

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (LOGIS)



“With MBF-UDALink we realized cost savings, increased efficiencies, reduced development time and are uniquely positioned to grow with technology as our user needs and requirements grow.”

Faced with the challenge of providing a collective, cost-effective solution for the 25 municipalities they service, Local Government Information Systems Association (LOGIS) turned to MBF-UDALink (formerly DataExpress), which includes an ODBC driver to deliver the client-server solution they needed.

LOGIS, a information systems consortium, for over twenty-five municipalities in Minnesota has been providing data processing, application support, networking and MIS coordination for 27 years now.

Recently, they were tasked with the challenge of finding a cost-effective solution that would deliver a graphical interface to their legacy applications on their HP3000 for their Permit & Inspection database. This database is responsible for all information relating to building permits, inspections, inspection scheduling, business licenses, etc.

“As a non-profit government organization, LOGIS is accountable to hold the costs”, says Ray Jozwiak, Manager of Technology.

LOGIS formed a search committee and began the task of examining several ERP products to help them move towards a client server world for permits and inspections. However, the costs of moving to this software required acquiring additional 3rd party software, maintenance, application servers, databases and securing extra staff bringing the costs to an estimated 1 million dollars. Even then, the ERP solutions would only cover 12 of the 25 municipalities they supported.

Wanting to hold the costs in line and keep them as low as possible, LOGIS decided to look in-house and to MB Foster’s MBF-UDALink (formerly DataExpress) to help them realize their goal. With minimal education, support and administration, they could easily expand this service to the other remaining municipalities. For a fraction of the costs to implement the ERP solution, LOGIS discovered that they could deliver the Permit & Inspection applications.

LOGIS soon realized other projects could benefit from MBF-UDALink. Benefits such as maintaining their original investment in the HP3000 without adding additional hardware or educational training for staff. It was also important to have database backup and integrity still kept in-house.

Inspectors now have the ability to drill down and gather extensive information on schedules, business licenses, code compliance, land parcels, and the Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Ray also explains how LOGIS is now able to provide the police community with access to their data in different ways using their own tool sets. “Our police community was looking for a graphical way to analyze their crime data. Using MS Access and Visual Basic with the GIS system, they can now manipulate their own data instantly in a variety of ways.”

Documentation has been cut to a minimum. In fact, to date since implementing the system, they have created only minimum documentation for their users. They do conduct a four-day training class on using the solution and assist with implementation.

Future developments for LOGIS include offering permits on-line through the web and allowing users remote access from the field. Using the web capabilities of MBF-UDALink for these future projects will eliminate the need for LOGIS to spend additional dollars on new software to link to the HP3000 data.

Within just seven months of implementing MBF-UDALink (formerly DataExpress), LOGIS increased their business for this application by 33%. They are planning for another 30% in the next five months. “We just don’t see growth like that”, says Ray.

MBF-UDALink delivers data accessibility while reducing costs.

