



Bexar County IT News

June 2013

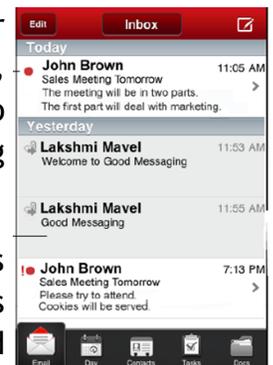


GOOD News for Mobile Devices



Bexar County will be implementing a new mobile device management solution to all Smart Phones that will access Bexar County information. This will include all Smart Phones operating iOS, Android and Windows 7.5 (Windows 8 coming soon).

Good Dynamics offers one of the most secure mobile application solutions, reducing the likelihood of data loss and risk for Bexar County. We have combined all Bexar County email, Calendar and contacts into the app. This platform also lets Bexar County build secure apps by embedding



security code through Good Dynamics API's.

Good Dynamics also secures Bexar County data while in motion, and gives Bexar County IT team additional management functionalities, such as application policies (app level password and jail-break/root detection), and remote app data.

Certified Property Tax eStatement



For your convenience, the office of the Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector now offers Taxpayers the option of receiving their certified Bexar County Property Tax Statement via email. To begin receiving the Property Tax Statement via email please visit the Tax Assessor-Collector's Website at: <http://www.bexar.org/tax/eStatementInstructions.html>

This is just one way Bexar County is moving towards GreenIT.

NEW!
REQUEST A
BEXAR COUNTY
ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX
PAPERLESS eSTATEMENT!

Paperless Certified Property Tax Statements now available

Read about obtaining your Certified Property Tax eStatement via email, a new service offered by the Office of the Tax Assessor-Collector

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BCIT wins 2 Best of Texas 2013 Awards!

The Bexar County eTruancy Portal won the Best Application Serving an Agency's Business Needs and Bexar County Candidate Campaign Finance Reports Online won for Best Application Serving the Public! These awards were presented in Austin at a special ceremony at the Government Technology Conference (GTC) Southwest 2013 on June 4th. GTC Southwest plays an important role in highlighting best practices and new, innovative solutions to provide better services to the citizens of Texas. For more information on the Bexar County Candidate Campaign Finance Reports Online please visit the website at <http://apps.bexar.org/electionsfinancereport/>



Geospatial World Forum

This past May 15th, Eric Lomeli (Senior GIS Analyst for Bexar County's Information Technology Department) participated in the 2013 Geospatial World Forum held in Rotterdam, The Netherlands: "Monetizing Geospatial Value and Practices" (<http://www.geospatialworldforum.org/>). The organizers of the event, Geospatial Media & Communications (<http://geospatialmedia.net/>) identified Bexar County IT's use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in local government as a leading example to share with the world.



Eric was invited to present in the Local Government User Forum. His presentation "GIS in Local Government: Making More with Less" was one of eighteen presentations from the following countries: Belgium, China, Ghana, India, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Arab Emirates and the United States. A total of 50 countries were represented during the forum, hosted at Rotterdam's Beurs-World Trade Center.

Here is the abstract of the presentation:

Tough economic times, experienced in the past few years, have led local governments to cut budgets, freeze positions and in some instances resizing. This same situation has led to a new state of mind in finding the best possible ways to save money, manage time and maximize resources, and ideally, creating money revenue projects. The use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) has increased in Bexar County (Texas) due to all the reasons mentioned above: "Making the most with less". Bexar County's eServices & Innovation Technology Division (GIS, Web and Technical Training Groups) has leveraged free resources made available from GIS companies and developers, customized and deployed external and internal applications through GIS web services and mapping platforms, and more, in order to meet the demand for highly efficient tools to minimize cost and increase efficiency; while at the same time, focusing on its costumers: The public, staff and elected officials.

Eric's participation in this world forum adds to a long list of state, national and international recognition of the County's commitment to utilize technology in an efficient and innovative way.

The Truth Will Set You Free - Injecting some accuracy about mainframes

By Gabe Goldberg

Anyone who's worked with mainframes has heard cringe-worthy comments about them: misconceptions, misinformation, misunderstandings, exaggerations, myths and blatant lies. Sadly, bogosity comes from many sources: colleagues, managers, airline magazines, vendors, itinerant consultants.

