

## **Rosedale Block Cluster, Inc. – Final Report**

Student Consultant, Alana Frome  
Community Partner, Dianne Swan  
Community Partner, Lezetta Cox

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Rosedale Block Cluster, Inc. is a private non-profit organization that strives to connect people with new opportunities while also improving the community. Since 1991, RBC has achieved this mission by developing, promoting, implementing, and planning programs to enhance the community's attractiveness and foster a sense of family and community values.

Executive Director, Dianne Swan, has worked very hard to see this mission become a reality. Creating the RBC center on the corner of Rosedale and Tioga and landscaping and cleaning up the area, RBC literally became a type of oasis for the community.

In order to foster the history and accomplishments of this organization and to further promote participation within the offered programs, RBC decided they were in need of a website. For the fall 2005 class term, the main scope of work for this CP/consultant pairing was drafting, designing, setting up, and implementing a website for the organization.

As a result of the website, RBC was able to more easily distribute its mission and opportunities. Before the site, all requests and inquiries were done by phone, which did not offer the influential visual display of photos of projects and programs. Furthermore, people were able to read about employment opportunities and programs and submit their information over the site if they were interested. A bulletin board was created on the site that provided up-to-date news and events to keep the public informed with current activities and provide reason to continually check the site. For these outcomes to be sustainable it was necessary to provide the proper training and draft sufficient documentation for updating the bulletin on the website.

Besides just the website, a few other technical recommendations were made regarding general technical practices. Consistently keeping a back-up of the server and keeping these back-ups in a safe location in case of a disaster was one recommendation. This is important to preserve priceless saved data in the event of a disaster, be it a network virus or office fire. A second recommendation was to purchase and install anti-virus software for all networked computers. Since all computers on the network have access to the internet it is necessary to protect each computer from harmful viruses because one weak link in the chain could potentially affect the whole network, including the server. More detail on this, as well as other recommendations, can be read in that section of the report.

**Community Partner Contact Information:**

Rosedale Block Cluster, Inc.  
7810 Tioga St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208  
412-243-6474

Dianne Swan  
Lezetta Cox  
rosedaleblock@aol.com

## **ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

### **Organization**

#### *Mission:*

The Rosedale Block Cluster, Inc., (RBC's) mission is to improve the image of the community by developing, promoting, implementing, and planning programs and special events to enhance the community's attractiveness for residents and merchants. It is also organized to assist programs, undertakings, studies and other activities in cooperation and coordination with local governmental and civic bodies for the elimination of slums, blight and blighting influences; to aid, assist and foster family values, and community values within and without the Rosedale-Tioga area; and to assist in securing adequate housing, community facilities and other facilities and services conducive to the progress and general welfare of the community.

#### *Description:*

Rosedale Block Cluster is a private non-profit organization that evolved out of a cluster of block clubs in 1991. RBC is a program provider for youth that also provides training and employment. This organization provides programs and various community improving projects (such as a GED program, lot cleanup, landscape maintenance, lawn and garden services, and mass plant and irrigation installations).

#### *Location:*

7810 Tioga Street  
Pittsburgh, PA, 15208

### **Programs**

Over the course of the last 14 years, Rosedale Block Cluster offers several programs for the youth in the area in order to stimulate hope and organize the community. RBC has purchased and renovated, debt free, the first outreach center in the community. The center is maintained very well and is home to several program providers.

Renovating and restoring is just one type of project offered at RBC. Specific projects have included gathering half a million dollars from supporters to purchase and renovate the actual site for the community outreach center. Community youth and mostly minority subcontractors were utilized to renovate the center. This was the very first entrepreneurial project to have occurred in the community for over twenty-five years and continues to exist and act as a symbol of success for both the organization and community.

A more recent project that has been carried out to great successes is the renovation of the entrance at Highland Park. Using taught horticultural techniques, the community came together to plant an array of tulips and perform other agricultural improvements. This program turned out to be a huge achievement for RBC and the community.

Other program providers are also encouraged to partner with RBC if they can help achieve the mission statement and focus of educating, training, developing, and creating employment opportunities. Currently the Head Start program is in effect for early

childhood development day care. It is operated by the Homewood-Brushton Child Care, Inc, which is also a non-profit organization.

