

Your Association

INSIDE:

Take Your Office Paperless
Organization Goals for 2017
Engaging with Social Media
Landscape & Technology

And More!





JERRY ORTEN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

It is with great pleasure that we congratulate Jerry Orten on CAI-RMC's Lifetime Achievement Award. This award was created to honor members who have provided a superior commitment to the advancement of the Chapter and the community management industry through leadership, service and dedication to the mission of CAI.





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by Eric Perczak





The materials contained in this publication are designed to provide our members and readers with accurate, timely and authoritative information with regard to the subject covered. However, the Rocky Mountain Chapter of CAI is not engaging in the rendering of legal, accounting, or other professional types of services. While the Rocky Mountain Chapter of CAI provides this publication for information and advertising, the Rocky Mountain Chapter of CAI has not verified the contents of the articles or advertising, nor do we have the facilities or the personnel to do so. Members and readers should not act on the information contained herein without seeking more specific professional advice from management, legal, accounting or other experts as required.

President's Letter



DENISE HAASPresident
CAI-RMC

an you believe it? February is upon us! The 2017 Board of Directors held their first official board meeting on January 26th. Several decisions were made. First, the Association has hired a new public relations firm, Strategies 360. The Board also agreed to offer the opportunity to all members to donate to CLAC during their registration to attend events. (We hope you will participate in this as CLAC advocates on behalf of our membership with our state government).

Our M-100 class in January had 28 attendees and our DORA Days class had 61 attendees. Congratulations to our P&E Committee and Membership Committees for hosting a VERY successful event. The Board finalized the 2017 Strategic Plan assignments. Look for this to be published on the website within the next couple of weeks.

February is busy with an M-201 class, the manager lunch and our SOLD OUT Annual Bowling Tournament. We hope to see you at our first Lunch and Learn of the year! ♠



Join Our Online Community!

Our chapter is on the web! "Like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for the latest industry updates, chapter news and photos from CAI-RMC events!

Have an idea for content? Share it with us in a message or tweet and it might be featured on our channels!



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Executive Director's Message



BRIDGET SEBERNExecutive Director
CAI-RMC

t's the month of LOVE! It's also our month to showcase technology. I admit I have a love / dislike relationship with technology. Most of the time I love it. Truthfully, I'm amazed by it.

I was speaking with a committee leader recently and we concluded that there are many people in our industry who do not have file sharing set up or who haven't quite figured out how to use social media. Is this you? Do you need help with getting started in the world of technology? If so, please let

me know. We need to know what you need to know! If you have ideas, or if you need help, email me at bridget@hoa-colorado.org. As always, be a good neighbor!

CAI-RMC MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a membership organization that offers learning and networking opportunities and advocates on behalf of its members.

missing something?

Ensure you are getting all your valuable CAI member benefits.

Update your email address today at addresschanges@caionline.org or call (888) 224-4321.

SEE WHAT YOU'RE MISSING





is a publication of the Community Associations Institute, Rocky Mountain Chapter.

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ADVERTISING

Deadline: First of each month for the following month's issue. NOTE: All ads must be camera ready or additional charges will apply. All ads must be prepaid. Advertising in *Common Interests* is a benefit of membership, and you must be a member to advertise. Acceptance of advertising in this magazine does not constitute endorsement of the products or services. Rates available upon request. Email bridget@hoa-colorado.org.

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Lisa S. Greenberg, Esq.Feldmann
Nagel, LLC

Snowplow Tracking

ith the onset of winter, snowplows and other snowclearing equipment are an essential part of life for both managers and homeowners in their local communities. Nevertheless, many of us look out the window after a winter storm and wonder "where's the snowplow?" Now that question has a real answer.

A new Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) online application has opened up snowplow tracking to a whole new level.

In January, 2016 CDOT announced a new web application that allows individuals to track the location of the CDOT plows in real time. The application, which can be found at http://www.cotrip.org/snowplow.htm, tracks the current location of over 850 of CDOT's plows. The application overlays the location of the plows, identified with a snowplow icon, on top of a map of Colorado to show the plows' location in real time. When users click on the snowplow icon, an information box opens that shows the current location of the plow, its traveling speed, direction, where and how far it has traveled over the 60 minutes. Plows that have not moved for more than 16 minutes are not visible on the application.

