



Customer Focus

A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 5

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

Breaking Ground (and tradition) for the State's New Green Building

On a sunny, windy morning in late August approximately 100 people gathered on the field at the southeast corner of the Capitol Complex to break ground for what will be Iowa state government's greenest office space. The new building for the Iowa Utilities Board and the Office of Consumer Advocate (IUB/OCA) has been in the planning stages for more than three years. When completed, the building will position the state as a leader in energy efficiency and energy conservation, and the high-performance building will provide a teaching model for public and private entities across the state.



Among the featured guests at the August 20 ceremony were Governor Chet Culver, Attorney General Tom Miller, Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie, Office of Energy Independence Director Roya Stanley and Department of Administrative Services Director Ray Walton. IUB Chair Rob Bernsten, Utilities Board members Krista Tanner and Darrell Hanson, and Consumer Advocate John Perkins were present with many members of their staffs and those associated with their organizations to take part in the historic event.

When the 44,000-square-foot building is completed in the fall of 2010 it will be one of the most energy-efficient office buildings in Iowa. It is designed to use 63% less energy than a typical office building, which will result in significant operational cost savings as well. The facility will feature daylight harvesting, native prairie restoration, solar panels, a geo-thermal well field, and on-site reuse of stormwater, resulting in less runoff. The State will be applying for LEED Platinum certification, the highest ranking on the U.S. Green Building Council's scale.

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Electronic Return Receipts Return Big Savings

A new service offered by the DAS-GSE Mail Center is saving agencies that use certified mail some serious money – at no additional cost for the service.

The U.S. Postal Service is now utilizing Electronic Return Receipts – web-based confirmation that replaces the traditional green postcards used for certified mail. The Mail Center purchased the software necessary to make this technology available to other state agencies, opening the door for agencies to realize savings of \$1.20 per certified letter sent.

For some agencies, the result is noticeable savings in particularly tough budget times. In projecting future savings due to cost avoidance, the Department of Human Services expects to save more than \$2,800 in FY10, and possibly more than \$11,000 in FY11.

Even for agencies that don't send enough certified mail to notice significant dollar savings, there is still the benefit of saving time and storage needs by moving to electronic return receipts.

After an educational meeting in July
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Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update about the Department of Administrative Services for Iowa state government agencies. For more information about DAS, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov>.

This issue's contributors: Judy Akre, Robert Bailey, Tera Granger, Ed Holland, Malcolm Huston, Sheryl Jensen, Grace Marino, Jennifer Moehlmann, Darcy Pech, Jim Pierson, Laura Riordan, Russ Rozinek, Robbie Stoecker, Dawn Stohs, Nancy Williams.

Special thanks to Chuck Seel and Joan Conrad (IUB), Michelle Choda (DHS), & Valerie Seals (Judicial).

Contact the editor at Laura.Riordan@iowa.gov or 515-242-5038. We encourage your feedback.

Breaking Ground

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The IUB/OCA Building will house more than 90 employees of the two agencies, which are currently leasing space in Des Moines.

Architects for the project are BNIM Architects of Des Moines. J.P. Cullen of Janesville, Wisconsin, was the lowest bidder for the construction contract. The bid with selected options totals about \$9.8 million dollars. Twenty-year bonds are being sold to pay for construction costs. Over the expected life of the building there will be savings in lease, energy, and other operating costs compared to the present situation. Utilities in Iowa fully fund the IUB and OCA; they have been completely supportive of this project because they see cost savings for their utility customers over the long-term and because they believe in the benefits of energy efficiency.

The IUB is a full-time, three-member panel appointed by the Governor to oversee rate, service reliability, technical, and safety standards of energy and telecommunications service providers in the state. The Office of Consumer Advocate is part of the Attorney General's Office and represents the general interests of consumers in matters before the IUB. By state law, the two agencies are required to be co-located in the same facilities.

Electronic Return Receipts

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about the new option, eight agencies jumped on board.

