

## Technology News You Can Use!

September 2006 - Issue XIX

### In This Newsletter

- [Letter from the Chair](#)
- [Graphic File Formats - What's All the Fuss?](#)
- [CRM Email Queues](#)
- [Website Design](#)
- [Migrating to Microsoft Vista](#)
- [Information Technology Infrastructure Library \(ITIL\)](#)
- [Need more information?](#)
- [IT Resource Guide](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

### Letter from the Chair [John Dickson](#), [Denim Group](#)

**Shared Pain: The Challenge of Recruiting Technical Talent** - As I've written in this column before, recruiting and retaining technical talent is a formidable challenge - doubly so in San Antonio. Emerging companies such as Rackspace and Denim Group are experiencing the same IT talent crunch as traditional companies such as HEB, USAA, and Argonaut. Help is potentially on the way...The North Chamber and SATAI are exploring ways to enhance the recruiting success of fledgling technology companies and larger IT employers. The inherent challenge is this - how best to communicate to IT talent outside San Antonio that a multitude of tech jobs exist in our community. We want to do a better job letting people outside San Antonio what we've know for some time, namely that you can be very successful as an IT professional in San Antonio.

**City Reaffirms SATAI Funding Commitment** - I would like to thank Mayor Hardberger and the City Council for approving the City of San Antonio's funding for SATAI. The City has been the cornerstone funding agency for organization since SATAI's inception in 2001 and recent success stories from SATAI portfolio companies point towards continued growth of our local tech and biotech companies. This continued support is a very positive sign in light of the recent monies sent to San Antonio from the State's Emerging Technology Fund (ETF). To date, the ETF fund has sent over \$5m in investment dollars and grants to further accelerate the growth of tech and bioscience activities in the San Antonio region. As some of you might now, in my capacity as Chair of the North Chamber's Technology Council, I'm also the current Chairman of SATAI's Board of Directors. I'm very encouraged by the continued successes we are experiencing, and the long-term commitment of the City, as well as recent resources from the ETF, are going to have an exponential impact on our local economy.

**CTO for State of Texas Event** - A final not on last week's successful luncheon featuring Larry Olson, Chief Technology Officer for the State of Texas. The event was a smashing success that attracted over 200 attendees from across San Antonio's business community. Larry's speech provided background on recent initiatives at the State level to streamline IT delivery to State agencies and to reach out to vendors who might help his group solve problems for these agencies. Many in the audience listened closely to learn more on how their companies might vie for future state IT contracts. Also, thanks so much to the Chamber's Technology Council and Debby Zucker for once again making this an exceptional event.

[Top](#)

### Graphic File Formats - What's All the Fuss?

by [Roger Hall](#), [Full Fusion](#)

"Hello, Mr. Smith? We're working on your latest print job. We have the JPG file you sent with it... but really need that graphic in an EPS format".

How many times have you heard that you need a specific file type and didn't have the foggiest idea why they were being so particular? Take a moment to increase your understanding of the different file types, their specific uses, and the importance of having the files created in the proper format in the first place.

The most common file types used in the web development world are JPG, GIF and PNG. JPG (Joint Photographic Experts Group - the entity that developed the original file standard) is

Join the Technology Council  
now and  
participate in  
2007 program planning

For More Information call Debby at 344.4848 or  
email [dzucker@northsachamber.com](mailto:dzucker@northsachamber.com)

### Technology Council

- **Mission**
- The mission of the Technology Council is to
- promote the technology industry and educate
- businesses on technology-related products and
- services. This Council harnesses the power of the
- rapid growth of technology and addresses industry
- issues by offering best-in-class programs featuring
- the policy makers, visionaries and experts shaping
- the industry.

Ongoing programs offered and supported by the  
Technology Council;

1. CIO Breakfast Series
2. CIO Resource Guide
3. CIO Panel - Distinguished Speaker
4. E-Tech News You Can Use

If you would like more information about any of  
the Technology Council's programs, would like to  
participate or need information on becoming a  
member of the Council please contact the [North  
Chamber](#).

best suited for photographs and complex graphics. Images that have lots of color or grayscale tones in them, like your typical photograph, make use of the potential 16 million colors available in this compression format. When saving in this file type, one has to weigh image quality with file size... the smaller the file size, the less image detail information saved. JPG does not work well on line drawings (vector graphics), lettering or simple graphics because there is not a lot of the image that can be thrown out in the compression process, so the image loses clarity and sharpness.

This brings us to the GIF and PNG file formats. The GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) format excels with images containing only a few distinct colors (Line drawings, lettering or simple graphics) since it supports only 256 colors. You may want to involve some animated areas in a section of your site. GIF files can be "stitched" together in an animation editing program (Adobe Image Ready) without having to go to the extent of then developing in Flash. Images with areas of "flat" color and distinct edges may also benefit in having areas of transparency which the GIF and PNG formats allow - enabling a site to have more seamless parts. The option of GIF format is not universally available in programs because Unisys (patent owner) requires program authors to pay a licensing fee in order to output to the GIF format.

