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Management & IT Tips, Tricks & Resources

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“Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.
General recognition of this fact is shown in the proverbial phrase
"It is the busiest man who has time to spare."
C. Northcote Parkinson, 1909 – 1993

NAM: *Management & IT Tips, Tricks & Resources* is a weekly Internet newsletter for Non-Profit organizations (NPOs), published for the Non-profit Association of the Midlands, courtesy of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Executive MBA Program. It provides a compilation of useful Internet sites, free or low cost computer applications, and productivity tips for office applications that will be of use to NPO paid and volunteer staff.



The newsletter has four sections:

Office Productivity: Focuses on tips and tricks for users of Microsoft Windows, Internet Explorer, Word, and PowerPoint.

CyberSites: Highlights Internet sites of use or interest to website developers, technology managers and computer users.

NPO Executive's Resources: Offers websites of interest to non-profit organization, Senior Managers.

NPO Manager Resources: Offers websites of interest to non-profit organization functional and program managers.

The NAM *Management & IT Tips, Tricks & Resources* newsletter is compiled and edited by Curt Bayer, Director of Executive Education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Business Administration for the non-commercial use of non-profit organizations and their staffs. Recommended additions & links to the newsletter are welcome. Send them to: curtbayer@cox.net

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“People are lonely
because they build walls instead of bridges”
Joseph F. Newton

Word:

Convert Those PDF's To Word. Get That Text Back! – “Anyone who has been involved in the computer game for more than a little while knows what a PDF is. PDF is a file format that stands for Portable Document Format. A PDF is meant to be non-editable and the body of the document is an image and not editable, or selectable text. So if you received a document of say names and email addresses in a file called Leads.PDF. You can open the document, print the document and even send the document on to others. But if you want to import that information into your email address book, an excel spreadsheet or otherwise manipulate the data - you just can't. I looked around the web and then I searched good old MakeUseOf.com and found this article by Aibek from January of this year. He ran down some popular free PDF tools. And low and behold he listed exactly what I needed. It's called.....Free PDF to Word Doc Converter.” <http://www.hellopdf.com/index.php>

Microsoft Office applications tips and tricks designed to help make your time on the computer easier and more productive.

PowerPoint:

Build a quick training presentation using PowerPoint's Photo Album feature – “Putting together an educational slide show doesn't have to be labor intensive. Using PowerPoint's Photo Album tool, you can quickly assemble a series of screen shots and text slides for distribution as a training resource or as part of an informational package.”

<http://blogs.techrepublic.com.com/msoffice/?p=812&tag=nl.e056>

Free 3-D shapes and objects template for PowerPoint 2007 - “You can create memorable and attractive PowerPoint 2007 presentations with the professionally-designed slides in this free template. Use the shape, animation, and graphic effects in these slides to add 3-D background designs, rounded buttons, eye-catching visual aids, books with moving pages, and even an animated scale to your presentation.”

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint/HA102855891033.aspx?pid=CH103504611033>

Excel:

Sorting Excel 2007 Data on Multiple Columns – “If your Excel 2007 worksheet has become quite large, using the Sort dialog box to sort on multiple columns can make it easier to find the data you need. The Sort dialog box lets you tell Excel what column to sort on next if two cells in the main sort column contain the same value or data.” More.

http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/sorting-excel-2007-data-on-multiple-columns.html?cid=dn_article

Add style to your Microsoft Office Excel worksheet – “Find out how to create a formatting style that you can save with your workbook and use whenever you format information with the same attributes.”

http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel/HA011101991033.aspx?ION_CL=3569

MS Windows:

Restart or Shut Down a Locked-Up Computer in Windows Vista – “In some cases, Windows fails to respond to keyboard and mouse commands. To restart or shut down a locked-up computer, you can try pressing special key combinations.”

http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/how-to-restart-or-shut-down-a-lockedup-computer-in.html?cid=dn_article

Favorite Links in Vista – “Delves into the Favorite Links list feature and shows you how to customize it to suit your needs and to take full advantage of its features.” <http://blogs.techrepublic.com.com/window-on-windows/?p=1256&tag=nl.e132>



“As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say.
I just watch what they do.”
Andrew Carnegie

Web Surf & Search:

Wolfram|Alpha - “The first step in an ambitious, long-term project to make all systematic knowledge immediately computable by anyone. Enter your question or calculation, and Wolfram|Alpha uses its built-in algorithms and a growing collection of data to compute the answer. Based on a new kind of knowledge-based computing.” <http://www.wolframalpha.com/>

