



38th Annual Conference &  
Membership Meeting  
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# Express Yourself

How Agencies Are Using Online Publications to  
Reach Communities and Councils

By: Bill Hart

# Today's Speaker



**Bill Hart**



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# Agenda



**01** The History of U.S. Budget Books

**06** Q + A

**02** Advantages to Online Budget Books

**03** Online Budget/Capital Books

**04** Beyond Budgets

**05** The Future of Budget Books: AI

# Birth of the Public Government Budget

**1711**

The Kingdom of Great Britain forms the South Sea Company

- Converting a portion of the national debt into shares of South Sea Company stock
- 1 share = 1 claim British trade monopoly over South America

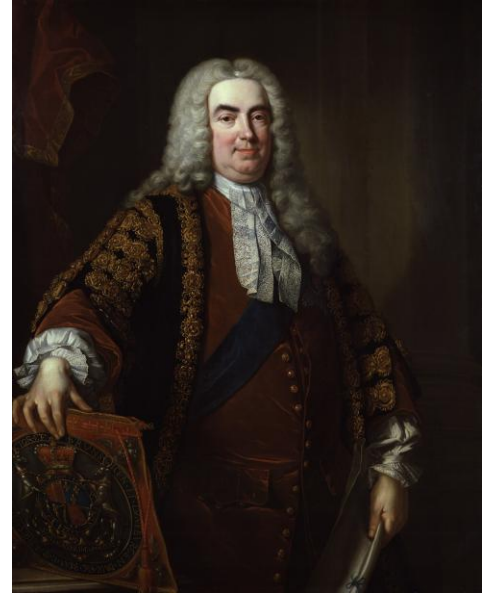
**1720**

Great Britain goes all in on the debt-for-stock swap plan

- All national debt converted into shares
  - January share price: £100
  - August share price: £1,000
  - September share price: £150
- Economic depression and widespread mistrust in government

**1721**

MP **Robert Walpole** proposes making the Parliamentary budget public to restore trust in government



# Online Budget Books v. PDFs

## Advantages of Going Digital

### 1. Survey Tools

1. Tracking clicks and engagement leads to surprising areas of importance
1. Makes data accessible and interactive

# Kyle, Texas

Second-fastest growing U.S. city

## The Challenge

- Population in 2000: **6,348**
- Population in 2025: **73,274**

## The Results

- Created their first ever comprehensive Strategic Plan in an online, interactive publication





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*“Don’t wait for the perfect time. It doesn’t exist. Start with what you can fix. Build trust. Use the momentum. Once people see what’s possible, they want to be part of it.”*

*–Joshua Chronley, Assistant Director of Administrative Services.*

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# Colerain Township, OH

Northwest Cincinnati suburb

## The Challenge

- Go from reactive data sharing to proactive strategy
- Lacked a single platform of accurate data for internal and external reporting

## The Results

- Improved productivity
- Gained a top transparency score
- Detailed performance data shareable to the public





# New Carrollton, MD

30 mins outside of D.C.

## The Challenge

- Eliminate manual data entry and the inefficiency of Excel for its operations
- Sought a digital services solution to upgrade its budgeting system

## The Results

- Strategic time reallocation, moving staff away from cumbersome manual tasks.
- Improved reporting capabilities to create a CIP, instrumental in bolstering community trust.
- Created a portal to display financial reports in publications





# Beyond Budgets

# Winchester, VA

## Smaller government strategic plan

### The Challenge

- Sought to strengthen the connection between strategic planning, budgeting, and reporting on strategic initiatives
- Easily share performance publicly

### The Results

- Increased transparency of general ledger information
- Online strategic plan
- Easy-to-understand web page that pulls data directly from the transparency portal



# Forest Park, GA

30 minutes outside of Atlanta

## The Challenge

- Modernize operations to serve its residents better, including reduced budget book creation time, the ability to establish KPIs for stronger decision-making, and streamlined solicitation planning

## The Results

- Streamline budget preparation
- Meet GFOA standards
- Make solicitations much easier to develop, providing a modern support system for the City's financial and procurement work.





# Newport News, VA

## Tidewater region of Virginia

### The Challenge

- During and after COVID, the city wanted constituent feedback regarding ARPA funding and other initiatives

### The Results

- Created an online Community Feedback portal to quantify issues constituents felt strongly about



# AI and the Future of Budget Books

The AI-powered forecasting tool will enable agencies to:

- Automatically generate forecasts using historical actuals and AI trend analysis
- Integrate live data from ERP, personnel planning, and grants without manual stitching
- Model multi-year scenarios (3 to 10 years) to plan for different financial outcomes
- Run "what-if" analyses to evaluate the impact of key assumptions and decisions
- Make real-time adjustments and see instant updates to forecasts and visuals
- Use AI to generate plain-language summaries and answer natural language questions such as "What if CAGR is 4.5%?"
- Create multiple forecast types including 5-year, 10-year, end-of-year balance, and cash flow



# Budgeting & Performance

End-to-end Collaborative Budgeting  
and Performance Management

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Set goals, create and track metrics, then connect spending to outcomes

## OPERATING BUDGET

Collaborative tools to drive an automated and strategic process

## CAPITAL PLANNING

Prioritize, plan, and promote your biggest investments

## WORKFORCE PLANNING

Simplify planning for your most important asset – your people

## DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

Publish an interactive GFOA award-winning budget book and online dashboards directly from your budgeting system

# Digital Publications: Online Budget Book

**Publish** a fully interactive GFOA  
award-winning budget

**Compile** information using a single  
source

**Pull** information easily from your  
dashboards and reports

**Create** a user-friendly online budget  
book for all audiences





- ✓ 5 Year Budget Projections
- ✓ Equitable Budgeting
- ✓ Program-Based Budgeting



## Budgeting & Performance



*"We make sure departments are including not only information about what they're doing, but also... how it connects to the city's strategic plan."*

Amelia Cruver, Budget Director | City of Minneapolis, MN



# Questions?

# Thank You

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