Starting in 1994, the General Education program operated by the Board of Education was implemented to provide GED classes through the Community College of Allegheny County.

### **Staff**

The staff at Rosedale Block Cluster primarily consists of two main women who work regularly in the office. While there are other employees for the other programs associated with RBC, Executive Director, Dianne Swan and Financial Secretary/Manager, Lezetta Cox, are the main forces behind the scene. They organize events, administer programs, keep contacts, and manage the technology within the company.

### **Technical Environment**

RBC has pretty extensive technical equipment within the office. They have a computer lab set up specifically to offer a class in computers for the youth who they employ and other assigned program activities. The lab consists of six computers that are about five years old. These computers run Microsoft Windows 98 and are hooked up to the internet and the local network. There are two “main” computers in the lab as well; these computers are newer than the rest in the lab (only about 3 years old) and are Dells. They run Windows XP and are also hooked up to the internet and local network, but are also given administrative power over the other six PCs in the lab. The offices, which are removed from the lab, currently hold five of the same Dell type computers as the two in the lab and also the local server. These computers are also all networked and on the internet, however currently they connect to the internet via America Online secure version so as not to pick up adware and can thus only log onto the internet one at a time (there is only one account set up).

All the computers are connected to the internet via DSL that was installed in the office. Expedient DSL services installed the internet and although there have been some technical difficulties, for the most part the internet is run effectively as the connection is readily available (with very rare periods of it not working on part of their provider once every few months) and offers a fast bandwidth.

There is also a local server that was set up by a past IT contractor that RBC once outsourced. The local network allows the staff to access the files of other computers with proper authoritative status when necessary and also provides a means for file backup. The office computers are also equipped with UPSs (Uninterruptible Power Supply) to provide continuous power to the computers when the normal power supply is interrupted for some reason. This is obviously just another precautionary method of backing up files and ensuring low data loss in the event of an accident.

RBC has sufficient supplies to have an advanced and functioning technical environment.

### **Technology Management**

For the most part, technology in the office is managed on a case by case basis. Lezetta Cox is typically responsible for managing the technical environment when necessary. When met with a technical problem, Lezetta and Dianne seek to solve it themselves. In the past, they have hired a consultant/IT expert to come in; such was the case with installing and setting up the server, which is primarily used to back-up files (the server is not backed-up). As far as specific computer management, America Online secure connection is used to manage adware and viruses on the computers and the server is used to backup files. Lezetta and Dianne are both very computer-able: Lezetta uses Quickbooks and Microsoft Excel often and Dianne also uses Microsoft Office applications.

### **Technology Planning**

As of now, there is no developed specific plan or budget for the technology at RBC. Although, it would seem that there is sufficient technical equipment in the office that will be necessary for implementing the many technical ideas of the staff. The organization is always busy planning events and working with other organizations, but they are now budgeting their time to include time spent on moving forward with their technical desires of having a website and a generally more fully functioning technical environment.

### **Internal & External Communications**

RBC currently does not have a website, thus most external communications are handled via phone or email. The phone appears to be the most indispensable form of external communication as it is often ringing with business. Also, for now, RBC only has one main email address that is shared between the staff for business purposes.

Most every internal communication need can be settled person-to-person within the office. But as far as internal technical communications, the server provides easy access to all files from any computer if necessary so that finance reports and such are easily accessed.

### **Information Management**

Lezetta Cox keeps all financial records (this includes payments of employees) in the form of soft-copy using the software QuickBooks. She can also use QuickBooks to export information regarding past employees into Microsoft Excel in the form of a basic database. Other necessary paperwork is stored in filing cabinets throughout the offices.

Right now there is no central database to keep records of past employees who have worked on landscaping projects besides the financial data that is QuickBooks. This database would be extremely helpful for sending out updates on programs/opportunities to those who have done programs with them in the past. Also, because there is no website, gathering the data necessary to create the database is a difficult task. An information management system could be set up to have user input of employee data on the website by each individual go to a running database.

