



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 screenshot shows the 'Dela House of Delegates Intranet' portal. The top navigation bar includes 'Welcome', 'Calendar and Events', 'Forms', 'Human Resources', 'Lists and Directories' (selected), 'Policies and Guidelines', 'Publications', and 'Requests & Services'. The date 'October 10, 2013' is displayed in the top right. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled 'Lists & Directories' and features a search bar with the text 'Search in View 'Members Complete Listing'' and a search button. Below the search bar is a table with the following columns: Member Name, District, Party, District Description, and Room. The table lists various members and their details.

Member Name	District	Party	District Description	Room
Rush, L. Nick	7th	R	Counties of Floyd, Montgomery (part), and Pulaski (part)	
Rust, Thomas Davis	86th	R	Counties of Fairfax (part) and Loudoun (part)	
Scott, Edward T.	30th	R	Counties of Culpeper (part), Madison, and Orange	
Scott, James M.	53rd	D	County of Fairfax (part); City of Falls Church	
Sherwood, Beverly J.	29th	R	Counties of Frederick (part) and Warren (part); City of Winchester	
Sickles, Mark D.	43rd	D	County of Fairfax (part)	
Spruill, Lionell, Sr.	77th	D	Cities of Chesapeake (part) and Suffolk (part)	
Stolle, Christopher P.	83rd	R	Cities of Norfolk (part) and Virginia Beach (part)	
Surovell, Scott A.	44th	D	County of Fairfax (part)	
Tata, Robert	85th	R	City of Virginia Beach (part)	
Torian, Luke E.	52nd	D	County of Prince William (part)	
Toscano, David J.	57th	D	County of Albemarle (part); City of Charlottesville	
Tyler, Roslyn C.	75th	D	Counties of Brunswick, Dinwiddie (part), Greensville, Isle of Wight (part), Lunenburg (part), Southampton (part), Surry (part), and Sussex (part); Cities of Emporia and Franklin (part)	
Villanueva, Ronald A.	21st	R	Cities of Chesapeake (part) and Virginia Beach (part)	
Ward, Jeion A.	92nd	D	City of Hampton (part)	
Ware, Onzlee	11th	D	City of Roanoke (part)	
Ware, R. Lee, Jr.	65th	R	Counties of Chesterfield (part), Fluvanna (part), Goochland (part), and Powhatan	

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

The screenshot shows the home page of the Delaware House of Representatives Staff Portal. The header includes the Delaware state logo and 'Home' link, along with navigation links for 'Information Systems', 'NMO 2013', 'Training', 'apps.house.virginia.gov', 'House Clerk's Staff', and 'Clerks Office'. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area is organized into several colored boxes: 'News & Resources' (white), 'Calendar & Events' (purple), 'Lists & Directories' (green), 'Forms & Requests' (blue), 'Policies & Guidelines' (grey), 'Online Resources' (red), and 'Human Resources' (light green). Each box contains a list of links and a 'More' button.

The screenshot shows a table of meeting reservations. The table has columns for Meeting Setting, Meeting Type, Meeting Purpose, Meet Time, Room, Calendar Remarks, House Members, and Senators. The data is grouped by date, with sections for 10/10/2013, 10/11/2013, 10/12/2013, and 10/15/2013. A sidebar on the left contains navigation links for 'At Capitol Square', 'Reservations', and 'Lists'.

Meeting Setting	Meeting Type	Meeting Purpose	Meet Time	Room	Calendar Remarks	House Members	Senators
10/10/2013							
10/11/2013							
Private	Citizen Group	Scenic Virginia Event	8:00 AM	House Room 3			
10/12/2013							
Private	Citizen Group	YMCA Model General Assembly Board Meeting	8:00 AM	House Room 2		Gilbert	Vogel
10/15/2013							
Private	Legislative Study	Public Hearing Overflow	7:00 AM	House Room C			
Private	Staff	Public Hearing Set Up	8:00 AM	House Room D			
Private	State Agency	Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority	8:00 AM	House Room 3			
Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	5th Floor East Conference Room			
Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	5th Floor West Conference Room			
Private	Citizen Group	Virginians for Quality Healthcare	8:00 AM	7th Floor West Conference Room			
Public	Legislative Study	Modeling and Simulation Advisory Council	9:30 AM	4th Floor West Conference Room		Lingamfelter, Ward	Northam
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 very 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
 - PostgreSQL
 - 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

