



Win Over Your Citizens with an Award Quality Municipal Web Site

You have all heard about the importance of providing a web site to inform your citizens, but what makes a municipal web site truly great? What characteristics must it possess to make residents and businesses visit it, return to it, and find value in it?

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) dedicated a recent issue of its *Municipal Advocate* magazine to that very topic. In Volume 24, Number 2, an article on the makings of an award-winning municipal web site states “If the site doesn’t allow people to meaningfully interact and transact with government, it is little more than an electronic bulletin board. Great Web sites provide functionality that supports easy-to-use, end-to-end transactions between citizens, businesses and governments.”

Certainly, the article goes into other features that make a municipal web site useful to its visitors. Certainly, they all contribute to the site’s benefit to the public. But *interactivity* is the quality cited first and foremost.

Most sites we reviewed presented virtually all static content, including the use of common forms presented as flat PDF documents. While these sites are okay for some, this same information can be retooled to create a fully interactive experience by replacing those flat forms with our DocumentLink™ technology.

By design, DocumentLink™ is affordable, easy to implement and maintain, and robust in its functionality. Moreover, it is not a replacement technology but rather an extension technology. This means that existing websites are enhanced by this technology to create the missing interactive elements.

Interactive Documents

At its foundation, DocumentLink™ is a browser-based, web-ready centralized document management application designed for both internal and public use. Municipal documents can be converted into the universally accepted Portable Document Format (PDF) whether they are property record cards generated by ReportNET™ or building permits issued from within the DocumentLink™ system. A myriad of other file types can be added to the archive as well, including text files, photos and video clips – any format configured for your system. These documents then become part of a parcel-based information set that can be readily referenced using simple searching and/or indexed references.

Workflow Management

The workflow components of DocumentLink™ take applications and other requests submitted online through user-defined review and approval processes by routing them to the appropriate municipal personnel every step of the way.



All tasks from submission to filing are handled electronically, including on-line form payments, signature capture, alerts, notifications and event triggers.

Knowledge Mapping

When combined with a GIS system, DocumentLink™ furnishes your municipality with the power to engage in knowledge mapping. This function pulls data from document selections and overlays it onto a geographic map to show resources, demographics and trends. The result is that municipal officials can make informed, foresightful decisions using visual comparisons of data presented as a mapping layer.

While knowledge mapping is a tool for government use, it is made possible in large part due to the participation of the pub-

lic. Every document in the centralized document database contributes to your town’s repository of knowledge. The applications submitted online, along with all the documentation they trigger, enrich the knowledge repository. The quality and quantity of knowledge maps that can be rendered are thereby increased. This would not be possible without the interactivity DocumentLink™ adds to your municipal web site.

With DocumentLink™ technology seamlessly blended into your town’s web site, you can serve your citizens in a truly award quality manner. After all, they are the real judges.

To learn more about DocumentLink™ or to schedule a demonstration, contact Scott Choiniere at 1.800.368.9538



Calendar of Events

Date(s)	Event	Location
Aug. 3-8	MAAO 53 rd Annual School	University of Massachusetts Campus Center Amherst, MA
Aug. 12-15	MCTA 38 th Annual School	University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA
Sep. 3-Oct. 6 <i>Mons. & Weds.</i>	CCMA Course 1A: Assessment Administration	Prospect Fire House 26 New Haven Road Prospect, CT
Sep. 15-Oct. 20 <i>Mons. & Weds.</i>	CCMA Course 1B: Assessment Valuation	Dept. of Police Services 314 Lambert Road Orange, CT
Sep. 23	CAAO Annual Fall Symposium	Hawthorne Inn 2421 Berlin Turnpike Berlin, CT
Sep. 29-Oct. 3	IAAO Course 102: Income Approach to Valuation <i>Sponsored by the Connecticut Chapter of IAAO</i>	Rocky Hill Fire HQ 3050 Main Street Rocky Hill, CT

A Case Study in Point's Lockbox Posting Services

About five months ago, Maureen Dwinell of Hopkinton, Massachusetts faced a challenge shared by many of her fellow treasurer/collectors: how to continue operating at the same capacity while staying at current funding levels. She knew to do this she needed to eliminate portions of her office's workload, so she began exploring alternative ways to get the job done.

Maureen opened a dialog with Point Software and presented a few different scenarios to make this happen. After some discussion, it was determined that the best solution was for Hopkinton to contract Point to provide Service Bureau printing services combined with a newly conceived service for lockbox posting. With Point already serving as Hopkinton's deputy collector, those changes effectively eliminated all third party dependencies for billing management.

Appointing Point to render its lockbox posting service afforded the Town of Hopkinton a number of advantages. For starters, Hopkinton was free to

select the bank of its choice to do business with. On a related note, the removal of the bank dependency also improved turnaround time for deposits. With Point's service, there is no "second round processing." Hopkinton no longer had to wait for the bank's information, which in traditional lockbox is typically a day behind posting. In addition, Point eliminated the need for specialized OCR code by using its own scanning methods.

Employing Point's lockbox posting services has proven to be a successful venture for Hopkinton. By presenting Point with her challenges and ideas, Maureen was able to reduce the number of steps in a core process and thereby make her office run more efficiently. After satisfactorily testing the waters, Hopkinton has expanded its use of Point lockbox to include posting for real estate, personal property, motor vehicle and soon water/sewer.

To learn more about our lockbox posting services, please contact us.

Tech Tips

Has your desktop become overcrowded? Are you having trouble finding the things that you need on it? Is it long overdue for some reorganization, but you don't know where to begin?

No, the desktop in question is not the one where you rest your coffee mug. We're talking about your Windows desktop that you see every business day right after booting your computer. It's where you start your work – just as soon as you find the desired item in the Sea of Shortcuts swimming before you.

Here's how you can reduce desktop clutter in just a few steps.

STEP 1: Determine which items are used less frequently and group similar ones. You can use folders to manage your desktop items. To create a folder, right-click on the desktop, select **New** then select **Folder**. A blinking cursor will appear after "New Folder," allowing you to give the folder a good, recognizable name. (Press **Enter** when you are done entering the new name.)

You can now move the relevant shortcuts into the new folder. One way you can do this is to click and drag them there, one by one. You can also move them all together by holding down the Control (Ctrl) key, clicking on each relevant shortcut, releasing Ctrl and dragging the group over.

STEP 2: Consolidate the remaining desktop items. After you moved desktop items into folders, you were left with big gaping holes and scattered icons. Clean things up by right-clicking on the desktop, selecting **Arrange Icons By** then selecting **Auto Arrange**.

STEP 3: Make sure the essentials are there. While it is generally good to get items off the desktop, everyday items like My Computer and your e-mail program shouldn't be buried. You can drag and drop your top used programs and utilities from the Start menu to the desktop to create shortcuts.