Valerie Seals with the Judicial Branch was one of the first to make the transition, and she couldn't be more pleased. "This should be a lesson to me about not being so apprehensive about change! We are saving time and money, which is a good thing!" she said.

Paula Newbrough, supervisor of the Mail Center, is hoping other agencies will take advantage of this option. The service is available to all agencies in the greater Des Moines metro that process mail through the DAS Mail Center on the Capitol Complex.

For Paula, the decision to pursue this option was simply a way of offering agencies another way to save. "It's a service we looked into to help agencies save money," she said, explaining that even though they had to purchase the software to make this service available, in the end the savings realized by other agencies will more than make up for the initial investment. "So, it's basically state savings, savings for taxpayers."

For more information on how your agency can make the move to electronic receipts, contact Paula at paula.newbrough@iowa.gov or 515-281-5143.

John Gillispie Earns Spot as 2009 Toll Fellow

John Gillispie, Chief Operating Officer of DAS-Information Technology Enterprise and Executive Director of the Iowa Communications Network, has been accepted into the 2009 class of the Toll Fellowship Program.

The Toll Fellowship, sponsored by the Council of State Governments (CSG), is considered one of the most prestigious leadership programs in the country. Forty applicants are accepted every year, ten from each of four geographical regions. Participants are selected based on leadership potential and accomplishments to date, and can be from any one of the three branches of government: executive, legislative or judicial. In fact, this program is noted for how it brings together leaders from those different branches.

That is one aspect of the program that particularly appealed to Gillispie, who was nominated by Governor Chet Culver and Betsy Brandsgard, Chair of the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission.

"I hope to learn about the key issues that legislators are thinking about and the processes used to move the state forward," said Gillispie. "Also, developing leadership skills is a big part of the program I am looking forward to."

During the five-day program, which runs September 12-17, the Toll Fellows will convene in Lexington, Kentucky, the location of CSG National Headquarters. The schedule includes speakers, leadership training and networking opportunities. The program has been called an "intellectual boot camp" for participants to gain valuable insights and perspectives not readily available in the course of everyday public service.

The Toll Fellowship Program is named in honor of Henry Wolcott Toll, founding father of The Council of State Governments and a Colorado state senator from 1922 until 1930. To improve state legislative conditions across the country, Toll founded the National Association of State Legislators in 1925. In 1933, the association adopted articles of organization, forming the CSG.

For more information visit <http://www.csg.org/leadership/tollfellows/default.aspx>.



New Mainframe Works Behind the Scenes to Save Money

DAS's Information Technology Enterprise has purchased a new mainframe, the IBM Z10, to replace the mainframe (an IBM Z890) that was originally purchased in 2002 and last upgraded in 2005. The switch is expected to save \$75,000 a year in operating costs – savings that will be passed along to customers.

The Z10 is approximately the same capacity as the Z890, but it is a current model that can be upgraded (or downgraded) to match our processing requirements. That flexibility means DAS can expand or contract mainframe power based on customers' needs, and because it's a model currently on the market, features – such as cryptography for increased security – can be added as needed.

The Z10 was placed in production during the morning hours of Sunday, August 2, 2009. Not only did this mean employees were at work before 4 a.m., but it required very fast work to transfer licenses from third-party software vendors to the new platform, as well as the technical challenges of making sure the replacement went smoothly. This upgrade had a lower risk than previous upgrades, though, because the old mainframe was intact and functional. In previous upgrades, components of the old mainframe were used in the upgraded mainframe and the old one would have had to be reassembled if the upgrade did not go as planned. Thanks to the favorable circumstances and quick work of an expert IT team, this mainframe upgrade was completed in a matter of hours with no major problems.



Shattering Silence Nears Completion



Construction on Shattering Silence, the newest sculpture on the Capitol Complex, will be completed this fall, with a dedication ceremony scheduled for October 22, 2009.

