



LookOut

April 4, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 7

ORS Mission:

We deliver pensions, related benefits and services to promote the future financial security of our customers.

ORS Vision:

Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.

ORS Calendar

April

Daylight Savings 6th
 EMPAC Book Sale and
 Basket Auction 10th
 Six Weeks to Wellness
 Starts 14th
 Tax Day 15th
 State Police Board
 Meeting 17th
 Earth Day 22nd
 All-Staff Meeting 23rd
 Public School Employees
 Board Meeting 24th
 Bring Your Child to
 Work Day 25th

Strategic Planning smooths the way in tough times

Have you ever been stuck waiting to make a left turn from a busy road because traffic in the other lanes stopped in a spot that gridlocked your turn? If so, you were a victim of drivers who failed to plan strategically. If the other drivers had planned properly, they would have seen that they could not clear the intersection and would have stopped before they ended up blocking your turn.

Strategic planning for business is a lot like strategic planning for driving. Both require high-level skills to be successful and safe. Many of the skills required for both go unnoticed by those not directly involved in the process; some of these skills are even



taken for granted by those involved. When one person fails to plan effectively, others may suffer.

It would be easy for us to forget the strategic driving skills it takes for ORS to reach our accomplishments if we don't practice them. In 2002, we proved ourselves to be great strategic drivers by

achieving our 2002 business plan objectives. But our skills didn't appear overnight.

"Our strategic journey began about five years ago," says **Chris DeRose**. "First we reworked our relationship with ITSD (now DIT), and then we re-engineered our processes. We

Continued on page 2 ... Strategic Planning

EPC appreciates you!

At ORS employee appreciation came with 12 ½ pounds of popcorn and lots of butter!

On Tuesday, April 2, the Executive Process Council composed of **Chris DeRose, Laurie Hill and Phil Stoddard** hosted a popcorn popping party to show their appreciation for the ORS staff. Chris was unable to attend at the last minute, but sent his thanks in an all-staff e-mail.

Laurie and Phil popped approximately 180 bags of corn in an hour and

distributed bags to those that were unable to leave their desk to attend the celebration.

At right, Laurie Hill delivers warm popcorn to Brenda Prast.





Strategic Planning

Continued from page 1

invested in training to help all of us fine tune our skill sets. Finally, we even changed the way we operate - becoming process based - to make sure we were best able to use our new technology." These efforts prepared us for the challenges that are a natural part of change. No transition is ever perfect, but good strategic planning can reduce the difficulties. ORS' successes are living examples of this.

ORS' 2003 Strategic Plan includes the following goals:

- Invest in Employee Development
- Promote Positive Work Environment
- Focus on the Customer
- Continuously Improve Processes
- Optimize Technology

Our strategic plan guides us to get things back on track when things aren't working as well as we'd all like. More than ever ORS needs strategic planning to stay on course. As the state is looking for ways to cut costs, strategic planning will help provide direction and protect us from spending valuable time and resources on activities that aren't in step with the overall plan. The plan helps us see how far we have come, what our track record is, and sheds light on the prospects for success. Strategic planning is that invisible umbrella protecting our daily activities while we try to reign in the budget problem.

Your daily work contributes to the success of the strategic plan. Think about what work you do each day. Ask yourself, how does this fit in with our strategic plan? For example, the new scanners in Process Support help us Optimize Technology. Every phone call that comes into Customer Accounts is an opportunity to Focus on the Customer. When the BPOs map our processes, they help us Continuously Improve Processes. Events like the EMPAC Basket Sale and Customer Account's "Make Lemonade" treats Promote a Positive Work Environment. Take a minute to review your activities for this week. You can quickly name several activities that contributed to our strategic plan.

The plan is not developed in a vacuum and is not fixed in one spot. Your ideas and suggestions helped develop the foundational elements of the plan. For example, with the implementation of Siebel and Clarity, during stages one and two of Vision ORS, Customer Accounts and Benefits Management staff provided feedback and suggestions to improve system functionality. **Jeff Dumrose** and **Cathleen Curran** are leading efforts for communication with **John Donovan** to correct problems and to institute a Smart-script allowing improved access to needed information.

