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NALIT PDS To Be Held in Madison, Wisconsin

The 2012 NALIT Professional Development Seminar will be held in Madison, Wisconsin on October 9-12, 2012. The NALIT seminar agenda offers a mix of technical, policy and management sessions and provides opportunities to share solutions and discuss innovative uses of technology.

This year, however, six staff sections have joined together to meet at a joint seminar, creating the "*Super PDS 2012.*" The NCSL Staff Sections participating in *Super PDS 2012* in Madison are the Legal Services Staff Section, the Leadership Staff Section, the Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section, the National Legislative Services and Security Association, and the Research and Committee Staff Section.

All of the staff sections will get together for some plenary sessions and a reception at the capitol, but the agenda is still designed specifically for NALIT, with our pre-seminar training programs focusing on various of aspects of dealing with mobile devices in the legislature.

Joint plenary sessions for all six staff sections feature noted speakers and authors:

Wednesday Plenary: Decoding Body Language
Janine Driver is the New York Times Best Selling author of *You Say More Than You Think*, and president of the Body Language Institute, an elite certification program that offers advanced communications training.

Thursday Breakfast: Are You Hyper-Connected?
Lee Rainie is Director of the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project and co-author of *Networked: The New Social Operating System*.

Thursday Luncheon: Compromise and Negotiation in the Legislative Arena
Professor Ralph Cagle teaches negotiation and compromise skills at the University of Wisconsin Law School. He is a former key aide to legislative leaders in Wisconsin.

Please join us for the plenary sessions, training, tours and briefings at Wisconsin's Legislative Technology Service Bureau, roundtables and networking opportunities. Visit the NALIT Seminar home page or see the SuperPDS brochure online for more information.

Chamber Automation System
North Carolina

Peter Capriglione

The second half of the North Carolina General Assembly's 2011-2012 session saw the piloting of technology that has the potential to change the landscape and overall use of technology in the legislature for years to come.

First, in September of 2011, leadership asked us what it would take to implement a pilot for a chamber automation system. The purpose was twofold: to eliminate the use of paper on the floor, or greatly reduce it, thus decreasing the time required to distribute documents; and to eliminate the requirement for the printing of documents that were not scheduled to be heard that day.

After checking with vendors to see what they had to offer and to see if they could meet our six-month implementation requirement, we presented to the senate and house leadership our recommendation. Due to the time required for implementation, the required interaction with the clerks' staff for the development of the product, and the advantage of the internal IT staff's overall knowledge of the North Carolina legislative process, we proposed that we do in-house development. Leadership accepted our proposal and our staff began the project with a six-month development plan and an implementation target for our May short session. The project was successful, and the completed product offered much more than the original request entailed.

The application was developed to run on tablets as well as Windows laptops, which added to the complexity of the development process. The chamber automation system provided for a member dashboard segment and a clerk staff's (front desk and back office) segment. In addition, as a complement to the electronic co-sponsoring application first introduced in the 2007 session, an electronic bill filing feature was added to help streamline the work done in the clerks' offices.

In addition, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology did a tablet pilot project using iPads and Motorola XYboard devices. Again, the intent was to determine the practicality of the devices in the legislative environment and to determine if the devices could help to decrease the need for paper. The members of the committee also used the tablets on the floor for access to the chamber automation system. As we enter the interim period, we will continue with the committee pilot and prepare a report with our findings about the use of the devices in committee and the chambers.

As with any software implementation, there were training hurdles to overcome, processes not thought of in the initial design to address, and the challenges of eliminating a paper copy to have in hand during the debate of legislation. However, we have decided to move forward with strengthening the foundation of the application and including some of the other features desired by leadership.

Additionally, the other sections in our division were busy doing their daily support tasks (including aiding us in getting the applications live and supported), as well as planning for their own interim projects.

This article does not do justice to describing the chamber automation application's design and implementation. Nor does it begin to address all the issues involved in the committee pilot project. I will be at the Legislative Summit, and more importantly, our lead developer, Seth McFarland, will attend the Super PDS in Madison. If you would like to get in touch with either of us to get into some of the details of these pilots or our future projects, please let us know.

I look forward to seeing all who plan to attend the Summit and/or the Super PDS.

Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
Rhode Island

Phillip Carlucci

The General Assembly in Rhode Island is in recess right now. But that doesn't mean that there is nothing going on in the chambers. During this break, the IT staff has partnered with Versatile Communications to swap out the outdated personal computers at each of the legislator's desks with new Hewlett-Packard thin clients. These small, energy-efficient devices are the next generation in personal computing for an office environment. Rather than each system running its own applications, they are all connected to one main server that creates a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) for them to operate in. Not only are these devices cost effective compared to their stand-alone counterparts, they allow the support staff the ability to perform centralized software updates, patches, and fixes. Mark Johnsen, the Project Manager for this implementation, sees it as a big step forward. "In addition to the hardware savings, the support costs are dramatically reduced, we can offer more efficient support, and we're focusing on our commitment to 'go green' by the energy savings we'll enjoy."

Is this where it ends? Phil Carlucci, IT Director for Legislative Services, responds with an enthusiastic "no way." "This is our first step into the virtual desktop world. But from what we've seen so far, this will be an ongoing opportunity for us. Our vision is to eventually replace hundreds of other desktops here at the Statehouse as they reach end-of-life. The further we grow this environment, the greater the return on our initial investment. To say we're excited is an understatement."

This, along with other projects such as the re-write of the website utilizing Microsoft SharePoint, a growing active presence in social media venues, and the development of some mobile apps, are all part of Speaker of the House Gordon D. Fox and President of the Senate M. Teresa Paiva Weed's ongoing commitment to improving communications and increasing transparency.

Employee Development - Hawaii Senate

Jon Shimabuku

Have you ever wanted to practice yoga? Learn CPR? Learn how to box from a world champion? Come work for the Hawaii Senate. Over the years, the Senate's interim employee development program has blossomed into a great resource. From May through December, we offer numerous classes that are open to all Senate employees. Many of the classes are taught by Senate staff, so there is no cost associated with those. For the classes in which an instructor is brought in, the costs are minimal if any, and for some of those classes (such as the yoga class), employees pay out of their own pocket.

In addition to the above-mentioned classes, we typically offer a half a dozen classes annually dealing with such IT topics as "Using Adobe LiveCycle to create Online Surveys," "Windows Movie Maker," "Creating Flyers and Newsletters in Publisher," and "Using Rules and Alerts in Outlook." These classes are very popular among staff, and they offer a free opportunity for personal growth that makes people more valuable in their current job.

One particularly popular class, "Computer Tips and Tricks," is offered annually with a new batch of tips each year. Topics include, "The secret 'No To All' option when dragging files from one folder to another," "Printing specific pages after doing a mail merge in Word," and "How to get a directory listing of a folder structure." Each class includes anywhere from ten to twenty tips and tricks for Word, Excel, Outlook, Windows, and other programs; enough to fill a one hour hands-on class. This year will mark its fourth anniversary and it is as highly attended as ever.

Not all of the topics are strictly for work. There was a course called "Computer Security Basics" in which the material was a mixture of work-related information ("What to do when the website you're trying to get to is blocked by the firewall"), home related information ("How to secure your Internet connection with a home router"), as well as information that is useful anywhere ("Having your computer save your passwords is a very bad idea").

Most of the classes are hands-on, but occasionally a class will be better as a demo-only class, such as the "Computer Security Basics" class. Hands-on is a much better way to learn for most people, and it adds a fun dimension as students get lost and try to follow your directions. Keeping the class interactive also helps people pay attention, so they learn and retain more.

The program keeps us very visible during the interim. Let's face it, most IT staff rooms are in the basement. Getting out there gives us positive exposure and helps build good relationships with legislators and staff. Plus, the classes are a lot of fun to teach and it's always nice to share what you know with others and be appreciated.

Legislative Mobile Website - Oregon

Shancy Saban

Oregon's Legislative Assembly has made getting to the legislative mobile website a little easier. People who go to the legislative website with a smart phone will now be automatically redirected to the legislative mobile website saving users the time and effort of navigating there manually. This type of website redirect for smart devices has become an industry standard and an expectation for a lot of people. For those who wish to use the desktop version of the legislative website, a button allowing easy access to the main site has been added.

Increasingly, smart devices are being used by people interacting with legislators and the legislative process to access information found on the legislative website. The Oregon Legislature's mobile website allows quick and easy access to important information already available on the full legislative website in a format that's tailored to fit the smaller screens used by these smart devices. The mobile website increases efficiency for those engaging in legislative business while on the go.

Information available on the Oregon Legislature's mobile website includes:

- Contact information for legislators
- Committee agendas and meeting times
- Session at a glance information (during session)
- Measure and statutes search capability
- Glossary of terms and information about the legislative process.

To access the Oregon legislative mobile website, simply navigate on your smart device to: http://www.oregonlegislature.gov.

