

## My Neighborhood in the Cloud

By Barrett W. Knudsen

First of all, we at BK Business Systems want to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a happy and joyous holiday season.

My wife and I live in a lovely Burien, Washington neighborhood. Our neighbors are friendly and we belong to a community association that plans various activities during the year: an Easter Egg Hunt for the kids, an annual neighborhood-wide garage sale, a summer festival with music (in which I get to play my guitar and sing), a salmon cookout and a holiday festival lights judging contest. As you might imagine, coordinating the events, the people, things like eggs, tents, prizes, bouncy toys for the kids, etc. can be quite a task. We need some better way of communicating than phone calls and emails.

We put out a quarterly newsletter which needs to be reviewed and approved by a Communications Committee. At this time, we are trying to develop and circulate to the Board a set of Newsletter Guidelines for feedback and eventual approval. Again, we need some better way of communicating than phone calls and emails.

Wouldn't you know it, they elected me President for the coming year. I had been so happy for so many years serving my community as its Treasurer. But they twisted my arm and appealed to my ego. Besides, a CPA decided to join the Board and I was no longer the only person who understood accounting well enough to keep the books. One great excuse for not being President all these years went down the tubes.

The organization by-laws state that it is the President's job to develop and maintain a calendar for the year's events, so I decided that, with all the computerized tools I had at my disposal, I could certainly find a way to make my own life easier.

In the past, we've written to you about Microsoft SharePoint. SharePoint has the ability to create and maintain individual and company-wide calendars. It's very name suggests that you can share something. You can share tasks. You can share emails. Emails between two people are pretty easy and efficient. Emails among more than two people can get really messy.

I'm thinking about using SharePoint as a starting point for our initial Newsletter Guidelines document. I can share it with my entire Board. Individual members can suggest changes which can be reviewed by the entire group without compromising the original document. When we agree on changes, we can fold them into the original copy and continue with the approval process. We don't have to have noisy, messy meetings taking people's valuable time to modify our evolving work in progress. We can come to a meeting with a finalized document for quick, final approval by the board as a whole.

The same thing goes for managing an event. We can get it on the overall calendar for the appropriate managing committee, we can add members to the managing team, they can share and update to-do lists and move reasonably efficiently toward a joyful conclusion. When committees are working on something in SharePoint, they can share their progress with the overall board and it can be approved and presented to the monthly Board meeting without long discussions.

And, through Cloud based SharePoint services, the entire process can be accomplished at each members' home computer, at a low cost, just like surfing the Internet. True collaboration.

If you'd like to know more about SharePoint Services in the Cloud...

**Call** Barrett Knudsen at:

**BK Business Systems...206-246-2525**



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# Happy Holidays !

*To all of you and your families, from all of us at  
BK Business Systems, Inc.*

*Barrett, Patty & Jason Knudsen  
Dan Smith, Steve Marth  
Dan Hartman, Daniel Fletcher*



BK Business Systems

**31 Years Serving Washington State Businesses**

