

◆ **Registration**—Online group registration is available from many hotels which connects your organization's Web site to a hotel Web site. These direct links ensure instant access for hotel registrants to their arranged group block and contracted rate, as well as other pertinent group information. The biggest benefits of online registration, considered by many, are accessibility and ease of use, which by creating this additional registration venue for convention guests will often result in increased response and attendance.

◆ **During their stay**—Whereas Internet connectivity was a rarity and luxury for most hotels in the recent past, it is more and more a standard to

have such items as: in-room computers with complimentary Internet and e-mail access; Internet cafés as part of group functions; high speed internet access/DSL lines provided in meeting/convention space; even wireless Internet access in hotel lobbies and public areas of many upscale hotels and resorts.

◆ **After their stay**—Access to online accounting statements, billing records, post convention reports, post-conference attendee evaluations, etc.

While personalized one-on-one interaction and service should always remain

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CSAE Asked...

During 2002, what was one technological advancement that had the biggest impact on your organization?

"We implemented LaserFiche Document Imaging System in December 2002. It's too soon to have had much impact yet, but we expect to save significant time doing research and answering member inquiries in the coming months. We expect our library to be fully digital within five years."

*Gerilyn Wilson, Information Technology
and Research Associate
Colorado Municipal League*

"We took advantage of the power of .NET as a development tool and built several online applications to help membership and meetings, including an online "Space Request" application, which allowed users to reserve space and equipment at our annual meeting. The data was then downloaded to PDAs

(personal data assistants) for room checks and equipment assignment. Previously, this was by manual methods and was very time consuming. Our meetings staff was happy to carry a small PDA rather than a five pound, three-ring binder."

*Todd Berggren, Senior Director,
Information Technology & Services
Geological Society of America*

The biggest impact on our customer service has been software, such as HomeSite, that allows us—in-house—to make changes to and update our Web site. Members and nonmembers now have easy access to our schedule of upcoming training events, legislative updates and issues, and other important timely information, and we save money by being able to update it from the office rather than paying a professional to do it.

*Karen Simmering, Office Manager
Colorado Association of Homes
and Services for the Aging*

Get Organized!

by Melly Kinnard

For many of us, year after year, our New Year's goals are to lose weight and be better organized. A few weeks into January, we are back to our old habits of eating too much and our offices look like burglars ransacked them, but no one bothered to clean it up. The benefits of being organized are:

- ◆ You can find things
- ◆ Less wasted time searching for paper
- ◆ Reduced stress
- ◆ Have more time for fun
- ◆ Do more business

Just like weight loss, there are no shortcuts unless you submit to drastic measures like liposuction or gastric bypass. So let's take the reasonable approach and think long term. Set aside time on a regular basis to get organized and stay organized. Staying organized is like staying fit—you have to work continuously at it or everything falls apart quickly. Here are some tips to help you get organized and stay that way:

Set goals. Write them down and share them with your spouse, co-workers, friends and the FedEx man. Accountability is important. If you share them, you are more likely to fulfill them. What are your monthly goals? Year-end goals? When will you review them? Post them on your computer screen, on your bathroom mirror, so you see them each morning. Rewrite them during the year so they look fresh. Use different colors of paper. Keep the list short and realistic. It is better to have a few goals you will commit to rather than pages of goals you'll ignore. What is your target date for each goal?

Categories for your organization goals may include personal, financial, community, spiritual, physical, educational, hobbies and travel. What are the benefits of achieving each goal?

Customize a calendar/organizer. Calendars are personal and figuring out what works is a process. Think of the variety of organizers you have used in the past. Don't let anyone browbeat you into using a system that doesn't work for you. In years past

the huge Franklin planner was the symbol of importance. The pendulum has swung back to the tiny Palm Pilot or Blackberry. The advantage of the Palm (or clone) is the huge capacity of information stored and the ability to "hot sync" the hand model to your computer. The disadvantage is that the shorthand is very slow and for visual people, it is hard to see the big picture of a month at a glance. If your organizer is large and heavy, you may leave it in your office. If your calendar is computer based, you can print a few months to carry with you so you have an idea of what you have

scheduled. Spend some time in the office supply store and customize a paper based system that works for you. Compare tips with co-workers. Write in all regularly scheduled events even though you may know that every third Thursday you have a staff meeting. If I see free space, I will fill it in. ◆

New member, Melly Kinnard is a speaker, author and professional organizer. ABC News named Melly Kinnard the "De-Clutter Queen." Melly is the author of Get Organized!, I Need a Wife! and Gifts From the Heart. Go to Melly's Web site www.mellykinnard.com or call 303-762-9920.

