SUBMIT A PLAN

AUTHORITY MARKETING RESOURCE

SUBMIT-A-PLAN

Online building and planning application processing

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RESOLUTION

Submit-a-Plan Authority Marketing Resource

Introduction

With the number of applications submitted through Submit-a-Plan doubling every year and over 70,000 registered applicant and agent users, it is clear to see that online applications will steadily replace traditional paper methods.

Submit-a-Plan's long-term vision is to create a more modern, more efficient electronic Building Control application process for Local Authorities. Submit-a-Plan and DataSpace Live are designed to offer a complete and advanced electronic online solution that not only improves the efficiency of application submission and approval, but also the overall efficiency of how Building Control departments operate. Integral to this are electronic applications submitted online. The more electronic applications you receive, the more efficient your department will become.

If you are already receiving electronic applications through the Submit-a-Plan portal you are already off to a good start, but do all of your customers know about the service or know that it is your 'preferred' method of application? This marketing resource provides guidance on some simple steps your authority can follow to promote electronic submission through Submit-a-Plan. The resource comes with our Submit-a-Plan logos, web-text, applicant brochures and leaflets for your use. As well as attaching these to an email for you, throughout this document you will find web-links where you can download them.

Getting Prepared

Getting prepared for receiving electronic applications is important so that once you have received an application you are able to process it with ease. If you need assistance with promoting Submit-a-Plan or the process of electronic submission using the portal, please contact us and we will help guide you through the process. We hope you find this resource useful.

1. How to use our web-links & logos

Adding web-links and logos to your website

One of the initial steps you need to take to promote the electronic submission of applications is to advertise Submit-a-Plan on your authority Building Control web pages as your 'preferred' method of application.

We can provide both a generic web-link to the Submit-a-Plan Home Page or a web-link generated specifically for you that when posted on your web page will direct applicants and agents straight to your authority's 'Authority Page' on the Submit-a-Plan website. The most effective way to display our Submit-a-Plan links are at the top of your 'Make an Application' or similar page and to make it obvious to the eye and clear to the person visiting your site that this is your 'preferred' method of submission.

Along with this web-link can be included a list of details explaining what Submit-a-Plan is and the primary benefits for applicants and agents in submitting applications electronically online through the Submit-a-Plan Portal. Below is an example of the details we suggest to display and this is also provided on a separate page in the appendices towards the back of this document to send to the person who updates your council web pages. Also available to upload to your web-pages are our Submit-a-Plan logo and 'Apply Online' web graphic supplied with this resource.

Adding web-links and logos to your correspondence

You can also use our links, logos and graphics at the footers of your newsletters, emails and letters. Below is an example of how you may wish to do this.

Downloads: Download our 'Apply Online' graphic at http://www.screencast.com/t/gQoMn8bZ
Download our SAP logo at   http://www.screencast.com/t/YIXLovAF
Request us to generate authority SAP link: helpdesk@resolutiondm.com

2. Submit-a-Plan Brochure and Leaflet

Included with this Marketing Resource is a Submit-a-Plan brochure and leaflet for applicants and agents. The brochure provides an overview of the Submit-a-Plan portal and our applicant and agent accounts, including an explanation about submitting electronic applications through Submit-a-Plan and the services they can expect to benefit from. It also explains why Submit-a-Plan is increasingly a preferred method of submission outlining the efficiency it brings not only to authority Building Control departments but also to the applicant and agents themselves.

The leaflet is a more condensed version of the brochure. The brochure and leaflet can be uploaded to your Building Control web-pages, emails and newsletters, while the leaflet can also be printed and inserted in postal letters.

Downloads: Applicant & agent brochure: http://www.screencast.com/t/pLhAYbo51tk
Submit-a-Plan leaflet at: http://www.screencast.com/t/aorvztJMo

3. Discuss with and Support Your Clients

You may find that there are applicants or agents who will continue to submit paper applications unless you actually ask them to start submitting electronically on Submit-a-Plan. There are a number of ways you can encourage them.

Requesting Electronic Submission

Once you have begun promoting Submit-a-Plan on your website and in your correspondence as your 'preferred' method of submission, you can now create a letter or email to send to your returning agents requesting that they submit their applications electronically through Submit-a-Plan. Within this letter or email you will need to provide reasons behind your request and why submitting applications electronically via Submit-a-Plan will also be of benefit to the agents themselves.

In the appendices toward the back of this guide is a template letter which can be adapted to reflect your own reasons for requesting electronic submission on Submit-a-Plan. If sent by post you could insert the leaflet or if sent by email you can attach the brochure and/or leaflet. Also in the appendices we have also provided an example of some technical information you may wish to supply with your letter or email.

Offering Advice and Support

Once you have sent your request letter, a number of agents may express their concern at submitting electronically or wish to resist the change altogether. During this time your team should be willingly on hand to reassure anxious agents and answer any questions or concerns they may have.

The key concerns that may arise from agents are likely to revolve around learning to use a new online system and having to replace hand-crafted drawings with CAD. Reassurance in how quick and easy Submit-a-Plan is to use, and its compatibility with hand-crafted drawings once they have been scanned at local print shops should alleviate the majority of concern.

