

Case Study

Paperless Meeting Management for Canadian School Boards



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School Boards of all sizes and geographies are facing increased pressure for their accountability and environmental responsibility which they must balance against the need for accessibility and improved efficiency. These challenges also represent an opportunity to reduce the costs associated with their Board of Trustees and meeting management at all levels of the school district.

Background

Halton Catholic District School Board home to over 29,000 students in southwestern Ontario, and Yellowknife Education District #1 located in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories one of Canada's most geographically isolated may seem worlds apart yet shared similar meeting efficiency challenges. With regular trustee meetings driving other tiers of meetings at the Committee, Department and School level, the actual level of effort, cost and environmental impact of agenda and minute generation was significant and taxing upon their Boards and administrative staff. By considering electronic meeting management, both were hoping to reduce staff workload, paper

usage and costs, while improving the quality of interaction and communication between meeting participants, staff in addition to parents and students.

The Challenge

With increasing meeting frequency and escalating agenda sizes, the associated paper and consumable costs were taxing the limits of their existing paper-based systems in addition to the environmental impact of disposing of used meeting artifacts. Further with increased budget pressures on the existing small staffs, the labour necessary to create and distribute agendas, manage the meetings, produce minutes and follow up on the myriad of action items was taxing at best.

Approach

After a review of alternatives and available solutions, both organizations engaged eSCRIBE Solutions to provide its award winning paperless meeting and agenda management solution as a tool to automate the entire meeting lifecycle for Board Administrators, meeting contributors and participants. eSCRIBE is a commercially available comprehensive board, committee and departmental meeting automation solution built exclusively for Microsoft's industry leading SharePoint 2010 collaboration and business integration platform and the Office Client productivity suite.

Product Highlights

- ✔ 100% "User" configurable meeting templates
- ✔ Full lifecycle meeting management support for all meeting attendees
- ✔ Comprehensive legislative support (aligns with Robert's Rules of Order)
- ✔ Personalized Participants Web Portal
- ✔ Feature rich dedicated iPad Application for Participants
- ✔ Integrated online participant voting
- ✔ 2-Tier task and action log management
- ✔ Award winning SharePoint and Office integration
- ✔ Onsite or Hosted implementations

Unlike other competitive solutions, eSCRIBE does much more than just assist with the build-up of meeting agendas, it is a complete governance and management solution aligned with Roberts Rules of Order, providing procedural support during the meeting including roll calls, audited voting on motions and amendments, right through to the automatic generation of detailed minutes and the management of the myriad of action items and follow up tasks generated during the meeting process.

eSCRIBE also provides access for each elected official through a personalized online Participants Portal or dedicated iPad Application. From this entry point, each meeting participant can browse upcoming meeting agendas, easily access all related reports and supporting information, record personal comments and follow-up notes and search through previous reports and agenda items using eSCRIBE's enhanced search capabilities all without the need to ever print a piece of paper.

With eSCRIBE all information is available online to whoever needs it when they need it, through security trimmed portals, giving it great appeal for governing bodies looking to make a green environmental statement.

In addition to providing much needed efficiency, quality and transparency, eSCRIBE automates approval and distribution of reports, agendas and minutes virtually eliminating the need to print any paper; a drastic change from most current procedures which are heavily dependent on

manual, paper based processes for reports and meeting functions.

Outcomes

Once implementation and training had been completed, both organizations experienced a number of key benefits throughout the organization, including:

- I. Benefits to Administration:
 - Takes less time to produce the agenda package with at least a four times improvement in efficiency on day one
 - Scheduling meetings and creating their agendas is simple and easy to do
 - Increases the available organizational time prior to meetings
 - Simplifies viewing of documents
 - Minutes and motions can be partially prepared in advance to the meeting allow for a quicker update during your Board Meetings
 - Single click production of minute and agenda packages
 - Tremendous savings in paper and time normally spent on the photocopier or in front of shedder
 - No wasted paper
- II. Benefits to the Board of Trustees:
 - Trustees have secure access to agenda packages from any computer with internet connection
 - Streamlined communications – no more lost emails, multiple versions of documents or ill communicated changes to packages
 - Instant access to all meeting artifacts during the meeting
 - Board member mark-ups, collaboration tools and instant messaging during Board Meetings

- III. Benefits to Staff:
 - Better visibility to upcoming meetings
 - Streamlined approval and submission processes for Reports
 - Standardized meeting processes at all levels of the organization

- IV. Benefits to Students and Parents:
 - Improved access to meeting content and outcomes
 - Increased transparency
 - Greater involvement in meetings

- V. Additional organizational benefits:
 - With no additional licenses or costs, eSCRIBE has been extended to include other meeting streams beyond the Board and Committee level.