The PNG (Portable Network Graphics) file format developed as a patent-free answer to the GIF format, has a better compression result than GIF and also has a better range of opacity or transparency. However PNG files do not support animation like GIF files.

In review:

- JPG - best for your typical photograph
- GIF - best for images with flat areas of color, animation and transparency options
- PNG - better compression than GIF, supports a range of transparency.

Let's look at the common file types used in the print world, TIF, EPS and PDF. Like it's JPG counterpart in the web world, the TIF (Tagged Image File) format is widely used to handle monochrome (single color), gray scale, and color images. Many "page layout" programs handle TIF files with ease and even allow different shades of color to be applied to different iterations of the same source file thus reducing the overall document size. The compression methods of TIF files allow the typically large file necessary for printing press production to be more portable.

OK, listen up... the EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) format is the ideal format for your company brand or logo files. Typically these files are created in a "vector-based" program like Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand. JPG, GIF and PNG files use "pixels" to create the image - a dot of information for every part of the image. The EPS file type contains the code to generate the fonts and shapes used in the logo in "vectors". Vectors are lines mathematically plotted between points in a file. This enables the file to be scaled up to any size needed and the "vectors" are re-plotted to generate a crisp edged graphic. In other words, the same logo file can be used on a business card or a billboard!

This format also makes files very portable between computers and operating system platforms (Windows XP and Mac OSX for example). Ask your graphic designer to generate this file format and keep it on hand to give to printers and other output professionals.

The last of the common file types is the PDF (Portable Document Format).

This format developed by Adobe Systems captures formatting information from the source desktop publishing application. You can send a PDF formatted document to any customer and be certain they will appear on their monitor or printer as originally intended. To view a file in PDF format, you need a "PDF reader" (Adobe Reader or Apple's Preview).

Remember to ask your graphics professional for a PDF version of your company brochure, flyer or other printed item.

These can be made available to your clients on your company website - a way to reduce printing and mailing costs but that is another topic for another time.

In review:

- TIF - best for images to be used in printed pieces
- EPS - scalable and the best for your company logo
- PDF - retains intended formatting

In the end, you want to have a consistent quality company image presented to your customers. Having a better grasp of the benefits of the different formats is the first step. Taking the next step to consult with your graphics professional to review your company's web site and printed materials will be another step toward success!

[Top](#)

**CRM Email Queues by [Larry Lentz](#), [Lentz Computers](#)**

*Have you ever had an email account created at [sales@yourcompany.com](mailto:sales@yourcompany.com) and discover months later no one is picking up the email...or worse...picking up the emails but not passing them off properly? Or do have a customer service group with no viable means for the customer service reps to pick up the "next" inquiry in the "que"? This month's article is targeted toward*

*technical personnel responsible for running your CRM on your network.*

Recently our Microsoft CRM study group took a deeper dive into Queues. Queues are sort of like public folders where Cases and Activities can be stored and then picked up by users for further action. These are great in a Customer Service scenario where cases can be placed in a queue and picked up by the next available Customer Service Representative.

Queues can also be assigned an e-mail address. Messages addressed to the queue appear in the associated queue and can be picked up by any user. A good example of how this can work would be a Sales queue. Inquiries or orders addressed to [Sales@yourcompany.com](mailto:Sales@yourcompany.com) would go into the queue. From there, any Sales Representative could pick them up and follow through with the sale.

Creating a Queue is fairly simple. With the CRM web client, select Settings from the Navigation pane, then Settings again, and then Business Units. Here you will find Queues. Select New to create a new queue. Very little is required, just the name of the queue, a User to be the Owner, and the associated Business Unit. That's all you need for a simple service queue. If you want to e-mail enable the queue, it becomes a bit trickier.

The first step is to assign an e-mail address to the queue. This is an optional field on the Queue form. You could assign the e-mail address of a user such as [joe@mycompany.com](mailto:joe@mycompany.com). Then e-mail addressed to Joe would also show up in the queue. However, if you want to set up a Sales queue you have a bit more to do.

When you initially install the CRM E-mail Router on your CRM server, it asks for the mailbox the router is to use to process messages. I had created a user and e-mail mailbox called, likely enough, CRM. To create the e-mail address for our Sales queue, we added an additional e-mail address to the CRM account. This is done from the user's properties form, E-mail Addresses tab. Messages addressed to [Sales@LentzComputer.net](mailto:Sales@LentzComputer.net) will actually go to the CRM mailbox.

