

## NASCA 2001 Outstanding Program Awards



### **MyCalifornia E-government Category**

#### **Executive Summary**

MyCalifornia provides an enterprise-wide system and standards that will allow the integration of all State government web applications and a controlled transition from legacy systems into more modern system architectures. The portal is central to the State's ability and desire to deliver higher levels of customer service through eGovernment – that is, to make the experience of transacting business with government easier, less expensive, more flexible, and faster.

MyCalifornia demonstrates the foundation upon which eGovernment services are based. California is governed by more than 120 departments and agencies, each traditionally creating and operating independent (and often incompatible) technology systems. The portal implementation provides a development framework that allows departments and agencies to leverage technology resources across the state enterprise. This will lead to decreased cost, risk, and time to develop new systems. (For example, over ten new applications were launched during the portal launch – all created in less than 110 days at an average cost of \$250,000.)

State departments may now leverage the existing infrastructure rather than purchase separately. Legacy systems are tied together through a common infrastructure, allowing joint applications between departments. The MyCalifornia framework provides an environment for the continued development of applications by having the State's existing data centers specialize in an ASP approach, with data centers specializing in hosting and application development, respectively.

The portal infrastructure also provides a framework for the development and distribution of technology and communications standards across the enterprise. By housing common functionality in a shared infrastructure, the State allows each department to focus on tailored application development built on the common modules and components in the portal.

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#### A. Description of the Program & Relative Significance to the Improvement of the Operation and/or Efficiency of State Government

In September 2000, Executive Order D-17-00 Governor Gray Davis tasked the Director of eGovernment to:

"...implement electronic technologies that will allow the people of California to receive government services and interact with State government, including a statewide Internet portal that offers a single, convenient access point for state government information and services..."

The result, MyCalifornia, is a best of breed, dynamic, customizable, fully integrated web portal for which the state adopted a private-sector development model, selecting best-of-breed technologies and engaging in extensive user interface, information architecture, ADA, and branding exercises to develop and launching a portal within a three-month time frame.

The State portal provides a single entry point for all citizens to government, giving them access to all the services and programs within State government. Users' experience is simple, personalized, secure, consistent, and effective – empowering citizens to access services and information 24 / 7.

The MyCalifornia approach was holistic, encompassing the entire process of bringing the site to life. Most of these functions were performed in parallel in order to meet the aggressive implementation deadline. The project included:

- Developing the brand strategy and creative design for the portal. The State conducted extensive user sessions and engaged a world-class branding/advertising firm to create the new look and feel.
- For the first time in any government, the State engaged the State Library to develop the information architecture and navigation. This ensured a customer-focused navigational structure that is intentions-based and intuitive to the non-technical user.
- Determining the functionality of the site and developing the code to deliver it. This integration engaged over ten of the world's premier technology firms and twelve State departments.
- Designing and implementing the technical architecture.
- Converting the content of the current site to the new dynamic database. The prior site needed to be entirely converted prior to launch in order to assure consistent information for the public.
- Conducting user, performance, fail-over and recovery testing. Due to the size of the system and the centrality to the State's efforts, the State conducted nearly two weeks of performance testing, subjecting the system to loads and traffic comparable to the business private-sector web sites.
- Operating and maintaining the site.

The portal launch included, within the same 110-day period, new applications allowing Californians to transact business directly with state government online:

1. Tax Refund Status
2. DMV Appointments
3. Vehicle Registration

4. State Lottery
5. CA Care Network - Supportive Services for Elders and Persons with Disabilities
6. Film CA Reimbursement Application
7. Household Employer Internet Reporting for Domestic Workers
8. State Phone Directory
9. Registered Nurses License Renewal
10. State Park Campsite Reservations
11. California State Parks e.Store
12. Sport Fishing Licenses
13. Check Road Conditions
14. Online Renewal of Mobilehome Registration
15. Real-Time View of California Highways

The framework is scalable, extensible, and designed to provide dynamic, robust infrastructure and content for the public. Below is a list of the equipment, technology and software used in the launch of the MyCalifornia Portal:

- 16 Dedicated Servers (13 Sun 420R Servers & 3 NT Servers)
- Interwoven – Teamsite for content management, versioning and workflow.
- BroadVision – One-to-One Enterprise for Dynamic presentation and personalization of content.
- Verity – K2 Toolkit for high-powered search and content retrieval.
- Broadbase – e-Commerce for integrated analytical and eCustomer relationship management tools.
- Cisco networking equipment.
- Data services from SBC/Pacific Bell.
- The network contains the following attributes:
  - Supports multiple vendor products/environments
  - LAN/WAN designed to scale from a low user load to a very high load
  - Seamless load balancing across heterogeneous software environments (OS/Applications/Databases)
  - Supports Hot-Fail-Over capability for all software and hardware components
  - Supports remote development and troubleshooting
  - Subscribes to Industry standard technology (Ethernet/Fast Ethernet) and protocols (TCP/IP)
- The security architecture contains the following attributes:
  - Multi-tier security for access to the Portal Environment
  - Real-time intrusion detection for the portal
  - 24x7 Security Monitoring
  - TCP Port level security
  - Multiple security zones to meet any additional/new application on demand.

Our goals were to create: a central location for the delivery of government information and services; ensure a professional looking site; comply with relevant ADA guidelines, use best of breed technologies; create an infrastructure that could house all government web systems; and, provide improved customer service.