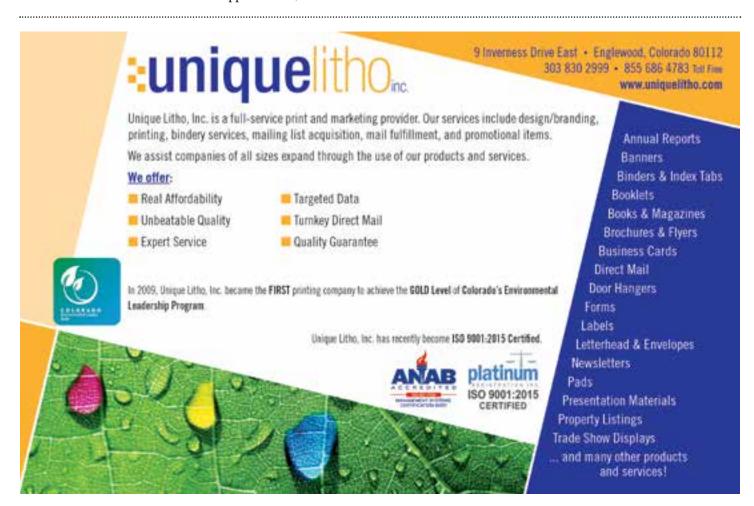


Mark Richardson, CMCA, AMS, PCAM, 4 Seasons Mgmt.

an you believe that the 2017 Spring Show-case is only a month away? CAI-RMC presents "Vintage Cinema—Which lens tells your story?" The showcase will feature educational opportunities and ample time to network with industry professionals. Be on the lookout for the information on the show as the schedule has been changed to accommodate requests from all types of members—

Thursday, April 13th at the Colorado Convention Center. Registration is available at CAI-RMC.org (direct link https://cai-rmc.wildapricot.org/event-2392705).









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Winner of Best Booth Design

2016 Fall Conference & Trade Show "SUPER HEROES IN OUR COMMUNITY"

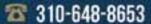
"Things have gone so smoothly and I'm pleased to have great people working by my side,"

Brit, Community Association Manager

"We are very fortunate for hiring RE and for working so closely on this claim from the onset. Please accept our sincere appreciation for RE's experience in the industry and exceptional work performance,"

Kathe, HOA President

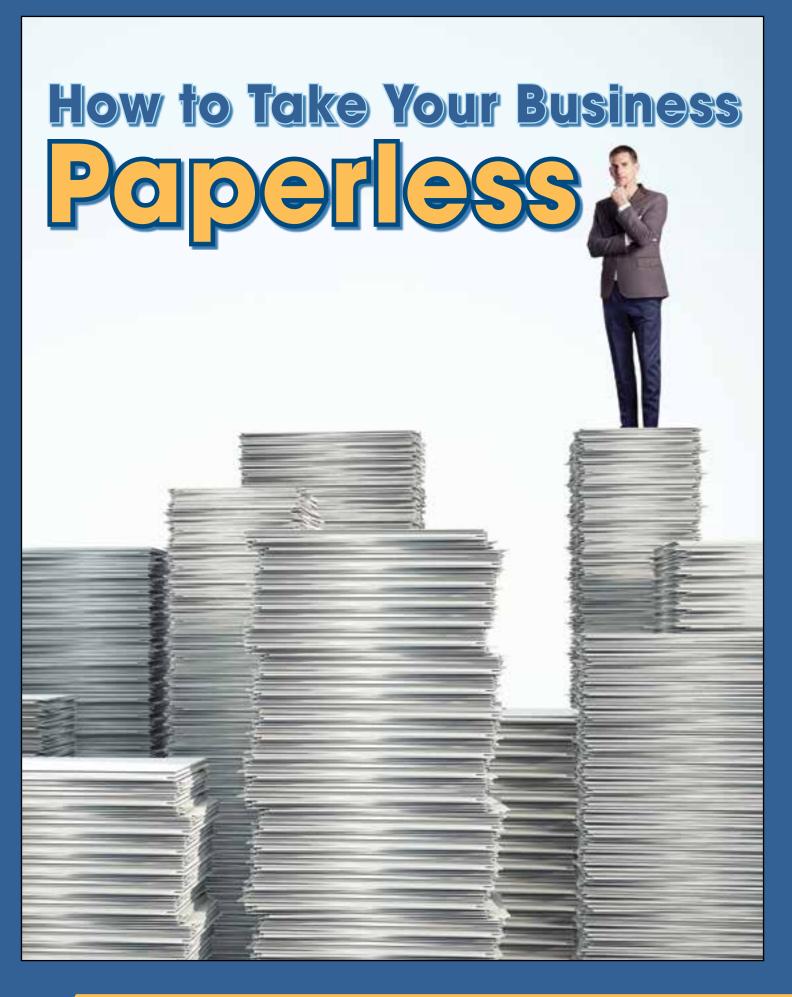
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DJ Francis, Marketing Director, Useful Systems, Inc.

