

Summary Report

Iowa Counties Information Technology Organization
Planning Retreat

Report Date: October 9, 2009



Institute for Decision Making (IDM)
Business and Community Services
University of Northern Iowa
IDM Facilitators
Bill Wood and Don Chaplain

Summary of Planning Retreat

Iowa Counties Information Technology Organization (ICIT)

October 1 and 2, 2009

Waterloo, Iowa

Purpose of the Planning Retreat: To determine the future direction, areas of focus, and important intended accomplishments of ICIT over the next three to five years.

Session I

Following a welcome to the 18 participants and introduction of Bill Wood and Don Chaplain with the Institute for Decision Making (IDM) by ICIT President Kim Veeder, Bill Wood began the afternoon session. He initially reviewed the agenda and the proposed operating principles for the retreat, which were accepted by the planning team members. He asked the group if there were any specific expectations they did not see included in the agenda of which there were none.

Bill then asked the participants to answer individually two questions about themselves: **What they bring to the table? Why they make an investment of themselves in ICIT?** The participants were then asked to introduce themselves and answer the first question verbally. Following introductions each member of the group was then asked to share their response to the second question. The responses are included with this Summary Report as **ATTACHMENT A**.

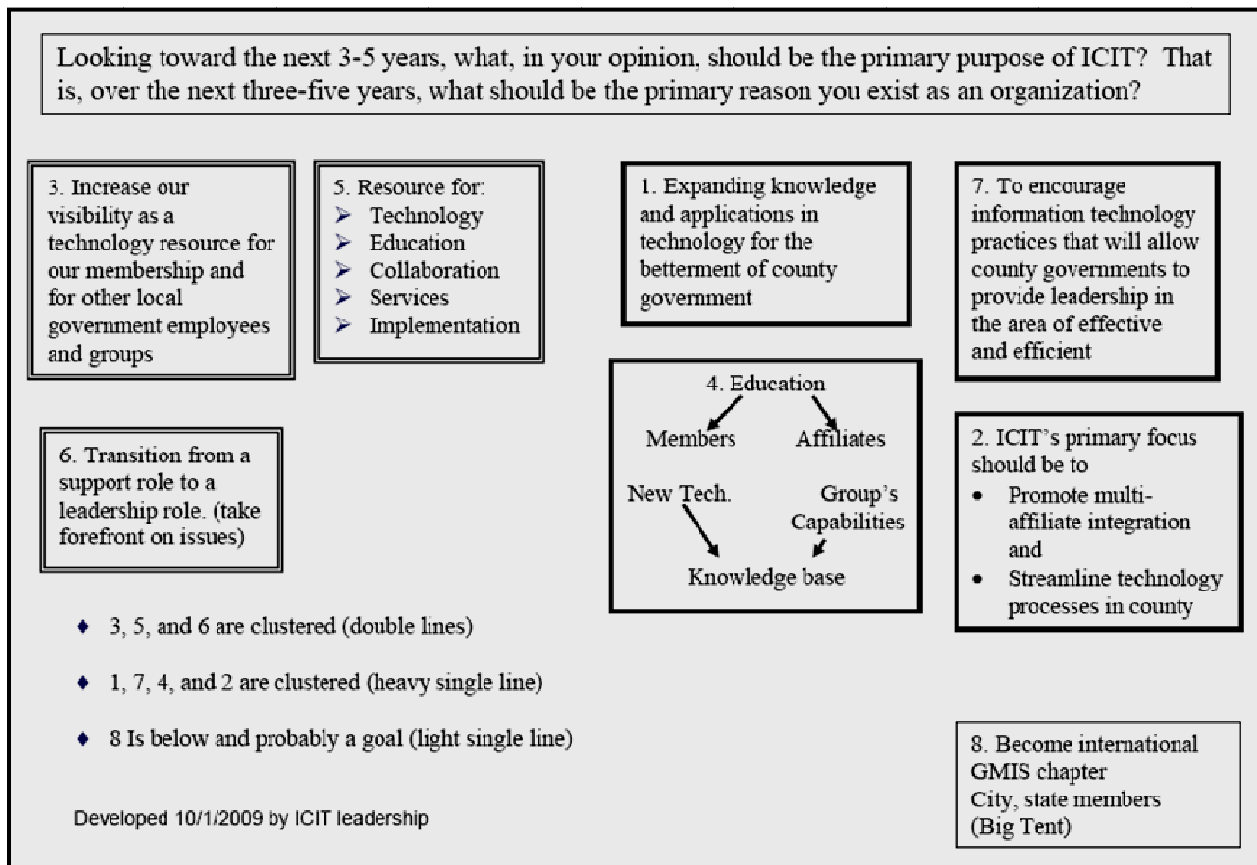
Don began the initial phase of the planning work by asking the participants to briefly note a response to this question: **Considering the time you have been a member of ICIT, what single past accomplishment of ICIT are you proudest of and why?** Don indicated that it is usually beneficial to begin planning work with a view of past accomplishments to build a common beginning point and to recognize the efforts that have preceded the current planning work.

