

IT Vision



August 2002

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Development Update

Of the core modules that we set out to build in SynergySoft, Receipting is now the only one that is not running live at one or more customer sites. The programming for Receipting was completed some months ago and since then we have been showing it to customers, gaining valuable feedback regarding optimisation, and testing and documenting it. Year-end pressures have caught up with us, but we expect the release to be before the end of the calendar year.

We have also started two new modules, Human Resources (HR) and a tool that we have named Do-It-Yourself (DIY), and have been undertaking more work with On-Line web-based solutions.

HR

The new HR module will considerably enhance the data that is retained within the Payroll system and assist the HR manager in the varied activities that he/she undertakes. It includes

- Establishment details
- The recruitment process
- Training
- Additional details about officers including

Leave history

Employment history

Personal details

Council property held

Workers Compensation history

Qualifications and training received

A prototype has been developed and we are preparing for a workshop with interested users so that the design may be finalised and the module completed by the end of the calendar year.

DIY

DIY is a general purpose database tool that will enable customers to build and control other databases of information. It will enable the user to define their own database requirements, and to link these to other appropriate SynergySoft modules. Typically Councils maintain many varied Access databases of information to help them with their daily business and this will replace many of these: The benefit being that a SynergySoft DIY database will easily link to other parts of SynergySoft (for example Rates and Property data) which is much more difficult to achieve with Access.

SynergySoft DIY is designed to be highly flexible with optional standard or pre-defined details as well as user-defined fields. The first "tab" is relatively fixed in format, but all subsequent tabs are user defined. DIY contains an optional "stages" concept that enables the user to define functionality and processes, and there will be excellent reporting capabilities including the ability to automatically produce user defined forms.

Interest on debtors

We have recently specified the requirements for interest on debtors. If any customers would like to view this before it is set in concrete, we will be pleased to send it to you.

On-Line Internet Solutions

ITV has been undertaking development on On-Line web-based applications for twelve months. We have several initiatives already released and we are in a position where we are ready to finalise and roll-out further solutions whenever a customer wishes to proceed. In other words, our ability to supply On-Line Web-Based solutions has for some while been ahead of the customer demand for them.

We see our role as enabling web applications that require on-line back-end interaction (with core SynergySoft data), and not the provision of static data or the design of websites (which are generally developed by Council staff or their nominated website developer).

SynergySoft already offers:

- Payment of Rates, Debts and Infringements (through an interface with FastPay or WALGA's Telstra BillPay)
- E-Procurement (through an interface with StraightBUY)
- Agenda and Minutes, including excellent searching facilities
- Lodgement and monitoring of Customer Requests

And we have now produced the second generation of a prototype for:

- The provision of personalised information, according to the relationship that the enquirer has with Council, and the ability for the person to lodge information with Council (eg changed personal details)
- The distribution of forms, personalised with information from the SynergySoft data
- Lodgment and monitoring of applications
- Enquiring and Booking of facilities

South Australia

The Installation of Synergysoft at our first Victorian Council - Golden Plains Shire, has kept the South Australian contingent of IT Vision busy over the last three months. A conversion was done from InfoLGS, and most modules are now up and running quite smoothly.

The South Australian staff have also recently converted two Queensland Councils to SynergySoft from Administrator, the Shires of Millmerran and Wondai.

Exciting news also from Victoria, where we have also just secured Delatite. This Council will soon de-amalgamate into the Rural City of Benalla and the Shire of Mansfield, providing IT Vision with two further Councils in Victoria. The decision, following careful evaluation of the tenders received from all the mainstream Local Government software suppliers, was based on our product offering and the positive customer feedback from site visits and telephone calls. The selection panel decided that IT Vision's integrated solution provided the best functionality for Council, and they advised us that the main distinguishing factor between IT Vision and the other suppliers was our level of support and excellent customer relationships. This is the first result from our decision, twelve months ago, to increase our marketing presence in the Eastern States and we are confident that this will lead to our becoming a very significant supplier down the Eastern Seaboard (as we already are in WA and SA).

On the South Australian front, we have had the pleasure of Vicki Wright at a number of our sites, installing Central Records and Agenda Minutes. Alexandrina has been running Central Records for some time and has just installed Agenda and Minutes, Coober Pedy has installed Agenda and Minutes, and Renmark, Berri and Roxby Downs have implemented Central Records. Vicki Wright has also just recently conducted a one day workshop for our sites using Central Records.

Over the next 3-6 months, we will be upgrading the following Councils to Synergysoft – Cleve, Tatiara, Renmark, Roxby Downs, Port Lincoln, Berri and Coober Pedy. We will also roll out SynergySoft Payroll, on a site-by-site basis.

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Winning New Business in WA

Three new Councils have joined the ITV customer list in the last twelve months. The Shires of Quairading, Jerramungup, and Pingelly were all utilising Collier Knyn's Logis software prior to taking up SynergySoft.

We are also very pleased to say that Carnamah is also just starting to implement SynergySoft after utilising Sanderson's Authority for a twelve month period – welcome back Carnamah.

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New Staff



Vincent Bentley, Melissa Nardi, Ann Bull, Melissa Cunningham, Daniel Smith
(from left to right)

Since our last Newsletter, which we are ashamed to admit was twelve months ago, IT Vision's numbers have grown by six: One developer (Daniel Smith) and three support staff (Vince Bentley and Melissa Cunningham in Perth, and Clive Hempel in Adelaide). Ann Bull and Belinda Bush are now sharing the help desk/reception duties and Melissa Nardi has joined us in an Accounting role.

