



Point Software, Problem Solvers to Municipal Government

Throughout our history, we have been called upon to be problem solvers. And the reason people call us is because they know that we possess the commitment and ingenuity to solve nearly any municipal technology need they can present to us.

In fact, Point Software was founded on the problem solving ability of company president Jim Regan. When Maureen Dwinell became the town treasurer/collector for Hopkinton in 1989, she was faced with dysfunctional software and an unresponsive vendor. Knowing Jim from his work developing assessing applications, Maureen asked him if he could build a collection system if she provided the municipal expertise. Jim took on the challenge and Hopkinton had tax bills out within 90 days of her decision.

Since that time, Point has tackled and solved innumerable problems for the municipal sector. This article features a sampling of them.

Double Voucher Tax Bills

Postage represents a substantial expense for the municipal tax collector, so Point has received many requests over the years related to minimizing that cost. Some involved the incorporation of existing solutions like CASS certification, while others were

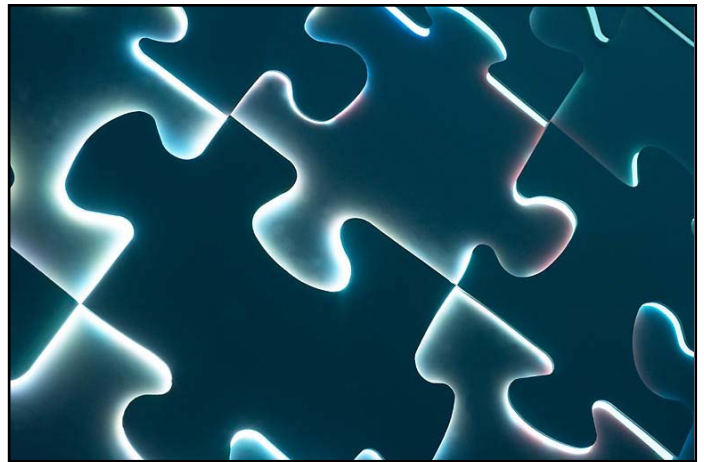
new concepts suggested by customers. Such was the case with double voucher tax bills, which place the third and fourth payment vouchers for real estate/personal property onto one bill. This combination necessitates a complex design, but Point was able to craft a solution that fully met the client's needs and saved a ton of money.

CPA Software

Oftentimes, extensions to our software come from changes to the legislation surrounding municipal taxation. December 2000 saw the passing of the Community Preservation Act (CPA), a local option that would prove a great benefit to the municipalities that adopted it – and a great headache to vendors trying to implement it in their software. The Point team developed an extension that enabled collectors to produce CPA-compliant tax files by mid-June 2001. We later introduced the CPA Reconciliation Report, which offers powerful capabilities to show overpaid, underpaid, distribution errors and adjustments.

Radio Read Map Support

With the introduction of new technologies comes the introduction of new challenges. Radio readers were set to revolutionize water consumption collection, pro-



vided the data collector had some way of knowing which meters had already had their radio signals picked up. By joining latitude and longitude coordinates to our public works software, we enabled the meter reading system to automatically map the readings with visual indicators.

Trash Billing Utility

North Reading approached us seeking the ability to produce bills for trash pickup. We had a dialog with them at length and, in three weeks time, were able to furnish them with a working solution complete with reporting, payoff inquiry and municipal lien inclusion.

Two years later, the town's treasurer/collector Maryann MacKay came up with the money-saving idea of combining the trash and real estate bills into a single form, which was implemented and

used for fiscal 2010.

EDU Calculations

With the extraordinary diversity of water/sewer billing approaches in practice, the DPW poses lots of challenges for our company. A particularly intriguing one was presented to us by the Town of Natick. They wanted to be able to bill water consumption based on equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), where each unit in a multi-unit account like a condo could be billed an equal portion of the water charges. To solve this Point constructed a living unit-based consumption method that made the EDU calculations possible.

Tax Title Bulk Sale Option

Hopkinton came to Point with an interesting alternative to maintain their tax title properties internally. Their concept was to sell off the

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Calendar of Events

Date(s)	Event	Location
Apr. 5-9	IAAO Course 311: Residential Modeling Concepts <i>Sponsored by the Mass. Chapter of the IAAO</i>	Chelmsford Police Station Public Meeting Room 2 Olde North Road Chelmsford, MA
Apr. 7	MAAO Spring Conference	Hogan Campus Center College of the Holy Cross 1 College Street Worcester, MA
Apr. 14	MCTA Spring Meeting	Pleasant Valley Country Club 95 Armsby Road Sutton, MA
May 13	CAAO Spring Meeting	Aqua Turf Club 556 Mulberry Street Southington, CT
May 14, 15, 21, 22 and 28	MAAO Course 200	Shrewsbury, MA
May 20	CTx Spring Meeting	Aqua Turf Club Wagon Room 556 Mulberry Street Southington, CT
May 23-26	NRAAO Annual Conference	Eastland Park Hotel 157 High Street Portland, ME
Jun. 7-11	CAAO Annual Assessors School	University of Connecticut Storrs, CT
Jun. 13-16	MCTA Conference	Cape Codder Resort & Spa 1225 Iyannough Road Route 132 & Bearse's Way Hyannis, MA
Jun. 22-25	MAAO Summer Conference	Red Jacket Beach Resort 1 South Shore Drive South Yarmouth, MA

Problem Solvers (continued from previous page)

receivables for the delinquent real estate accounts as one large sale. We went to work and amended our software to allow them to package the receivables, making it possible for Hopkinton to conduct the first bulk sale of tax title accounts in the commonwealth that we know of.

Tax Class Analysis Report for W/S

We just completed a new report for Ware's DPW that we're pretty excited about. Designed for state reporting, the tax class analysis report supplies the consumption and income per tax class

for both water and sewer in the selected billing date range. This report also is significant for planning purposes, as it makes the DPW aware of the amount of revenue coming in versus the amount of resources being used.

We've Got You Covered

Improvements to our software are covered by your ALRUS agreement. You don't get charge backs for software enhancements; you just get problem-solving technology backed by exceptional customer service.

Tech Tips

By viewing a water/sewer account's billing history, you can see all billing information for a water/sewer account from the date it was created. The history includes a complete list of bills issued for the account. For each bill listed, the history shows the billing cycle number, the reading date, the prior and current readings for that period, the water consumption, the billed amounts for water, sewer and fees, and the total billed amount.

The history also details individual bills. The bill detail screen for an individual bill provides additional billing information, such as discounts, services charges and the length of the billing period in days.

Use the procedure below to view a water/sewer account's billing history.

1. Access the water billing history. In MSM, this is done by selecting **WATER** / **SEWER COLLECTION** from the main menu then selecting **HISTORY**.
2. Indicate that you want to view account history.
3. Specify the account number. The account details for the selected account appear.
4. Indicate that you want to see the billing history details. The list of bills appears for the selected account.
5. Select a bill to see its bill detail screen.