Technology Improves Guest Service

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the primary focus of any hospitality organization, there is clearly a place for advances in computer and Internet technology to complement the human service element, thus enhancing overall guest experiences and satisfaction. ◆

David F. Grusbey is sales manager at Park Hyatt Beaver Creek Resort and Spa. He is also a member of CSAE's communication committee and can be reached at 303-294-0224 or dgrusbey@cnsopo.hyatt.com.



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Telecommuting—Simple or Complex?

by *Andrea J. Weelans, CAE*

As an occasional telecommuter, I have found that working at home is a great way to increase my productivity and still keep in touch with the office and my staff. Because the CPA Society office closes at noon on Friday and I live 22 miles away, working from home on some Fridays is a great benefit—allowing me to get a lot of work done without interruption.

When the Society began considering telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement, we researched everything we could find on the pros and cons, costs and requirements. The cost of equipment and software was one of our major concerns. Do we purchase equipment

and software for our employees, require them to supply it, or a combination? In my case, I agreed that I would supply the equipment and Internet connection and the Society would purchase the connectivity software. It was surprisingly easy to accomplish!

I already had a computer and printer with a dial-up Internet connection (good ole AOL.com.) The Society supplied me with PCAny-where software that allowed me to dial in to the computer on my desk. This worked for a while, but I couldn't use my phone while online, and the connection was pretty slow. I bit the bullet and had broadband service installed. WOW, what a difference! The speed is infinitely faster than

dial-up, and I can use my phone at the same time. Now I can do all the work I want without any trouble.

Technology has come a long way in making this alternative work arrangement feasible. Studies show that an employer can spend from \$100–5,500 to establish an employee as a telecommuter, depending on required equipment, furniture, and supplies. (In my case, it only cost my association the price of the software.)

The benefits of telecommuting to employers, from my point of view, are happier employees, more productivity, less weather-related absences, and potential costs savings. As an employee, my benefits are less travel time,

more productivity, and the ability to stay connected to my staff. The costs to me are small in comparison to the benefits I receive.

I recommend that any association, large or small, consider allowing employees to work from home, at least part of the time. You'll be amazed at how much more motivated your employees will be, and how much work you'll get from us! ♦

Andrea J. Weelans, CAE, is director of membership at the Colorado Society of CPAs. She is also chair of CSAE's communications committee and can be reached at 303-741-8612 or e-mail aweelans@cocpa.org

25 Creative Uses for the Back of Your Business Card

by *Tom Letourneau*

Behold the lowly business card. It gets no respect. It gets crushed in a bill-fold or tucked away in the bottom of a purse only to be hauled out and used as a piece of notepaper. Or worse yet, as a toothpick. It deserves much better.

The business card is one of the cheapest forms of advertising we have and because of its low cost, we squander its effectiveness like ashes in the wind.

This article will give you some great ideas to give your business card an "ooh, wow" factor that will make the recipient remember you.

The back of your card is a valuable piece of blank space that should be used. Just think, you can double the effectiveness of your card by simply printing a valuable tidbit on the back. Here are some ideas:

1. Your business philosophy
2. A list (or partial list) of your services
3. Directions to your office or place of business
4. A reusable coupon
5. An affirmation or favorite saying
6. Three benefits of doing business with you

7. Your picture or caricature
8. A short quiz about your business or industry
9. A mini-notepad with lines to make notes when your client isn't available
10. A short joke
11. A recipe
12. A calendar of events
13. Community emergency telephone numbers
14. Tips on how your products or services can save money or make money
15. A list of fashion colors that go together
16. A list of common cooking weights and measures
17. A sports calendar
18. Your rates
19. A partial list of your best clients
20. Third party testimonials

21. A tipping chart
22. Care and cleaning instructions for your products
23. Trivia about your business or industry
24. Your guarantee
25. Five things people should know about your products and services

Have fun with this and let me know what you come up with. If you do, I'll send you one of my Shirt Pocket Seminar books for your idea. ♦

Tom Letourneau coaches people on how to generate creative ideas that increase sales and profits. He can be reached at TomSpeaks@aol.com or 303-680-7405.

Tech Tip: Autosave to Prevent Loss

Quick tips to improve your day-to-day work and increase the efficiency of your organization. E-mail your tips to Tim Blum at timblum@rmel.org.

