

## Public Works Services' digital pen increases work efficiency by 1200 per cent

Stop by the Touch-A-Truck & Community Open House event for a demonstration

**NEWMARKET, Ontario, May 20, 2016** - In 2015, Newmarket's Information Technology and Public Works Services' department worked together on a new project that eventually helped increase work efficiency by 500 per cent for the Water and Wastewater division and 1200 per cent for its Fleet division for particular processes. The small but mighty technology is known as the digital pen.

"The integration of the digital pen demonstrates innovative ideas to and from cross collaboration to increase efficiency to make Newmarket *well* beyond the ordinary." says Mayor Tony Van Bynen.

### What is the digital pen?

The digital pen is a pen that works like any other pen but smarter. The digital pen is able to digitally record anything that the user writes on a paper template designed using the pen's software. Once the digital pen is returned to its docking station, information recorded during its use is digitally transferred, along with the template onto the Town's secured cloud platform.

### How has the digital pen increased efficiency?

Previously, Public Works staff completed forms for various tasks manually. The forms would then be handed over to administrative staff to scan, file (the digital and hard copy) and then sent off to various stakeholders for action through various systems. This process would take approximately 10 to 20 minutes per form.

With the introduction of the digital pen, information recorded using the digital pen is automatically uploaded, archived and made searchable through an easy-to-use web interface. Thanks to the digital pen, work efficiency has increased 500 per cent for the Water and Wastewater division and 1200 per cent for its Fleet (mechanic) division for particular processes.

### How does the technology work?

The digital pen technology is the first municipal partnership with Canadian-based technology company, [InfoMax Technologies](#). The digital pen, slightly larger than a highlighter comes with a rechargeable battery, storage memory and an optical module (the lens for the pen that assists with recording what the user is writing).

The form template for the digital pen is created using the pen's software. Unique dot patterns are printed on the background of each paper and serve as mapped coordinates to capture the handwriting, drawings, checkmarks, signatures and other items.

The form templates are highly customizable to serve the different purposes for Public Works Services. For example, every box on a form template can be customized to perform a certain action once the user has used the digital pen to check off the item. Some actions can include emailing to a specific stakeholder or updating a 'work order' process.

Each digital pen can be assigned to a different staff member with a unique login to ensure that all processes are logged and tracked. The digital pen's software is also able to identify different revisions of each individual form, track with time stamps and provide a record of what the user wrote.

The digital pen has become an integral piece of technology that embodies a strategic partnership between Information Technology and Public Works Services and has dramatically improved a core business practice.

See a demonstration of the digital pen in action at the upcoming Touch-A-Truck & Community Open House event on **Wednesday, May 25, 2016** from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Operations Centre (1275 Maple Hill Court). Visit [www.newmarket.ca/touchatruck](http://www.newmarket.ca/touchatruck) for more information.

For more information on the digital pen, please view the feature article in the [2016 edition of Municipal Interface](#).

### Media Contact:

Name: Amanda Lee  
Communications Specialist  
Email: [alee@newmarket.ca](mailto:alee@newmarket.ca)  
905-953-5300 ext. 2042

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TOWN OF NEWMARKET

## Images of the Digital Pen



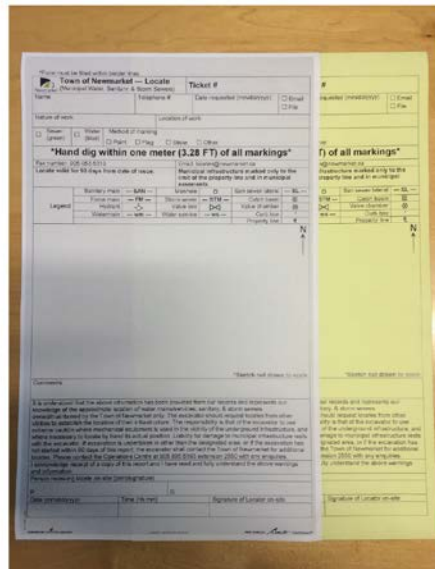
The digital pen



The digital pen in comparison with a highlighter



The digital pen's docking station



A sample of a Public Works Services customized form created using the digital pen's software and printed using a PostScript 3 printer.