ATTACHMENT B lists the responses to this question. Don then asked for voluntary responses to another question based on their previous responses as to: **What do you see are the key organizational strengths that position you (ICIT) for a strong future?** Included in the responses were the following comments:

- Collaboration
- Friendships

- Skills of people
- No ego's – common goals
- Friendly competition
- Do it no matter what it takes
- Eagerness to help others
- Built good relationships with specific affiliates

Bill then began working with the planning group on determining ICIT's future direction by asking the participants to first individually answer the following question: **Looking toward the next 3-5 years, what, in your opinion, should be the primary purpose of ICIT?** The participants were then instructed to work in a group of two or three individuals to develop a consensus response on a card and post on the wall. After all of the responses were posted Bill then asked everyone to go to the wall and arrange the cards by putting similar ones together, with the broadest ones at the top. Following is the result of their repositioning:



Clustered Group 1

- Increase our visibility as a technology resource for our membership and for other local government employees
- Transition from a support role to a leadership role (take forefront on issues)
- Resource for: technology, education, collaboration, services, implementation

Clustered Group 2

- Expanding knowledge and applications in technology for the betterment of county government
- To encourage information technology practices that will allow county governments to provide leadership in the areas of effective and efficient county government
- ICIT's primary focus should be to: promote multi-affiliate integration and streamline technology processes in county government
- Education on two levels to members regarding new technology and to affiliates as to the ICIT's capabilities all of which results in an expanded knowledge base

Single Standing Purpose

- Become an international GMIS Chapter and include city and state members (become a Big Tent)

Don distributed another worksheet and asked each individual to respond to the question: **As ICIT, whom will you primarily serve over the next three-five years?** Once they had identified those they expect to primarily serve, the participants were then asked to identify: **What they think their expectations of ICIT will be over the next 3 to 5 years?** Once the group members individually answered these two questions, they worked as a small group to identify their consensus primary stakeholders and a list of expectations. The four small groups identified the following stakeholders and expectations for each (x4 or x3 indicates number of small groups choosing as "primary"):

Primary Stakeholders Expectations

ICIT's individual members x4

Additional education and training communications
Representation
Resource/Knowledge base
Education assistance, training
Education, networking, conferences, communications on specific topics/problems
Expand knowledgebase
Website
Education, cooperation, friendships
Leadership by example
Conferences
Career development opportunities
Templates

The other affiliates of ISAC x4

Support on technology projects
Resource/technical partner
Improve technology efficiency with office procedures
Share basic technology information
Assistance with large and small projects
Our opinions regarding new technology
Availability to provide:

- Leadership
- Guidance on technical issues
- Standardization of similar functions
- Overview county wide perspective on applications

Local county leaders x3

A technology resource and support
Benefits IT/GIS services
One-stop shop for technology
County IT/GIS projects where local leaders go to other counties where the ICIT member doesn't have specific knowledge
Recommendations on creation and development of IT or GIS resources

ISAC as an organization x3

A leadership role in the implementation of technology and technology management processes
Leadership role (w/COSTAR)
More involvement with ISAC sponsored projects