"eSCRIBE has catapulted us in the 21st Century!"

"In less than 8 months, we have stopped producing paper copies for Administrative and Academic Council meetings and reduced the number of printed Board agendas and reports."

"As an Executive Assistant, eSCRIBE has drastically reduced my workload – from preparing agendas and collating reports to taking minutes and assigning tasks, the whole process has become more cost effective and time efficient."

Danielle Ross
Executive Assistant, Director's Office
Halton Catholic District School Board

"eSCRIBE has improved our work quality and quality of life within the office"

"Quick to learn, easy to use – eSCRIBE has increased the efficiency with which we conduct meetings, have saved us money and is good for the environment. How can you argue with that?"

Tracy Turk
Executive Assistant to the
Superintendent
Yellowknife Education District No. 1

Corporate Overview

eSCRIBE is Microsoft Gold certified, Canadian independent software vendor (ISV) of Paperless Governance and Meeting Management Solutions built exclusively for Microsoft SharePoint and the Office client suite. With eSCRIBE's robust user configurable meeting management engine and award winning SharePoint integration, it is quickly becoming the go-to choice of public and private sector boards, committees and councils looking to improve efficiency, transparency and accessibility while at the same time demonstrating environmental responsibility by reducing the costs and consumables used to manage local government.

As part of its solutions focus, eSCRIBE's internal team of professional project managers, business consultants, software engineers, quality assurance testers, and documentation experts are specialists in a number of core Microsoft technologies and do not outsource or subcontract any of the development, support or enhancement of its products.

Contact Us

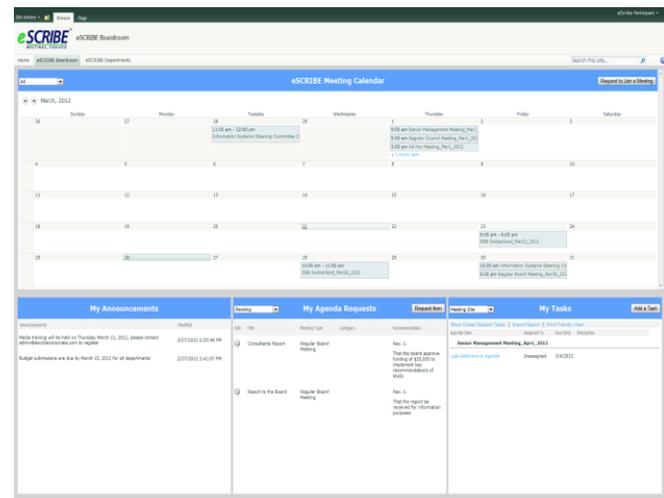
Corporate

Robert Treumann, President and CEO
 #219-60 Centurian Drive
 Markham, ON
 L3R 8T5
 +1 905 305 3420
rtreumann@escribecorporate.com

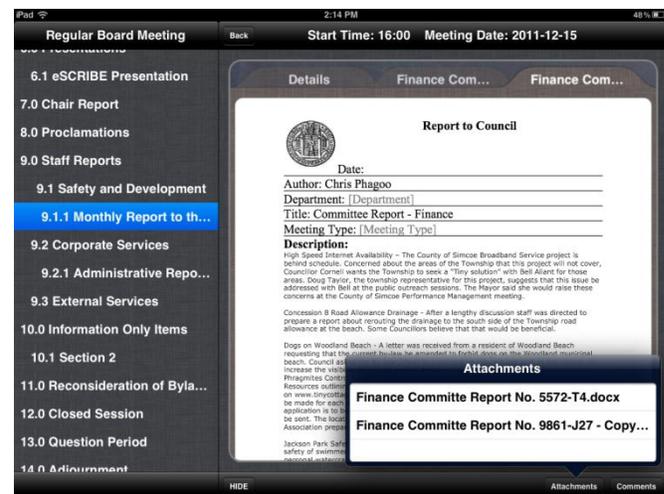
Sales

Paul Mackin, Executive Vice President,
 Sales and Marketing
 +1 905 305 3415
pmackin@escribecorporate.com

William Hall, Business Development Manager
 +1 905 305 3424
whall@escribecorporate.com



eSCRIBE Personal Participants Portal (Web Browser View)



eSCRIBE Full Featured Dedicated iPad Application