As our processes grow, your ideas have changed the strategic plan, the various business plans that support the strategic plan,

and the balanced score card that measures our success. Most of the work in pulling your ideas into a single cohesive strategic plan falls on the Executive Process Council with help from **Ben Louagie** and **Fred Doll** in Plan Design and Development. You can contact them or your BPO if you have questions or suggestions about changes in your process.

Budget Reminder

Due to the governor's moratorium on color printing we can no longer buy color toner for the laser printers or color cartridges for ink jet printers. This means that when we run out of color toner, the color laser printers will not work — not even for black-only documents.

If you have documents that rely on color, please rework them using techniques like **bold**, *italics*, underline, and ALL CAPS.



Published by:

State of Michigan
Department of Management
& Budget
Office of Retirement Services
P.O. Box 30171
Lansing, MI 48909-7671

Director:

Chris DeRose

Edited by the Customer Education
Communications Staff

Printed by authority of 1984 P.A. 431
Total number of copies printed: 235
Total cost: \$91.65 Cost per copy: \$0.39

The Strategic Plan pyramid logo

You may have noticed this logo accompanying articles on the Strategic Plan. Let's take a moment to familiarize you with it.

- The Mission and Vision (M/V) are our guiding statements to which all other things must align themselves.
- The Goals show us what needs to be accomplished to demonstrate that we have been successful in our endeavors towards our Mission and Vision. Our goals for 2003 include: Invest in Employee Development; Promote Positive Work Environment; Continuously Improve Processes; and Optimize Technology.
- The Strategic Plan gives a more detailed view of what we are actually doing to accomplish the goals, often taking place over a number of years. A few of the initiatives on this year's plan include: Cultivate Competency Based Training; Develop/Maintain Cutting-Edge Skills; Communicate, Communicate, Communicate; Assess Customer Needs/Expectations; and Empower Customers.
- The Business Plan specifies measurable steps that will be pursued during the year to accomplish the strategic plan. A few steps on this year's plan include: Improve Annual Member Statements; Revise the New Employee Orientation Program; and Implement Web-Based Employer Reporting.
- The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) shows us if we are on track and helps to hold the plan together. By watching the BSC closely, we can make the adjustments we need to get us back on track when things don't go as smoothly as desired.

All of these are living documents that are reviewed regularly. When items are accomplished or no longer apply, they are removed, updated or replaced to help keep ORS on target.



April is alcohol awareness month

April 10 is National Alcohol Screening Day, the centerpiece of the Alcohol Awareness Month campaign. We bring you this information from DMB's Employee Services to help you better understand the effects alcohol can have on an individual and others when it is misused.

If you have ever seen someone who had too much to drink (or have been there yourself), you can probably identify some of the typical symptoms - unsteadiness; slowed reaction time; slurred speech for some; a change in behavior such as being silly at one extreme to being angry and ready to start a fight at the other extreme.

Most individuals who consume alcohol do so safely and do not encounter difficulties. But, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), estimates that approximately 14 million people drink in amounts that *do* create problems.

How do you know what is a safe level of drinking? Unfortunately, the answer is not the same for everyone. For most adults, the NIAAA considers two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women as moderate drinking that causes few if any problems. One drink is defined as 12 oz. of beer, 5 oz. of wine, or 1.5 oz. of 80-proof distilled spirits. However, a family history of alcohol problems, pregnancy, or the use of either prescription or over-the-counter medications could make even moderate drinking harmful.

Continued on page 4 ... Alcohol

Gift basket auction benefits the EMPAC treasury

A tisket, a tasket it's time to auction gift baskets! EMPAC is sponsoring a silent gift basket auction on April 10. If you're interested in donating an item for one of the baskets please contact Lisa Schmidt. All money raised will help fund the annual ORS picnic and other fun-at-work activities.