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 ? **Did you know...** your copier or printer may be ?
 ? making you cold? Copiers and printers give out a lot ?
 ? of heat. If one is located near a building temperature ?
 ? sensor, it could cause the system to increase cooling ?
 ? to an area (in the summer) or reduce heating (in ?
 ? the winter), leaving you in the cold. ?
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Capitol Complex Calendar of Events

September 2009

- 7th – **Labor Day Parade**
(Lot #15 north of Lucas & lots north of Grand)
- 11th, 12th, 13th – **Homeless Stand-down**
(Grimes Grounds – SW Corner)
- 12th – **Governor's Cup Race**
(West Capitol Terrace)
- 26th – **Orchard Place Run** (West Capitol Terrace)

October 2009

- 9th, 10th, 11th – **World Food Festival**
(East Village – utilizing State Parking Structure)
- 11th – **Abate Toy Run**
(Parking Lot #15 north of Lucas)
- 11th – **40th Annual Des Moines Hunger Hike**
(West Capitol Terrace)
- 15th – **World Food Prize** (Capitol)
- 16th – **Extreme Race**
(West Capitol Terrace/Finkbine/West Mall)
- 17th – **Iowa Minute Man Civil Defense Corp**
(West Mall)
- 24th – **Susan Koman Race for the Cure**
(Many locations on Capitol Complex)

New Wellness Services Provider

DAS-HRE recently issued an informal solicitation for a wellness services provider. Following the proposal evaluation process of the three submitted proposals, the contract was awarded to Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa (VNS). We believe VNS has the resources to provide a high level of service to State of Iowa employees, and we are excited to begin working with them.

VNS will provide services beginning September 1, 2009, by offering flu shots in the Des Moines/Ames metro areas. We anticipate offering additional services, such as cardiovascular screening, blood chemistry profiles and health screenings later in the year, and are exploring the possibility of expanding service offerings to more locations. If you are interested in offering wellness services at your office, contact Sheryl Jensen at sheryl.jensen@iowa.gov.



RIC News

Provider Bid Results

The State of Iowa's Retirement Investors' Club (deferred compensation) issued a Request for Proposals earlier this year for investment providers. The winning providers are Hartford, ING, Security Benefit, TIAA-CREF, and VALIC (subject to successful contract negotiations).

Proposed investments will be available to receive contributions for 2010 and beyond. These providers are gearing up to provide new product information soon. Although some of the current investment options will continue to be offered in the new products, a variety of alternative fund options, including funds offered in three new investment categories, will now be available. Two new providers were added to the RIC program and the fees of another have been reduced.



Contributions to Hartford, ING, or VALIC will automatically continue in 2010. The active providers will redirect contributions in the same manner the participant has elected.

Contributions to Nationwide will stop after December 2009. Participants will receive information about the new products being offered in 2010 soon. Assets currently invested with Nationwide do not have to move. Nationwide has a five-year restriction on transfers from their fixed rate account; otherwise transfers are free from penalty or restrictions.

Over the next couple of months, existing participants will receive communication from the providers regarding any product changes and the suggested "mapping" of their current fund selections to the new product. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and make alternate fund selections if they choose. If no action is taken by the participant, a mapping of their fund selections will be automatic.

Non-participating employees should not wait to enroll! Employees may call an active provider today to get accounts open and payroll deductions started. DAS encourages all eligible employees to take advantage of the employer match as soon as possible.

Visit our website at <http://ric.iowa.gov> for more information about this great employee benefit!

Benefit Education

Benefit knowledge is power!

Employee benefits can be confusing. Benefit education is a service provided by DAS so you can learn to make the best use of your benefits.

The presentations are approximately one hour in length. The following are the presentations currently scheduled:

- 2010 Enrollment and Change
- Choosing the Right Health Insurance
- Continuing Benefits at Retirement
- Deferred Compensation Basics
- Deferred Compensation Distributions
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Group Insurance Overview
- RIC Provider Update



To find out more, check out the DAS [Benefit Education website](#).

Dependent Eligibility Verification

Employees who have adult children age 19 or older enrolled in their health or dental coverage have received or will receive a dependent eligibility verification notice from DAS.



