New Professional Group Addresses Municipal E-Gov Best Practices

Municipal Web Developers Group

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The Growing Digital Majority

• According to the Center for Digital Government, 64% of U.S. households have Internet connectivity.

• Of those born from 1985 to 2000 ("millenials")…
  – 87% use the Internet.
  – 44% are online every day.

• According to a recent survey in Oregon, 70% of citizens want to be active in their community and in the decisions of their government.
Governments Must Be Responsive

- The aforementioned statistical percentages will increase, not decrease, with time; therefore, there will be greater and greater demand for government information and services via the Internet.

- Municipal governments must become proactive in serving their citizenry online, 24/7 and 365.

- Beyond that, local governments need to begin taking on an “e-government mindset” in every phase of information and service delivery to successfully move forward in this day and age.
Background

• **Five years ago**, less than one third (18) of the state’s 57 municipalities had launched a website.

• That number has **more than doubled (37)** since **then**, despite the typical barriers, particularly for smaller towns:
  – Lack of technology/Web staff
  – Lack of financial resources
  – Lack of technology/Web expertise
  – Security issues

• Knowing that **many towns still need help** either getting on board or learning and implementing best practices, IPA created the MWDG.
The mission of the MWDG is to effect support, education, and networking on issues relating to e-government for those in Delaware who either have oversight responsibility for or maintain a municipal/county website.

www.ipa.udel.edu/mwdg
Membership in Delaware MWDG

• This group is open to all who are in roles as described in the mission statement plus any municipal officials who are engaged in or are responsible for planning, development, or redevelopment of a municipal/county website.

• Currently, 26 municipalities and one county (Sussex) are currently represented in the membership.

• In addition, the state’s Government Information Center’s director is a member, as is a representative from OSPC.

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The Delaware MWDG meets quarterly in Dover (January, April, July, October), generally on Thursday afternoons, at the University of Delaware Paradee Center. These meetings can be topical or deal with a variety of issues as the consensus directs and will usually feature a speaker who will address a specific e-government topic. So far speakers have addressed:

- Obtaining government (.gov) domain names
- Using websites to improve financial management
- A recent national association (NAGW) conference

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The consensus of the membership has identified several issues that it would like to address in upcoming meetings. Among the most critical mentioned were:

- Website policy and procedures
- Website redesign (redevelopment/redeployment)
- Electronic payments
- E-mail databases
- Accessibility (Section 508 compliance)

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Current Statewide Website Status

New Castle County

• Each municipality has some web presence.*

• Nine of the 14 municipalities are represented in MWDG.

• New Castle Co. is not represented in MWDG.

*Delaware City will have a government site up by year’s end.

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Kent County

• Ten municipalities have some web presence.

• Five of the 20 municipalities are represented in MWDG.

• Kent County is not represented in MWDG.

Felton is currently in developing a site.

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Current Statewide Website Status

Sussex County

• Seventeen municipalities have some web presence.
• Fourteen of the 25 municipalities are represented in MWDG.
• Sussex County *is* represented in MWDG.

Three towns are planning websites.

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Delaware MWDG Website

- Meetings and agendas
- Current constituents
- Municipal website status
- Resources and links

Hosted by IPA and maintained by Mark Deshon

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Get Involved in the Delaware MWDG

• Contact Mark Deshon at IPA (deshon@udel.edu or 302-831-4954) to get your municipality involved in the MWDG.

• Support your staff person who is responsible for your municipal or county website; encourage their attendance at MWDG’s meetings.

• Talk with other municipalities about this group and its benefits.

• Help promote web best practices to better serve your citizens.

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