Daniel is a graduate who is developing SynergySoft software using Visual Basic and Java software development tools. He has significantly reduced the average age of our office and likes everything fast (motorbikes, food and other things).

Vince came to us from another software supplier (who will remain nameless) and brings with him experience of implementing software on customer sites, together with some seven years of previous Local Government experience. Vince is responsible for scheduling training sessions, controlling software releases and managing implementation projects as well as other support duties.

Melissa Cunningham joined us in April. Melissa has had five years of Local Government experience prior to joining IT Vision, two of which were utilising SynergySoft, and she is already a highly proficient support person. Melissa has mostly been working on support to date and looks forward to undertaking customer training in the near future.



Clive Hempel

Clive brings with him eight years of Local Government experience, much of it as Finance Manager, and extensive use of IT Vision software products. Clive increases our Adelaide office resource by 50%, making it three full-time staff.

Ann joined IT Vision as an experienced administration person with several years of Call Centre experience, and Melissa Nardi is a qualified accountant who will help us to improve our internal management accounting.

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WA Customers Upgrading to SynergySoft

IT Vision was extremely busy converting existing customers to SynergySoft during the last financial year.

Conversions included the first four Councils moving from InfoLGS to SynergySoft and this created new difficulties. The data conversion process is very demanding, with in excess of a year of programming development having gone into the task and each site additionally taking an average of three weeks of support effort to convert the data.

We now have over 25 customers using SynergySoft Financials and some 20 using Rates and Property, with varying numbers using the ancillary applications. We have already received orders from a further 7 customers that want to move to SynergySoft this financial year and we would ask you to make your intentions clear to Martin if you want to change this year.

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New Name for a SynergySoft Module

We have decided to rename SynergySoft GUI Reports. After an internal competition that won Belinda a bottle of champagne, we have renamed the product to SynergySoft Report Manager. The name maybe a little boring (we had several more interesting ones, including O.R.G.A.S.M - Online Report Generator for Accurate System Mensuration), but it does accurately describe the product.

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What's Hot?

The two modules that Councils are showing the most interest in at this time are Central Records and Mapping Enquiry.

The interest in Central Records, that has seen orders from five Councils in the last three months, has obviously been brought about by the exposure given to the new State Records legislation. SynergySoft Central Records is a very cost effective solution that will suit most customers, and has the distinct benefit of encompassing a very high level of integration with other SynergySoft modules. If you are considering implementing a document management system, we would urge you to ensure that SynergySoft Central Records is one of the products that you evaluate.

A Mapping interface is a great way to view information, and makes some tasks significantly easier. DOLA has recently reduced the cost of providing the cadastre (to Councils) to \$121, which makes the inclusion of the Mapping interface a viable proposition for almost all Local Authorities. As the DCEO of one of the smaller Councils recently

stated “you should be selling this Mapping interface to even your smallest customers, our ranger and planner thinks it is great and wouldn’t do without it now”.

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WA User Group

We are delighted that the IT Vision User Group Inc. has elected to extend the employment of Bruce Wittber on a part-time basis. Bruce’s Local Government skills and knowledge are a significant benefit to the group. If you are using ANY SynergySoft modules, or intend to shortly, you should be a member of this group. Apart from the benefit of being able to share experiences and to put your views at quarterly meetings, membership brings you under the umbrella of the Service Level Agreement and the Escrow Agreement. Bruce can be reached on bwittber@inet.net.au.

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Software Releases

The latest versions of ITV products are:

- SynergySoft 2.8.x
- Administrator v21
- InfoLGS 2002.2

Release 3.0.x of SynergySoft will be available between the end of September and mid-October and the main purpose of this release is to take advantage of significant changes that IBM has made to the database and its related products. Ongoing development of SynergySoft will see two further releases during this financial year, in January/February and in May/June.

No new releases of Administrator or InfoLGS are planned, although there will be at least one for each product this year.

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Supported Hardware and Software

We are now publishing the minimum hardware and operating system requirements for SynergySoft on our website. The following should be considered:

- We no longer support our software running on Windows ‘95
- Whilst we are currently supporting our software running on Windows ’98, there are some significant restrictions brought about by the way ’98 allows memory to be used. The effect of this is that it may not be possible to have more than one SynergySoft window open at any one time on a PC running ’98.
- We intend to discontinue supporting our software in conjunction with Office ’97, by 30th June 2003. However we will review this if it has a detrimental effect on a large number of customers and we would ask

you to advise us if this is likely to effect you.

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Changes for IT Vision

With the additional staff that IT Vision has taken on, we have run out of space in our Perth office and this will lead us to move premises later this calendar year. We will then take the opportunity to re-engineer ourselves for the next few years with new IT infrastructure, hopefully a new website, and a new identity (colours and logo). We look forward to being able to announce the detail of these changes.

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FESA

As all West Australian Councils will know, the Fire and Emergency Services Levy will be implemented from 1st July 2003. ITV has had two recent meeting with FESA to discuss and agree the specification for the changes and we anticipate that these will be finalised by FESA in the coming month or two. The changes will involve significant software development, but we believe that the cost of this will be met by FESA.

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For Sale

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder has an IBM AIX system for sale (RS/6000 Model E30). If anyone is interested in this system please contact Roger Hayes on 9021 9600.

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Contributions gladly accepted. Please email to newsletter@itvision.com.au

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