



Next Move Group

We Are Jobs Podcast

with Special Guest: Lisa Franklin

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Chad Chancellor: Welcome, to this week's episode of the Next Move Group We Are Jobs podcast. This is Chad Chancellor, co-founder of Next Move Group and I'm glad to have Lisa Franklin with us today from LocationOne Buildings and Sites. It's also known as LOIS within the economic development industry and it's easy to use on iPads, iPhones, and Lisa, I know you've worked really hard to make it useful for economic developers and site selectors, so thank you for being with us. Why don't we start will you tell us a little bit about what LOIS is?

Lisa Franklin: Very good. Well, thank you, Chad, for having me today. Yes, LOIS is an online customizable site, building, and community application that plugs into any local economic development organization's website so they can showcase their available sites and buildings and community information.

In fact, every ED organization that has a business retention and attraction strategy should have this type of database connected to their websites. Companies and site selectors looking for sites and buildings will most often come to the local economic development organizations' websites to find these assets.

Chad Chancellor: I know you all recently invested quite a bit of money in it to make it really easy. So, I'm a young guy when it comes to most sites selectors, so I like to play with buildings and sites on my iPad and phone and LOIS I have found is the best database for that. It works just as well in the field as on my computer. So, talk about really what makes LOIS unique in your mind.

Lisa Franklin: When we rolled out our new LOIS version in 2018, we developed a fully responsive system. This means LOIS works well on any device such as a mobile phone, iPad, laptop, or website. We are excited about this application because it's lightning fast. It's something that if a site selector or company comes into this particular application, they're going to be able to search on properties, get their information, put it into a folder, and print the reports.

It also comes with a variety of data sets. They can access ESRI reports and they can view video and they can actually look at a local economic organization's assets from the local layers such as they can put on their new market tax credits, their opportunity zones; anything like that to showcase what they have to offer to a site selector.

Chad Chancellor: So, you can really build maps as you go. So, if you're not interested in let's say where the water lines are, but you are interested in a new market tax credit, you push a button and it pops up and it really doesn't tear your computer down waiting on and thinking all day long.

Lisa Franklin: Yes, that's correct and that's nice because we have found in the past with our older systems that if anyone has to wait on having a page rendered with your search results and they are

not getting them quickly, they will move away from the applications. So, we've actually removed that out of the equation.

Chad Chancellor: There's one state out there and they are friends of mine, so I won't say who they are. I love them and they do great work, but there's a state out there that has a buildings and sites database if I put in 50,000 square-foot building and I go get my list, when I back out, I have to retell it 50,000 feet again. It is just a little-- it'll literally tear your computer down waiting on it. I love how fast this works. You've told me before we were just talking it's kind of Zillow model and I think a lot of our users will understand that. So, talk about kind of how and how they compare to that.

Lisa Franklin: Yes, when we developed this version of LocationOne, what we found is when we looked at the web analytics, someone would come in and do a search, they would only spend about two or three minutes on the site. We wanted to improve that experience. So, we really-- what we call-- we developed LOIS in what we like to say is the Zillow model because we want to make the user interface very easy to use.

People don't want to have to go through training to use an application and so, that's why we call it the Zillow model. It's not going to have every bell and whistle on it, but I tell you what, it's enough to get people interested in your properties.

Chad Chancellor: So, you guys launched the new rollout I guess in 2018. So, what kind of changes have you seen in your analytics? Analytics is really what everybody pays attention to now.

Lisa Franklin: Right.

Chad Chancellor: What have you seen there?

Lisa Franklin: That's been an interesting fact. We were seeing a session last 45 minutes in our last version. This version we're seeing users spend upwards around 10 minutes on the site in any given session. So, that's telling us that their user experience is much better. They're finding what they want in the system and they're staying there to print out printable reports and I can also tell you since we use ESRI reports, we can actually track how many of those reports are pulled down on a monthly basis. That is probably-- I would say the growth there is about 200%.

Chad Chancellor: Wow! So, as people are finding it easier to use and faster, they are encouraged to stay there and look at more stuff and download more stuff because it's easy.

Lisa Franklin: That's right. That's right.

Chad Chancellor: To me, that's really what it's all about. That's why I like it so much. When you all rolled this thing out, I called you and said you have done it this time. I've been looking for a good builders and sites database.

Lisa Franklin: Thank you.

Chad Chancellor: What about-- I'm sure your sales are growing because I think this is so good. I can't be the only one. So, have you had any sales growth since you released it?

Lisa Franklin: Yes, we have. When we demo LOIS to a prospect, they are amazed on how the user interface is laid out and how fast it is to search for properties. We have a steady revenue growth with this release of the latest version and are excited about what the opportunities bring to us.

We continue to enhance this application. In fact, we're working on a new feature where you'll be able to search on special layers. So, someone is wanting to search for properties just within an opportunity zone, they're going to be able to do that. If they want to especially search on new market tax credits properties, they're going to be able to do that.

So, that's exciting for any local ED organization because they literally can have their properties in there with adding these layers. It just adds a whole new opportunity for them to be able to showcase their assets.

