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 **Letter From the Chair****Author:** [John Dickson](#), [Denim Group](#)

As a technologist, I often get asked what is coolest new thing I've seen lately. Aside from the iPod Nano in the consumer electronic space, I have to say one of the coolest things I've seen lately is a web programming arena in a while is a programming language named AJAX. AJAX enables web enthusiasts to interact with web applications in a way that was impossible before. For example, if you visit <http://maps.google.com/> <<http://maps.google.com/>> you are able to scroll through maps interactively. The secret is the application "tiles" other maps around the one that you are viewing in the background (and unbeknownst to you). When you scroll over to look at the map next door - voila! The map is already available for your viewing. Before AJAX you had to reload an entire web page with the new map, a less compelling browsing experience. For a definition on AJAX, visit: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AJAX> . This is exciting stuff - feel free to learn more about it - likely your locally technology folks are diving into it right now!

Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,
John Dickson
Technology Chair

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★ There's More to eBusiness Than the Page Code!

Author: [Beth Beaty](#), [Web Head Group](#)

The addition of eBusiness functionality to a company's web site provides an excellent opportunity to provide a higher level of service and build stronger relationships with customers and constituents, while reducing operational costs and speeding response times. But any talk of adding eBusiness applications must also include discussions on possible operational impacts and potential business process re-engineering. For example, it may be decided to allow site users to apply for an XYZ permit online. The initial design has the web user completing an online form that submits a structured email to Ms. Administrative Assistant, who then keys the information into the company's MIS system. The MIS system then generates the permit, which is sent back to Ms. Assistant for mailing. This process is akin to how Ms. Assistant currently handles requests that come in by phone or postal mail, but now it includes a web access point as well.

Sounds simple, but here's what could happen if the operational impact is not fully assessed and addressed... having the ability to request the permit online meant that users didn't have to call during regular business hours or go to the trouble of writing a letter and licking a stamp, so the number of requests sent to Ms. Assistant doubled in the first month, and again the following month. Many of Ms. Assistant's other job duties went to the wayside, as she struggled to input the information into the MIS. Additionally, the online form mirrored the paper-based form, but as Ms. Assistant could tell you (but nobody asked her) the order of the information on the paper and web forms is different than the order used in the MIS system. This wasn't a big problem before, but now that the volume has increased the inefficiency of the key entry is being compounded.

Just as the number of applications has increased, there's an equal number of permits piling up on Ms. Assistant's desk that need handling and mailing. In the meantime, web users who are used to reduced turnaround times have begun emailing various company departments wanting to know what's taking so long for their permit. Due to a lack of internal communication regarding the web site and its new content, these employees at the various departments call around trying to get an answer to the same user's email, duplicating efforts and eating time away from their regular duties. At this point, Ms. Assistant leaves for her regularly scheduled vacation and it comes to light that no one else has access to her email box, while the permit requests keep coming and coming and...

Unfortunately, this example is fairly typical when the organizational impact of adding a piece of online functionality is not fully planned and supported. The functional page design of a web form or application is just the tip of the ice berg. To be truly effective, an interactive, eBusiness web site must be fully integrated into the overall operation of an organization. This integration is an ongoing process and may entail fundamental changes in how you do business in your "bricks and mortar." So in the event you decide to step into the eBusiness arena, or decide to enhance your current offerings, be certain to partner with an experienced Internet solutions provider who's looking beyond the page code. With their guidance and planning, you will be able to fully realize the benefits and ROI that eBusiness has to offer.

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Acceptable Use Agreements

Author: [Roni Buitte](#), [Vegabyte LLC](#)

While it is very important to establish an “Acceptable Use Policy” for your company; it is also becoming equally important to have your employees sign an “Acceptable Use Agreement.” Not only does the importance rely on acknowledgement of you policy as well as establish expectations of behavior, but the signature allows for accountability in case of policy breach.

Many organizations are required to implement signed “Acceptable Use Agreements” signed by their employees, via security audits and sometimes mandated by the government. Although you company might not fall under the criteria to comply with this requirement; implementing such a practice is of great benefit to you company as well as your business' intellectual property.

Here is a list of some common concerns to consider:

- Employee use of Network Resources, Files and Documents
- Employee use of Desktop Resources, Files and Documents
- Data and Back up procedures and confidentiality
- Email Use
- Internet Use
- Instant Messaging guidelines
- Use of Business Machines

It's a better practice to not assume that your employees are aware of your company expectations for “Business Use”, nor what is considered your companies “Intellectual Property.” The pro-active approach might save your company in the long run.

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Top PC Pitfalls to Avoid

Author: [Malcolm McGee](#), [CM IT Solutions](#)

Admittedly, we all make mistakes and do not always follow the rules on taking care of our PC. Here are some ideas and rules to follow so we can avoid those pitfalls and problems and have a cleaner running system.

1) Unknown Emails - Be cautious of strange emails from unknown recipients. They may contain viruses and executables that can harm your computer. Set your email functions to never download automatically and use (and update) your anti-virus software.

