

## Featured Project

# Brunello Estates

To help market and promote a new real estate development just outside of Halifax, Nicom designed and developed a new web site for Brunello Estates.

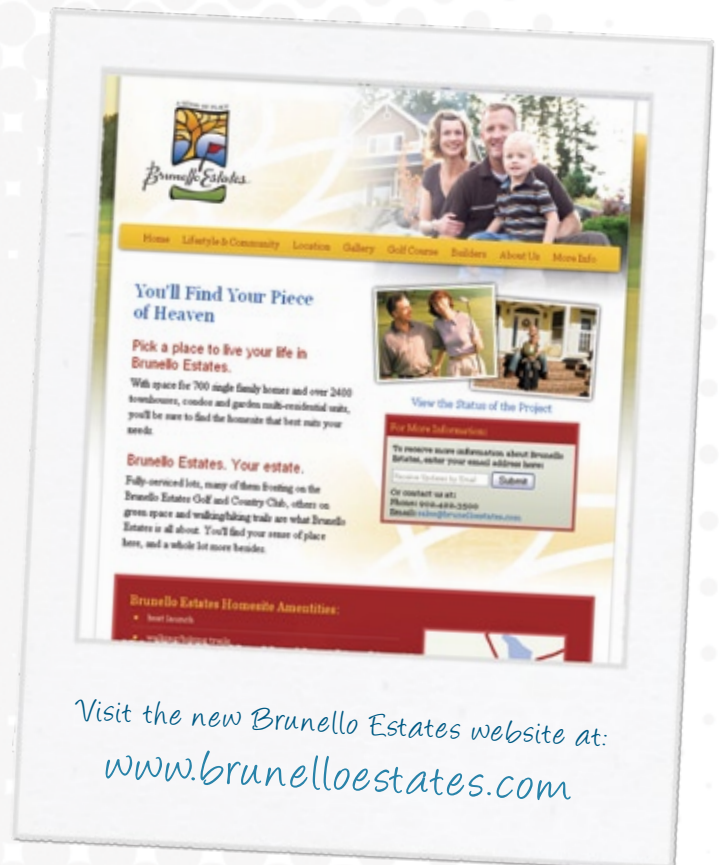
Conveniently located just off Highway 103 near the Bayers Lake Business Park, Brunello Estates is only a 15 minute commute to downtown Halifax. Once completed, its more than 500 acres will contain homes for over 700 families— townhouses, apartments and condominiums— the Brunello Estates Golf and Country Club. Many of the building lots are situated along the 7,100 yard, 18-hole golf course, which has been designed by Tom McBroom, a highly respected landscape and golf course architect .

Nicom's Senior Interface Designer, Ryan Grant, approached the new website with two goals in mind. The first was to create a design that was consistent and complimented the Brunello Estates' existing marketing materials. The second goal was to provide users with a way to feel like they are experiencing the lifestyle, without actually being there. Brunello Estates Marketing Consultant, Deanna Skinner, praises Nicom for meeting these goals, *"I love the design Nicom came up with for the website. Its layout is very attractive and works great in allowing users to visualize the appeal of the Brunello Estates lifestyle."* Ryan achieved this by making use of a number of prominently displayed lifestyle photos, which were complemented with bold colors, intuitive navigation and clean typography.

Nicom developed online forms for users to sign up and receive updates by email or ask questions about the

project. A custom email template was also designed for Brunello Estates when sending out emails to those users. *"The online registration system and custom email template Nicom created, have provided us with a great way to keep users up to date on any news related to the project."* says Deanna.

To allow Brunello Estates to keep the website current, Nicom deployed a content management system, which



Visit the new Brunello Estates website at:  
[www.brunelloestates.com](http://www.brunelloestates.com)

Deanna has been more than pleased with, *"Making updates to the website using the content management system Nicom set-up has been very easy and fast."*

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# New Employees



## *Barry Milne*

Barry brings to Nicom a host of accomplishments and experience, as Project Manager. Barry was the first graduate in the Bachelor of Information

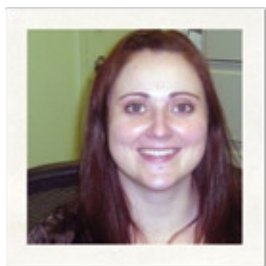
Systems program from Saint Francis Xavier University in 1989. Barry sits on the board of the local chapter of the Project Management Institute. Barry says that being a Project Manager is about focusing on the ‘team’ and needing to ‘trust the team to be capable to do the job.’



## *Greg Ord*

Greg became a part of Nicom’s newest division, Nicom Interactive, bringing with him five years of professional web design and development experience. Greg began his

career in graphic design but always knew the web was his real passion. In his spare time Greg enjoys cycling and camping.



## *Leanne Halliday*

Leanne is Nicom’s Administrative Assistant. Leanne enjoys assisting Debbie Burbidge and finds her position very accommodating, allowing

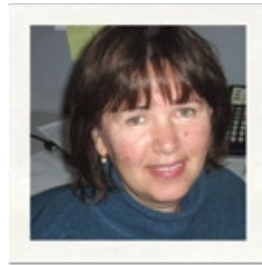
her to take care of her son. Leanne has recently started swimming with her son, once a week, at a local pool during Family Swim.