Admit it. Paper has Problems.

problem in triplicate is not a problem solved. And while paperwork may seem infallible, we can tell you plenty of stories about paper making field service jobs harder, not easier, for business owners, crew and everyone in between.

There's the everyday slowness of paper. The fact you and your crew have to do the paper shuffle every morning and evening to keep track of the data points from each day: what was done, at what cost, what didn't get done, what's over

budget, what's ready to invoice, etc.

All very important decisions. And all dependent on the slowest form of data movement possible: paper.

Making the Switch: It's Easier Than You Think.

You've thought about making the switch from paper, but there are so many options. How can you know which app or software to choose? What will you be getting yourself, your office support team and your crew into? What will your most reliable, less tech savvy guys say—the guys who don't use smartphones or computers at all?

One of our favorite customer stories is about a front line guy named Tom who is 67 years old. His boss was concerned that Tom wouldn't quickly—or easily—adopt an app to track his work, though the decision was a done deal. They were switching from paper to an app.

By the first week's end, Tom's time sheets and job notes were more accurate than anyone else on the team. Friendly reminder: Tom is 67 years old. If Tom can do it, so can your crew.

Go Paperless in 5 Steps.

There are five main steps to choosing the best digital solution for your business.

- 1. Choose your tools
- 2. Choose your people
- 3. Hunt for your new solution
- 4. Gather your data
- 5. Make a plan for a pain-free change

Moving your field service business off of paper isn't easy, but it isn't rocket science either. No matter what app you end up choosing, my goal is to shed light on the process of making the switch. And, life afterwards.

In this article, let's cover a few key questions to ask when hunting for your new solution.

Fire Away: Questions to Save You Some Trouble.

As you're considering which software or app fits your company best, make sure you put it to the test. Here are some questions to help you do just that.

Revenue:

The Benefits of Trading Paper for Software

For starters, there's a good chance you'll make more money and just flat-out do better business. Research as old as ten years ago found that companies who automated field service improved service revenues an average of 17.5 percent, SLA compliance by 22.1 percent and reduced repair time by 9 percent.1

So, if you run a small business that pulls \$5 million in revenue, automating your field service forms and workflow could drive an additional \$875,000 in annual revenue. Not bad.

1. "The Mobile Field Service Update: 2007 and Beyond" Aberdeen Group, December 2006.

Competition:

The Benefits of Trading Paper for Software

A 2016 report revealed that over one third of field service companies are now using cloud-based field service management systems. This means mobile-first solutions are finally replacing desktop software and other systems that were never made for the field in the first place. The same study shows that of those who have adopted cloud-based FSM systems, one third have done so within the past 6 months, meaning companies are now switching over at a faster pace than ever before.2

Cloud-based apps and software are giving your competitors an edge on customer service, efficiency—and revenue. How long can you afford not to join them?

2. Field Service News and ClickSoftware 2016 Research Report: Has Field Service Finally Made the Move to the Cloud?

"Is your app as simple as paper?"

Sounds silly, but it's a valid question. Knowing that's where the industry is coming from, the best software and app designers have spent time making their technology friendly, intuitive and super simple—and in the best cases, even easier to use than paper. If you want to live to have your own Tom story to tell, demand that the "user experience" (fancy words for "is it easy or hard to use?") of any tool you're considering be described in detail. And if it seems too confusing, it probably is.

"Why should we buy your thing?"

There are about as many apps and pieces of software out there as there are lightbulbs. Each app does things a little differently, so the choice you should make depends heavily on what you're looking to gain from it.

- Do you want more visibility into your crew's work days?
- Do you just want to track time digitally?
- Do you want a system even your subcontractors can join?