The next step is to run the Rule Deployment Wizard. This can be accessed from Server Management, Advanced Management if you are running Small Business Server and the CRM Small Business Edition. Otherwise you'll have to access it from Start -> All Programs.

Next we select what the Rule Deployment Wizard is to do from the Select an Available Task form. We select 'Deploy rule to user mailboxes'. Hitting Next completes the process with a couple of more windows to wrap it up.

Something to be aware of when configuring e-mail enabled queues is the Owner of the queue specified on the Queue form must be a CRM user with full access. When experimenting with this in our study group, we assigned the Administrator account as the owner. However, the Administrator was selected for Restricted Access Mode. Restricted Access Mode users do not consume a CRM client access license. However, they also may not own e-mail enabled queues. They can own them but e-mail won't be routed to the queue. We unselected Restricted Access Mode and our queue was able to receive e-mail.

Now when a message is sent to [Sales@LentzComputer.net](mailto:Sales@LentzComputer.net), it goes to the CRM mailbox. If you configure your Outlook to view the CRM mailbox, you can see messages enter and then disappear a bit later as the router dispatches it to the appropriate Queue.

The Queues are viewed by users from My Work, Queues on either their Outlook or Web CRM clients. Users can select items from the Queues and 'Accept' them. Once accepted, they will go into their In Progress personal queue to be worked on.

E-mail enabled Queues can be a great tool for organizations that may have departments where several users might need access to a pool of messages such as Sales, Info, Support, etc. Setting them up is actually pretty easy, once you know the steps.

[Top](#)

## Website Design -- Everything you always wanted to know about website design...but were afraid to ask. Part I

By [John Tomblin](#), [DataTitan](#)

First, trying to cover website design in one, two or even three articles is like saying I can explain the IRS rule book over lunch. It's just not going to happen. What I can tell you though is there are six general rules everyone should consider when having a website designed and built. There are many other considerations...so consider this a primer. In part one of this two part article, we'll address website advertising, design factors and fact gathering.

Rule 1: Consider the entire website solution...not just the website. I've heard people say countless times "I had my website built last year...but no one came." Sorry to burst your bubble...but just because you have a website built doesn't mean anyone is going to visit you. Ted Turner once said...and I quote: "Early to bed...early to rise...work like hell...and advertise!" As a business owner, you must consider Mr. Turner's sage words as to how you will target your particular market and how much you're willing to invest in advertising to drive perspective customers to your site. Notice I said invest...not spend. There's a difference and it's up to you to research and discover the best methods to drive visitors to your site.

Remember, building a website is not advertising...advertising is what people do to drive traffic to their website. Once you've committed to the project, add to the project costs the amount you are willing to invest in an advertising campaign to get picky consumers to choose your company.

Rule 2: Design to your audience. The way DataTitan designs and builds a mortgage company website is light-years apart from the way we design for pop radio station. Similarities in design aside, the radio website will have far more animation, sound, flashy bells and whistles than the mortgage company. Flash design can be effectively weaved into any site...but how much is largely dependent on your audience...and your budget. You must also consider whether you want to code your site for both audiences...those with the latest browser controls and those without.

Rule 3: Know your facts. Aldous Huxley once said "*Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.*" That said, the greatest service you can do for yourself and your company before selecting your design firm is to do the following: 1) Go to the web and look up ten competing websites. What are they doing that make them unique? What market do these sites appeal to? What do like and dislike about each one? 2) What do you want to say to visitors on your "welcome" page? First time visitors must be able to clearly identify what you do in less than five seconds upon arriving to your site or they are gone. 3) Do you already have a logo or do you need one developed? Your logo dictates virtually every aspect of the rest of your site... from layout and color scheme to structure and content. Be sure your logo is completed before any other work begins. 4) What have you seen on other sites that you DO NOT want repeated on yours? Once armed with facts and details, you can now call your web firm to start your site.

Next month, part two will discuss critical domain name requirements, hosting services and the "look and feel" of websites.

### **Migrating to Microsoft Vista by Rob Krauss**

*In this article we will be looking at the upcoming Microsoft Vista Operating System from the eyes of a business owner. An owner who is trying to decide how to approach migration from older systems to the new features that Microsoft Vista will bring.*

First, a brief overview of what Microsoft Vista will have to offer:

Redefined User interface options that allow users to see contents of files without opening them.

- Enhanced Visual effects that provide a 3D feeling when navigating through open windows.
- Enhanced security tools including Windows Update, Firewall, Defender anti-malware and the Malicious Software Removal Tool.
- Improved search features.
- Internet Explorer 7 with pop-up blocker, anti-phishing, and a tabbed browser that allows viewing thumbnails of websites.
- Sidebar that allows you to organize your desktop and keep everything neat, in addition to adding functionality to your desktop environment.
- Redesigned Windows Backup that supports Shadow Copies.
- Network setup wizards that allow you to view and diagnose your network environment. Graphical representations of your network with easy point and click interactive icons.
- Speech Recognition that allows you to interact and control your PC with limited use of the mouse or keyboard.