Google Squared – “New search tool by Google that collects facts from the web and presents them in tabular interface, similar to a spreadsheet. When you search for a particular item in Google Squared, say dogs, it organizes search results and displays different breeds of dogs and corresponding facts such as description, images, height, life span and many other features in a tabular manner.” <http://www.google.com/squared>

Searching the Internet - A Primer – “This .pdf document is designed to give you the resources that will allow you to search the Internet for the various information needs that are required for your business, profession or special interest.” <http://awarenesswatch.virtualprivatelibrary.net/V7N6.pdf>

Websites:

A Nonprofit's Guide to Building Simple, Low-Cost Websites – “A well-designed, user-friendly website can help you engage new members, raise money, and communicate with decision-makers. But creating this site affordably, and finding the right tools to build and host it, can be a challenge — especially when you are relying on in-house talent with little or no web-development expertise.” <http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/webbuilding/page11890.cfm>

Technical:

Microsoft wants to help you fix Windows – “Microsoft has added a new Web site to its online support resources called Fix it. Troubleshooting common problems with Microsoft applications and operating systems is theoretically just a few clicks away.” <http://blogs.techrepublic.com.com/window-on-windows/?p=869&tag=nl.e064>

10 ways to turn your mobile phone into an efficient business tool – “Increasingly sophisticated smartphone capabilities are making it easier for road warriors to accomplish business tasks. These tips will help maximize your mobile phone productivity.” <http://downloads.techrepublic.com.com/abstract.aspx?docid=1101121&tag=nl.e072>

Tap into a Library of Open Source Text, Photos, and Music – “Looking for photos, video, text, or music for a multimedia project, but don't have the budget to license anything? No worries: The Internet Archive has a library of free, open source, and Creative Commons content ready to be used.” <http://www.archive.org/index.php>

How to Use a USB Jump Drive Like a Super Geek with Tech Toolkit 2.0 – “So you fancy yourself the technical advisor out of your clique? If true, then The Tech Toolkit 2.0 is for you! I am talking everything here. They have the best free applications for everything including anti-virus, virus/spyware removal, password recovery and even DVD burning. The magic behind this baby is that it comes with a downloader so that you can use your jump drive to launch a program. That program grabs the latest and greatest versions of a whole bunch of portable tools. With that same program (Ketarin) you can keep your applications updated as well.” <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/use-the-tech-toolkit-2-0-to-supercharge-your-thumb-drive-windows/>

Highlights sites of use
or interest to website
developers, computer
users and
information
technology
managers.



“The person who is devoted to paperwork has lost the initiative.
He is dealing with things that are brought to his notice, having ceased to notice anything for himself.
He has been essentially defeated in his job.”
C. Northcote Parkinson, 1909 - 1993

General Management:

7 pitfalls to avoid when delegating – “Many leaders worry about being too hard or too soft on their people when they're handing out assignments, according to Ron Ashkenas and Robert Schaffer. Among the "sins" they say are most common: Not establishing clear consequences, picking fuzzy goals and setting too many goals.” <http://smartblogs.com/workforce/2009/08/04/7-deadly-sins-of-delegating/>

Things they wish they had known – “Art Petty ponders the leadership lessons he wishes someone had told him early on. Among the most important, he writes: Establishing your credibility. "Credibility is your most valuable currency as a professional and a leader," he writes. "Everything you do must reinforce your credibility." <http://tinyurl.com/m2r7ut>

How to Derive a Value Proposition – “What do you do better than anyone does? What does your company offer that competitors can't match? Why would customers buy one company's product or service as opposed to another's? These are all definitions of a critical business concept called "value proposition." Here's a litmus test and five-step process.” <http://blogs.bnet.com/ceo/?p=2579&tag=nl.rSINGLE>

How to Think Strategically: Six Approaches – “We use and misuse the word "strategy" constantly in civil society. Thus it's interesting to examine what it actually means to think strategically and how we might encourage that in our organizations. This is something explored by Michael Watkins in his 2007 Harvard Business review article on How to Think Strategically. He recommends six ways to learn this skill: immersion, apprenticeships, simulations, game-theory training, case-based education, and cognitive reshaping.” http://discussionleader.hbsp.com/watkins/2007/04/how_to_think_strategically_1.html

Nonprofit Management:

Boards Should Only Have Three Committees! - “Boards tend to be frustrated with their committees, but often don't know what to do about them. Use this article to kick off a common-sense discussion and make the changes you know you should be making! Most nonprofit organizations have too many board committees doing too little work. A typical nonprofit has several committees, such as Finance, Personnel, Development, and of course an Executive Committee. Often, when one committee malfunctions, the board appoints another. When none of this actually produces any appreciable increase in donations, the board may then charter a Major Gifts Committee to go after big donors. Therefore, in most cases, nonprofits do better by replacing this cumbersome structure with a simple three-committee structure consisting of Internal Affairs, External Affairs, and Governance . . . “ <http://www.blueavocado.org/node/385>

A Nonprofit Dashboard and Signal Light for Boards – “The dashboard in a car gives an instant update on many important factors: speed, gas left in the tank, engine temperature, whether the air conditioner is on. If your dashboard isn't working, it's unnerving and upsetting. But at the same time, when it is working, you glance at it from time to time but you don't look at it constantly. A nonprofit dashboard is similar: it gives important information to decision makers such as executives and boards in a quick-read way. But a dashboard has limitations: it doesn't tell you if you're taking the right road to Chicago, or more importantly, whether you should be going to Chicago at all! The idea of making data -- especially financial data -- easily readable for board members is not a new one. Building on that basic idea, we've added two critical features:” <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/nonprofit-dashboard-and-signal-light-boards>

Information
and websites of
interest to
non-profit
organization
senior
managers.



“The art of progress is to preserve order amid change
and to preserve change amid order.”
Alfred North Whitehead, 1861 - 1947

Marketing & Resource Raising:

New Report Shows Donor Advised Funds Provide the Majority of Grant Funding – “Just how vital are donor advised funds to the health and welfare of our communities—now and in the future? A new Council on Foundations’ report reveals a host of interesting facts about these funds and their role in addressing societal needs. For example, did you know that... Community foundations hold more than half (53 percent) of the estimated \$31 billion currently held in donor advised funds? Donor advised funds comprise about 33 percent of the community foundation sector’s total assets of over \$50 billion, yet make up 62 percent of the community foundation sector’s annual grants?”

<http://www.cof.org/council/prdetail.cfm?ItemNumber=14659&navItemNumber=3990>

Great Mash-Up Of E-Philanthropy, Social Networking, And Online Advocacy – “The basic idea is that nonprofits can register (for free), and then their stakeholders, friends, and donors can create individualized gift registries for themselves. That way, they can show their loved ones what sort of donations for positive social change they like to have as birthday presents - as an alternative to another ornamental doily.” http://blog.deborah.elizabeth.finn.com/blog/_archives/2007/9/3/3205343.html

Information of interest to non-profit organization functional and program managers.

Program & Project Management:

5 Tips for Quick, Well-Run Projects – “Agile development may have been designed for software engineers, but it can be an effective way to complete almost any kind of project -- if you follow some key guidelines.”

http://www.inc.com/magazine/20090501/not-just-for-techies.html?partner=newsletter_Success

TheBigPicture—”Free online organizer & innovative project manager. Combines things like tasks, to-dos, calendar and other project management related features into an intuitive mind map style interface. Projects can be created using drag and drop circles and events can be added to the calendar using suggestion box pop ups. Each and every data on the interface can be moved around and rearranged. Original, intuitive and definitely a new way to manage tasks.” <http://thebigpic.org/>

Personal Productivity:

Free PDF Packed with iPhone Tips, Tricks, and How-To Goodness – “Do you know how to get the most out of your iPhone? Can you use it as a flash drive? Convert music to ringtones? Extend your battery life? Your iPhone has so much potential that odds are good you're only tapping a small part of what it can do.” <http://blogs.bnet.com/businesstips/?p=4505&tag=nl.rSINGLE>

Cynergy Systems Map - “Google Maps mash up that lets you view US census data online. Simply enter any zip code and the application will display the corresponding census data sets such as age and ethnic distribution, household and population stats, housing units and vacancy rates” <http://www.cynergysystems.com/blogs/blogs/andrew.trice/census/#>

DRoster Employee Scheduling Software – “If you're responsible for employee scheduling, you know what a challenge—and pain in the neck—it can be. You've got to cover all the shifts on all the days, keeping track of hours assigned, who can work when, and about a zillion other variables. Typically this is all done on something like a desk calendar (if you're lucky) or the back of an envelope (if you're not). It would be nice to clean this process up a bit, don't you think? DRoster is a free employee scheduling tool.” <http://www.freedownloadaday.com/2009/07/23/droster-employee-scheduling-software/>