Think about what you need first. Then consider what each option has to offer and what makes it better or different. Where there's overlap between what you need and what something does, there's an option you should keep high on your list. And remember, you can ask for help. Enlist your trusted teammates and advisors to help do some digging and bring you their top picks. Where there's overlap with your list and theirs, you know you've found a serious prospect to consider.

"What do we get for the cost?"

From monthly subscriptions to annual contracts, the pricing models out there can be tricky. Understanding exactly what you're getting for the money is a critical part of making the decision. "You get what you pay for" applies tenfold when it comes to software that makes big promises at a low or next-to-nothing price. Be aware of this. Ask exactly what is included.

"Do you offer human support?"

The best software support teams provide an experience that's as close to one-on-one help as possible. If an option you're considering gives you a 1-800 number to call for support, try calling it. See how long it takes to reach someone. And ask where they are. Are they available 24/7? Is there a language barrier? Will you have someone you can call who knows you by name, and not as a customer number?

This isn't meant to be a comprehensive list of questions, but it should get you off to a running start. This process is no different from buying a car or any other large-scale tool—there's a lot to consider, a lot to gain and a whole lot to learn.

Closing Thoughts

Knowing your tools, identifying people you can depend on for help, choosing the right solution, gathering your data and a simple plan for pain-free change are all that stand between you and a paper-free job management system. Take any version of this advice that you'd like—make it your own. Do what works for you and your crew. Don't do what doesn't feel necessary. The ultimate reward—life after paperwork—is waiting for you just on the other side. \\ \frac{\tau}{\tau}









Thursday, April 13th 2017 9am - 5pm Colorado Convention Center

Sponsored By:













Register Here:

https://cai-rmc.wildapricot.org/event-2392705





Beth Ziesenis,

ow that you've cleared the deck of all your other New Year's Resolutions, you might consider adding "Get Organized" to your digital to-do list. Every one of these tools will help save you time (and money!) so you can concentrate on your residents and get ready for a great year.

Here are 10 tech tools to help you organize several areas of your life to begin the new year with everything in its place.



Organize Your Passwords lastpass.com \$0 for the basic version or \$12/year for deluxe

If you do nothing else in the new year, at least get a grip on your passwords. LastPass saves all the passwords in its vault so you don't have to keep using the sticky note system around your computer monitor. Use the Security Challenge button to discover all the usernames and passwords for every site you've visited – then let LastPass identify duplicate and weak passwords to replace them with safer choices.

Also check out: 1Password, Dashlane



Contactually.com Starting at \$29/month

If your contacts are basically in one big pile in your contacts tab, Contactually can help. With an entertaining game (as entertaining as contact sorting can be), you can quickly toss your contacts into "buckets" to get them organized. Contactually is also a CRM that helps you track leads, find contacts on social media, view opportunities and keep your sales projects organized.

Also check out: FullContact, Insight.ly



Unroll.me



Organize Your Bits and Pieces

evernote.com

\$0 for the basic version or paid plans starting at \$34.99/year

Evemote

Evernote is the ultimate organizer for all the random bits of information you need to save. From photos of your buildings to board meeting notes, Evernote saves anything that can be stored in electronic format. You can organize information globally into "notebooks" or use tags to link individual items together. Everything you upload is searchable (even handwritten notes!). The free version lets you synchronize across two devices, while the paid versions offer unlimited synchronization, offline access and more.

Also check out: Microsoft OneNote, Google Keep.

Organize Your Email Free

Between social media notifications and the weekly newsletters and the monthly industry updates, your inbox is clogged with information that may interest you but ends up overwhelming you. Unroll. me sweeps through your web-based inbox to list all your subscriptions. Then it gives you the option of unsubscribing from each one with a click or organizing the ones you want to keep into a daily or weekly digest. That way you can get one email with links to all your subscriptions instead of a stream of inbox-clogging newsletters that you never get around to reading.



Google Photos



Organize Your Photos google.com/photos Free

Chances are you have approximately 4,532 photos on your phone — everything from photos of your board members to your kids to pictures of your thumb. It's almost impossible to find what you're looking for unless you spend hours downloading and organizing... unless you're using Google Photos. You can set Google Photos to automatically download your photos from your devices. Once your images are in its system, Google uses advanced image recognition technology to automatically organize your images by person, place or thing. If you search for the address of one of your buildings, for example, Google will scan your entire image library to display all images from that address. What's more, Google will store all your media (including video!) for free forever.