It is very important that employees respond. Failure to return the certification form will mean that the child's coverage will be terminated on the first day of the month following the child's birthday.

Storm Clouds Have Silver Green Lining

When a devastating storm moved through the state on August 9, 2009, the town of Eldora was hit hard. Nearly every business and residence suffered damage, and the State Training School for Boys was no exception. Operated by the Department of Human Services, the facility houses up to 189 boys between the ages of 12 and 18. Preliminary damage assessments estimate that about 200 windows will need to be replaced, as well as repairs possibly needed for roofs and HVAC systems.



possibility for a tremendous opportunity. Jennifer Moehlmann, the Capitol Complex Energy Manager for DAS, is working with other state officials to find money to replace those windows with energy efficient models. Doing so will not only save the facility energy and money in terms of operating costs, but may also make the building eligible for enhanced rebates from Alliant Energy.

In the midst of all the destruction, however, is the

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? **Did you know...** your space heater could be ?
? making your neighbors cold? Space heaters near ?
? a building temperature sensor could give a false ?
? warm reading and cause the system to reduce ?
? heating to the area. Instead of using a space ?
? heater, report your temperature complaints to ?
? DAS Customer Service (242-5120) so we can fix ?
? the root cause of the problem. ?
????????????????????

FY11 Utility Rates Finalized

The DAS Customer Council met on Thursday, August 20 and finalized utility rates for Fiscal Year 2011. No changes were made from the proposed rates communicated to agencies in a memo sent June 30, 2009. Rates are finalized by the Council after a 30-day comment period open to customer agencies.

DAS has added a page to its website that lists all of the utilities services provided, the methodology for each rate, and the rates for FY09, FY10 and FY11. You can visit that page by going to http://das.iowa.gov/services_rates/utilities.html.

Bob Straker retires after 31 years, 27 years as AFSCME President

After 31 years with the State of Iowa, Bob Straker retired on August 31, 2009.

Bob had been the Lead Engineer at the Central Energy Plant for over 15 years. Bob started with the State of Iowa in 1978 as a Trades Helper.

Over the years Bob's expertise has been an asset not only to Capitol Complex Maintenance and the Central Energy Plant, but he also served as the AFSCME Union president for 27 years.

A gathering was held on August 25 to celebrate his career with the State of Iowa and share fond memories. His dedication, to both the State of Iowa and his fellow employees, will be missed.

Good bye Bob – we wish you well, and congratulations on your retirement!

Master Plan Update

The 2010 Master Plan Update is coming into focus. The visioning process for planning future development of the Capitol Complex began last January. Planners have been meeting with various community and state employee groups to discuss different options. A public survey was conducted over the course of two months earlier this year; more than 3,400 people responded, many of them state employees. That feedback and the feedback from the meetings have been used to shape the direction of the discussions.

Upcoming meetings include workshops on September 10 for the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Capitol Planning Commission. The Steering Committee will meet again on October 12 and the Capitol Planning Commission on October 14.

A final report will be ready in time for the 2010 Legislative session, at which time it will also be made available to the public. For more information go to <http://das.gse.iowa.gov/statebldg/masterplan/>.

Developing the New State of Iowa Home Page

We asked Malcolm Huston, the driving force behind the redesign of the State of Iowa's official home page, iowa.gov, for his take on what sparked the change, how he went about taking on a project of this magnitude and what features he wanted the online face of Iowa government to show off.

Like many state employees, I had been noticing a certain "staleness" to the home page of the State of Iowa and my mind began to conjure a new Internet presence with an assortment of Web 2.0 social interaction tools. What if we had cutting-edge audio/video components, like YouTube? Maybe Twitter link-ups and the like? To support this site and all its advanced gadgetry, we could use the team of ... me. So my lofty ideas became a little more grounded and I sought the help of the pros that do this every day – Iowa Interactive and DAS-ITE.