Web Reporting Implementation Extended to April 15, 2004

After long and careful consideration, the web-reporting team has decided to extend the implementation date for reporting units to begin submitting member information on a pay-period basis. Instead of November 2003, reporting units will have until April 2004 to convert from quarterly to pay-period processing.

Why are we doing this? Earlier this month, we invited 15 reporting units to help us pilot the new web interface for wage and service reporting. We asked the reporting units to test the interface in March and begin processing in April. However, as we tested the new system, we found that we needed more time to create a quality test environment for them. The test system was generating invalid error messages that the reporting units would not understand and would not have the ability to fix. Rather than create confusion, we chose to delay the original pilot group implementation from April to July and to extend the deadline from November 2003 to April 2004.

What does this mean for ORS staff? For most areas, this has little affect. Employer Reporting will work closely with the reporting units to reschedule their implementation dates, the Project Team will fine tune the test environment, and Customer Education will reschedule the *Introduction to Web Reporting Seminar* presentations.

If you have questions about the new web reporting process, you can contact **Joanne Masarik** or **Chantele Geisenhaver**.



Alcohol

Continued from page 3

What about you? Is it OK for you to have one drink? What about two or three? Are there special circumstances that you should be aware of before you drink? For example, if you're pregnant, are you willing to risk potentially serious effects on the growth and development of your unborn child?

Are you taking any prescription medications? Alcohol can enhance the effects of certain medications – possibly suppressing your heart or breathing functions, or stimulating organs to overwork, causing severe health problems.

If you have questions about safe drinking, for yourself or others you care about, the State of Michigan Employee Service Program offers a **free, anonymous telephone alcohol screening** that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's very easy. Just call **(800) 887-5676**, respond to a series of pre-recorded questions and your answers will be tabulated while you're still on the phone. Maybe Alcohol Awareness Month is the right time for you (or someone you care about) to make a call for your good health.

For more information, call the Employee Service Program at (517) 373-7630 or (800) 521-1377 in Lansing, or in Detroit dial (313) 456-4020 or (800) 872-5563 in Detroit.

Policies and Procedures

Updated or Renamed

CS-CA36 Customer Accounts Releasing Pension Amount and Changing Addresses for the Retirees Over the Phone (formerly CS36)

CS-CA29 Releasing Specific Member Account Info Over the Telephone (formerly CS29)

New

OPER-BM1 Eligibility Requirements for Community Health Facility Closures

SPOTLIGHT



Robert travels the globe, helping others

Traveling to various locations around the world may have been a childhood fairytale adventure for many people, but the LookOut editors know that there are at least a few of our co-workers who have fulfilled those childhood dreams by traveling to some interesting places over the years. In this Spotlight article, we're focusing on Robert Glennon's travels across the globe in the past several years.

The Middle East, Africa, Central America, Europe, and areas in the former Soviet Union – quite a diverse list of locations for trips, even for an adventurous soul. But this is where Robert headed, motivated by a special desire – to help people in other parts of the world.

Robert is actively involved in his church, Mount Hope Church in Lansing. While working with church leaders to develop different types of communication materials, Robert developed relationships with some of the missionaries. When opportunities arose to go and see first hand the work that some of these missionaries were doing, Robert jumped at the chance.

Before coming to work at ORS, Robert had already visited Israel and Greece to produce television programs. In November of 1999, Robert headed to Morocco, by way of Amsterdam, with a group of nine others from his church. They spent 10 days traveling through Morocco, meeting with some of the missionaries they support, and learning about the culture and the challenges the missionaries face in their daily interactions with the nationals.

One of Robert's more memorable experiences during this trip was having one of the local dignitaries attempt a marriage proposal with one of the women in their party. As the man's initial offer of camels for the woman was rejected, he kept offering more and more camels. He eventually offered 2,000 camels! Robert and his

group figured they'd better leave before the man decided not to take "no" for an answer.

