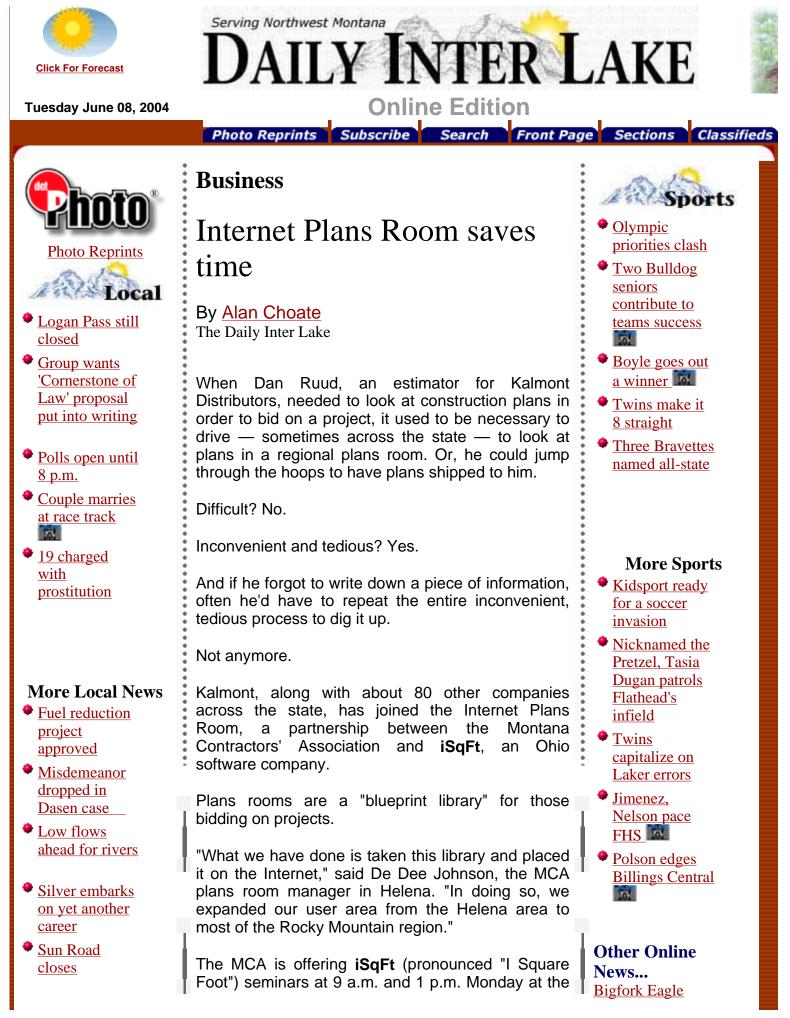
The Daily Internet: The Daily Inter Lake Newspaper, Kalispell, Montana



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Hungry Horse News Lake County Leader Whitefish Pilot



WestCoast Kalispell Center Hotel.

The service brings the advantages of online access to the construction bidding process — project plans are now available at any time and in any place that a subscriber has an Internet connection.

It also gives businesses access to more projects in more places, said Ruud, and is often more comprehensive: "It opens us up to more jobs." Kalmont sells metal and wood doors, hardware and building specialties to commercial projects.

As blueprints arrive at the MCA's office, they are scanned in and uploaded to the **iSqFt** site. Subscribers can then view the plans, contact owners and search specifications.

"It's pretty handy, I'll tell you that," said Alisha May, president of Rocky Mountain Rebar, which provides reinforced steel to highway and heavy construction projects.

Her company used to maintain subscriptions to plans rooms in Kalispell, Bozeman and Missoula, and people spent a lot of time traveling to make sure they kept up with available projects. It often was hard to get to the rooms from construction sites during business hours, May added.

"Now, you have no need to be running so much," she said.

At one point, dozens of software companies were competing to establish online plans depositories, said Will Hammerquist, the MCA's director of member services.

Associated General Contractors of America sorted through the competitors and recommended **iSqFt**. The MCA joined with contractor associations in Idaho, Washington and Oregon in setting up the service about a year ago.

It's not perfect, Ruud said. A computer monitor can't display an entire blueprint all at once, and scrolling around a building plan takes getting used to, he said. The printouts sometimes aren't as good as an original drawing, either.

Subscriptions cost \$995 for MCA members and \$1,450 for nonmembers. May and Ruud said they're satisfied with what the service provides.

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	Hammerquist: "Th	ad of the gan is is the direc	that weren't in your ne," he said. Said tion the industry is going to be how it's	
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