## *Mary Protos*

After working in the teaching profession Mary decided on a career change and went back to school to complete an MBA. Mary was hired on to

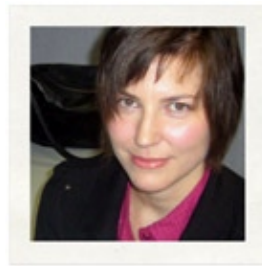
assist Nicom in marketing its offerings to the seaport community. In her free time Mary enjoys dancing and the arts.



## *Irene Sobes*

Irene came to Canada with her husband and son in 1999, from the Ukraine. Irene completed a degree in electrical engineering from the Ukraine State

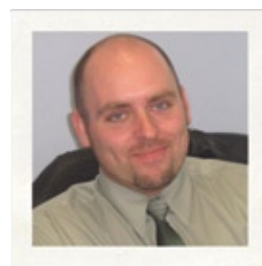
Maritime Technical University. When Irene arrived in Canada, she decided to get another diploma from the Nova Scotia Community College. Irene graduated from the NSCC with the Highest Academic Achievements Reward.



## *Genevieve Kelly*

Genevieve has worked as a designer for prominent organizations including Adbusters Magazine, Blast Radius, and the Government of

British Columbia. Genevieve earned a BFA degree and later completed a Diploma in New Media and Internet Technology. Recently Genevieve’s illustrations were published in the Big Book of Fashion Illustration: A World Sourcebook of Contemporary Illustration (2007), by Martin Dawber.



## *Adam Himmelman*

Adam was hired on as a computer programmer in September, bringing with him his knowledge of Linux and PHP. Adam is the company

musician. He plays solo guitar—classical, jazz, and blues—and the harmonica, just for fun. He writes music, as well.



## *John Patterson*

John has been in the IT business for 13 years. Presently he is working on assignment as the Acting IT Operations Manager for Nova Scotia Power. In his

spare time, John likes to ride motorcycles, fish, train dogs, go white water canoeing, and play golf.

# IT Investment Pays Off

by MARY PROTOS

If implemented correctly, IT empowers organizations to do what their competitors cannot. According to the Center for Information Systems Research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management, companies that successfully manage their IT investments are 40% more profitable than their competitors. IT has become a critical component to a business' success, tying operations together and easing supply flow. IT has also become the backbone of commerce with computer applications completing transactions.

## Categories of IT Investments

There are basically three categories of IT investment:

- **Function IT**—streamline tasks, such as spreadsheet and word-processing applications
- **Network IT**—improve communication, such as through email, instant messaging and blogs
- **Enterprise IT**—enable electronic interaction between groups of workers or business partners, such as customer resource management or supply chain management systems.

All of these are accompanied with organizational change, and managers should tailor their roles according to their adoption.

## Senior IT Roles

Senior managers should work with their IT divisions as a team and look beyond projects as individual implementations assessing their impact on the organization. Executives should be involved to keep the needs of the business at the fore, ensure exploitation and encourage adoption, knowing that change quite often is met with resistance.

## IT Humour

*A computer once  
beat me at chess,  
but it was no match  
for me at kick  
boxing*

*I would love to  
change the world,  
but they won't give  
me the source code.*



## IT and Business Processes

Adopting new systems often requires adaptations to organizational and business processes which is why it is important that it is not only the technology experts who are involved. In order for a newly adopted piece of software or system to work properly, it must be led and supported by management and the people who will be using it. They all must aim to meet corporate performance standards, while at the same time, cut costs and add value. Improvements can be made in growth, profit and output.

## IT Strategic Planning

Creating an IT strategic plan can enhance competitiveness and provide opportunity to prepare for the future. The functions of a system should not conflict with those of the business. If it does, either the implementation will fail wasting vast amounts of money and causing disruption, or weaken an advantage bringing harm. Procuring appropriate software and systems starts by gathering requirements with staff and management about what they hope to gain and by utilizing the knowledge of professional IT consultants.

# The Importance of Project Management

by BARRY MILNE

As with most successful initiatives, having the right people and tools are key for IT projects. Project management is about making sure the right people understand what needs to get done, and when.

A project, as defined by the Project Management Institute (PMI), "...is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result." The processes and knowledge applied to their management are, at a high level, consistent across all industries. Project management is primarily focused on: Scope; Schedule; and Budget. These three items are sometimes referred to as the 'triple constraints.' When one of these constraints is changed either one or both of the others will need to be modified.

One of the key pieces to a successful IT project is having

a clear understanding of its scope. Unlike in a construction project, it is sometimes difficult to understand what the final outcome will be. At the end of a construction project you should be able to see a building. What are you supposed to see at the end of a technology project?

There are various approaches to the management of scope. One technique is to divide the project down into a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS). The objective of the WBS is to break the final deliverable into smaller sub-projects or activities. A good approach to developing a WBS is to begin with the end in mind and work backwards until you reach the start. By starting at the end you will remain focused on what needs to happen to accomplish your desired outcome. In the case of an application development project its architecture is a key deliverable. The application architecture will provide a functional breakdown of the various elements. The software development methodology used will identify the activities needed to complete these elements. Combining the functional architecture and development methodology produces a solid WBS to be used by other project management processes.



Nicom IT Solutions has been providing professional and innovative IT services for over 25 years. Based on our methodologies, unbiased advice, and a business systems focus, our goal is to fully satisfy client objectives.

The combined breadth of our information technology consulting services encompasses:

- Custom Software Development
- Website Design & Development
- IT Consulting Services
- IT Technical Support Services
- IT Staffing Services

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