Following discussion as to the anticipated expectations of the four primary stakeholders, the participants were then asked to respond verbally to the following question: **What in your opinion should differentiate ICIT from other groups or organizations that will likely also be serving your primary stakeholders?**

Responses included the following key points:

- ICIT has no bias
- ICIT is “apolitical”
- ICIT can offer expertise with no agenda
- ICIT has a commitment to county government and offers expertise in that area
- ICIT and its members are the only function that has a county wide view – working with all departments of county government

Bill began the next section of the planning retreat by sharing with the group a short video titled “Did You Know” that identified a number of significant trends that are going to affect the world in the future (communications tools and expectations, population growth, and similar topics). The video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpEnFwiqdx8&NR=1>) was intended to set the tone for the next portion of the retreat dealing with trends that the participants believe could/will shape county government. The specific question: **What in your opinion, are the significant trends or issues that will shape county government over the next 3-5 years?** Bill circulated a worksheet that provided some beginning points to help stimulate thinking for Ideawriting about responses to this question including:

Broadband out there in next 3-4 years

Dwindling employee base, fewer people to do more work

Groundswell to make government more efficient and transparent

How do you demonstrate your county’s quality of life?

Consolidation of services at state level from a data perspective (makes it easier, more efficient and more effective) to deal with three plan versus 99)

Interconnectivity

Business processes, efficiencies

After writing additional responses to the question, the participants were asked to share their worksheet with others at their table for added ideas. Those thoughts felt to be the most significant in shaping county government were to be identified. Following completion of the individual worksheet by all each of the four tables worked as small groups to arrive at 3 or 4 trends or issues as a response to the following question: **Addressing which of these trends or issues should be among ICIT's highest priorities during the next 3-5 years?** Respondents listed their group responses on newsprint and were asked to provide a brief explanation as to why they believed these were the priority issues/trends for ICIT. Following is what the group's identified:

1. Broadband (expansion)
2. Efficiency
3. Mobile Services
4. Mobility Workers –work anywhere
5. Declining employee base
6. Information Security
7. 24/7 availability from anywhere
8. Transparency
9. Education – all levels
10. Government reorganization
11. Organizational development of ICIT

Bill thanked the group for their attention and commitment to the afternoon's planning session and indicated we would reconvene the retreat at 8:30AM the following day.

Session II

Bill opened the morning session by briefly reviewing yesterday's work including a handout of the input regarding the primary purpose of ICIT; a hand out as to the four identified primary stakeholders and their identified expectations; and the 11 trends or issues identified as among ICIT's highest priority over the next 3 to 5 years.

Bill then facilitated the group in the application of Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) software to identify what should be the top areas of focus from the 11 previously identified trends and issues. Following participation in the ISM process the following five issues/trends are those the group believes ICIT should champion:

Priority Ranking – Only Top Four Focus Areas Addressed in the Attached Draft Plan Developed During the Retreat
✓ Organizational development of ICIT
✓ Education – all levels
✓ Broadband (expansion) ✓ Information Security
✓ Efficiency (<i>ICIT will focus on “efficiency” at a later time</i>)
• 24/7 availability from anywhere
• Mobile Services
• Mobility Workers –work anywhere • Government reorganization
• Transparency
• Declining employee base

Don next outlined the process through which the small groups could work to determine intended accomplishments over the next 1 to 3 years in the above focused areas. Each table selected one of the above focused areas and began to work to develop responses to the following question for their focus area: **As ICIT, what specifically and concretely do you want or need to accomplish over the next one to three years in the area of _____?**

Worksheets were provided and explained as to having each of the small groups identify a desired objective/result, a timeframe for implementation and the responsibility for the objective. When the small groups had completed their task each was asked to verbally report as to the desired objectives developed, timeframes for each along with appropriate responsibilities. The objectives

drafted by the small groups comprise the basis of the draft ICIT Business Plan included as **ATTACHMENT C**.

Because of time limitations, the efficiency focus area was not reviewed. It was suggested that perhaps at one of the future schools a 1 ½ hours session could be set aside for brain storming as to **“How it would be possible to leverage technology to do things better at the county level”?**

Bill then began working with the participants to help identify potential ways to increase active participation in ICIT. As a beginning point, he reviewed the responses to the initial introduction question: **Why do you make this investment of yourself in ICIT?** He then asked for thoughts as to the ways similar motivations could be imparted to less active members. **ATTACHMENT D** provides a list of the ideas put forward by the group.

