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Paper for Presenting at the 2009 ITAC Sydney Conference – May 21 -22

Title of Presentation: Can we build better-connected and more sustainable communities through the inclusion of new internet-based technologies? What are the obstacles, challenges and where do we start?

Proposed Presentation Overview:

Keyvision has established a unique level of expertise based upon research and actual project implementations in the area of incorporating web-based technologies into Master Planned and lifestyle based communities.

This presentation will cover the processes that Keyvision have developed in relation to its deployment of these solutions and explore the issues and challenges of including web based technologies so they are affordable, relevant and sustainable.

Presenter Overview

Mark Davis

Director & Founder of Keyvision
Managing Director of Stonehenge Group

Mark has been involved in the building and construction industry for over 25 years. His reputation in the industry as a progressive thinker and innovator is highly regarded. Mark is well know amongst his industry Peers as a pioneer through successfully penetrating the Japanese market during the mid 90's when his company designed and built over 40 housing projects in Japan over a period of six years. His design and building company, the Stonehenge Group, is one of the most awarded residential construction companies in Australia and since the year 2000 his company has been focusing on the Design, Building and Project Management of Aged Care and Retirement developments.

For almost a decade, Mark as a Melbourne based developer and builder, explored creative ways of providing more to his customers than simply the homes in which they live. Based on a philosophy that subscribes to the importance of relationships, Mark and his team looked to provide ways in which they could not only improve the living environment of their clients but impact their lifestyle, through providing better information, appropriate technology and facilitate community and neighborhood interaction.

In 1996, Mark Davis (Managing Director of the Stonehenge Group), began the research and investigation that led to the formation of a new technology company, Keyvision Pty Ltd. A key component explored, through this new entity, was the emerging web technologies to provide data to the homeowner regarding their home and connect communities of common purpose through an online "Community Intranet". After 2 years of development, consultation and refinement, their first Community Intranet was launched in November 1999.

Some Background to the presentation

More than just a 'Novel Idea'?

Through its work with Australia's largest developers of new communities and other community development stakeholders, Keyvision has established a 'Community Intranet Sustainability Model' – that aims to ensure that the deployment of such a technology provides real and tangible benefits to its participants – over the long term.

There are four fundamental components to Community Intranet Sustainability:

- **Technology**
 - The technology use to connect individuals to build community and generate real social benefits must be simple to use, scalable and robust. Mark will cover how Keyvision came to recognize the importance of this element back in 1997 and commenced the implementation of this element in their development projects.
- **Governance**
 - A Community Intranet system will not be sustainable long term without a well-structured Governance model. Mark will present, from experience, how Keyvision has assisted communities in setting up resident bodies (Incorporated Associations) for the purpose of managing and administering the community's online resource.
- **Engagement**
 - Community stakeholders must participate in and embrace the technology. Mark will show how important 'simplicity of use' is to ensure regular participation in the Community Intranet
- **Financial**
 - The Community Intranet must be under pinned by a sustainable financial model. Mark will be able to review ways in which Community Intranets are utilizing sponsorship from local businesses, and give live examples of the benefits and functionality that local businesses gain from such involvement.

Connectedness & Social Capital

Keyvision's implementations have provided a valuable insight into how Social Capital in communities is enhanced through the implementation of a 'Virtual Community' via a Community Intranet.

The role of Community Intranets in Aged Care services

The Internet is a much more flexible medium than any other communication technology for empowering isolated older people. The Internet is becoming increasingly easy for novices to use, information can be exchanged quickly, often in real-time, once the technology is in place it is durable and quite inexpensive to use, and the proportion of older people who have used a computer continues to climb rapidly. (Reference: The Internet as a medium for increase inclusion: does the virtual learning process support theories of Successful Ageing?' Peter Grimbeek and Rick Swindell, Griffith University. 20

Digital Home Manual – The beginning of the concept

“Some Ten years ago, CSIRO did a study that showed 65% of profit erosion in the building industry was due to poor communication and information transfer,” says Mark Davis Founder and Director for KeyVision.

“The reason is that the industry is segmented, and whenever information is transferred—from sales to design to construction to home owner—there is a loss of information. One of the biggest losses occurs when the home is handed over to the customer.”

“There is a great deal of information generated when you build a home—diagrams, drawings, specifications—but the information passed to the customer is normally fairly limited. Customers generally get minimal information, specifications or building details. They don’t know where their wiring or plumbing is, or who to contact for information. The relationship between homeowner and builder is cut off at hand-over. There’s no ongoing relationship.”

KeyVision is tackling poor communication and information transfer in two ways. One is to build better long-term relationships with customers. The other is to improve the way builders use information to build homes. Mark believes technology can play a large part in both.

“The building industry needs to embrace sustainable relationships with customers beyond handover,” says Mark.

“We want a system that a builder can use to manage information created throughout a project, then store it so the customer can access it once their home is complete,” he says.

“Originally we thought about it like a home user’s manual. Then we thought, ‘why not give the customer access to that information as their home is being built?’ It’s there and accessible. We’re using a web-based management system that is available to the project team. Why not let the customer into the loop via the Internet, so they are better informed about the project and know what stage their home is at? They might get variations, make approval on-line, get documentation, or see a picture of their site.”

“Doing this is to our benefit, because if the customer is better informed they’re often much better to deal with,” he says. “By far the majority of disputes between builders and their customers revolve around poor communication.”

Some Project Implementations & Case Studies:

Springthorpeonline, MacLeod Victoria

Springthorpe is a 700-lot community in MacLeod in Melbourne's north developed by Urban Pacific Limited. Its Community Intranet, Springthorpeonline, was launched at the opening of the community's country club on October 25th, 2003.

See www.springthorpreonline.com.au

The online Community Intranet provides residents with a convenient and efficient way to interact with each other and access community information, resources and services.

The Springthorpe Community Intranet allow residents to become part of a 'virtual online community' that allows them to access local information, communicate with other residents, discover neighbours with similar interests, access local community resource information and businesses, and receive notifications of upcoming community events.

Swan Hill Village – Aged Care Community

Keyvision has been developing an online Community Intranet environment specifically for Aged Care and Retirement communities. The Swan Hill Village in Swan Hill, a project from non-profit Alcheringa Hostels Inc, has been developed and includes our 'lifestyle' edition intranet service which is available to residents and external families

The Swan Hill Hub can be accessed via: www.swanhillvillagehub.com.au and www.alcheringacommunityhub.com.au

Reclink – Not for profit Organisation

Keyvision was requested to revamp the current static National website for this Not for Profit Organisation into a dynamic content management website and portal. The objective was to provide secure access to management from all states so that localized content could be uploaded and modified on a daily and weekly basis. The new site was launched in January of 2009 and has been a great success.

See www.reclink.org

More information is available by contacting:

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