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000

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Stop scouring your shoeboxes for that one credit card statement from two years ago. FileThis lets you hook up accounts that have statements, such as bills, credit cards, banking and more. The service automatically collects the statements and organizes them into folders on Dropbox or other cloud-storage services.



CareZone



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carezone.com

Free

CareZone is the perfect place to organize your health information -- and, maybe more importantly, -- the health info of someone you care for. The app lets you scan prescriptions to track refills, doses and usage. You can also keep track of symptoms, organize medical appointments and collect critical documents.





If you have ever fumbled in a taxi to find the name of your hotel, Triplt can help. Just forward every electronic travel confirmation you receive to plans@tripit.com, and Triplt will convert all the details into an itinerary at your fingertips, automatically grouped by trip and organized together. When you leave for a client visit, your travel schedule is organized into digital cards you can flip through on your mobile device to see confirmation numbers, flight times, hotel locations and even the weather where you're headed. The pro version keeps an eye on flight prices and notifies you when the price drops below what you paid.

Also check out TripCase, WorldMate



Organize Your Family Schedules cozi.com

\$0 for the basic version or Cozi Gold for \$19.99/year

Having trouble keeping track of your busy life, much less your spouse's and kids? Cozi Family Organizer brings everyone's schedules together for an at-a-glance look at your busy family so you can focus on your residents. You can also share to-do and grocery lists, as well as a family journal to cherish memories.



Organize Your Finances mint.com Free

Mint has been one of the top financial organization and budgeting systems for many years. Once you connect your accounts, Mint gives you a snapshot of your finances, helps you create a budget, lets you pay your bills and keeps an eye on your investments. Alerts tell you about suspicious activity, upcoming bills and even bank fees you might overlook. You can even get a heads up when you exceed your budget. $\ensuremath{\\hat{A}}$

Beth Ziesenis is Your Nerdy Best Friend. She is the author of several books on technology including Nerd Know-How: The 27+ Best Apps for Work ... & How to Use 'Em! Beth travels the country talking to organizations about free and bargain technology.

Recognition of Continued Support of CAI!

Thank you to Tyleen Ortiz with Hammersmith Management. Tyleen recruited seven new manager members in December—that's awesome and shows her and her company's commitment to education, advocacy and networking with CAI.

id you know that you have a chance of winning a prize and recognition when you recruit new members?

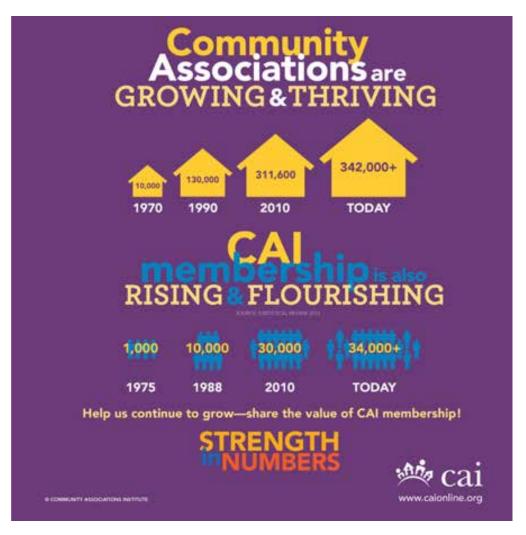
CAI has set a goal to reach 35,000 members and grow even stronger by the 2017 Annual Conference, May 3–6 in Las Vegas. Currently home to more than 34,000 members, we need your help! There's no more effective way to spread the word about CAI than through you—members building membership.

The Recruiter Club recognizes CAI members who recruit new members. It rewards members who achieve progressively higher levels of new member recruitment.

Each time you recruit a new member, you receive one credit toward your membership recruitment total.

The more members you recruit, the more prestigious your recognition and you'll increase your eligibility for campaign rewards and to be named Recruiter of the Month—and potentially Recruiter of the Year!