To conclude the retreat, Bill reviewed the initial Purpose of the Retreat and asked if everyone felt the session has served to meet that purpose statement. There was agreement it had. Bill also asked if there were any other issues that someone had thought would be dealt with during the session but was not addressed. Two comments surfaced:

- ICIT should consider sponsoring and make available a standardized video conferencing system that can be used by members of ICIT to conduct committee meetings.
- Someone needs to develop an acronym page and store on the ICIT website to serve as a resource in helping everyone deal with the various acronyms used in IT and government.

There being no further discussion, Bill thanked everyone for their cooperation and active participation in the retreat. He and Don will have a summary report recapping the information developed during the retreat to Kim within seven to ten working days. Kim also thanked the participants along with Bill and Don for facilitating the retreat.

ATTACHMENT A

Question: **Why do you make this investment of yourself in ICIT?**

Responses:

1. It enabled me to work with the best technology professionals in this state and so do my job better.
2. Because the group allows me to improve how I do my job by sharing information.
3. Important Black Hawk County to be represented as well as learn from other counties' experiences.
4. Because I believe in what ICIT stands for and I support county government.
5. Because of the knowledge that can be added by other ICIT members.
6. To share knowledge with other counties and learn from other counties' experiences.
7. It not only promotes ICIT, but it will assist my district in becoming more informed and involved with an organization that has such a tremendous amount of knowledge to share with other counties.
8. I learn from people from other counties. Counties working together can have greater impact than each county working separately. Good people.
9. To learn what other counties are doing and share what Story County is doing in regards to technology.
10. To represent small counties. Help or speak for those smaller counties and cities. To gain and share information and designs. Quality of people and knowledge.
11. Feel that ICIT is the only organization in ISAC that can steer the ISAC and others in the correct technical direction working together, not just in islands.
12. I have a strong belief in the goals of this group and that the quality of its members will benefit county government.
13. I feel that it is a great organization to belong to – great People, - excellent knowledge base. I would like to see continued success.
14. Want to offer I care about this state and want to see this great state thrive and grow.
15. Because of the great relationships and help I receive from my fellow county employees.
16. I want to help where I can and to learn from others with more experience. I believe in the positive power of local government.
17. Good organization to work together to make accomplishments – people are willing to give their time on efforts like this.
18. Want to offer my/our experienced ideas for other counties' growth. Support technology to make count processes more efficient. Desire to be visible and available for others in the group and across the state.

ATTACHMENT B

Question: **Considering the time you have been a member of ICIT, what single past accomplishment of ICIT are you proudest of and why?**

Responses:

Information Security

1. Co-founded Information Security Committee; provided training for a dwindling audience.
2. Information Security Committee – InfoSec plays an important role in every technology related project. I think it is important for our organization to understand current InfoSec trends and how they can impact us.

ISAC Affiliation

3. Being part of ICIT's creation and ISAC's acceptance – great group together for singular purpose.
4. Became ISAC affiliate – took a few years to accomplish. That resulted in the other affiliates getting ICIT's input and participation in their projects.
5. ICIT's acceptance as an affiliate of ISAC. Opened the door to engage IT/GIS staffs across the state. Gives the group opportunity to combine talents to develop projects such as GIS Data Depository and Iowa Land Records.
6. Being an ISAC affiliate provides credibility with other officials.
7. The original ICIT organizers lobbying for ICIT to become our own affiliate showing the importance of technology.
8. Raising the awareness of technology among ISAC and its affiliates.
9. The support of other affiliates.
10. Increased attention to technology by ISAC and its affiliates: ISAC staff, affiliate websites, CSN-HRRA clearing house.

