



Technology to Look for at the June MCTA and MAAO Conferences

It is always the right time to examine your technology options, and you will have a prime opportunity to do so at the MCTA and MAAO conferences in a few weeks. As Point Software is not only a technology provider but a user as well, we know talking with the vendors and dealing with the barrage of information they give can be daunting. On the other hand, we believe your show experience can be enriched by gaining a sense of the up-and-coming technologies that are transforming government.

You should also investigate the level of integration offered. Specialized expertise is needed to blend solutions and extend them to the myriad of choices that are currently available, a requirement in today's marketplace.

Point Software has been keeping a watch on which technologies show promise and recommends doing some discovery on the following technology trends.

Remote Deposit Capture

When Check 21 went into effect in October 2004, we immediately saw its advantages and proceeded to build supporting technology into then one-year-old CheckCache™, Point's check payment processing solution. Check 21 offered an electronic check clearing protocol without the limita-

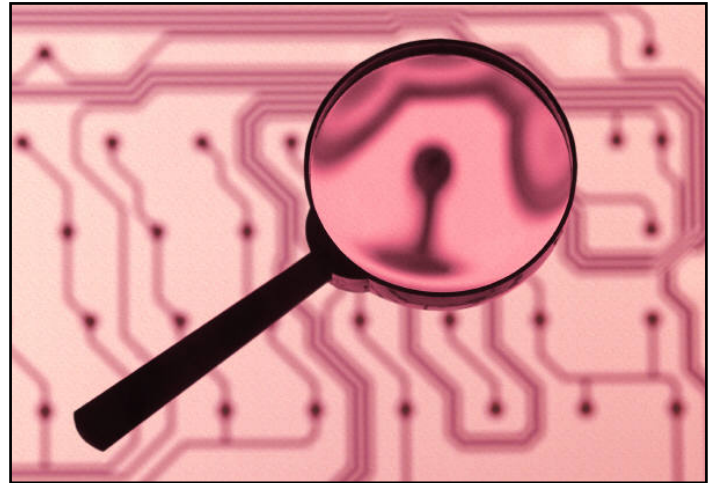
tions of MICR capture and ARC that prevented those older methods from fully entering the mainstream.

It took some time for the banking industry to catch up, though. It was not until the rules of banking changed in 2006 that Check 21 became a practical solution. The integration of Check 21 technology by financial institutions suddenly went from 0 to 60 and continues to gather speed.

The check conversion applications they offer answer the banking part of the equation of delivering Check 21 capabilities to municipal government. However, we advocate looking for a complete solution capable of updating both your bank account and your tax billing information, such as Check-Cache.

Off Site Data Hosting

Traditionally, the storage of municipal data was handled by and at the municipality itself. This practice finds itself challenged, however, as technology evolves more and more rapidly and secure, reliable Internet connectivity becomes increasingly attainable. You find yourself asking if it still makes sense to invest in what are now essentially disposable computer systems, as well as the backup equipment critical to keeping your office up and running. Perhaps it is time for an alternative: off site data



hosting that provides you with 24/7/365 access.

PDF Report Generation

Reports will always play a major role in municipal government, but the way they are shared and delivered is changing dramatically. With the ability to generate reports straight to Portable Document Format (PDF) via a compliant report tool like ReportNET™, you can provide instant access to your reports via e-mail and your website.

PDF is also ideal for digital archiving as this worldwide business staple will be around indefinitely. Adobe Systems, the inventor of the format, began work this January to gain ISO approval for PDF as a formal open standard.

Document Management

We engineered Document Link™ in 2005 with the

knowledge that document management is not merely an amenity to municipal government; it is a necessity. You face a flood of demands for information on a daily basis – from taxpayers, from other departments and from your own workflow. The only effective tactic is to retain your documents in a searchable, centralized system.

Beyond file storage, you should give thought as to what else you need in a document management system. Connectivity with existing applications, a browser-based design, mobile computing options, and dynamic form creation can all be valuable benefits.

We invite you to talk to us about any of the emerging technologies discussed in this article. Stop by the Point Software booth at the MCTA or MAAO conference or give us a call at 1.800.368.9538.



Calendar of Events

Date(s)	Event	Location
June 4-8	CAAO 64 th Annual School	University of Connecticut Storrs, CT
June 10-13	MCTA Conference <i>Come see us at Booth 4!</i>	Sea Crest Resort Old Silver Beach on Cape Cod 350 Quaker Road North Falmouth, MA
June 19-22	MAAO Summer Conference	Red Jacket Beach Resort 1 South Shore Drive South Yarmouth, MA

Entering Ownership Information for Recommitments

Point Software’s customer service department would like to remind our collection system users of a few formatting rules for entering the ownership information when working on recommitments:

- Put the last name first and the first name last.
- Do not use commas or periods. (Hyphens are acceptable.)
- As with all entries in the collection system, use all capital letters.

Be Prepared for the Challenges of Tax Billing

June is a busy month for quarterly towns, but it doesn’t have to be a stressful one as long as you enter it prepared for the challenges of tax billing. Make sure you allot plenty of time for dealing with common issues that cause delays, such as balancing problems. Remember that the due date for Point to receive your data conversion package is **June 20, 2007** and keep in mind that the earlier it arrives in our offices, the better off you will be. Also, verify that you have all necessary supplies on hand for when we return your data. Turnaround is 5 business days or less from the time your complete package arrives, barring problems with the files or totals.

Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers 52nd Annual School

Location

University of Massachusetts
Campus Center
Amherst, MA 01003

School Dates

August 5-10, 2007

Registration Deadline

July 20, 2007

Registration Form/School Program Available At:

<https://www.aux.umass.edu/forms/conferenceservices/assessors/index.htm>

IAAO Curriculum Offered at the MAAO Annual School

In addition to its own curriculum, MAAO is offering the following IAAO training sessions at the 52nd Annual School:

- IAAO Course 201: Appraisal of Land
- IAAO Workshop 451: Planning an In-House Revaluation
- IAAO Forum 911: Valuation of Contaminated Property

Tech Tips

You’re using Microsoft Excel to prepare data for a meeting or report. You print off a copy to review, only to discover that the columns spill onto another page – making it hard to line up the right data with the right record.

So how do you fix your spreadsheet so that the columns fit on one page? Here are a few tips you can try.

- Make use of the Print Preview feature, available from the File menu. Rather than run off copy after copy, you can use this feature to see if your tweaks have succeeded in getting the columns to fit.
- Go into Page Setup (also available from the File menu) and change the page orientation from “Portrait” to “Landscape.”
- Use a larger paper size (e.g. legal size) if your printer will allow it. You select the paper size through Page Setup.
- Play around with the font size. To change the font size of the text in the selected cell(s), select **Cells** from the Format menu, click on the **Font** tab, then select the size and click **OK**.
- Use the column autosizing feature. Notice that each column is assigned a letter, visible in the light gray bar at the top of the spreadsheet. Double-click on the dark gray line to the right of the column letter and the column will resize to fit the text in that column.
- Consider displaying the data on multiple worksheets by breaking it up into groups. If you right click on the worksheet tab at the bottom of the spreadsheet, you have the option of creating a copy. You can then go into each worksheet and delete the columns that don’t belong with that group. Rename the tab to reflect the group’s name.