



January 18, 2013

Please print a copy of this newsletter for staff who do not have e-mail.

ACCELA
Government Software

focus

Designed for all staff and departments who use Accela

Here we go!

How quickly the time passes! Sixteen months ago we embarked on quite a journey. Next Tuesday morning when you return to your offices the new Accela Automation system will be in place.

The project has involved thousands of hours of many people's time. It has been demanding as well as challenging. Those involved have stayed the course. Congratulations on bringing this monumental system into place. In this special "go-live" edition, we are featuring some project reflections from key management positions. Congratulations to all of you involved in making this project a success!

Rick Hoppe, Chief of Staff/Mayor's Office

It's a game changer. The Accela project will have an enduring impact on the future of City Hall and the residents of Lincoln. Even though most Lincolniters may never deal directly with Accela or even hear of its existence, they will feel its ramifications in a number of ways. That's what makes the project's impact so powerful.

Improved customer service will be the most visible sign of success. People whose jobs depend on fast, reliable service will see an improvement on our already outstanding service. If the old adage is true that time is money, then Accela will bring enormous financial benefit to the private sector. The ability to access services on-line in real time will be a tremendous economic boost to the community.

The Accela project will make our community's entrepreneurs even more productive, a key to Lincoln's continued growth. The acceleration of growth is a benefit to every citizen of the community, even if they never know that Accela exists.

Increased satisfaction in the development community enhances Lincoln's reputation both regionally and nationally as a great place to do business. It cannot be underestimated how a community's reputation as "business-friendly" attracts new investment. It wasn't that long ago that you heard negative comments about Lincoln's business climate. Today, we are lauded for our commitment to helping the private sector get it done right. Accela will enhance and accelerate that perception.

I predict the Accela project will lead to increased faith and confidence in City Hall. As those of us in government are aware, the public sometimes assumes that government wastes and can't become more efficient. Accela's success demonstrates that we can make the changes that lead to better outcomes. That in turn increases public confidence in City Hall, an important consideration when the City takes on future challenges.

On behalf of Mayor Beutler, I salute those of you who have worked so diligently for so long on this project. You have given your all for over a year and now your hard work is coming to fruition. You should feel great pride in what you have accomplished for your community. You have indeed changed the game for the better.

Mike Lang, Mayor's Office

A note of gratitude to all DSC staff: It is hard to believe the planning efforts to create a Development Services Center started back in 2008. While remodeling the second floor and re-locating key staff was an important element of the original plan, the second phase - and perhaps the most significant - involved the implementation of Accela Automation. As we all know, technology is playing an increasing role in our everyday lives. The Accela Automation project is essentially laying the groundwork for how the City of Lincoln delivers development services well into the future. Implementation of a new software is no easy undertaking. File conversion, developing new processes, testing and reliability, software integration, training, and a host of other tasks and challenges needed to be overcome. This can easily translate into a taxing experience, including long hours over a several month period and the tumultuous grind leading up to the "Go-Live" date. We are truly fortunate to have a DSC team with the skills to ensure the project launch will be a success.

From an economic development perspective, the Development Services Center is an integral part of Lincoln's economic development effort(s). Being able to efficiently facilitate development processes is instrumental in creating a positive business climate. We have received a great deal of positive feedback from Developers, Architects, Engineers, and Businesses about the quality of our customer service. Consistently performing at a high level has put Lincoln in an even stronger position on the national stage.

A final thought: I consider the implementation of Accela Automation a "legacy" project. Thank you to all staff involved in this upgrade.....you have definitely left your mark on our community.

Fred Hoke, Director Building and Safety

Purpose, persistence, and patience pay off in every endeavor. This conversion from PermitsPlus to Accela Automation will be a legacy experience for every staff member who took part in this enormous project. Dedicated Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) spent more time than they planned, had to put their regular responsibilities "on hold", and commit even more time, talent, and energy to the conversion project.

For 16 months, staff have for nearly every waking moment, been focused on this major undertaking. The dedication, frustration, hard work, and persistence is the price they paid for providing a new system that will have a huge economic impact on Lincoln and Lancaster County for years to come. Thousands of customers, hundreds of thousands of permits, and millions of dollars of investments – all will be the reward to staff who have pulled together to fashion a fabulous product.

Congratulations to everyone associated with this mammoth achievement.

Steve Henderson, Chief Information Officer

Amidst the Excitement, Be Kind to One Another

For the past 16 months or so, dozens of people have devoted thousands of hours toward the implementation of Accela Automation. By the time people read this newsletter, the final steps to implement the new software will be underway. With the dawn of Tuesday, January 22, the new environment will be in place and a new chapter will be underway.

There is a chance that the implementation will be flawless. In case that might happen, let me offer my congratulations in advance for accomplishing a rare feat. It is indeed rare that projects of this size and scope are implemented completely smoothly and without a single disruption.

It's far more likely that there will be a few "bumps in the road" as Accela "goes live". Despite everyone's sincere efforts to prepare for the launch, there will probably be things that don't go quite as planned. There may be parts of the system that, while they seem to work for the most part, aren't totally correct. There might be pieces of the system that need to be fixed. At the worst, there could even be a significant amount of excitement about whether the system is working properly. Such activities are very common during the start-up of major systems like Accela.

If this in fact proves to be true, please remember one thing – be kind to one another. Help one another. Everyone has worked extremely hard to get to this point; no one has been laboring with the intent of a failed beginning. Working together, minor problems can quickly be resolved. Being patient with one another will allow temporary problems to be solved more easily and ongoing operations to become more stable. If you're fortunate enough that your primary responsibilities seem to be functioning smoothly, look around to see if there is someone who might need assistance that you could help. Before you know it, Accela will be working very well. Before you know it, Accela will be serving the people and businesses of Lincoln better than any previous product.

Working together in this way in the coming days is a fitting culmination to all the hard work that has already occurred. Such a spirit of cooperation, of mutual support and assistance, will help Accela quickly become the success that everyone envisions. And it will be a testament to all the prior efforts that have already gone into this project.

So, be kind to one another. And congratulations to everyone who has worked so hard to make this Accela implementation a success!

IMPORTANT!

Changes to SAME DAY INSPECTION REQUESTS: March 1, 2013

Starting March 1, 2013 ONLY ONLINE inspection requests submitted prior to 7:30 AM will be eligible for SAME DAY INSPECTIONS.

Inspection requests submitted by fax (402 441-8214) or left on the 24-hour inspection line (402 441-8213) prior to 12:00 noon will be eligible for inspections the following business day.

The members of our team are proud to announce that our newsletter now reaches 1,155 people!



**JIM WALKENHORST
PROJECT MANAGER**

**FRED A. HOKE
PROJECT SPONSOR**

All Accela project newsletters, presentations, and link to the Lincoln project partners page can be referenced at: lincoln.ne.gov/city/dsc/accela