Mid-Year Conferences

11. Working with the Mid-Year 2009 conference committee. But the real heroes of this were Mark, Wayne and Kim, but it was great conference because of all of the committee members working together.
12. Mid-year conferences: excellent forms of networking and knowledge transfer.
13. Mid-Year conference 2009 was the best – keep getting better.
14. Mid-year 2008 – the 2nd best Mid-Year ever!
15. The importance of our Mid-Year Conferences along with our role in county government.
16. Mid-Year Conferences.

Collaboration

17. The total willingness of members to share and even train other agencies or affiliates, to have added presence working with other affiliates.
18. The leadership of the founding fathers of ICIT – no one has egos to fight with.

ATTACHMENT C

DRAFT
Iowa Counties Information Technology Organization (ICIT)
2010 -2013
Business Plan

Focus Area: ICIT Organizational Development

Objective 1 – Increase coordination and participation of ISAC affiliates in planning educational workshops for spring and fall schools.

Time frame: First of August to September 2010

Responsibility: Education Workshop

Suggested Strategies:

Work with ISAC to recognize importance of spring and fall schools
Create a liaison position with identified affiliates

Objective 2 – Improve communications resources available to ICIT members

Time frame: Open

Responsibility: On-Line Services Committee

Suggested Strategies:

Expand On-Line Services Committee membership by December 2009
Committee to look at options for increasing communications

Objective 3 –Increase membership of ICIT

Time frame: 12 months from plan adoption

Responsibility: Membership Committee Chair

Suggested Strategies:

Change by-laws to include city and state membership
Change by-laws to include city advocate as a voting position
Reach out to the League of Cities leadership to build relationship
Develop the membership committee roles and responsibilities
Explore feasibility of an Iowa GMIS Chapter

Objective 4 – Encourage participation on board and committee roles

Time frame: Six (6) months from plan adoption

Responsibility: DLSC and Mid-Year Committees

Suggested Strategies:

Video/audio conferencing
Recognition on-line and at schools of participants and their
Accomplishments
Promote opportunities to become more involved in ICIT to participants
when signing up as a member or renewing memberships

Focus Area: Education at all levels

Objective 1 –Encourage and support District level educational opportunities

Time fame: Two (2) years from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT District Representatives

Suggested Strategies:

Utilize trending topics as a source of information to be presented
Use White Papers for topics discussions
Utilize district characteristics to tailor information to local needs
Advocate webinar technologies for all members of the District
Partner with vendors to develop content and delivery methods

Objective 2 – Increase attendance from other ISAC affiliates and county leaders at our Mid- Year Conferences

Time frame: June 2010 (next conference date)

Responsibility: Mid-Year Committee (with assistance from full membership)

Suggested Strategies:

Increased self-promotion at conferences, mailings and follow-up contacts
Mid-Year program topics need to be relevant to other affiliates
Coordinate and communicate with other affiliates' education committee

Objective 3 – Create “Trending Topics” articles

Time frame: Begin in 6-12 months from plan adoption and then on-going

Responsibility: Full membership (with assistance from On-Line Services Committee)

Suggested Strategies:

Iowa County Magazine
Digital articles
Utilize new technologies (such as social media)

Objective 4 –Build and maintain a knowledge base on the web

Time frame: Immediate implementation with a one (1) year time frame for completion

Responsibility: On-Line Services Committee (with support from full membership)

Suggested Strategies:

Compile surveys
Templates/Policies
Living Documents

Focus Area: Broad Band

Objective 1 – Develop recommended Broad Band standards for county government

Time frame: Three to nine (3-9) months from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT and CoSTAR

Suggested Strategies:

Establish an ICIT Technical Standards Committee
Gather/research what other governments have done to establish standards
Compile findings, condense results and make recommendations to ICIT and CoSTAR
CoStart to disseminate agreed to standards

Objective 2 – To educate ICIT members on why Broad Band is important to county governments

Time frame: Spring ISCA 2010

Responsibility: Robin, Wayne and CoSTAR

Suggested Strategies:

Provide information on Connect A Nation process, implementation process and time tables
Provide working definitions as to: What defines Broad Band, what is underserved and unnerved areas, what is classified as speed and throughput
Develop profiles of current landscape of players in the State of Iowa
Have John Gillispie address questions regarding the ICN and possible roles it may play in the solution of Broad Band access