So, your computer crashed and you lost the word document you've been typing for the last hour. You save your document regularly, right? No? Here's a tip for Microsoft Word users that allows you to automatically save and recover your files to avoid losing your data.

1. On the *Tools* menu, click *Options*, and then click the *Save* tab.
2. Select the *Save AutoRecover info every ___ minutes* check box (must be checked before the problem occurs).
3. In the *minutes* box, enter how often you want Word to save documents. The more frequently Word saves, the more information is recovered if there is a power failure or similar problem while a document is open.

To Recover a Document

1. Restart Microsoft Word (do this by opening the application directly through the Start menu, not by opening the file you were working on).
2. All documents that

were open at the time of the power failure or similar problem appear for you. Only changes you made after the last *AutoRecover save* are lost.

3. Save the recovered document as a new file or over your original file.

You can specify the location for automatically recovered files as well.

1. On the *Tools* menu, click *Options*, and then the *File Locations* tab.
2. In the *File types* box, click *AutoRecover* files.
3. Click *Modify*.
4. If you want to store automatically recovered files in a different folder, locate and open the folder.

Two items of note:

AutoRecover is not a replacement for regularly saving your documents. If you don't save the recovered file after Word opens it, the file is deleted and your changes are lost.

If Word didn't open your recovered file automatically, the default location for storing recovered files is usually in the Windows\Application Data\Microsoft\Word folder. ♦

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Bonus Tech Tips: Take Advantage of Office

(a.k.a. What your mother didn't teach you about Microsoft Office)

by Andy Tabisz, CEO, 1st Priority Software, Inc.

Microsoft Office has been around a long time. It's packed with almost too many features that it's hard to distinguish what actually may work best for you. This article touches on three of the lesser-known features that you can take advantage of...today. *FYI: Features here are found in Office 2000 or Office XP.*

Word

Track Changes: When you've got two or more people that need to review a document, make corrections or get opinions, the *Track Changes* feature does the trick. Here's how it works. After you've written a letter or article, click *Tools – Track Changes – Highlight Changes*. When you (or another user) make additional changes to the document, the changes will appear with additional editing marks (and in color). For example...

Before: Mark Norton's speech went remarkably well.
With changes: ~~Mark~~Mr. Norton's speech ~~went~~ was a great success.~~remarkably well.~~

If the first person wants to accept the changes, she would just click *Tools – Accept or Reject Changes – Accept All*. You'll then see the line:
After accepting changes: Mr. Norton's speech was a great success.

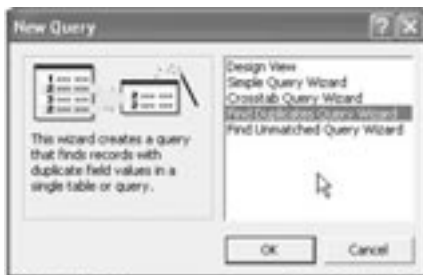
With the *Accept/Reject* feature, you can select all changes, or, you can pick and choose which changes you want to keep. This makes it very useful.

Access

First off, MS Access is a database system that allows you to keep thousands of data records, create flexible forms to display and edit the information, and print the information in many ways. It comes with Office Professional & Premium, *not* Office Standard, but it's a popular part of Office.

Find Duplicates: When you're dealing with lots of data, like a list of all the individuals your association keeps track of, you'll occasionally get some duplicate records. To fix those, just go to your database query window and click *New, Duplicates Query*.

This will allow you to select the table you want to use (to search for data), and choose the field(s) to search



on. Two that are often checked are Social Security

Number or First and Last Names (although you have to watch out for the Jr.'s and Sr.'s).

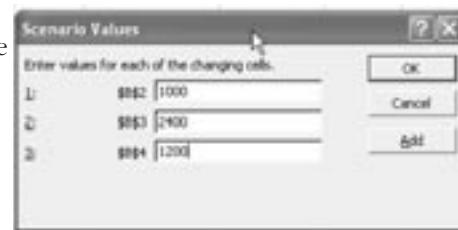
Clean up that information, and you'll avoid the cost of sending those extra mailings!

