# OUR PATH TO AND RETREAT FROM SHAREPOINT

The Good, the Bad and the unfortunate surprises

# BEFORE THE CLOUD

House Clerk's office had a robust portal (albeit in Lotus Notes) for staff and members that handled:

- Staff Leave
- Purchase Orders
- Member listings
- Policies (lots and lots of them)
- Calendars and room reservation requests
- Group Visit planning and requests to the Capitol
- Ordering publications
- Framing and Certificate requests



## THE PLAN

- Move From Lotus to the cloud and Office365
- Redevelop our robust portal in SharePoint online
- Migrate all 375 mailboxes to Office365
- Evaluate feasibility of migrating applications to SharePoint and .Net environment
- Heck If Lotus Notes can do it, surely SharePoint is better!



Email and calendar migration went extremely well....

# EMAIL AND CALENDAR MIGRATION WENT GREAT

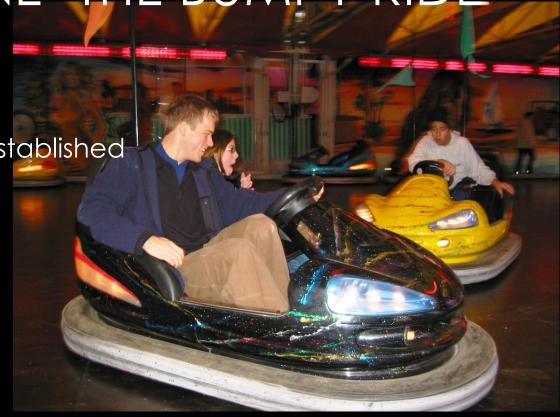
- Members and staff alike were very pleased (To death with Lotus Notes!)
- No email or folder structures were lost
- Very little preparation effort was required of users
- Users like the option of using the browser UI or ability to get more power from the Outlook client

Life is what happens when you're out making plans.....



# SHAREPOINT ONLINE- THE BUMPY RIDE

- Initial success with SharePoint online
  - Created our staff portal successfully
  - Use Active Directory for authentication and established SSO for email and portal
  - SharePoint provide a vast number of tools to accommodate many technical levels
    - Web UI, Designer, InfoPath or .Net
- With the successes came the bumps
  - Public pages
  - Sharing data
  - Calendar connection between application and exchange
  - Research continued and Microsoft / Consultants continued to promise



# THE GOOD

#### Staff Portal - Online



#### Lists and document storage

At Capitol Square		Meeting Setting	Meeting Type	Meeting Purpose	Meet Time	Room	Calendar Remarks	s House Members	Senators
All House Meetings		<b>= 10/10/201</b>	3						
Capitol Events and Visits		= 10/11/2013							
		Private	Citizen Group	Scenic Virginia Event	8:00 AM	House Room 3			
Reservations		<b>= 10/12/201</b>	3			recent 5			
Request a Room									
By Date	18	Private	Citizen Group	YMCA Model General Assembly Board Meeting	8:00 AM	House Room 2		Gilbert	Vogel
By Date with Filter		<b>= 10/15/201</b>	3						
By Room	H	Private	Legislative	Public Hearing Overflow	7:00 AM	House			
My Reservations	6	***************************************	Study	Table Hearing Overhous	71007111	Room C			
Bulk Change Visibility  All Reservations		Private	Staff	Public Hearing Set Up	8:00 AM	House Room D			
	Y.	Private	State Agency	Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority	8:00 AM	House Room 3			
Lists Tasks	Es	Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	5th Floor East Conference			
Committees						Room			
Rooms Room User		Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	5th Floor West Conference Room			
Permissions		Deliverte	Cities Comm	Missississ for Ossilla Hoslikass	0:00 414	7th Floor			
Config		Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	West			
Meeting Types						Conference Room			
Public Meetings Page		Public	Legislative Study	Modeling and Simulation Advisory Council	9:30 AM	4th Floor West Conference		Lingamfelter, Ward	Northam
Recycle Bin						Room			
All Site Content		Public	Senate Room	Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission	10:00 AM	Senate Room A		Albo, M.K. Cox, Joannou, Jones, Massie.	Colgan, Howell, Norment.
<									

# MORE ON THE GOOD

- Document management, collaboration and sharing
- Simple workflow type applications
- Approval processes
- Creation and management of data for lists (ie. Information on our members)
- Social Networking We don't really use, but it is there
- Security can be very granular
- Surprised use External authentication for other cloud applications currently being built



# THE BAD - ONLINE

- We couldn't deploy farm level solutions that some of our planned applications required
- Any customizations can and will be lost if you have modified any core code (Microsoft owns it, not you)
- We couldn't present public pages and share information from our internal authenticated site to the public – very disconnected
- Couldn't share calendar information between SharePoint Online and Exchange Online



# POTHOLE REPAIR

- SharePoint Online was fairly new and Microsoft was <u>very</u> motivated for the success:
  - Provide an On Premise SharePoint server
  - Provide a tech for a week for staff training and knowledge transfer
  - Helped us navigate through the decision process on what should be on premise vs. online

This solves all of our problems with SharePoint, Right?



# THE UNFORTUNATE SURPRISES

- SharePoint Server is not a robust/relational database development tool
- We found the development tools overly complicated and didn't always work
  - We preferred our own dev tools and wanted to inject into SharePoint (SharePoint laughs at this, we scream)
- SharePoint uses web services like BCS to share information across SharePoint which makes this overly complicated

# BOTTOM LINE

- SharePoint can do pretty much anything you want to do, but:
  - Administrative overhead can suck up resources, staff and hardware
  - Learning curve on SharePoint is enormous
  - Developers were pulling out there hair
- SharePoint is huge, and is a leap of faith
- SharePoint can be overwhelming, but has some good uses
- Get lots of money and resources then DOUBLE it!
- Drop the consultants and bring it in-house as quickly as possible





## THE RETREAT

- None of us want to be here when the next migration occurs
- For robust app and relational development, Go open source! It is cheap and we (the developers) think it's really cool
  - Current project is
    - Ruby on Rails
    - PostgresSQL
    - Cloud hosted
    - Rapid development
    - Public and Login access (using SharePoint web serv
- We wanted more out of SharePoint than was capable by our small shop