To receive recruitment credit, write your name and company on each membership application you provide to prospective members. Each month, one recruiter will be selected as Recruiter of the Month based on their number of recruits in a one-month period. The Recruiter of the Month with up to five new recruits will win a prize valued at \$100. The Recruiter of the Month with more than five recruits will win a prize valued at \$200. If you forget to add your name and company to a membership application, simply call CAI at (888) 224-4321 to add yourself as the recruiter. •





Social Media and Your Association:

MAKE ENGAGEMENT A GOAL IN 2017





Joe Jackson, Hammersmith Management

ocial media. Whether you love it, hate it or just don't understand it, the technology has undeniably become a force within today's culture. And if that bothers you, I'm willing to bet you fall into either camp "hate it" or "don't understand it."

As a "Millennial" who studied social media throughout college and worked in it in some capacity for the entirety of my professional career, I'll admit that I'm at an advantage when it comes to using the technology, perhaps even more than many of my peers. But I certainly don't believe you need a specialized degree to

use social media to your benefit. Just ask my grandmother—you can message her on Facebook!

And she's not alone: Facebook has 1.91 billion monthly users, and photo-sharing service Instagram—a subsidiary of Facebook—claims 600 million. Snapchat, Twitter, Swarm, Pinterest...the list of social networks is growing exhaustive, and it seems there's always a new one around the corner with a new feature to occupy our collective attentions.

And the astute have taken notice. Because we as a society have adopted social media into our lives in droves, companies and many non-profit organizations have also begun utilizing the medium to meet us, their audiences, where we live: online. And they've reaped the rewards in the form of increased sales, donations and what's known in the social media world as "engagement."

Before I go any further, first let me define "engagement" in the way that I'm using it. What is it, and why is it important? "Engagement" in terms of social media can mean a number of things, but in the broadest sense, I like to think of it as a measure of the strength and quality of the conversation you're having with your audience. Notice I used the word "conversation." That means true engagement is both projecting your message in a way that it is well received, but also using the medium as a listening channel for feedback from your audience.

As community managers and leaders who have engaged ourselves in the operation of our associations either as part of our careers or volunteer commitments, we should recognize the importance of engaging homeowners in the process. When people become engaged in their community, they tend to join and form committees, expanding homeowner involvement, lightening the load for the board of directors and allowing the community to accomplish things it couldn't before. Social events are held, neighbors meet one another and conflicts are reduced. (It's hard to stay mad at someone you met at the community holiday party.)

Engaged homeowners help write newsletters, which inform your community's residents of changes that will impact them and how their assessments are being used for the betterment of the community, which leads to fewer complaints and less hard feelings about paying them.

Think of social media as a digital extension of all of these things. It's a meeting space where ideas are shared, it's a living community news ticker where announcements and updates can be broadcasted instantaneously, it's a neighborhood photo album where memories

are preserved, and so much more. It's not something that has to be scary or intimidating.

Because Facebook is the most ubiquitous and user friendly, my advice is to start there. Creating a Facebook page is simple, but requires you to have your own personal account (even if you don't fill out all of the information), so setting that up is the first step. Once you've done that, you can create your community's page by clicking "home," finding and clicking "pages" in the left sidebar and clicking "create page" in the upper right hand corner. It will walk you through the steps of adding information, and inviting other people to help you moderate it.

"'Engagement' in terms of social media can mean a number of things, but in the broadest sense, I like to think of it as a measure of the strength and quality of the conversation you're having with your audience."

As a board member looking to utilize Facebook for your community, I would advise you to familiarize yourself with Facebook's status update and event announcement features to start. Be sure to post things like board meeting dates and times, club and committee meetings, pool openings and closings and other community events.

When announcing the page to the community (either in an email or newsletter, or with community signage), be sure to stress that the Facebook page is a community informational resource and gathering space for positivity, and that while constructive criticism will be welcomed and appreciated through the channel's private communication methods (Facebook has a messaging feature for instantaneous, private chatting), negativity and public gossip will not be tolerated.

You can moderate this in Facebook's setting panel, and control whether to allow other people to publicly post to the page or not, as well as to filter profanity and other words of your choosing. The platform makes it very easy to maintain a handle on the type of conversation that takes place, and the controls are intuitive.

Social media platforms like Facebook have such potential to increase engagement within community associations, yet have been historically underutilized. I'd encourage you to discuss it at your next board meeting and commit to making social media a priority in 2017. If you're a board member and use the services of a management company, you might even discuss social media management with your manager, as some companies have now started to offer this as an additional service.