Chad Chancellor: I've got a question a lot of economic developers probably want to know. So, most economic developers are busy and they would really like to task uploading the buildings and sites database to folks on staff or interns or folks to help them while they are out meeting with the mayor and prospects and so forth. So, how easy is it to add videos and layers and flyers? If an economic developer wants to task this to somebody they've just hired, is this something easy to do or is it hard and cumbersome to do?

Lisa Franklin: No, very easy to use. Here again, we build a new administration site for LOIS in 2018 as well and rolled that one out. If you have an intern who comes in for the summer, they can log into the administration site. You can assign them a user name yourself. They can get in there and literally, it's so easy to use.

We have forms where they can enter information in for a site or building, hit save and they can go to an area where you add media and they can upload videos, they can upload images. It's just very simple and that's what we wanted to make it. We know that leaders don't have time. Local economic development organizations don't have time to train and learn these systems, so we make it very easy.

We also have user training section in our application on the administration site. It's probably an hour video where I actually give a training session. So, if anybody wants to watch it and you want to hand it over to an intern, I think they'll know how to use that application in an hour.

Chad Chancellor: So, we have economic developers listening and manufacturing companies listen to our podcast. So, for the manufacturing companies out there, if they go to LocationOne, they really see buildings and sites across the whole country, right? This is not just a two or three-state region. They can check this out and find multiple buildings and sites.

Lisa Franklin: That's right. We have users in 40 states and even in Mexico and this has been great because what I will say about that is when you're a local economic development organization and you connect this application to your website, you're only showcasing the properties that are in your community, for example, but if you're a county, you're going to be able to show your county information.

We have even state users and utility users. If the utility user is using this system and we have many of them, they can actually showcase properties across the nation on their website. It's networkable. In fact, we have subscribers and I'll talk a little bit about the utilities, if they buy a subscription, they can offer this application to their communities at no cost.

We call those umbrella subscriptions and quite frankly, we have a lot of states in our network and utilities who have bought into the umbrella subscriptions because it just makes sense. Their local economic development organizations are not spending a lot of money on these applications where

they can spend more in their marketing budgets and doing industry analysis and other things. So, that's how we see that.

Chad Chancellor: Well, you know I travel the country, so I talk to a lot of state economic development folks in utilities and one of their frustrations is they-- how do we get our local economic developers to keep their buildings and sites updated on these things? That's the cost of frustration. I think this system is so easy that it'll be-- both people will be encouraged to keep their sites updated. If you've got a buildings and sites database that's hard to handle, then naturally you're just not going to be as excited to get up and keep it updated as this which is really easy.

So, I think in a way, if a state or utility buys into this, they can then use it to encourage their folks; look how easy it is. It's just like playing on your iPad. It can almost become something fun to do. How quickly can you have somebody running? If a county calls you today and says hey, we're interested in this, how quickly can you have that going?

Lisa Franklin: Once we sign the contract-- in fact, sometimes we do it before we sign the contract because it takes a little bit of time to get these contracts through these local boards, but we really can have a user up and running within a day and so once we hand that application over to them, they can start populating the application.

Chad Chancellor: So, once it's running, they can put in one building at a time and they list that building comes up while they're doing their other ones. Let's say they got five buildings or sites in town, they don't have to wait to have all of them in it for it to start working.

Lisa Franklin: No, it's real-time. When you put in data, it automatically shows up on your website. In fact, not only does it show up on your website, but if you have other users in your network like your county, your utility, that information will show up on their website immediately as well.

And that's kind of something else I wanted to address. We have a national viewer, so if you think about all the users that are in our network, every property that you put into the database actually shows up on a national viewer. I can tell you from all of our web analytics, we have people who will find locationone.com when they do a search on Google or just do a browser search and then, fortunately, LocationOne comes up and we are finding that a lot of site selectors are using it.

So, if you put in your property at the local level even one record, literally, it can show up on four or five websites immediately. You're really extending your marketing reach. It's amazing how this application works and how it's networked together to really take advantage of that particular feature.

Chad Chancellor: I know I've looked at it from the front end. So, I've looked at it from a site selection perspective trying to find buildings and sites and I love it. I give it a ten out of ten. What about the administrative side from the viewer's perspective. So, even if I'm an economic developer and my intern uploads it, but as the person in charge, I want to see an admin picture; how easy is that to view and how I guess user-friendly is it?

Lisa Franklin: Very friendly. What happens is when we sign up an economic development organization we provide them with a username and password. When they log in, they get a dashboard so they can see how many available properties they have on the market, off the market. They can see all areas attached to them, but it's very easy for them to go in and customize things.

I think that's the trick because if you're at your desk at 5 o'clock on Friday and you need to do something to the database you can actually log in and make that change. You don't have to come back to us and we don't have to create a statement of work to make a change. You can do it yourself. So, very easy to use, web analytics very easy to access and review and you can print those reports out as well.

Chad Chancellor: And are you all set up with any large real estate consortiums?

Lisa Franklin: We are. We do have several across the country that we are set up with and so if the user comes on and let's just use Colliers for example, we absorb their data and so if Colliers is in their area, we can automatically attach that feed to their profile.