Under a multi-year contract with the State, overseen by DAS, the private company of Iowa Interactive develops a number of websites for any state agency at the best price you can get – free! In return, Iowa Interactive gets a portion of fees charged to online services, such as searches of driving records by insurance companies or applications for professional licenses. Over time these small portions add up to enough revenue for Iowa Interactive to be able to offer these free services. Optionally, agencies that need to provide citizen access to government information can apply for funding and support through IOWAccess, the state program providing "venture capital" for agencies.

Getting back to the State website, I first met with an Iowa Interactive project manager and we came to an agreement on a vision for the redesign. The largest obstacle was content – how was the website going to be dynamic enough to keep people returning to it? Looking at the print counterpart of a website, we explored using headlines. I found a company that would enable us to lift press releases from the many state agency sites and format them to a scrolling list. In times when there was urgent information like an AMBER Alert, the headlines would display a pop-up message.

The old website had some good ideas, like sections tailored for the public, children or visitors, so those were retained but updated. Items of daily interest were added, such as lottery results and websites of seasonal interest, such as the State Fair. We also wanted a quick way to get to popular applications, like the award-winning School Alerts subscription service, or the new DNR Training system to select education offerings, like Hunter Education. Finally, we wanted to add the new employee telephone directory developed by ITE.

To help users, the State Library continues to offer state information support and answers to user questions, but we updated that service to allow online chat, so users could

pose questions in real time and get an immediate response to their inquiries.

We next worked on an easier navigation system and a clean, bright look. Finally, public information officers were asked for their suggestions and the final product was released to the public this past June. All in all, it took almost two years to try various approaches and decide on a final look and feel.

To keep the content fresh, I periodically review the selection of online services that are highlighted. Often, these just make themselves known, like the I-JOBS program or information on the Economic Recovery Act.

After final testing of the new site, press releases were issued; we even received a write-up from Europe! In the month of release, we had almost 30,000 more visitors than the previous month (195,000 vs. 168,000).

I hope users find the new site easy to navigate, fresh enough to return to often, and a worthwhile online portal to the State of Iowa.

Malcolm Huston is the manager of IOWAccess, and works in DAS-ITE. For information on IOWAccess, see IOWAccess.iowa.gov. To contact Iowa Interactive, call 515-323-3468, or e-mail the General Manager at tracy@iowai.org.





Take Care of Your State Vehicles
With these Specials from DAS Fleet*

September Special
\$28.99 Oil Change
Plus FREE Tire Rotation
Additional fees for diesel, specialty vehicles, special filters or more than 5 quarts oil.
Valid the month of September 2009.

October Special
FREE Winter Inspection
Valid the month of October 2009.

November Special
\$28.99 Oil Change
Plus FREE Car Wash
Additional fees for diesel, specialty vehicles, special filters or more than 5 quarts oil.
Valid the month of November 2009.

Schedule your appointment today!
Call Roy Williams at (515) 281-3162

*These offers are for State of Iowa fleet vehicles only.




It's the Off Season – What are you going to do?

Budgets are tight, resources are low and everyday stress of doing more with less affects us all. Now is the time to take a good look at the brand called YOU and decide what you can do to get stronger, better, smarter and more resilient in the "off season."

If you're not into sports, you may not recognize the term "off season." The off season is that time between seasons when you lift weights, run laps, get faster and keep yourself in shape so when it's time to play again, you're ready to roll. The off season gives you a chance to rest, recuperate and re-evaluate what you do well, and what you need to improve.

Walter Bond, a former NBA player and now a motivational speaker puts it this way: "Your personal brand is what you get paid for. Every single thing you do, every day, at work, at home, in the community, strengthens or weakens your personal brand. The people you associate with strengthen or weaken your personal brand."

"An off-season is not vacation time," says Bond. "In sports, it is a given that you have to constantly train in order to keep up, much less succeed."

"The biggest shock to me when I entered the business world," says Bond, "was the discovery that compared with

professional athletes, most professional business people in corporate America are just plain lazy when it comes to maximizing their potential."