2) Unknown File Downloads - Be sure to know what you are downloading and from what sites. Not all software is bad, but you never know what may show up and some unknown programs may contain a virus. Know exactly what you're downloading and installing to your hard drive beforehand.

3) Unexpected Power Outages - If you get an unexpected power outage, be sure to wait at least ten seconds before powering your system back up.

4) Shutting Your Computer Down Improperly - Always shutdown your programs and computer properly. Only use the reset button if your computer locks up and you have no other choice. For Windows go to Start > Shutdown > and choose the option you need; Restart, Shutdown, or Log Off (if using profiles).

5) Not Backing Up Your Data - Backing up your data should become a regular task. We recommend your be stored at multiple offsite data centers and be Internet based so that you can access your data 24/7 from any PC.

6) Hardware and Software which are not Compatible - Before spending a lot of money on that new software, be sure that the new software you are buying is compatible with your system. Also be sure that your system has the correct hardware to run that program. Jotting down your system information before you head out shopping is another good idea.

7) Incomplete Installs/Uninstalls - Be sure to read the instructions on how to install and uninstall your software properly. Usually you can use the Add/Remove option or the program may have its' own uninstaller program.

8) Random Deleting of Files - Do not delete files you are not sure of what they belong to. You may delete that one file that runs your favorite software or delete that important finance information. If you are not sure what to do, leave the file alone.

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 **CIO Corner - DBMS Security Plan**

Contributed by : [Mel Indyk](#), Mel Indyk & Associates

A DBMS Security Plan Needs Formalization to be Successful

Developing a DBMS (Database management system) security plan is difficult; it requires time and effort. But more importantly, a DBMS security plan needs to be formalized if it is to succeed. Plans for DBMS should involve several key groups including networks, security, applications, database, and business groups. Plans should integrate with the overall IT security plan to ensure the highest level of data protection. Rather than waiting for intrusion to take place or compliance requirements to get tougher, enterprises should proactively prioritize the creation of a comprehensive DBMS security plan.

DBMS security is not about installing a security feature. Rather, it is about implementing strong security policies and procedures for databases across the entire organization. Although DBMS software offers basic data security functionality, such as authentication, authorization, access control, and auditing, it's the security policies and procedures that firms define and implement that actually secure data. Enterprises should use IT security policies as a basis of a comprehensive DBMS security plan.

A DBMS security plan is not the same as a DBMS strategy plan, and therefore it requires a different approach. A DBMS security plan requires a broader focus, and it impacts most groups. The DBMS security plan is a living document and needs to be updated frequently, at least quarterly if not monthly. The plan must address any new compliance requirements, threat levels, and vulnerabilities, and appropriate action must be taken.

What Information Is Required for DBMS Security Plans?

- The enterprise DBMS strategy
- Compliance requirements
- Known DBMS vulnerabilities
- SLA's (security level agreement) for various applications
- The business value of various data elements
- An inventory of DBMS security features and functionality
- An inventory of DBMS security tools.

What Should A DBMS Security Plan Contain?

- An executive summary defining scope and locations covered by the security plan.
- A description of the DBMS security team identifying the key groups and people involved in setting up the security plan.
- A categorization of databases must be categorized into three or four categories that define the level of security that is required.
- An authentication policy that includes an account management policy, a password management policy, and guidelines how applications should be authenticated
- An authorization and access control policy defining what procedures should be followed to control access, if roles should be used, and if so, how roles should be implemented.
- An administration policy stating when, how, and what to audit as well as procedures and tools to use, and a focus on various policies and procedures related to database administration.
- A compliance policy and what the enterprise should do to ensure it meets the requirements.

- A data availability policy defines the availability policies and procedures that need to be addressed that are related to data becoming unavailable as a result of intrusion.
- Security procedures should define procedures and management reporting of security related issues.
- A list of exceptions should define exceptions to the policy, if there are any
- An appendix document should include a list of vulnerabilities and guidelines on how to overcome them.

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Local News - Items of Interest

Local Business Owner gets Microsoft Blog

| Larry Lentz, owner of [Lentz Computer Services](#), has been asked by Microsoft to author his own blog titled '[Larry's Taco Talk](#)' on Microsoft's TS2 Community Site. Check out his blog for cutting edge info with a San Antonio flavor!

*A blog is an online journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption

2006 CIO Panel

Mark your calendar's for the upcoming 3rd Annual CIO Panel to be held Feb. 22, 2006 at the Norris Conference Center. Listen to top CIO's discuss the **Business of IT**.

"Is IT a business? Can it be run like one? Should it be?"

Hear their thoughts and proven strategies over a great lunch! Q&A session will follow. [More Event Information](#).

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Need More Information?

If you would like more information on any of the articles in this newsletter the following options are recommended;

- Discuss the article with your IT professional.
- Contact the Author of the article (contact info is available within the article)
- [Contact us](#) and we will help you find the resources you need.

If you would like information on a topic not included in the eNewsletter - please let us know and we'll do our best to find the information you need and have it included in the next eNewsletter!

This newsletter is a combined effort of the North Chamber Tech Committee and The Montopolis Group. All input is provided by Chamber members. [Top](#)

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