



PIPELINE INSIDE THE DESIGN

September 2009

Letter from the President

by Bret Weiss, PE

The past four years have been a challenging time in the engineering industry, as well as for all of our clients. Money is in short supply, unemployment is high, and personal levels of stress are excessive. It appears that our state will be in this same position for the next 12-18 months, although we are all hopeful for a quicker turn around.

It is important to fall back on your values during difficult times, focusing on your job and your ability to help your clients and organization. Each organization is different and you shouldn't assume that you need to be the same as another similar organization. You need to find a way to treat your staff and clients as close to normal as possible, so when the good times return, they know you were looking out for them when times were tough.

We have made some difficult decisions at WSB related to staffing, salary increases, and spending, but we tried to implement these changes with the future in mind. We expect to emerge from this downturn stronger than when we went into it. We are investing in education, health programs, and strategic staff to improve our business. We have remained a very positive and forward-looking organization because we all are focused on doing our individual jobs the best that we can. If we all can do this, the organization can't help but succeed!



Should I Invest in a GIS?

Does your work involve managing information that can be linked to geographic locations?

Getting the most from your GIS Investment

Implementing Geographic Information System technology into an organization is rather daunting, especially when it involves multiple platforms, sites, and mobile devices. This can be further complicated by integration requirements with other information systems such as Computerized Maintenance Management Systems, document management solutions, and financial packages. Working with an experienced implementation specialist can minimize costs, quickly deliver results to Council, design a scalable system that grows with your needs, and help make staff more efficient by getting them excited, informed, and involved.

Understanding your software/hardware needs

Implementing a software system is an expensive proposition requiring valuable time and effort from key staff with user acceptance often hanging in the balance. WSB's GIS team leader, John Mackiewicz, puts over 10 years of experience with GIS technology to work for our clients by focusing on designing the system to meet decision maker's high level requirements. John explains what his implementation experience brings to a project - "Understanding the ultimate goal of a system and analyzing bottlenecks accordingly allows us to design efficient systems - easily saving upwards of \$20,000 in up front costs and eliminating costly monthly service fees for web services."

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Welcome to the Neighborhood

WSB is proud to be selected as City/Township Engineer for the following communities:



WSB is committed to building on existing success and supporting the increasing challenges and efficiencies of these communities.



Should I Invest in a GIS? (con't from cover)

John also explains that a knowledgeable independent eye is often needed when evaluating software. "Today's software marketplace is complex and requires in-depth knowledge of how web, desktop, and mobile systems integrate; licensing options; and database technology. By working with a system designer who understands all of the underlying platforms and technologies, you reduce the risk of overspending on software or designing a system that does not support your future requirements without costly software modifications. Taking it beyond what is available today - understanding what software will be available in the next three years - is critical in planning your system now."

Get Results Fast

In our current economic environment, it is critical to define and deliver Return on Investment for decision makers early in the process and revisit it throughout the implementation lifecycle. The success of an implementation will be judged on its ability to quickly raise the level of understanding and application of GIS within your organization. There should be no trial and error with the implementation process or development practices.

WSB Approach

WSB accomplishes the challenging task of providing everything needed to implement a GIS by offering an experienced team that breaks the complex system into parts, designs them to meet your needs, and assembles them into a seamless integrated system. Once the system is built and tested, we rely on our educational team to get your staff educated and motivated, guaranteeing success. The best system is of little use if your staff does not utilize every aspect of the system. Our GIS team makes certain that your staff understands not only how to use the GIS/asset management system, but how to operate more efficiently and make their jobs easier.

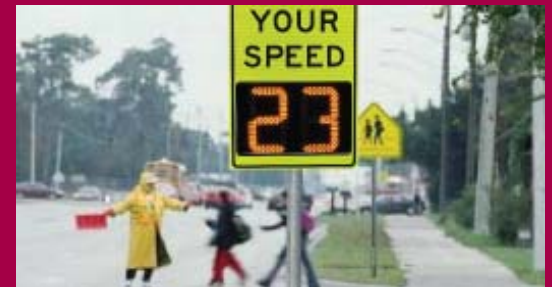
For more information on how WSB experts can assist you, contact John Mackiewicz at (763) 287-7194.