Reassure agents that your team will be available for support should they need assistance the first time they submit an electronic application. Recommend that they submit a test application and why not submit a test application yourself so you are familiar with the process. You can also direct them to our Submit-a-Plan Support which is available by phone, email and our online guide-sheet and video tips and tutorials for using Submit-a-Plan. We are also happy to come and present an overview of Submit-a-Plan to your regular agents at your council offices.

It is useful to offer a follow up service and the feedback will also help you to reassure agents in the future. For those agents still resisting the change, continue to send them information about how Submit-a-Plan is beneficial to both authority and agents and gently encourage them to make the change. Last of all you could send out a letter of thanks to your agents for cooperating with the changes and helping to improve your department's system of working. Agents will feel better about making the change if they feel their contribution is appreciated and has been worthwhile.

Additional Resource 1:

Example Promotional Web Text

Electronic Applications – The Green Option

Send in you next Building Control application online by visiting: www.submit-a-plan.com

Submit-a-Plan enables anyone, with access to the web, to submit Building Control applications electronically to Local Authorities across the country free of charge. It is the green option compared to printing and posting and will help to reduce your carbon footprint.

Main Benefits of Electronic Submission

1. Free of charge to use.
2. Open 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
3. No printing or postage required.
4. To register and submit applications is simple.
5. Applications can be managed and tracked online.
6. Reduces your carbon footprint.

Downloads: Download our 'Apply Online' graphic at http://www.screencast.com/t/gQoMn8bZ
Download our SAP logo at   http://www.screencast.com/t/YIXLovAF
Request us to generate authority SAP link: helpdesk@resolutiondm.com

Additional Resource 2:

Submission Request Letter/Email

Council Name

To all our agents, for your information:

From **insert date** we will be requesting all Building Control applications to be submitted electronically via the Submit-a-Plan.com portal. This request comes in response to the increasing administrative, qualitative and financial pressures on our department that arise from viewing, printing, scanning and storing paper applications and their documents. Submit-a-Plan is an efficient solution enabling authorities to save in the money, time and quality lost in scanning, the costs of printing and the space used in the storage of paper applications.

With applications submitted and stored electronically, not only does Submit-a-Plan drastically reduce storage space and the costs of administration, but also makes the application and approval process faster, easier, more accurate and more secure, enabling smarter, more efficient ways of working for authorities. In addition, agents submitting electronic applications can upload additional or revised documents, track the status of their application, use their Submit-a-Plan account for application storage and benefit from a range of services authorities can offer through the portal.

If you are used to hand-crafting your drawings and are unable to convert them to the pdf electronic format yourself, you can either have them converted at your local print shop prior to using Submit-a-Plan, or alternatively, you can still submit a paper application to us. Please be aware however that with hard copy submissions there may be processing delays before we are able to validate your application. We hope that you will find that this change does not cause you too much inconvenience, indeed it should save your printing costs.

Please find attached a few technical instructions for submitting through Submit-a-Plan. Our team will be available to answer any questions and offer guidance when you first use Submit-a-Plan to submit an application. In addition the Submit-a-Plan team offer phone and email support as well as guide sheets and a YouTube Video Support Channel.

If you are not aware of Submit-a-Plan or are unsure about using it please check out their web page at the link below or watch an introductory video about Submit-a-Plan here: https://youtu.be/0Rvp5CQc1rl . In addition we have **attached/included copies/included links for downloading** a Submit-a-Plan Brochure and Leaflet.

If you have any queries please contact us on **phone/email**.

Kindest Regards,
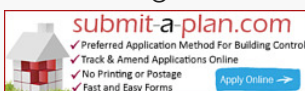
. **For electronic submission of applications go to www.submitaplan.com :
Quick, Direct and Economical – The Green Option! Our preferred method of submission.**

Additional Resource 2:

Example Technical Instructions

Technical Instructions

When using Submit-a-Plan, we will be requiring the following protocol to be adopted:

On the 'Charges' page of the Submit-a-Plan form please choose 'the fees will be calculated as part of this application' option and continue to complete the information requested in full.

Ensure that the internal floor area of extensions/rooms in the roof are given. If necessary supplement this information in the 'Additional Information' section of the form.

Please ensure that when submitting your associated plans, you save and submit them with a description of the drawing ie 'Ground Floor Plan as Proposed' and not just your own reference number etc. Unless your drawings are fully dimensioned please include a scale bar.

After you have submitted your application, if you or your clients wish to pay online please use this link for our council website payment page: **https://www........**

If you have any queries regarding the information required on the forms, or how to calculate the fees, please telephone us on **insert number** before submitting your application.

Below are details for Submit-a-Plan Support who are always happy to help:
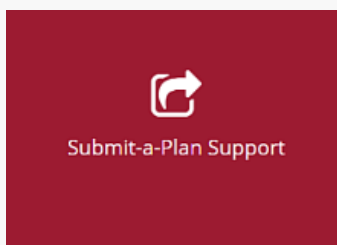
Submit-a-Plan Support Details:
Phone 01242 260505
Email helpdesk@resolutiondm.com
Guide-Sheets: http://www.screencast.com/t/vpwR42dRu
Videos: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2Bbi_yFZWBtCEy8BYZm66A

RESOLUTION