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**TO:** Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Nancy A. Sansalone  
**DATE:** 17 May 2007  
**RE:** HQ Operations Technology Update

Since January of 2007, the staff at SLA has been investigating and piloting several new technologies to introduce to the membership and/or the leadership.

Here is a sampling:

**Collaborative Tools:** Staff have been investigating vendors of collaborative tools and software and will make recommendations for the most cost effective and efficient method for units to participate in online events and conferencing. Once sufficient data have been collected, the investigation will include the development of unit liaisons. This effort will ultimately include training of all necessary unit leaders.

- A series of Leadership Training Live sessions were conducted in March and April with Bulletin Editors, PR Chairs, Webmasters, Treasurers, Membership Chairs, Chapter Presidents and President-Elects, and Division Chairs and Chairs-elect. Leadership Training Live will be revised and recorded for inclusion in Click U by year-end. This WebEx conference program provided a "Click U Live!" experience to those who had not previously used Click U Live.
- Staff attended a demonstration of Springboard, a technology product to help create and develop effective e-collaboration communities. The Springboard product transforms traditional, text-based list serves into e-discussion communities and full-blown e-learning communities as needs expand.
- Staff began a pilot program for unit Wikis and announced the Wiki program to all units prior to Conference.
- Staff began a pilot program for web/conferencing service with one division and one chapter and will roll out to additional units later in the year.
- We have investigated a Social Networking Tool that will allow members to create instant communities that others can join and participate.
- We have investigated and priced a presence in Second Life. There are budgetary implications with regards to fees and web development that must be addressed before we move into Second Life.

- For these new strategies being discussed to be successfully deployed throughout the organization, member volunteers will have to be recruited to coordinate these different programs.

**Association Management System (AMS):** SLA purchased a new AMS package in January, one that is user friendly, supported, encompassing the Associations' business practices, and one which would allow our Units access to specific data. In January, at the Leadership Summit, staff briefed leadership on the unit toolkits which will be available to them with the new AMS. The President and Vice President from Euclid Technologies, the developer and vendor of ClearVantage, presented at the Leadership Summit in January and conducted a focus group of volunteer leaders. The purpose of the focus group was to solicit feedback from leaders to ensure that planned tools and reports meet their anticipated needs. An implementation schedule has been established and a business system evaluation has been conducted for the project. Data conversion and testing are being conducted currently. HQ system implementation will occur after SLA 2007 and leadership training will occur around the January Leadership Summit.

**Telephone/Web Conferencing System:** HQ acquired a WebEx Web Training Center. The Training Center allows the Association to deliver interactive training classes to anyone, anywhere – over the Web. In March-April a series of Leadership Training Live sessions were conducted with selected volunteer unit positions: Bulletin Editors, Public Relations Chairs, Webmasters, Treasurers, Membership Chairs, Chapter Presidents and Presidents-Elect and Division Chairs and Chairs-Elect. Feedback has been appreciative and favorable. Leadership Training Live will be revised and recorded for inclusion on Click U by the end of 2007.

The Training Center allows us the ability to provide interactive training to Association entities and members globally. This may be especially useful in training our Units on our new AMS, when appropriate.

**Wiki:** The Association has secured a Wiki software package called Confluence, per member requests. Wiki is server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly. The Wiki responds to member requests by offering simple, moderated, and streamlined Wiki access to members allowing them the ability to access, collaborate on, and share content, knowledge and files anytime, anywhere.

SLA Wikis have been created for Centennial Commission, Chapter Idea Bank, Solo Division, San Francisco Chapter, Webmaster of the IT Division, Knowledge Management Division, and the Leveraging Library Leaders Project. After some testing of the system, promotional materials were sent out to all Units introducing the new service for the SLA public Wikis.

**Second Life:** Members and leaders have requested that SLA investigate the creation of a presence on Second Life. Second Life is an online society where users can create, learn new skills, and market goods and services. Second life, like Social Networking Software, can build brand loyalty and enhance our goods and services. Additionally, it is becoming a very popular platform for targeted and open marketing. After some investigation into resources needed to support Second Life for SLA members, staff were able to determine the personnel and financial resources needed to be successful in Second Life. There will be costs associated with purchasing an "Island", monthly maintenance fees, and a substantial amount of resources, both personnel and financial, to setup the initial island by a Web Developer.

**Blogs:** The 2007 Conference Blog opened during the week of 14 May, with sponsorship by the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA). The name of this new blog, "The SLA Blog," aims to develop a reader and poster base during the conference that will carry the blog as a central online SLA community throughout the year.

Additionally, staff has begun to experiment with podcasting and audio blogging. The CEO has posted audio blog messages to Info X, and selected staff are providing updates on new services and offerings through an experimental SLA Podcast Center. The Information Center blog is in its development stage and will be active by the conference; podcasts will be part of the blog content.

About 20 other blogs are hosted on SLA platforms. Additional units have requested (and received) information on establishing their blogs on SLA's platform, but these sites have not been established by the units yet.

**Discussion Lists:** The Association upgraded our previous Discussion List Software in late December 2006. The 'Lists' continue to be a popular platform for users and we will implement additional features to enhance the user experience.

Staff created guidelines, standards, and useful tips for discussion list owners and users and posted them to the SLA Web site. We will continue to work with list owners to provide useful information.

**Information Outlook:** We have developed a Web-based system for *Information Outlook* Online to make using and searching the online edition of the magazine easier as well as eliminating the monthly expense with eBrary. An initial design has been completed and staff are moving into the Web development stage. A new online format will be launched following conference.

#### **Click U:**

- In February, SLA and Click University signed a partnership with the University of Toronto's Professional Learning Center (PLC). The agreement will allow members to access all online courses offered by the PLC through Click University and members will receive an 11% discount.
- In January, signed an agreement with Local Knowledge Online and eBrary that will allow Click University to offer members the Leadership Library that contains over 900 books on topics related to leadership and management. The library will be available at no cost to members. Also, as part of the agreement, SLA members will also enjoy deep discounts if they wish to purchase content or subscriptions to eBrary services for their own organizations. The Leadership Library "opened its doors" on 20 March.
- Click University introduced a new free program, the Course of the Month. The first course, a self-paced course, "Making Decisions and Weighing Risks", was offered on 15 March 15 – April 14; the second course, a re-play, "Fostering Online Collaboration Using Wikis", was offered on April 15 – May 14.
- Learning Connections was changed to Click University Connections, to electronically promote all aspects of Click U to the membership, and the first monthly Click University Connections was sent to all members on April 2, 2007.