Make it your resolution to commit to engaging your community with social media in 2017, and I have no doubt you'll see your efforts pay off. •





Shad Parrish,BrightView
Landscape
Services

olorado is home to the nation's (and some would argue the world's) most picturesque landscape, both in terms of the aweinspiring mountains and forests, as well as the natural beauty around our homes, parks, and places of business. And as the name of our most prominent business, economic, and entertainment center (Denver Tech Center) would suggest, a hub of innovation and technology-based enterprises.

With two such highly prized components of our lives, one would expect them to intersect. One of those

intersection points is in regards to how the landscape industry uses technology to its advantage. Innovation and technology can be found in almost every aspect of our business; from estimating work and creating proposals, to executing service and completing projects, to management of various services, to ensuring sustainability and educating our clients.

Many companies are currently using some form of online programs to evaluate, measure and estimate landscape maintenance services for our Homeowner Associations. These tools are simply more accurate, faster and help bring service partners and Community Managers onto the same page as detailed maps can be shared which ensure what was bid, is truly what belongs to a particular association.

New technology is also clearly visible in the equipment being used today, as well as how work is carried out. Machinery powered by alternate fuel sources such as propane or electric are becoming more commonplace. Simple innovations such as maintenance equipment that performs multiple tasks that previously required various pieces of equipment are used by contractors who work to maximize quality and productivity. Examples include mowers equipped with high-powered blowers that cleanup grass clippings immediately after they are mowed, and combination string trimmers / sidewalks edgers that keep employees on task instead of walking to and from the truck.

While not a new invention, or computer-based application, there has been an ongoing movement to incorporate innovation and sustainability into our landscapes. Through proper planning and execution, a strategic landscape management plan can help meet environmental objectives. Horticultural improvements, reducing water consumption and sending less waste to landfills can minimize your environmental footprint. Among the means to help achieve sustainability initiatives: Reduce potable water use, energy, emissions and landscape waste; keep stormwater on site for use towards irrigating the landscape; landscape design and installation that increases shade on hardscape areas; preservation of on-site trees; greater incorporation of landscapes in urban settings.

Perhaps the most meaningful use of technology is in regards to the control of one of our most precious natural resources; our water. While many are familiar with "Smart" or ET (ET stands for Evapotranspiration) irrigation controllers, the functionality continues to progress. We can now program irrigation systems

remotely, turn them on and off from our cell phones (everything has an "app") determine leaks or breaks in underground lines and automatically shut down systems to avoid waste, and even determine the exact moisture content of the soil in a given area. These innovations not only ensure water is being applied in the most appropriate manner (thus conserving millions of gallons of water each year in Colorado), they save tremendous amounts of money and represent a very impressive Return on Investment.

While nothing will replace a horticultural professional managing landscape services, there are multiple tools that exist currently, and that are being developed constantly, that help make management more precise, equating to better landscape care and greater customer service. Applications exist where a "geo-fence" can be created, specifically outlining the boundaries of a given property. This capability alone can be immensely useful for Community

"Innovation and technology can be found in almost every aspect of our business; from estimating work and creating proposals, to executing service and completing projects, to management of various services, to ensuring sustainability and educating our clients."

Managers to identify an existing need on a given Association, and to communicate both with homeowners and service partners. Any time an employee with a cell phone equipped with the application is within that geo-fence, that employee can be "tagged" with a date and time stamp, tying them to that specific location. Pictures can be uploaded to the cloud, along with weather details for that area, voice notes, and the ability to systematically organize such documentation to determine things like hours worked on a given project, progress details and completion documentation.

Technology is everywhere, and certainly has its advantages in the landscape industry. And while it helps make things better in some areas, it is not to be treated as a substitute for good ole' fashioned hard work, direct personal communication (yep, face to face meetings still are the most effective in most cases) and handson experience.

Shad Parrish is 16 year landscape industry professional, a 9 year employee of BrightView Landscape Services (formerly ValleyCrest) and a continual trusted resource for Association Managers.

Choosing a Storage Solution for Your HOA



Erin Perczak,Litigation Solutions
Inc.

anaging and accessing storage for day to day documents and communications is a struggle in any profession today. It is critical to choose the right solution in an environment where data retention policies may not exist, may not be enforced, or may change year over year. This type of situation exists in nearly every HOA. Exploring the pros and cons to different data storage systems and environments is essential for the HOA board each year. Boards usually need to walk a tightrope between cost consciousness on solutions for the

association while having to balance ease of use, ease of backup, and ease of changing user credentials year over year. Today, there are two primary high-level solutions for boards to consider: Onsite Storage and Cloud Storage.