## **MAJOR CONSULTING TASK 1**

### **Name**

Establish a Website

### **Description**

Currently RBC does not have an up and running website. The company mission states that it wants to improve the image of the community by promoting and planning programs and special events to enhance the community's attractiveness. A website has the ability to contribute directly to this mission by increasing promotion and planning of programs. Through a website individuals in the community can more easily access information pertaining to the history and upcoming events of Rosedale Block Cluster and thus can more easily become involved in the programs. A survey can be constructed on the website so that interested individuals can easily submit their information and receive further information about the company and opportunities it offers.

### **Description of Work Task**

We have decided to build a website which would be easily accessible to the people of the area. This website would include valuable information pertaining to the history of the company and past projects that highlight the company's extreme success and rewards. This website will also serve as a bulletin for those who wish to read up on recent news of the company and gather information on upcoming/current projects and events being offered. It is felt that a frequently updated news source such as this will be a good way to keep people interested and checking back on the site.

### **Approach:**

- Acquire necessary technical means
  - Get server space
  - Register domain name
  - Gather any necessary software for updating/designing site
- Research other websites (both of similar companies and non-similar) to get an idea of what basic layout structures are liked and/or disliked
- Draft an idea of what content would be included on the site
  - Company history, bulletin board/news updates, page for inputting user information
- Gather all necessary content (including necessary pictures and text) to be used on the site
- Draft a basic layout of what the site might look like
- Begin designing process in which all knowledge is taught to CP along the way so as to foster a future for updating the website
- Document the process involved in the creation and upkeep of the website to aid in the future up-keep of the site

### **Feasibility**

I believe that establishing a website in such a way that RBC will be able to continue updating it and using it within the time frame of this semester is completely feasible. As

I have already said, both Lezetta and Dianne are extremely excited to learn and supply me with the necessary information to get the site up and running and are very diligent at getting their tasks completed. Based on the progress of the first few weeks, I feel as though we are headed in the right direction and will be successful in achieving the expected outcomes.

### **Expanded Capacity**

The ultimate goal of establishing the website is to increase company awareness, promotion of programs/events and to spread word about the history/successes. Further promoting Rosedale Block Cluster will only strengthen them in the end. The website has the potential for becoming the main driving force behind providing valuable information to those interested in the community. Furthermore the website will provide a way for RBC to gather individual's information for their records and thus be able to increase their promotion by keeping in contact with them (possibly via emailing lists that can be set up). A website will allow for many new opportunities for Rosedale Block Cluster and may turn into a driving promoting force for the company.

## **OUTCOMES**

### **Consulting Task 1 Outcome: Establish a Website**

Prior to this consulting task, RBC never had a website. Therefore, the purpose of this task was to build a website and complete the necessary training so that RBC would have the resources to keep the site up and running and also update it.

Lezetta, Dianne and I originally drafted the content and layout of the website together, including the style of navigation bar and any text, color themes, photos, and links that would be present on the various pages. The fact that this was a group effort makes me confident that they possess an overall understanding of the fluidity and direction of the site, which is important in the event they decide to expand the site in the future.

I constructed the navigation bar for the website independently, as well as the basic templates for all pages. The navigation bar is horizontal and lies across the top of every page; it consists of the company logo and the five main links: Home, History, Bulletin, Programs, and Contact. Each page properly references all of its links. For adding content and pictures, I worked with Lezetta to ensure that she gained the appropriate skills and knowledge to make these updates on her own, especially concerning pages that require content to be updated consistently such as the "Bulletin" page (the Bulletin page consists of a virtual bulletin board that displays current news and upcoming events).

In order to be able to add or alter content of a webpage, Macromedia's Dreamweaver, which is the chosen HTML-editing software used to facilitate this process, has been installed on Lezetta's work computer. She has been trained in the necessary procedure of using Dreamweaver to update and alter content. Lezetta has demonstrated her efficiency in this by properly updating the Bulletin page on her own.

A domain name ([www.rosedaleblock.org](http://www.rosedaleblock.org)) has been chosen and registered, and a hosting plan has been established with Marble Host. Lezetta has been shown and possessions

instructions for uploading the website from her computer onto the server space using the FTP software (CuteFTP). The website consists of about 15 pages and a full copy of it can be found both on Lezetta's computer and the host server. It can be viewed in entirety at [www.rosedaleblock.org](http://www.rosedaleblock.org).