Driver Feedback Signs Reduce Speeds

We've all reacted to one of these signs...you know, the signs that flash our speed? The assumption can be made that you take your foot off the accelerator just to see if the sign actually works. Well then, the sign has successfully done its job. Oftentimes you see these signs on temporary, mobile units on a random road or construction project. WSB, in partnership with 3M™, recently introduced an interactive driver feedback (DFB) sign that is permanent with these features:

- High output LEDs
- Multiple programmable speed thresholds and display modes
- Superior operating software package
- Modular design



The DFB signs have been effective in speed limit transition zones, school zones, and other dangerous roadway areas. More drivers should take their foot off the accelerator in these areas...this DFB sign will help. The DFB sign has been proven to reduce speeds by 6-8 mph and cost as little as \$3,000.

For a comprehensive information package and answers to your questions, please visit wsbeng.com or call Kate Miner, PE at (877) 252.4900.

If you would like to receive the Pipeline via email, please contact Sarah Madson at smadson@wsbeng.com.



Leadership

Recognized for their extraordinary leadership abilities and contributions toward WSB's success, Andrea Moffatt and Jupe Hale have been jointly appointed to the Ownership Group. Both Andi and Jupe continually dedicate themselves to improving and securing infrastructure engineering and environmental projects.

Appointed to the Associate's Group are John Mackiewicz and Jack Forslund. John and Jack eagerly support company initiatives and development of new service areas, while sharing enthusiasm for the company, staff, and clients.

By forming the Technical Associate's Group, WSB's Board of Directors recognized individuals who have distinguished themselves technically and developed a reliable reputation with our clients. The first staff members appointed to the Technical Associates Group include Chuck Kochmann, Dave Vincent, Jeff Michniewicz, Merl Jewell, Mike Malszycki, Mike Molitor, Pete Helder, Phil Tipka, Rick Hauser, Scott Niemann, Ted Witkowski, and Tim Cartony.



Promoted staff (Not pictured: Jack Forslund and Phil Tipka)

WSB is on Twitter: Follow us!

Perhaps you already use Twitter to communicate with your friends, find out about breaking news, and keep up with technology and social media (or even political) leaders.

Now you can also stay current with what's happening at WSB, and connect with other WSB staff members through Twitter.

www.twitter.com/WSBEngineering



WSB Welcomes New Members to the Team!

Pictured above (left to right) Aaron Nelson, PE – Structural Engineer, Michael Keswin – Technical Graphic Designer, Sean Delmore, PE, PTOE – Traffic Engineer, Matt John, EIT – Graduate Engineer, and Kathy Eide – Engineering Technician. (Not pictured- Adam Harrington – Seasonal Construction and Scott Harrington – Seasonal Construction.)

WSB Joins in the Fight Against Leukemia and Lymphoma

WSB participated in the Twin Cities' 18th annual Dress Down for Leukemia & Lymphoma day and raised \$3,615! They were awarded 200 Twins tickets and celebrated by tailgating and attending a recent game. This is WSB's fifth year as the top fundraising company!



Ron Bray and Dave Hutton (right) cookin' up some dogs



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WSB SERVICES

Municipal



Transportation



Water Resources



Water / Wastewater



Traffic



Structural



Environmental



Construction Services



Surveying



Right of Way



GIS

Staff Certified for Bridge Safety Inspection

Registered engineer Jim Archer has recently become a Mn/DOT certified Bridge Safety Inspector. WSB Bridge Safety Inspectors now include Jim Archer and Barritt Lovelace. They are both certified to fill the roles of Bridge Inspection Team Leader and Assistant Bridge Inspector. Mn/DOT Bridge Safety Inspection certification requires a Minnesota PE registration, completion of training courses, passing a field proficiency test, five years of bridge inspection experience, and a refresher course every two years. Barritt and Jim provide comprehensive inspection and condition rating of in-service bridges throughout Minnesota to satisfy the National Bridge Inventory Requirements. The National Bridge Inventory was established in 1968 after the Silver Bridge collapse in West Virginia. Bridge inspections include examining the structure, evaluating the physical condition, and reporting the observations and evaluations on the bridge inspection report. Currently, WSB is the bridge safety program administrator for nine cities and counties. Bridge inspections serve two purposes – to ensure the safety of the structure, and to identify maintenance needs for the structure. Contact our Bridge Safety Inspectors at (763) 541-4800 to find out how they can assist you.



Archer and Lovelace – Mn/DOT certified Bridge Safety Inspectors