NALIT at the NCSL Legislative Summit

NALIT members will meet at the NCSL Legislative Summit in Chicago on August 6-12 for a full agenda of sessions on open government initiatives, cloud computing, social media safety, iPads, BYOD and more.

The Annual NALIT Business Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 8 at 8 am. Members will elect new officers for the association, recognize winners of the Legislative Staff Achievement Award and the LINCS/NALIT Online Democracy Award. The membership also will vote on proposed By-Laws changes.

The proposed By-Laws changes would move the Annual Business meeting, now held in conjunction with the NCSL Legislative Summit, to the fall Professional Development Seminar. Other changes are for consistency and clarity. The proposed changes can be viewed on the NALIT web page.

A New Microsoft Office, a New Microsoft Office Division

Summary: A look at the road that led to the choices Microsoft made with the coming version of its Office software and services.

By Mary Jo Foley for All About Microsoft | July 16, 2012

What were they thinking?

With the coming version of Microsoft Office, codenamed Office 15, Microsoft is taking a cloud-first approach. This choice didn't just come out of nowhere. (And surprising to many, the germ of this cloud-centric thinking wasn't planted some time after Google launched Google Apps around 2006.)
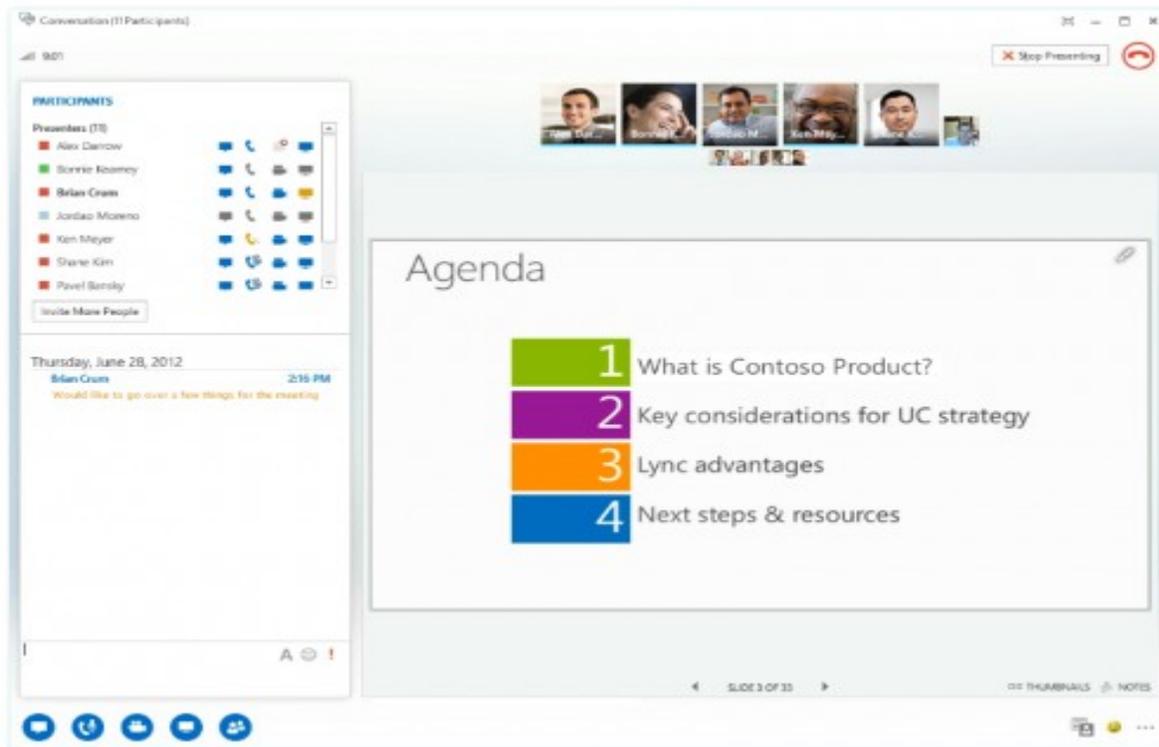
(The new Lync screen coming with the Office 15 wave, courtesy of Microsoft.)

The beginnings of Microsoft's push into online services in the Office division dates back to 2003/2004 , when the unit began investing in hosted services, including hosted messaging and conferencing. Post 2009, Microsoft changed its Office structure so that the Office and Office 365 development teams could work in tandem. Rather than develop Office client and Office server (SharePoint, Exchange and Lync) apps and throw them over the transom to the Online Services team to "Webify," Microsoft began involving both its cloud and on-premises teams in creating and building new features and functionality from the start of the Office 15 project.

