

PMI Mass Bay Chapter, Inc.

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Volunteers, Collaboration and the PMCC Experience

An Online Organizational Effort

<http://www.pmcc.jot.com>

by Geoff Moore, PMCC Collaboration team

If you work for a large international company, you are familiar with long distance collaboration tools, such as Microsoft's Live Meeting™ and SharePoint™ or perhaps you use LiveLink™ or the ProjExec™ software available from November's meeting sponsor Trilog Group, built on IBM Workspace™.

Perhaps, if you work at a small company, your IT department has set up servers for document storage, mandates an operating system, specifies and provides common versions of email, calendar and other office productivity tools and is there to help you when it inevitably goes wrong. If you have a project office, you may even have set up a world-class integrated project management suite of tools. Your CEO has a strategic plan, your CIO is investigating and implementing the latest technology and tools and your COO is making it all happen smoothly.

Take a moment to reflect on the services and support you take for granted when working with colleagues. The ones you rely on to efficiently maximize your limited and expensive time.

Now, strip all that away, rely on a free email account for communication and document sharing, a monthly-hosted tele-conference call for audio only meetings, and occasional travel to a donated conference room, perhaps 20 or 30 miles from your home for an evening meeting. Pay yourself nothing and be prepared to play catch-up via email chains, if they are available and you are new to the team. Welcome to the world of collaboration in some volunteer organizations.

So why do it? Because it is good to give, one person can make a difference and you have ideas, determination and perseverance to improve the value of your organization.

The Project Management Career Connection (PMCC), faced with the blessing of a large and growing volunteer group and the challenge of sharing, collaborating and meeting in a non-workplace environment, are assessing readily available, simple to use, and inexpensive applications. One such tool is a Wiki application from JotSpot, co-founded by Excite founder, [Joe Kraus](#). It allows the team to store Word or other files such as minutes, agenda, action register and if an editing member, to update them via a simple web page. Change tracking and version control is maintained automatically from within the application.

Users view the information from their web browser, making updates directly to pages containing ideas under collaborative development. The latest information for new members is immediately available, in one place and co-owned by the team. Take a few minutes to explore the PMCC test site at www.pmcc.jot.com.

How inexpensive is it? To set up for five members with 20 pages (but beware, since any attachment counts as a page, this number is soon exceeded) is free. Twenty editing members, 250 pages and 100MB of storage is \$9 per month. Yes, an Enterprise application, such as those mentioned above are more robust, and come with many added benefits, but can cost \$10,000 and upwards in server and annual client license fees.

The other team exploring collaboration options? Your very own Newsletter team. If you make use of a better collaboration application and are willing to share its details or are a Company, willing to share, host or sponsor a collaboration site for PMI Mass Bay Chapter volunteer teams, please contact gmoore@brightanalysis.com on behalf of the PMCC collaboration team.

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