Excel

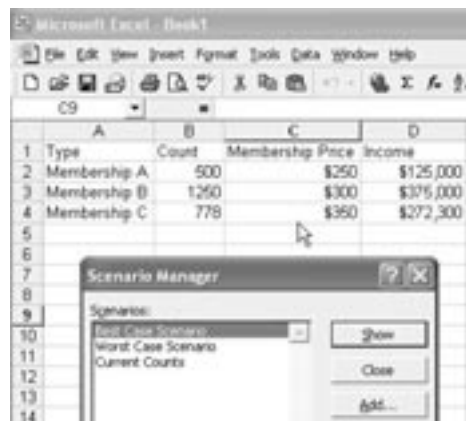
Scenarios: This is a great "What if..." tool. Let's say you're working on counts of the different membership types for the board. You currently have 500 members in Membership type A, 1,250 in Membership type B and 778 in Membership type C.

But times, they are-a-changing. You're planning a major marketing push and think you'll be adding 12 percent of members in group A, 5 percent in group B and probably lose 3 percent in group C. What if you want to see how that will affect your bottom line? Scenarios is your answer.

After entering your basic data into the spreadsheet, click *Tools – Scenarios...* Then, click *Add*. Enter a name (i.e. Current Counts, Worst Case Scenario, Best Case Scenario). Select the cells you want to change and click *OK*. The following screen appears:



To enter the field data (1000 members, 2400 members, 1200 members, etc). Choose OK, and you'll now be able to move back and



forth between the different scenarios.

Select the scenario, choose *Show*, and that data will display. It's an easy way to compare what different outcomes could be, as circumstances change.

Many more features may be found at our Web site, www.membrois.com, or Microsoft's Office site, www.microsoft.com/office. ♦

Andy Tabisz is CEO of First Priority Software, Inc. and can be reached at www.membrois.com.

The Universal Serial Bus...

by Todd Berggren

The computing world is exploding with Universal Serial Bus (USB) devices. USB was developed as a replacement for serial and parallel port connections, and has gained acceptance as a robust protocol for a variety of applications including mice, keyboards, joysticks, memory devices, etc.

Desktop and laptop systems are flooded with USB devices that come ready to use right out of the box. PC and Mac boxes make USB hookup even easier by bringing the USB connector to the front of the machine (what a novel idea). Newer operating systems identify the USB device and many times load the driver without user intervention. Power is often supplied to the device over the USB cable and USB is hot swappable (no more power downs just to install a device). Finally, one USB controller can support up to 127 devices (although this is not recommended).

There is more good news! The USB 2.0 specification was released in 2000 and supports a bus speed 40 times faster than USB 1.x, this is great for those needing to transfer data (i.e. video) over USB.

Making Life Easier

As association managers, we are trying to catch up with life in the fast lane. Here are a few USB devices that can make life easier:

- ◆ This is a cool little gadget...that won't break the bank. The **"FlyLight USB Notebook Light,"** is great on the plane and during a presentation. I bought one online for \$12 and they are also available at local retailers. There is also a **"FlyFan"** available
- ◆ to cool you off during those heated meetings.
- ◆ The **DYMO LabelWriter** is a lifesaver for printing badges onsite. We bring a couple to all of our smaller meetings. For a quick badge, these work great. We print on clear stick labels and affix them to
- our badge stock. Looks very professional. Available online for around \$130 (www.dymo.com). ◆

Todd Berggren is director of information technology at The Geological Society of America. He can be reached at 303-357-1081 or tberggren@geosociety.org.

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Chapter Series: What Local Chapters Can (and Can't) Do for Your Association

by Mark Grace, American Waterworks Association

The other day, my daughter again asked me what it is that I do. Well what I do is manage a chapter relations department for an international association. Here are excerpts from my response:

"I work with the chapters of our association. The Association is an organization that supports professionals who work to provide safe drinking water. Our chapters are kind of like little versions of the association, except they don't do all the things we do and they do some we don't. Think of McDonald's [fatally flawed comparison by the way]. They have local stores and a big headquarters somewhere. Chapters are a little like the local stores."

Okay, I got into trouble somewhere in there and she lost interest and as a result, I was saved. When I started working with chapters seven years ago, my understanding of chapters was not much more sophisticated than my daughter's is today. But my knowledge has grown significantly, and now I plan to share that understanding with you in a series of articles.

What Are Chapters?

So let's start with what chapters are and what they do, and I promise no comparison to any franchise. I like to think of chapters (sometimes called member associations, sections, etc.) as local

branches of your association. What local means here is up to the association. The association I work for has state (or multi-state) chapters, but you could just as easily have them based on cities, counties, or any geographical designation, provided there is the critical mass needed to sustain a chapter and the duties you assign to it.

