

TO: CITY MANAGER 1999 November 16

FROM: CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

SUBJECT: MICROSOFT SYSTEM MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (SMS)

PURPOSE: To request that a bylaw be brought down for \$250,000 to fund the purchase of software and equipment to control the PC inventory and for the distribution of PC software.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a Capital Expenditure Bylaw in the amount of \$250,000 be brought down to finance the acquisition of hardware, software and implementation services required for the use of Microsoft System Management Software (SMS).

REPORT

Background

The Information Services Strategic Plan includes the implementation of networking and client support (back office) software. The Microsoft software being recommended will provide the ability to centrally manage servers and remote PC devices thus improving the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of PC administration and support services.

Overview

The City is preparing to move to new client/server systems which necessitates managing and updating the software at the client (user) PC level. This can be accommodated through the distribution of software from a centralized server. Microsoft SMS server will allow support staff to manage the City's 750 PC computers without having to physically go to each PC to provide service. The upcoming Microsoft Exchange project is scheduled to be initiated early in the new year and as the other projects follow, physically going to each machine will be an inordinately time consuming task. There are currently over 750 PCs spread throughout the City. The varying makes and models of the computer equipment, many with their specialized application configurations, requires extensive staff time to service and maintain. Microsoft SMS will alleviate the need to continuously visit each PC to upgrade its software and diagnose problems.

The City has two primary objectives for the Microsoft SMS server project. The first is to manage and expedite the City's software distribution effort. The second is to provide the City with a tool to identify and track hundreds of PCs located at various remote sites resulting in a comprehensive asset management capability.

Solution

Microsoft Systems Management Server is a comprehensive solution for centrally managing personal computers on a network of our size. The product will enable Information Services to centrally distribute software, to detect every machine on the network, inventory software and hardware configurations, and send key information back to a central database. Microsoft SMS has the following features and functionality:

- Identifies and maintains a central inventory of PCs and servers.
- Automatically installs the client management information on all client machines from a single location.
- Performs detailed hardware and software inventory, including historical changes and collected files.
- Identifies software packages based on an extensive database.

The Systems Administrators will be able to use the SMS information to plan rollouts of new applications and updates. Initially, the City will use the Systems Management Server to automatically install desktop applications from our central site. This ability to schedule non-business hours software installation will significantly reduce installation costs for software maintenance.

As virtually all City PCs are running Windows as an operating system, support staff will use the system to remotely control the users keyboard, screen, and mouse for troubleshooting and training. This saves support, travel and administration costs, and resolves problems faster.

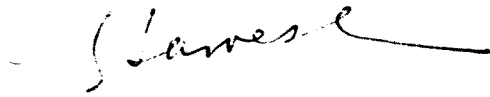
A small server is included in the funding request to run the SMS software. In addition, consulting is provided for the one time setup, site survey deployment and system configuration.

Summary

The City's ability to install software centrally, inventory equipment, diagnosis and remotely access PCs, and support standard interfaces will be enabled by the purchase of SMS software and server. This will translate into savings of staff time and more timely distribution of upgrades.

Financing

Sufficient Capital Reserves are available and this project is included in the first two years of the 1999 - 2003 Capital Budget. The 1999 portion of the budget will be reduced in other projects to accommodate the two years of expenditure proposed here.



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