We also have a lot of what we call real estate exchange transfer services that are connecting to LOIS and that's a big bonus because if you have one in those areas, we can set up an automatic feed. So, that means you never have to worry about sites and buildings and you don't have to worry about area information either because we provide that. We source that data from ESRI. You really can have a turnkey system.

Chad Chancellor: And I think that will be important to our manufacturing listeners is if you go to this, you don't only see what an economic developer puts in, you can access the Colliers for that area and real estate data. So, you've got a really sound list. Where does the state county and community data come from? I know you can push some buttons in there and start seeing demographic reports and population and all. Where are you getting that stuff from?

Lisa Franklin: I kind of alluded to that earlier, but we source all of our data from ESRI. It's a trusted data provider for many industries across the U.S. and so we continue to use them and we've used them for years. They're very, very popular. LEDO's have the opportunity to add additional data like major employers and distance from major markets and any other local factors to enhance a data set, but if it comes down to the data that-- if you're showing population or any economic factors, you don't want to be putting that on your website yourself. You want it to come from a third party.

Chad Chancellor: Right. At least I got to ask you the million-dollar question and I hope it doesn't cost a million dollars, by the way. How much does something like this cost if we've got listeners that are interested?

Lisa Franklin: Yes, we have always prided ourselves on being the low-cost provider. That doesn't mean you don't get a system that is not as robust as any of the other systems. We understand that economic development organizations have budgets where they cannot afford a real robust system, but what you're getting with LOIS is a very robust system for what I consider a low cost.

If you're a single community and you want to use this application, you can purchase it for \$3500 annually and if you're a county, for example, you might want to buy an umbrella subscription. So, we offer umbrella subscriptions for a county for \$7500. That means that any economic development organization in the county can use it at no charge under that umbrella subscription. So, if you divide it up and you have four, five economic development organizations, it's very, very affordable.

Chad Chancellor: Right and in some states, Missouri is one of them, Texas is one of them, the cities do economic development and it's funny different states are different. So, there are counties in certain states where you'll have ten different economic development organizations. So, you can buy an umbrella. Then I know states and utilities also can buy it--

Lisa Franklin: That's correct.

Chad Chancellor: --from what I understand.

Lisa Franklin: Yes, we have states where they bought full subscriptions for the entire states. So, any economic development organization in that state can use it at no charge. That's really a nice scenario because everybody is on one system.

Chad Chancellor: I got to brag on you a little bit. So, yesterday I was at the Kansas City Royals game for an event up here and we were talking about LOIS and some of the people said that-- I was bragging on it. I said this thing is easy to use because-- I was bragging about how easy it was and they said that's all due to Lisa Franklin. They did.

Lisa Franklin: Thank you.

Chad Chancellor: They said you spearheaded this thing back when there was no internet. You had all invented this and had floppy disks of all your builders and sites. So listeners, just imagine I guess in the '90s or early 2000s having a floppy disk with all the buildings and sites in a big area. So, talk about coming from then and really, could you ever imagine where you are now? It must excite you now to see what this has become.

Lisa Franklin: It really is. I worked at the time for a utility that had a service area in eight states. It was very difficult to market sites and buildings and communities that you weren't really familiar with and so really, we started building this application back in 1998, but yes, we had floppy disks and we would send them out and our local economic development organizations would populate them and send them back in and we would populate the application. Then we had to send them reports.

But when the internet came about, we decided we had this concept of why does every economic development organization have to build their own application or buy very expensive-- leave some ED organizations out of the equation, buy expensive systems? So, that's where we came up with the concept of having a networkable system on the internet.

We've been doing this since really like you said, Chad, since 1998 and we have evolved and I think this latest version has the latest and greatest technology. Everything is built in the cloud and we're excited to see the future of where this application is going to go.

Chad Chancellor: Folks, go out and find some buildings and sites on this thing on your phone or iPad. That's what I would challenge you to do. Look at it on your computer if you want to, but if you're like me, I like to get on my iPad when I'm in a community and literally while I'm standing in the middle of an industrial park and start pulling up where's all the infrastructure. You just watch how easy this thing works I'm telling you.

I'm happy, Lisa, that you joined us today because I think this solves so many problems and as people get more and more used to the internet and how fast things work, people are not going to put up with a cumbersome system that takes a whole day to load or your iPad won't load it.

So, I just think that this is so smart and I think it really-- the folks that have it, it's going to be obvious they're really in 2019. This is not technology that we're using from 2005, that we're trying to get by on. This is state of the art stuff which most companies are going to want to look at and use. Lisa, thank you so much for being with us here today. Is there anything you wish I had asked you that I didn't?

Lisa Franklin: No, I appreciate the time you're giving me. If you're interested in looking at this application or getting a demo, certainly go to locationone.com. Our contact information is there and we're happy to help you. We're happy to give you maybe a demo that usually takes about one hour, but I think it will be worth your time to see what we're putting on the table.

Chad Chancellor: All right. Thank you so much for being with us today.

Lisa Franklin: Thank you.

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Chad Chancellor: A special thank you to Younger Associates for recording, editing, and publishing this podcast for us. I encourage you to visit their website at younger-associates.com.