So what have you done lately to maximize your potential and improve the brand called YOU? What can you do to get better, faster and smarter to become more valuable to your team? One of the things you can do is exactly what Walter Bond recommends – constantly train in order to keep up.

Are your computer skills a little rusty? Have you recently been upgraded to Office 2007 and wish you could navigate through the programs a little more adeptly? Are you having some communication challenges and need to learn some new strategies? Maybe you'd just like to learn more about state government, policies and procedures.

Look to Performance & Development Solutions to help. Our new FY10 courses are all listed online now and can be accessed at <http://learnatpds.iowa.gov>

Managers, think about what you are doing for your team during this off season. Call on PDS and let us help you put together a program that will allow you to maximize your most valuable assets – your people.

Judy Akre is the Program Manager for Performance & Development Solutions. Contact her at judy.akre@iowa.gov or 515-281-6383.



Summer Clear-Out Sale!

It's time to clean out your closet ... and your databases. How many old addresses do you have tucked away that do you **no good** anymore?

Clean them out! Get updated for Fall!

Now through the end of October, get half (limit 5,000) of your addresses validated for free.

Wouldn't it be nice to know you have correct, updated addresses all formatted to make you eligible for the lowest possible postal rates?

Here's how it works:

- A mailing list of 4,000 addresses: 2,000 validated for free; 2,000 validated at the standard low rate of \$0.005 per address. So 4,000 addresses validated for just \$10!
- A mailing list of 10,000 addresses: 5,000 validated for free; 5,000 validated for just \$25!
- A mailing list of 20,000 addresses: 5,000 validated for free; 15,000 validated for just \$75!

Hurry! Offer ends October 31, 2009.

Take advantage of this great offer by contacting Mary Hadd (mary.hadd@iowa.gov 515-242-5637).

Fall Specials

The first two things that get cut with a tight economy and reduced budgets are training and travel. But the one thing that can have the greatest negative impact on our business is not training people. Not only do we need to maintain skills, we also need to provide incentives to remain in a job. Statistics consistently reveal that one of the top five reasons people select a job or employer is because of the opportunity to learn.

PDS is here to help S•T•R•E•C•H your training dollars! In FY10 we are offering webinars brought directly to your employees desktops, in-person training sessions throughout Iowa, expanded on-line learning offerings, and specials throughout the year. If you have a special training need, contact us and we would be glad to assist.

Learn more about our [Fall specials!](#)

AA Certificate Courses

Microsoft 2007 Courses

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Upcoming Courses

Enroll now for Fall sessions! Check out our website for our updated course offerings.



[September Calendar](#)



[October Calendar](#)

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Introducing Webinars through PDS

Uncertainty Rules - September 29

What do you think of when you read these words: "Uncertainty Rules"? Does uncertainty rule or govern what we do? Should it? Does uncertainty have its own set of rules and regulations that we should be aware of and manage? What if someone said "ambiguity ROCKS"? Join Sinikka Waugh for an engaging and thought-provoking look at uncertainty management. With all the change and uncertainty in our market, economy and current environment, this timely session will help you hone your skills in the areas of anticipating the unknown and leading with confidence when..."uncertainty rules".

Change Management - October 13

If its true that the only thing that doesn't change is that "things change," then why are we as human beings so uncomfortable with change? And if it's not universally hard, why is change so hard for some, but others seem to navigate through it so quickly? This engaging look at the processes we all go through around change, including why some seem to "do" change better than others, will help you look at change a little differently, with the end goal of improving your own outlook on and tolerance towards change.

The Right Stuff - October 27

Why does problem solving seem so hard? How do we keep ourselves from getting overwhelmed by the problems we're facing, or distracted by the first solution that comes along? Wouldn't it be nice to have a simple way to face problems, head-on? Join us to learn tips to make problem solving as easy as 1...2...3. You'll walk away with practical, useful, try-this-now strategies to help you solve even the most complex problems.

Training at your desk
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.
\$49 per session

[Contact PDS](#) to enroll.



Presented by:
Sinikka Waugh,
Project Coach