Robert's next adventure involved a more active role. In October 2001, Robert headed to Central America with a work crew of 23 to build

classrooms and a new church sanctuary with the people of Toluca, Mexico. His main task was to document the trip for the people at home, by taking pictures and posting them to a web site along with captions. However, he did get involved in the daily work effort too, mixing cement for the brick walls, helping with the brick laying and inserting the metal supports in the walls. Robert comments, "This obviously was one of the most physically demanding trips I've been on. By the middle of the week I thought I had sprained my body." With everyone pitching in, the work progressed quickly, and the local villagers were so thankful to have everyone helping them build their

new church and classrooms with strong walls and solid roofs to protect them from the elements.

Almost a year ago, Robert was asked to accompany the church's missions director into parts of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (U.S.S.R.) – what many of us have commonly referred to as Russia. On this trip, he visited Kiev in the Ukraine, Moscow and St. Petersburg in Russia. They visited beautiful churches and other notable locations, but those paled in comparison to actually being in a parade!



Robert stands in front of St. Basil's Cathedral, Red Square, Moscow, Russia.

Continued on page 6 ... Robert

Robert

Continued from page 5

While walking through the streets of St. Petersburg, Robert and his party became separated while photographing a large Communist parade. At the end of the parade, a white supremacist group decided to join in, dragging an American flag. "It was a little unnerving at first," said Robert. "I was literally only inches from these folks. But eventually I realized no one was picking me out as an American, so I just continued to photograph what was going on." Robert and his friends were glad to finally find each other about 30 minutes later.

Robert's most recent trip occurred this past winter. When the dean of the Kiev Bible Institute in Kiev learned of Robert's talents and skills with creating web sites and promotional materials, he asked Robert if he would consider returning to Kiev to help them create a web site and materials to let people know about the college. With careful planning and scheduling, Robert returned to Kiev last December and spent five weeks helping the Kiev Bible Institute use modern tools to deliver educational and spiritual enrichment.

While there, his life was forever touched, as he met his soul mate, Tanya (Tatyana Lisovska), a Ukrainian native teaching English at the college, who was assigned as his full-time translator. Needless to say, he'll be making another trip to Kiev in a few months to meet more of his fiancée's family, and travel with her to America for a wedding later this year.

If you'd like to see more of Robert's travel pictures, including a picture of his fiancée, check out his web site at www.RobertGlennon.com.

Reminders

- Please mark your calendars for the next All Staff Meeting on April 23 from 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM in Conference Room A.
- Daylights savings time begins this weekend. Remember to *spring* ahead one hour.

Comings and Goings

ORS welcomed **Michelle Thompson** on March 27. Michelle is on loan from the DMB Director's Office. She is currently working in Benefit Management.

ORS welcomed back **Sam Williams** after an extended absence. Sam works closely with the Judge's Retirement System.

Congratulations to **Kathy Tober** who recently transitioned into the role of Business Process Owner over the Customer Education process.

Customer Accounts said good-bye to **Kumar Priyavrat** on Friday, March 28. Kumar is now pursuing his career in Denver, Colorado.

Six Weeks to Wellness is coming!

Spring's warm days inspire thoughts of sunny beaches, shorts, sandals... uh oh...bathing suits! Tuck your tummy and tone your thighs by joining a Six Weeks to Wellness team. This year the event runs from Monday, April 14 - Sunday, May 25. 6W2W, as it is commonly known, consists of six weeks of eating well, exercising more, raising awareness of healthy habits, and lifestyle changes, all with the potential for lots of fun and winning great prizes.

This year, **Lisa Schmidt** is coordinating the event based upon responses to last year's 6W2W survey. One comment that was consistent is everyone wants more prizes spaced out over more events. This is guaranteed to be an exciting year for 6W2W!

If you are interested in joining 6W2W as an individual or as part of a team, contact Lisa by noon Wednesday, April 9. If you are without a team but would like to participate on one, let Lisa know and she will match you up.

For more information, go to f:\staff\Schmidt\6W2W or e-mail Lisa at schmidt1@michigan.gov.