

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
INFORMATION RESOURCE EXCHANGE GROUP
DRAFT Minutes of March 3, 2009

Location: DVRPC Offices, 8th Floor, 190 N. Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Attendance:

1. Presentation: “DVRPC Backup Strategy & Spam Filter Solution”

Taghi Ozbeki, IT Director, gave an overview of DVRPC’s backup strategy and solution for unsolicited emails.

DVRPC employs the Symantec Backup Exec 11d product providing comprehensive disk and tape backup and recovery to the Commission’s workstations. Desktop and Laptop Option (DLO) allow end users to select what documents are backed up on the system. When installed, the Symantec Desktop Agent appears on the users system tray and will run daily at a scheduled time. By default, each user’s “Documents and Settings” are protected. DVRPC imposed some restrictions, such as a 5 GB quota per user, no backup of files with prohibited extensions (.dll, .exe, .mp3, etc.), and only 3 revisions are saved for each file that is backed up. When the data is backup by the agent, it goes to a network drive on the backup server, which is then backed up differentially (a differential backup only backs up the files that changed since the last full backup). DVRPC has a contract with Iron Mountain to retrieve and store our backup tapes offsite on a biweekly basis.

The second part of Mr. Ozbeki’s presentation discussed implementing and using Postini as email spam filter. Spam is very pervasive and a part of every day life. Mr. Ozbeki showed a ‘snapshot’ that on a given day, about 22% of 9,000 email messages received by DVRPC were considered ‘legitimate’. Of those ‘legitimate’ messages, 21% were quarantined by the service, and an additional 58% were blocked by the end user. Previously, all of this work was done by DVRPC’s email server, causing a huge overhead strain on the equipment. Now, all of this work is done remotely by the Postini servers, with only a fraction of the email traffic hitting our firewall and generating traffic on our servers. Every morning, each email account on dvrpc.org receives an email from the Postini service listing the Virus-Infected and Junk Messages, along with a link to the Message Center, where each user can customize how aggressively they want the service to handle their emails. Users can also maintain a list of Approved and Blocked Senders on the Postini website. Two other member governments are also using Postini.

2. Presentation: “DVRPC Website Project”

Joseph Fazekas, Manager of the Office of Web and Creative Services, gave an overview of previous DVRPC website projects, lessons learned, recent improvements to the website, and features that will launched with the new site.

This project provided a good opportunity to take inventory and do some needed ‘housecleaning’. For example, out of over 1,500 static HTML pages, almost half were meeting agendas. We looked for opportunities to convert static information into database-driven content. Since providing DVRPC reports as downloadable .pdf files, the publications page is now one of the most top ranking pages on the site. We discovered that although we conducted quarterly website log analysis, we need better analytics than our current rudimentary tool for making informed decisions about our site. Elimination of an unnecessary hierarchical structure brought programs that were 5 or more levels deep on our

site to the main navigation.

Taking a project management approach to this effort, quality could not be sacrificed and all work had to be done with existing resources. The scope of the project grew as the project moved on, so the only variable we had flexibility with was time. With an originally planned launch at the first of the year, the end of the fiscal year (June 30th) seems most likely at this point.

The project timeline began with an Executive Director appointed Web Advisory Committee that met through Fall 2007, through the introduction of widgets on our homepage in December 2007, a Public Image / Brand Evaluation by an outside consultant in Spring 2008, brand consolidation through the summer, with actual content changes and design starting in Fall 2008.

Besides improvements to the information architecture of the site, the new DVRPC Website will include the following: improve printing, better organization, improved exposure to important announcements on most pages, consistent branding of applications. Much of this will be done through improved standards of practice, redistribution of responsibilities, migration of content to databases, and reevaluation of contracts (search engine and translations).

3. Discussion and Information Items

a. Census Update

- There was no representative from the Census Bureau present. Kimberly Korejko from DVRPC reported that the Participant Statistical Areas Program has begun. DVRPC completed Burlington County's changes and submitted them for approval from the Census Bureau. The remaining counties are in the process of scheduling the dates to complete their edits.

b. DVRPC Work Program Updates

- Joe Fazekas reported that Analytical Data Report #17 Demographics of Transit Zones (1/2-Mile Radius Around Rail Transit Stops) has been released, in addition to numerous other publications. Mr. Fazekas invited everyone to search DVRPC's online publication database and Data Bulletin webpage.
- Taghi Ozbeki reported on a project that has been completed for the Regional Online Information Network. DVRPC, with the help of a consultant, has installed and implemented ArcGIS Server (which will replace ArcIMS) and ArcSDE 9.3. Mr. Ozbeki encouraged attendees who use these new technologies to provide him with feedback on their experiences.
- Glenn McNichol from DVRPC reported that USGS expressed interest in partnering with DVRPC to acquire aerial imagery for the Philadelphia region which, for their purposes, includes New Castle Co., Delaware. DVRPC staff is currently pursuing that possibility. Also, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is on-board with the 2010 project to acquire imagery for Lehigh and Northampton counties in PA. Staff is also exploring the possibility of pooling more regional resources in an attempt to combine various imagery acquisition efforts that are either on-going or planned, and come up with a product or products to satisfy the needs of member governments and state/federal agencies. This will entail further examination of Pictometry as a possible source for the 2010 orthoimagery.
- Sean Lawrence reported that the Region-wide Transportation GIS Project continues to make progress. The Dynamic Conflation Tool (DCT) has been modified with improvements based upon testing by GeoDecisions and project participants. Project participants have received the improved version and are performing final testing. An edge-matched regional road centerline file has been reviewed and will be conflated with county data using the DCT. DVRPC has received the final GIS web portal design and a draft GIS web portal test plan. GeoDecisions is continuing design of two web applications. One will be a generic mapping application and the other application will

assist county planners and DVRPC staff with traffic count requests. In preparation of installing and testing the web applications at DVRPC, GeoDecisions has provided hardware and software recommendations and will make recommendations regarding publishing strategies for improved efficiencies. They also provided DVRPC with technical assistance in the migration of ArcGIS Server from version 9.1 to 9.3. Finally, internal discussions have taken place on how best to integrate historic resource information into DVRPC's long range planning process.

- The Online GIS Subcommittee and the Webmasters Subcommittee met after the meeting adjourned.

The next IREG meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2009.