The Mainframe Lives! The oldest—astonishingly long-lived—myths claim "the mainframe is dead/dying/doomed." It's tempting to answer this by pointing to Stewart Alsop's 1991 assertion that the last mainframe would be uninstalled within five years, which led to his eating his words. And noting that while other technologies have come and gone, the mainframe simply improves. Since Alsop's bad bet, we've seen more than a few major processor and OS generations, and we're coming up on the 50th birthday of what's still a compatible computing architecture.

"The mainframe is obsolete." Tell that to large and small businesses worldwide—banks, insurance companies, airlines, manufacturing companies—running mission-critical solutions (not just applications or systems) on mainframes. Or ask the hundred or so new mainframe customers IBM expects to add this year. IBM has said that the number of z/OS and z/VSE CICS transactions processed daily rivals the number of Web pages served.

"The mainframe is 1960s technology." That's true only in the sense that a 2013 automobile is Henry Ford's Model T. IBMer Jim Elliott's wonderful mainframe history outlines its evolution since introduction in 1964 (and gives a bit of pre-history, too).



"Mainframes are inflexible and don't scale." Moving from the \$75,000 entry-level zEnterprise 114 to the top-end, 52,000-MIPS zEnterprise 196 (z196) provides ample room to grow. If that's not adequate, up to eight z196 systems can be connected in a single centrally managed ensemble. In fact, multiple options allow increasing in-place processor capacity with no outage, either to handle transient workload spikes or as permanent upgrades. That's flexibility.

"Mainframes cost more than distributed systems." The complementary metal-oxide semiconductor (CMOS) processor's evolution dramatically reduced mainframe cost structure, and processors have subcapacity increments to closely—and competitively—match requirements.

"Mainframes don't speak modern programming languages." That's contradicted by more than 1,300 sites running Linux on System z with more than 3,000 applications available implemented in, and providing current programming and development tools. There's support for J2EE, Java and other industry standards—along with traditional and still-critical languages such as COBOL.

"Mainframe means z/OS." Since the early days of System/360—and still—multiple mainframe OSs have satisfied varying customer needs. Today, zEnterprise is supported by z/OS, z/VSE, z/

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VM, Linux on System z (often run under z/VM) and z/TPF, each of which has dedicated IBM development and support, committed customer installations and a vibrant user community.

Mainframe Staffing and Skills "Mainframes require bloated staff support." System programming productivity has improved over the years via learning and improved tools. Fewer people now tend processor and DASD resources on a scale previously unimaginable. Don't include application developers, network administrators and middleware managers in mainframe platform support—they'd be needed for any alternative systems. Mainframe capacity can often increase dramatically with no accompanying staff growth—unlike distributed systems.

"It's too hard to administer mainframes and mainframe hardware/software changes are disruptive." That's often said by someone thinking of old-days system generation or maintenance application, or who's believed competitors' marketing fluff. System installation and updating is highly automated and error checked, with command-line interfaces replaced by modern graphical environments. Besides unparalleled reliability, current mainframes allow non-disruptive upgrades and repairs.



"There's nothing to learn from mainframers." Consider various technologies innovated on mainframes, e.g., virtual machines, and only later "invented" on other platforms, and the many problems mainframers solved long ago still requiring remedies elsewhere.

"Mainframe careers are dead end or have no future." Multiple LinkedIn groups feature mainframe jobs, IBM Academic Initiative graduates find key jobs with clear advancement paths, and SHARE participants represent every career stage.

"It's hard to make mainframes secure." Has anyone heard of mainframe malware, or of a mainframe monthly "Patch Tuesday" closing dozens of newly discovered critical exposures? Mainframe architecture and associated OS design and configuration make it the most resilient system platform, enabling holistic security rather than a piece-parts approach.

"Mainframes are isolated, not networked." That's been false for decades; all mainframe OSs and associated middleware interoperate with other platforms and the Internet, fully implementing distributed processing and industry standards including TCP/IP, Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) and XML.

"Mainframes don't matter in the Internet/cloud world." In fact, they provide backend transaction processing to many high-end websites, and are ideal for service-oriented architecture (SOA) applications. In addition, specialty processors (System z Integrated Information Processor and System z Application Assist Processor) offload Internet-critical workload from main processing without increasing software-licensing costs. Finally, Integrated Facility for Linux engines, optimized for the Internet's most popular OS, enable large-scale server consolidation.

The original article can be found at <http://www.destinationz.org/Mainframe-Solution/Business-Case/The-Truth-Will-Set-You-Free.aspx>. This excerpt was reproduced with the permission of Mr. Goldberg