It is difficult to observe the increase of knowledge and reputation of the organization, because this is not something easily quantified. One way to do this is to check how many people have visited the site by providing a site counter, but this simply gives a number and does not represent the affect the site had on the individual going there or how long he/she spent on the site. In other words, a counter does not insure that those accessing the site are actually reading the material and absorbing it.

Furthermore, it will be possible to judge the effectiveness of the website by measuring whether the number of program participants increases since the inception of the website. It will be approximately six months, however, until it is possible to make this comparison.

For this outcome to be sustained, the website must be regularly updated. If the organization fails at this task, then those who were looking to the site for updated and current information will stop doing so because they will no longer be getting this. A site that is updated, however, will maintain people's interest and attention. This is the main risk of this consulting task. Because Lezetta possesses the proper skills to keep the site updated, I believe this risk is mitigated.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1. Use of CDs to back-up server/Disaster recovery plan**

The office is set up such that everyone has his or her own computer and is thus able to save the necessary files to the hard drive of that computer. Also, all office computers are networked to a local server which is located in Executive Director, Dianne Swan's office. The server is then used to back up the files on all office computers. This is good practice in case of a hard drive failure on one of the office computers or should the server go down. This practice does not, however, protect from an unfortunate event that could cause a loss of data on both the office computers and the server at the same time (something such as a break in or fire could cause this to occur). As a result, I recommend that the server be backed up by CDs weekly and that these data CDs be taken off of office location (possibly Dianne's home). This will ensure that important files will not be lost in the event of an unfortunate accident.

*This recovery plan should be implemented because:*

- Backing up files and taking them to an alternate location besides the office will prevent loss of priceless data in the event of:
  - A virus infecting the server and office computer hard drives
  - Office fire that would destroy all files
  - Office break-in
  - Any other unprecedented event

- Using CDs to back up files is fast, easy and cost efficient. More than likely only one CD will be needed each week to write important/invaluable files to.

*Procedure and Implementation for backing-up the server:*

- Choose a day and time of the week to consistently back-up server. For example, Friday at 3pm of every week.
- Locate and organize necessary/important files to be saved for the week.
  - More specifically, important files to back up are ones that are newly created that week, including but not limited to:
    - Quickbooks files
    - Word documents
    - PowerPoint slides
    - Digital photographs
  - These documents can be found on individual computers and can be transferred to the server for backup.
- Just as is done to create data disks when transferring files, a writeable CD-R or ZIP disk can be used to store the backups.
- Take storage disk home to a safe place and also put a copy in the fireproof box in the office.

*Resources and Budget:*

- This system is quick, efficient and inexpensive. Very little money needs to be budgeted for the CDs and/or ZIP disks. The disks are the only required resource (company already has an accessible CD-burner and ZIP drives).
- CD-Rs and/or ZIP disks for backing up files.
  - ZIP disks can be over-written so that they don't need to be purchased as frequently.
  - A spindle of 100 Fuji CD-Rs can be purchased at Best Buy for \$35. This would be enough to last for about a year of back-ups.
- <http://www.contingency-planning-disaster-recovery-guide.co.uk/>
  - Contingency Planning and Disaster Recovery Guide – A very useful website describing why it is necessary to have a disaster recovery plan, how to assess the impact a disaster could make, how to develop the plan and then how to test it and maintain it.

**Recommendation 2. Installing anti-virus software on all office computers**

All company computers are networked through the local server (which is how they are able to access the internet). As a result, it would be possible for one computer to acquire a virus and infect the server and other networked computers. This has potential be a huge problem if one computer somehow acquired a malicious virus that could bring down the office computer system. I recommend that RBC purchases anti-virus software through Tech Soup for all of the networked computers to protect against the possibility of a harmful virus causing damage to the server. For this to be effective all anti-virus programs must be updated weekly to ensure they have up-to-date protection.

