



Technology Eases the Way for Budgeteers

Kara Farley, Reporter

The MAX Federal Community presented itself to a variety of professionals in a session on April 1 at the AABPA Spring Symposium. The session, *The Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business (BFELoB): Infusing Automation in the Budget Community*, was convened by **Tom Skelly**, Budget Director at Department of Education.

The presenters were, in order of appearance, **Andy Schoenbach**, Branch Chief for Budget Systems at OMB and BFELoB Policy Lead, **Sandi McCabe**, Department of Education and BFELoB Project Manager, and **Emily Fort**, OMB and Project Lead for MAX Federal Community.

The MAX Federal Community (MAX) is a collaborative website that is available to federal government employees. Although it began as the Budget Community, its value was quickly realized by others and today the use of this site has expanded to those in various communities of the government. Some of the communities represented in MAX are: Acquisitions, E-Government, and Financial Management. MAX now has approximately 6,000 users.

Andy Schoenbach, recent recipient of a Fed 100 award for his work with MAX, began the session by informing those in the room about how the community got started. Mr. Schoenbach said that the “impetus for the development of BFELoB was that most agencies did not have integrated automated systems” for budgeting. He added that one of the major advantages of using the MAX Federal Community is to eliminate the use of e-mail as a knowledge management tool.

Next up was Sandi McCabe of the Department of Education. Ms. McCabe spoke of the advantages of a collaborative tool of this magnitude and outlined some of the advantages of MAX. They are:

- Tools and services
- Government wide collaboration
- Online meetings
- Shared workspace for co-authoring
- Guidelines for data ownership in all shared spaces.

Ms. McCabe also informed the audience that they could use MAX to find the latest news on training sessions for MAX users as well as information

about the human capital community on the website. The human capital area defines ideas for recruitment and retention of government employees and identifies some of the core competencies for professionals in the budgeting community.

Following Sandi McCabe was Emily Fort of OMB. “The MAX Federal Community is a wiki,” stated Ms. Fort, “a web based tool that allows anyone to modify pages.” Some features of MAX are:

- Users can create a page in MAX with just one click.
- Users can restrict others from viewing or editing their information.
- Users can watch pages for the latest information or to see if anyone has posted changes.
- Multiple attachments can be stored and viewed.

The session ended with a brief question session in which potential users were able to learn more about the benefits of using the MAX Federal Community.

For more information about MAX go to <https://max.omb.gov>. ✕