Objective 3 – Identify technology advocate in each county (may or may not be a county employee) to serve on the local Connect A Nation Broad Band Deployment Task Force

Time frame: Spring/Summer 2010

Responsibility: ICIT Committee working in Partnership with CoSTAR

Suggested Strategies:

ICIT members to identify potential county advocates
Conduct organizational meetings
Coordinate activities with Connect A Nation and the Iowa Utility Board
Ask for volunteers from ICIT membership
Map individual county employee advocates

Objective 4 – Advocacy and outreach regarding application and benefits of Broad Band access

Time frame: Six (6) months to three (3) years

Responsibility: County Technology Advocates, CoSTAR, ICIT, Connect A Nation

Suggested Strategies:

Presentations at various affiliate meetings
Distribution of educational materials
Town Hall meetings
For legislative priority task force
Identify individuals to champion/represent ICIT's interests in Broad Band deployment

Focus Area: Information Security

Objective 1 – Develop an ICIT Information Security website that will be a central repository for sharing information regarding security information procedures and processes

Time frame: Six (6) months from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT Security Committee

Suggested Strategies:

Develop website layout, design and add existing content
Have a security committee meeting to discuss what content and responsibilities for site design
Use Joomla to develop initial website shell
Add existing content to the site
Present the site to the ICIT board
Link from ICIT website to the ICIT information security site

Objective 2 – Develop a RSS feed to share quality information and security news through the ICIT Information Security website

Time fame: Six (6) months from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT Information Security Committee

Suggested Strategies:

Discuss at planned Information Security Committee meeting which technology to use for this project
Allow committee members the ability to share feeds with subscribers
Advertise this service to fellow ICIT members and other interested parties

Objective 3 – Provide a security “mind-set” presentation to other ISAC affiliates to develop a better understanding by county officials as to the importance of information security

Time frame: One (1) year from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT Information Security Committee

Suggested Strategies:

Develop the topics to be included in the presentation
Establish the agenda for the presentations and distribute to potential audiences
Assign committee members to do the presentations as schedules and geography allow

Objective 4 – Research and develop an IDS Sensor Network to improve overall knowledge regarding security threats that may be affecting counties.

Time frame: Three (3) years from plan adoption

Responsibility: ICIT Information Security Committee

Suggested Strategies:

Research IDS technologies
Spec Out hardware and software
Beta test with members of the Information Security Committee
Present results of beta testing to ICIT Board
Seek grant funding to support roll out of the network
Present information regarding the network to ICIT members to increase awareness and response time to security incidents
Rollout the network to interested counties/agencies/affiliates

ATTACHMENT D

Results of brainstorming as to ideas about how to motivate increased involvement by more of the ICIT membership

1. Send list of whys to entire membership
2. Mentoring
3. Having district meetings (district presentation)
4. Ask what obstacle is to their being involved – know reasons
5. Defining expectations of district reps (utilize district representatives better)
6. Leverage membership (nomination board)
7. Defining membership (committee's responsibility)
8. Start a mini-group (e.g. GIS coordinators at district level)
9. Accomplish your plan and share accomplishments
10. Reinforce accountability of committees
11. Identify people doing IT work
12. Consider executive committee as potential for handling accountability
13. Recognizing new people when they show up at meetings
14. Have a first-timer group
15. New members packet
16. Social committee
17. Reinforcing at elected official level how important membership in ICIT is
18. Promote feedback on presentations and initiatives
19. Have something of value when a newcomer comes to a meeting
20. How do we reduce the intimidation (get to know somebody)
21. Organizing after-hour activities
22. Name badges for new people
23. Scout out the expertise of non-contributing members and figure out how to use them
24. Do a presentation on something we don't touch on
25. Ask people for help when you know their expertise
26. Information base on expertise
27. Set up for a private question (different option to full-group open questions)
28. Other ISAC affiliates recommend us
29. If we do a service for an affiliate and they like it, use them to recommend
30. Certification perhaps a way to get CEU's
31. Help other affiliates to know what should be the responsibilities of an IT director
32. Integrate and clean up ICIT's website (want members to use our site – more of a one-stop)