*This anti-virus system should be implemented because:*

- The server and other networked computers should be protected from acquiring viruses that could potentially harm hard disks and important files
  - Dianne's desk computer previously acquired a virus and as a result the hard drive needed to be reformatted and Windows was reinstalled. Luckily the server was not also affected, but had it been the same result could have happened to the server as well, deleting both copies of any saved files that were on Dianne's computer.
- Adware and Spyware prevention is also included with the anti-virus software. This will protect the computer from potential on-line theft and allow computers to run at max capacity (these programs often slow CPU usage down significantly).
  - Adware is a type of software that plays, displays, or downloads advertising propaganda to a computer. Because it is a software the computer sees it as another program and thus spends time running it, creating a slower run time for actual desired programs.
  - Spyware is malicious software that illegally takes partial control of a computer. It secretly monitors the user keeping track of passwords, credit card information, network IDs, email accounts, etc and uses this information for commercial gain.

*Procedure and Implementation for updating anti-virus software:*

- Purchase anti-virus software and sufficient number of licenses to cover all computers on network (approximately 25) through the non-profit resource Tech Soup. Tech Soup is a technical product and service source that offers a variety of software at discounted prices to nonprofit organizations, they can be found at [www.techsoup.com](http://www.techsoup.com). Tech Soup offers Symantec Packages of 5-licenses per box.
- Follow anti-virus installation instructions to install software on all computers.
- Set up software such that it will automatically update itself weekly at a certain time on a certain day (For example, Friday mornings at 10am).
  - The option of "Scheduled Updates" should come up upon finishing the installation; however, if this for some reason is not the case this can be configured manually by:
    - Start "Symantec Antivirus" (Start->Programs->Symantec->Symantec AntiVirus")
    - Choose File->Schedule Updates
    - Click "Schedule..."
    - Pick an appropriate day and time as previously suggested, and click "OK".
- Make sure computers are on at the scheduled time of updates to ensure that updates are installed and protection is up-to-date.

*Resources and Budget:*

- Symantec anti-virus software with 25 licenses can be purchased through Tech Soup for a discounted price of \$70.
- Symantec monthly update charges must be paid for approximately \$10/month,

this enables the anti-virus software to be up-to-date since new viruses are created and managed everyday.

### **Recommendation 3. Create technology plan**

The creation and use of a technology plan would be very helpful to insure that Lezetta, Dianne and anyone else who is managing work computers is making proper updates on a consistent basis. I recommend that a basic technology plan be drafted outlining the necessary technological actions for each week and a rough budget of technical supplies for these actions. This technology plan will be the framework for what needs to be done on every computer in the office to ensure that its security and back-ups are up-to-date. This should explicitly be outlined in a plan in the event that new staff comes on board and to further engrave the procedure into the weekly routine.

*This technology plan should be implemented because:*

- Will keep the office technology up-to-date with updates.
  - This will protect from slipping into the habit of forgetting to update.
  - Updating is extremely important for reasons listed in first two recommendations.
  - Will serve as a template if new staff comes along. They will be able to read over plan and be able to follow procedure.
  - Can provide plan to RBC Board of Directors so they are able to see the methods for necessary procedures.
- Will estimate a basic budget for scheduled/standard technology practices.
  - Money will be properly budgeted so that it will be easily available when needed.
  - Money spent in technological areas is already justified.

*Procedure and Implementation for creating and using technology plan:*

- Create a schedule for specific technology related tasks (i.e. updating the website, updating anti-virus software, etc.)
  - This will include dates and times of when specific performances should occur (i.e. website will be updated every Friday at noon)
- Provide basic instructions for performing tasks.
  - These instructions should already be in writing for the particular plans (updating website, updating anti-virus, etc). Therefore it will be easy to add them into technology plan.
- Estimate necessary resources and costs for each task.
  - A simple budget and resource analysis will also be easy to add since they have already been established for each function previously.

*Resources and Budget:*

- The only resource necessary for this technology plan is a working computer with accessible word processing. RBC already has access to several computers with this capability in the office; therefore no budget is necessary for this recommendation.

- A simple budget and resource analysis will also be easy to add since they have
  - <http://www.coyotecom.com/tech/techbuy.html>
    - This site discusses the advantages of having a tech plan and introduces ways to make the plan more in-depth.

### **ABOUT THE CONSULTANT**

Alana is currently a senior at Carnegie Mellon University. She is a double major in Electrical and Computer Engineering and Engineering and Public Policy, with a concentration in Embedded Systems. Though plans are not concrete for next year, Alana greatly enjoyed this course and is considering technical consulting as her future career path.