(Continued from page 6)

"Our organization stepped back and said how do we evolve a business as big as this" with so many changes going on in the productivity space, said Janice Kapner, Senior Director of Communications with Microsoft's Office Division.

The team knew whatever ensued would be a major transformation for the Office business, impacting everything from how products were built and tested, to how they'd be rolled out to the channel, Kapner said. Other teams at Microsoft, such as the Windows Server/Windows Azure team and the Dynamics CRM/CRM Online team had undergone similar priority changes, and learned first-hand the difference between running a software business and a services business. The Office team has been discovering these same lessons, too.

Instead of delivering one big-bang release every two or three years, the Office 365 team was rolling out new features and fixes quarterly, if not monthly. Why not take that capability to consumers, and not just businesses, so as to insure they'd be on the most current release at all times?

"We are leading with services," Kapner said. "Even if you buy the traditional suite, it is cloud-connected and cloud-related."

In short, the Office team needed to find a way to strike a balance, Kapner said.

"We wanted the user experience to be contemporary, but not foreign," Kapner said."You can't afford to alienate a billion people" (the Microsoft Office installed base, according to Microsoft's tally).

Microsoft execs aren't yet ready to talk Office 15 packaging or pricing specifics. In fact, there are lots of specifics about all the different components of the next Office release that won't be disclosed in full today at the San Francisco Office 15 unveiling. Little will be shared on July 16 about the new Office Marketplace, for example, officials told me, though they will be discussing the Office 15 add-ons codenamed "Agaves," and now known officially as "Office Apps." Microsoft officials are planning to provide more deep-dive details on all the apps and services through August and into the fall, Kapner said.

Microsoft also won't be talking delivery dates today. But my sources -- who were right about the public beta of Office 15 hitting in July -- have said Microsoft's goal remains to release to manufacturing the final Office 15 client, servers and services before the end of calendar 2012, possibly around November.

About Mary Jo Foley

Mary Jo has covered the tech industry for more than 25 years for a variety of publications and Web sites, and is a frequent guest on radio, TV and podcasts, speaking about all things Microsoft-related. She is the author of Microsoft 2.0: How Microsoft plans to stay relevant in the post-Gates era (John Wiley & Sons, 2008).

(Reprinted with permission from http://www.zdnet.com/a-new-microsoft-office-a-new-microsoft-office-division-7000000978/.)

2012 NALIT Professional Development Seminar Preliminary Agenda

Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2012	Pre-Seminar Training
10:00 am–5:00 pm	Registration
11:00 am–12:15 pm	Mobile App Development
12:30 pm–1:30 pm	Lunch
1:45 pm–3:00 pm	State Experiences: Tablet Pilot Projects
3:15 pm–4:15 pm	State Experiences: Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)
4:30 pm–5:30 pm	BYOD: Supporting Mobile Devices
Evening	NALIT Dutch Treat Dinner
Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2012	**NALIT Seminar**
7:00 am–5:00 pm	Registration
8:00 am–10:00 am	Joint Plenary Breakfast: Decoding Body Language
10:15 am–12:15 pm	Five Minutes of Fame
12:30 pm–1:45 pm	Lunch
1:45 pm–4:00 pm	Tours and Briefings: Wisconsin Legislative Technology Service Bureau and Data Center
4:15 pm–5:30 pm	Social Media Revisited (Joint with Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section)
6:30 pm–7:30 pm	Joint Reception and Tours at the Wisconsin State Capitol
Thursday, Oct. 11, 2012	
7:00 am–5:00 pm	Registration
8:30 am–9:45 am	Joint Plenary Breakfast: Are You Hyper-Connected?
10:00 am–11:15 am	Virtual Desktops
11:15 am–12:15 pm	Security Myths
12:15 pm–1:45 pm	Joint Plenary Lunch Session: Negotiation and Compromise in the Legislative Arena
1:45 pm–3:00 pm	Cloud Fundamentals
3:15 pm–4:15 pm	What to Anticipate with Windows 8
5:00 pm–7:00 pm	NALIT Exhibitors Reception
Friday, Oct. 12, 2012	
8:30 am–9:45 am	Electronic Bill Drafting & Tracking Systems (Joint with Legal Services and Research and Committee Staff Sections)
10:00 am–11:15 am	Bill Drafting Systems (Technical)
11:15 am	Seminar concludes