Onsite Storage

Historically associations and small businesses have been drawn to this solution because of the ease of implementation of local storage and the minimal initial investment to start. This solution commonly involves the use of local machines where either each board member manages their records and communications on a laptop or desktop environment, or a local IT resource controls the environment. This solution can be cost effective as it usually involves less technical expertise and data storage costs are manageable. The risk to this solution tends to be in data security. Finding a local IT expert who is truly versed in the area of data and access security can be difficult and expensive. Additionally, costs can run up with managing multiple back-ups to stem the risk of data loss. As board members change, there is also additional work to set up new users, dealing with accessibility issues of previous board member information, collection and passing on of duplicative information, and documentation.

Cloud Storage

Cloud storage solutions have become commonplace in many industries and carry with them a host of collaborative offerings in addition to simple backup storage locations. There are many offerings for simple remote backup. These include quick installation

at an onsite location, taking backups locally, and then uploaded to an offsite shared storage location. Because of the popularity of offsite storage solutions, the volume of companies and individuals using them has drastically increased which in turn increased competition, driving down prices for the consumer. Users also have a large selection of providers to choose from geographically. One customer may want to select a vendor whose hardware is in nearby proximity (in case they want to stop by and quickly import or export large amounts of data), another customer may choose a storage provider located in another region to ensure a local natural disaster won't cause any disruption in uptime.

More advanced cloud solution providers, like Google, also offer attractive solutions for organizations trying to avoid the expensive software licensing fees that commonly come with running and supporting a local environment. The ability to share ideas and documents in real time, update spreadsheets and newsletter as a team instead of separately, and having shared mail stores are all reasons why these types of environments have grown in popularity. Using a Cloud solutions provider negates the need for local resources and provides a group storage space where work product and historical documents can all be stored and backed up automatically. One of the fastest adopters of this technology and workflow has been schools, where all that is required for a student to have access is a Chromebook. There is usually a monthly cost associated with these solutions, and in some cases, associations are hesitant to build these costs into their monthly operating budget.

The decision between onsite vs. cloud storage should certainly depend on comfort level by the HOA board and availability of local IT resources. Costs that may be saved in the short term by using onsite storage may end up costing the association more in the long run if it takes more time to manage the environment and provide support to its users. In contrast, if an association already has an onsite storage system in place, the time undertaken to transfer everything to the cloud and engage training for end users may not offset the benefits of making the move. Regardless of the solution an association uses, it is important that the board discusses data retention policies and best practices in addition to any backup solution deployed. Technology has drastically changed the conveniences in our lives, but there will always be a need for a sound, well-planned workflow to any technical solution.

Erin Perczak is CTO of Litigation Solutions Inc., a Denver based litigation solutions provider.



Issue	Topic	Article Due Date
April	Beautification/Enhancements	02/27/2017
May	Ground Maintenance	03/27/2017
June	Legal	04/24/2017
July	Mother Nature	05/26/2017
August	Finance	06/26/2017
September	Construction	07/28/2017
October	Security/Safety	08/25/2015
Nov/Dec	Maintenance & Mechanical	09/29/2017



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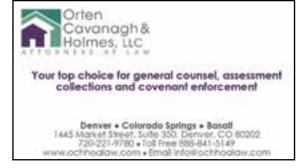
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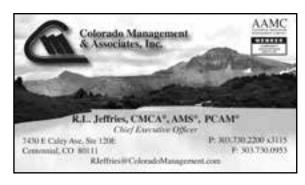
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10	DORA Day & Happy Hour	Thu		
Fri	Fri Fort Collins	20 Thu	HOA Roundtable Boulder	
10 Fri	New or Used Member Orientation Fort Collins	20 Thu	Manager's Lunch Westminster	
25	25 Sat Board Leadership Development Program Denver	JUNE		
		23 Fri	Annual Golf Tournament Thornton	
APRIL		AUGUS	T	
5	M-100	AUGUST		
Wed	Beaver Creek	4 Fri	Annual Summer Carnival Centennial	

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