As you can see, there are a lot of new features built into the new Microsoft Vista operating system. Some of us can't wait to get our hands on it and use all the new features. Some of us are afraid of changing from what we know already works. From another point of view, the decision makers will need to decide how and if to integrate this new technology with minimal impact to business objectives.

Before you take the plunge, ask yourself and your IT department a few questions:

Do we have any legacy systems that require staying with Windows XP, 2000, XP, MAC or Linux desktops?

1. Do we have a plan in place to test application software any other business critical systems before we commit to the migration?
2. What is our budget to make the migration and what is the proposed timeline?
3. Does our current hardware meet the requirements for Windows Vista?
4. Does my IT staff need training on Vista before we migrate?

According to Microsoft Vista website the minimum hardware requirements do not seem to be very demanding, but for the best experience I recommend not sticking to the minimum. Sticking with the minimum will provide a poor user environment and unhappy users. It is up to

your organization to determine if, and how much, systems should upgrade hardware to enhance the experience.

In many cases you may find it less expensive to purchase a new PC with Vista already installed than to attempt upgrading all of your organizations hardware on a PC by PC basis.

Some of the minimum hardware requirements for running Vista include:

800 MHz processor

512 MB RAM

20 GB Hard Drive

My hardware recommendation for running Vista are well above the minimum but are more in line with what "typical" users will require for a productive environment:

Modern Processor: Approximately 2.5 GHz

768MB of RAM or greater (1GB or higher for video, graphics or gaming computers)

80 GB Hard Drive (standard size shipped with most of today's PC's)

64MB or 128MB Video Card (256MB or greater for video, graphics or gaming computers)

Microsoft Vista resources that may help with your decisions:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/default.aspx>

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/upgradeadvisor/default.msp>

<http://www.microsoft.com/technet/windowsvista/default.msp>

Remember to take into account the different points we have covered. Making the migration may not always be easy or smooth, but planning for success helps for a successful deployment!!

Rob Kraus - CISSP, SSCP, MCSE, CCNA, Security Systems Engineer

## Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) by [Mel Indyk](#)

### TAKING ITIL BEYOND IT OPERATIONAL GOALS

The goal of using the ISO 9000 Information Technology Infrastructure Library processes in order to run IT more like a business requires an understanding that organizations must improve infrastructure management. The CIO's who link their service delivery for incident management, service-level management, change management, configuration management, problem management, capacity management, financial management, release management, and availability management through the ITIL Processes will create best practices for IT Service Delivery.

Organizations should identify the ITIL services where IT asset management can have the greatest return on investment (ROI). Firms have achieved positive ROI's from integrating IT asset management with a wide range of ITIL processes, including incident management, configuration, change, release, and problem management.

While ITIL best practices are certainly the foundation for a better control how IT delivers services, they are not a foundation for business process management or managing IT from a business process perspective. Organizations should not view ITIL as the end point for IT services optimization; the framework lacks actionable recommendations, making it an excellent guide or checklist but not a series of implementation blueprints. Further ITIL is rather hermetic in terms of scope beyond IT services, as it does not prescribe how IT relates to the changing needs of the business or the extended enterprise, such as partners. The No. 1 issue we still hear from IT executives is the challenge of re-architecting IT services to business demands. I believe BSM-Business Service Management will increasingly become the end goal for organizations, and IT asset management strategies will with ITIL processes increasingly be designed around the growing demands for BSM strategy.

Because of the tight connections, firms should make sure that a solid foundation of IT asset management backs up any attempts to implement ITIL---and, ultimately, a Configuration Management Data Base. Companies that have already gone through a full implementation of ITIL processes have realized that, in fact, not all ITIL processes are of equal importance and value to them. Companies feel most strongly about those ITIL processes that directly influence the end user experience and those that provide the necessary foundation for a good user experience.

As CEOs ask CIO's to run IT more efficiently—more like a manufacturing plant or item-processing centers—CIO's are seeking to stabilize technologies and IT operations through process methodologies: standards and increased consistency in IT operations. It's historically homegrown process methodologies are beginning to give way to broadly used approaches like ITIL and Six Sigma. CIO's can develop a plan for the incremental movement toward results. This will include adopting an IT services model, organizing to support that model—including identifying service owners—and delivering ongoing results through a continuous improvement process.

## Contact Us

Technology Chair

[John Dickson](#)

Principal

[Denim Group, Ltd.](#)

North Chamber Contact

[Debby Zucker](#)

Director of Finance/IS

[North SA Chamber](#)

Editor

[Katrina D. Mukherjee](#)

Vice President

[The Montopolis Group](#)

---