## **B. Calculation of Actual Savings in the Short-Term and/or Long-Term**

One example of the value to constituents: MyCalifornia currently has approximately 3,000 people a day successfully using the application to make an appointment at DMV. Citizens with appointments at DMV save, conservatively, between one and two hours by not having to wait in line. Assuming one million constituents a year, saving one hour, the State has provided three million hours of value to Californians. Valuing that time at even \$6 per hour places the value at \$18 million. This does not account for cost savings to the DMV agency, and only represents one application.

It should be noted that one application, California Film First, has provided over \$1 million in tax rebates to the film industry and that the program is ONLY available online.

The program is growing rapidly and is gaining momentum. Since its launch in January, two other State agencies have begun projects that are directly related to integrating their respective information and services with the Portal technology.

One State agency joining the portal infrastructure is spending approximately \$350,000 to convert and leverage the existing infrastructure and software licensing. If this agency were to create the MyCalifornia portal independently it would need to spend \$2 million.

The above savings are typical of the citizen and agency savings associated with the portal. As we continue to add additional applications and agencies continue to migrate to the shared infrastructure, savings will mount.

Beyond monetary savings, agencies avoid the following pitfalls by leveraging the Governor's vision:

- Defining a clear vision of eGovernment and gaining executive buy-in to the vision.
- Securing executive sponsorship and support for the implementation.
- Overcoming resistance to aggressive timelines and private-sector methodologies, including outside review.
- Managing the technical complexities of integration and implementation.
- Coordinating and following through on project tasks divided among numerous and varying stakeholder groups within a tight timeframe.
- While effective and based on private-sector models, managing such a diverse set of vendors is not common practice in government and creates cultural and organizational challenges.

### **C. Quantifiable Benefits Realized by Service Recipients, Taxpayers, Agencies and/or State**

While the concept of eGovernment has been discussed for some time, and several states have begun to offer information and services over the Web, the MyCalifornia solution is unique in that it has successfully integrated and implemented four best of breed private sector Web technologies to provide the infrastructure for a truly enterprise-wide, customer centric solution. Other governments operate static web sites and typically offer fewer than six online transactions.

MyCalifornia provides fully dynamic, personalized content and, most importantly, creates a framework for the continued development and deployment of online services by State and local government.

MyCalifornia is designed to accommodate the integration of local governments into the State's web systems – and a pilot with several counties is already underway.

Finally, other state programs do not integrate the organizational framework and taxonomy provided to California by the professional librarians.

The framework for a comprehensive eGovernment solution has been developed and implemented and several State departments have already integrated their information and services with the Portal technology. Remaining departments will integrate with the portal over a period of time.

It is estimated that if MyCalifornia can save Californians as little as one hour a year by avoiding lines and filling out forms, over US \$300 million dollars in productivity and spare time will be returned to the California economy.

## **D. Relevancy of use by Other State, Local and Federal Governments**

While many governments are moving services online and are working to build effective web sites, no other government has built a framework and infrastructure similar to MyCalifornia.

California approached the portal development in the context of an extensive customer service and business process review ordered by the Governor. The portal is central to the State's ability and desire to deliver higher levels of customer service through eGovernment – that is, to make the experience of transacting business with government easier, less expensive, more flexible, and faster.

The State also wanted to ensure the transfer of private-sector best practices in customer service and information technology. As the largest state in the nation and sixth largest economy in the world, California is governed by more than 120 departments and agencies, each traditionally creating and operating independent (and often incompatible) technology systems. The portal implementation provides a development framework that allows departments and agencies to leverage technology resources across the state enterprise. This will lead to decreased cost, risk, and time to develop new systems.

The resulting portal infrastructure provides a framework for enterprise development within State government and gives immediate access to government information and a suite of new applications – ranging from purchasing a fishing license to renewing auto vehicle registration online.

The customer-centric, user-friendly portal enables visitors to create their own profiles and to build personalized home pages in which they can highlight issues of interest. Relevant information is then delivered to them dynamically, based on their profiles. At present, the portal offers citizens services including automobile registration, tax refund status, fishing and hunting permits, hazardous waste disposal directions, and small business information such as tax forms and government contracting.

MyCalifornia was, from the beginning, a unique public-private partnership. The project and technical planning was overseen by a group of Silicon Valley executives through the Governor's Web Council. This helped bring a private-sector mindset and the best technical information from the private-sector to the project. The Council endorsed the MyCalifornia strategy, design and implementation plan.

Rather than selecting a single vendor to handle the entire project, California selected the best-of-breed software and hardware companies to develop solutions to meet their portal needs and chose a systems integrator to manage the overall project.

MyCalifornia demonstrates the foundation upon which eGovernment services are based. This concept is based on the principle that a citizen or business does not distinguish between one agency, one branch or one level of government. Instead, they are demanding a greater level of customer service and personalization.

The framework established by California will allow all levels of government to share infrastructure and, therefore, reduced costs and reduced technical requirements. We are in the process of integrating a county government.

Unique to any government web site, California engaged the State Library to develop and maintain the search system and information architecture underlying the site. In keeping with the best of breed approach, librarians were determined to have the subject area expertise necessary to continue development an

MyCalifornia was designed with future applications in mind and is ready to offer remote access via call centers, wireless phone, and handheld devices. In addition, the Accessibility Center of Excellence found that the California State Portal satisfies all Priority 1 Checkpoints and meets Conformance Level "A" of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0.

Finally, the project began in September 2000 and the MyCalifornia Portal was launched on January 8, 2001. From start to finish, MyCalifornia was approximately 110 days. California has successfully shown that government is capable of producing technology projects on private sector timelines, with private sector levels of quality. This project has set a benchmark for State of California departments, and established a process for continued technology implementations.