These branches help you have a local presence and give you direct contact with your members. They also give you the opportunity to provide services that would be impractical without them. For example, the association I work for does not do much certification-related training because the requirements for certification vary greatly by state. Instead, we leave much of that work to our chapters.

Chapters are able to work on the local level to make the training pertinent to the local conditions and our members still get the benefit through the association! What benefits having chapters offers your association will depend greatly on the type of work you do and what your members want from your association.

Advantages/Disadvantages

- ◆ Local presence that is adaptable to local conditions (at least to some extent)
- ◆ Direct contact with members (in particular those members that can't or

won't travel to you)

- ◆ The opportunity to provide services customized to fit local conditions or local demand
- ◆ The opportunity for local participation in the organization and a proving/training ground for your future association leaders

They can also create problems for you. Here are a few of the potential disadvantages:

- ◆ They require care and some management. You cannot just create chapters and leave them to fend for themselves. They will require guidance and some training at the very least.
- ◆ They speak for you or think they do. This is good as long as the message is one you support. Remember that the member thinks you are all one happy organization.
- ◆ They can draw you into litigation. No matter how well intentioned the chapter leaders are, they are volunteers who come with limited expertise. Remember the first bullet above? The less you support them, the more you expose yourself. Even if you formulate the organization so that you have limited legal liability for what they do, they still share your name or are otherwise associated with you in the minds of the

members and maybe the public.

- ◆ They may disagree with a decision the board has made, a new program being implemented, or even the direction you want to take the organization over the long term and may fight you over the disagreement.
- ◆ They can turn out to be competition for you for the member's or customer's dollars.

Good Business Sense?

Okay, that should be enough to get you thinking. Although the disadvantages are considerable, I think that chapters make good business sense for many associations. Many of the pitfalls can be successfully addressed by anticipating them and addressing them as you develop (or redevelop) your chapter structure.

I will cover chapter structures, legal considerations, and some real experiences before I am done. And, if you have suggestions for help with my dilemma with my daughter, feel free to pass them on. Though soon that will be the least of my worries where she is concerned—she is eleven! ◆

Mark L. Grace is manager of Section Services at American Water Works Association. He can be reached at 303-347-6193 or e-mail mgrace@awwa.org.

Shoveling Snow Safely

By Vineta Campau, Communications Director, Colorado Chiropractic Association

With our heaviest snow months still ahead of us, we need to prepare for the back-breaking work of shoveling. Many back and neck injuries occur in the winter as a result of shoveling snow. Experts in Colorado agree that with just a few simple suggestions, you can protect your back and neck from potentially painful injuries.

Watch Your Back!

Don't overexert yourself while shoveling your driveway and sidewalk. Be sure to take frequent breaks.

Follow safe lifting and bending guidelines when you

shovel snow to protect against back and neck injuries. Bend with your knees, not your back! To pick up a shovel from the ground or lift a heavy slab of ice, bend at the knees, grasp the object with both hands and lift with your legs slowly and carefully. Always be sure of your footing on ice and in bumpy snow before you shovel or lift.

When using your snow shovel, grasp the tool so that you work with your elbows slightly bent. Try not to bend over too much while working. Work with your arms and legs, not your back.

Throw the snow forward with your arms, not from

side to side. Consider using an ergonomically designed snow shovel, investing in a snow blower, or hiring someone to shovel snow for you!

If You Hurt Your Back...

Even after you've read all these suggestions and done your best to follow them, you may still suffer a back problem or injury. Your chiropractor can help you get your back on track! Don't delay seeing your chiropractor when problems arise. The sooner you go, the sooner your back and spine will be

healthy and normal again. The U.S. Department of Health, through the Agency of Health Care Policy and Research, recommends manipulation for treatment of a low back injury. In addition to manipulation and spinal adjustment, your chiropractor may recommend other types of treatment for strengthening your back and relieving tension and pain. These additional treatments may include personalized stretching and strengthening exercises, moist heat, ice packs, electrotherapy, ultrasound, or traction. ♦

What You Should Know About Snow

Average inches of annual snowfall for a few Colorado cities:

- ♦ Grand Junction 24.2
- ♦ Alamosa 33.7
- ♦ Denver 60.3
- ♦ Colorado Springs 42.7

Each year an average of 105 snow-producing storms affect the continental United States. A typical storm will have a snow-producing lifetime of two to five days and will bring snow to portions of several states.

In the western U.S., mountain snow pack contributes to up to 75 percent of all year-round surface water supplies.

