eChicago2011
Polish Genealogical Society of America

www.pgsa.org
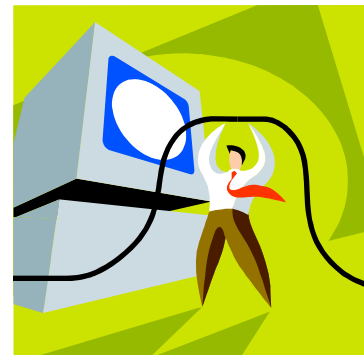
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Genealogy and technology

- Genealogists *LOVE* technology

- Genealogists HATE technology

Genealogists LOVE technology

- Communicate with others doing research – even globally – fast, easy, cheap
  - BBS (remember those!)
  - Email lists
  - Web sites
  - Facebook
  - Skype

Genealogists LOVE technology

- Quick and easy access to sources with comprehensive knowledge on how to do genealogical research, historical information, and archives

  - Genealogists used to have to visit libraries, subscribe to journals and magazines, attend conferences

- Relatively inexpensive

Genealogists **LOVE** technology

- Incredible access to vital records (digitized!) and other documentation
  - Ancestry.com
  - Footnote.com
  - HeritageQuest.com
  - Familysearch.org
- Access to foreign (Polish) websites
  - Google translate – not good but better than nothing

Genealogists **HATE** technology

- It can easily lead to:

  - sloppy documentation of research

  - erroneous information, which can send a person down the wrong path for years!

- Genealogists aren't technologists

  - It's confusing for a society to decide what it needs to or should provide to members

- It can be expensive

Genealogists HATE technology

- Technology still needs manual intervention
  - Someone needs to scan the records
  - Digitalized vital records are computer files that need to be renamed as something recognizable
  - Databases need to be populated with data by manual input
- In other words – good, old volunteers!

Genealogical Society Tech Issues

- Very small non-profit businesses, generally with limited sophisticated technological knowledge

- Generation technology gaps within the members of the society that need to be bridged

- Need for a community resource to which governing bodies of societies could turn for technology guidance

If you want to help the PGSA (no harm in asking!)

- www.PGSA.org

- Contact us at PGSAmerica@pgsa.org or Facebook

- The areas that we (think) that we need help:

  - Web site updates

  - Database management