42 million square miles of the earth's surface is covered by a constant blanket of snow.

For more on snow and winter in Colorado, visit www.NSIDC.colorado.edu.

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Here's the CAE question of the month...

For most not-for-profit organizations, a change in the composition of the board's executive committee should be preceded by a change in which of the following documents?

- A. Articles of incorporation
- B. Bylaws
- C. Association procedures manual
- D. Board policy guidelines

Answer at bottom.

Interested in finding out more about the CAE certification? Call ASAE at 202-626-2772.

Correct answer is B.

CSAE Member Profile: Nancy Snyder, Colorado Business Bank

by Mo Goldman, ConferenceDirect

Nancy Snyder is a familiar face around CSAE. For the past 6 1/2 years, she's been a regular at monthly luncheon meetings and annual conferences. She's spent three years on the Membership Committee and for the past two years has been an active member of the Finance Committee.

Since 1996, Nancy has held the title of vice president of commercial banking at the Colorado Business Bank in downtown Denver. She attributes her success to "developing and maintaining solid customer relationships to ensure that the client feels they have a business partner that is interested and attentive to their needs."

Born and raised in metropolitan Denver, she is a graduate of Aurora Central High School and earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Colorado State University in Fort Collins. In 1993 she went back to school and attended Colorado University's Graduate School of Banking, graduating with honors.

For fun, Nancy studies Jin Shin Jyutsu, a Japanese form of acupressure. Strength training is also a favorite hobby of hers. For relaxation she likes to "bury my nose in a good novel." Nancy is active with the Denver Lions Club, sits on the Membership Committee of CANPO, is treasurer for Providers

Resource Clearing House, a non-profit agency, and volunteers as secretary/treasurer of her Home Owners Association. Whew!

I asked Nancy what she would like to be doing in ten years and she responded, "I envision myself still as a banker, with a nonprofit specialty. Another alternative would entail me making the transition in the nonprofit world, either in the role of a volunteer or a staff position." Whatever she does, no doubt she will be successful! If you want to discuss your association's financial future call Nancy at 303-312-3411 or e-mail her at nsnyder@cobizbank.com. ♦

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February... Education

Legal Issues Affecting Colorado Associations

Presented by William E. Walters, III, Walters & Joyce, PC

This fast-paced program will at a minimum cover the following key issues: liability associated with certification programs; changes in federal and state elections (Section 527 Relief and Amendment 27), FTC Developments (telemarketing fraud rules), IRS Sponsorship Guidelines, E-commerce issues (E-signature act, website contracting, listserv liability, and filings with the Secretary of State).

Luncheon

Say What? How to Create Buzz for Your Business

Presented by Sheila Stewart, Marketing Solutions & Results

What is the "buzz" factor? Why does your organization need it? What can it do for your organization?

We will discover the answers to these questions and discuss why organizations should build a marketing plan around publicity; 10 things the media hates and 10 things the media loves; and 5 attention getting ways to promote an organization. This session will be packed full of great ideas to start spreading the "buzz" factor.

Cancellation deadline: 2/4/03

All unfiled reservations will be billed \$35

February Education & Luncheon

- When:** February 7, 2003
Where: Denver Marriott West, Golden
Directions: Take I-70 west to the Denver West Office Park exit. Turn Right.
Time: 8:00 a.m.—Check-In
 8:30 a.m.—Seminar
 11:00 a.m.—Orientation
 11:30 a.m.—Networking
 12:00 noon—Lunch
 12:30 p.m.—Program
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Luncheon Program
 \$30 Pre-registered CSAE Member
 \$35 Member walk in
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CSAE Registration Form

February

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Yes, I am attending for the first time. I am attending as a CSAE Member Guest

Attending new member orientation Yes No **Alternative Luncheon Plate** Fruit Plate Vegetable Plate

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Education & Membership Luncheon
Marriott Denver West

Wednesday, February 26, 2003

Meetings Industry Council Annual Educational Conference and Trade Show
Adams Mark Hotel, Denver

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Education/Membership Luncheon
Hyatt Regency Denver

Tuesday, March 25, 2003

Technology Solutions Conference
Denver Merchandise Mart

Friday, April 4, 2003

Education/Membership Luncheon
Wyndham Hotel Denver Tech Center

May 1, 2003

Membership Luncheon
Marriott Denver South, Denver

June 6, 2003

Membership Luncheon
Maggianno's Little Italy, Denver

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