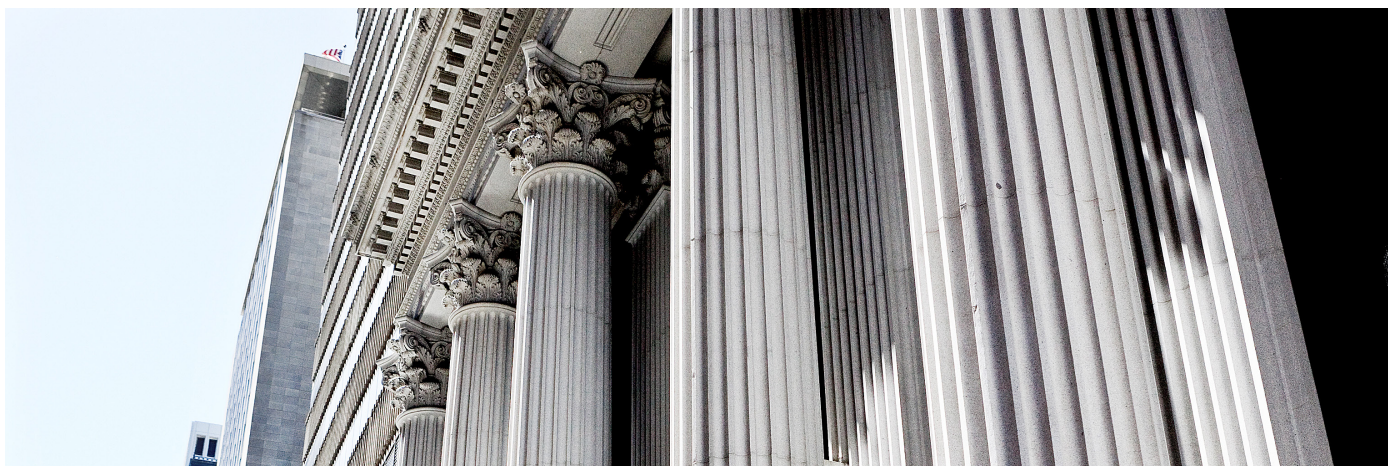# State Agencies Unite on New Information Exchange Platform

State government drives more efficient and effective interagency collaboration with guidance from Cisco Services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: State government

Industry: Public sector

Business Challenge:
- Enhance citizen services and government processes
- Build statewide information exchange platform for better cross-agency communication
- Enable agency information sharing despite reduced IT budget

Solution:
- Cisco Services provides business-level consulting to achieve key objectives
- With vendor-agnostic approach, Cisco helps define blueprint for required capabilities
- Cisco assists in creating business strategy for deployment of new exchange platform

Business Results:
- Developed enterprise architecture that meets statewide objectives and standards
- Increased communications and improved sponsorship between agencies
- Created roadmap for improving citizen services with more effective interagency information sharing

Business Challenge

This Cisco customer serves an overall population of more than 5 million citizens spanning more than 100,000 square miles. To better serve its ever-growing population, the customer created a statewide economic development strategy aimed at various goals, including the cultivation of advanced technologies to drive innovation, and ultimately, the well-being of the community.

Like any other state, business operations at the customer's healthcare, education, and public-safety agencies, in particular, are heavily dependent on exchanging information from each other. However, due to manual and suboptimum exchange capabilities, government services were slow and inefficient. Agency leads were seeking ways to leverage technology to make internal operations and citizen services more efficient.

As such, this government customer decided to build a new information exchange platform in the cloud using Identity Management as a Service (IDaaS) to create more effective interagency collaboration. This model would also use the shared-services operational model of spreading the cost across multiple agencies. The project's objectives focused on following major statewide information exchange initiatives, which included an education and health information exchange.

The challenge facing the IT team was that no single identifier existed that could link citizen records across the enterprise, nor was there a platform for creating, managing, and securing a unique identifier. In addition, the state faced a declining IT budget, organizational changes, lack of desired skill sets, and challenges around systems interoperability.

> "Together, we had many challenges, but the Cisco team was able to deftly deal with them. Plus, the skills and technical knowledge Cisco brought are second to none."

CTO, Governor's Office of Information Technology

Solution

During this time, the customer's IT team had been working with Cisco on two Cisco Smart+Connected Communities™ (S+CC) projects; one focused on providing distance learning to remote nurses, and another centered on Smart Grid technology. Knowing that Cisco was familiar with the state's business challenges and requirements, the state chose to engage with Cisco Advisory Services to help in the planning stage of its new information exchange platform.

"The purpose of the engagement was to facilitate the development of a governance framework and information sharing process model," says the state's health IT program director and coordinator. "As part of that, we wanted to enable agency collaboration, begin developing business scenarios, and complete application assessments for integration and automation of information sharing across departments." In conjunction with its traditional Cisco Services engagements that focus on infrastructure, Cisco Advisory Services looked at factors within the business domain. The IT team worked with Cisco to define key business use cases and requirements, providing both an organizational model and governance.

This vendor-agnostic, capabilities-focused approach was especially crucial in the platform development process, because the state had a very unique vision: to integrate a citizen identity service on top of the information exchange, one that connects the various database records of a single citizen into one location. Not only would this integration improve business intelligence among agencies, it would make it easier for individuals to access and update their personal records.

The Cisco team developed a comprehensive governance model outlining business architecture, standards/enterprise architecture, as well as deployment, verification, and operate/measure processes to guide agencies on introducing new IT capabilities. From there, Cisco also assisted in the application domain, providing IT with application integration processes and templates to facilitate the current assessment process.

Leveraging industry best practices, Cisco developed an information architecture maturity model to facilitate the process of classifying the agencies' information architecture. In addition, the customer received a clear roadmap to integrating future capabilities for driving statewide standardization. "Throughout the entire engagement, Cisco Services brought exceptional subject matter expertise, communication skills, and professionalism, as well as excellent deliverables," says the chief architect for the state's health information exchange. "The team's courteous demeanor helped us build relationships with a diverse group of participants, which was a key component in the success of this project."

Business Results

Now that plans are in place for the new shared-service information exchange to be deployed, the assistance of Cisco in getting all agencies on board with the unified vision has been of particular benefit. As with any major project, there was a level of skepticism, but after receiving a clear explanation of business scenarios and seeing the IT integration lifecycle governance framework in place, the IT department is receiving good support and cooperation from the agencies. "Together, we had many challenges, but the Cisco team was able to deftly deal with them," says the CTO in the Governor's Office of Information Technology. "Plus, the skills and technical knowledge Cisco brought are second to none."

> "The technical tools, templates, and framework developed through our Cisco engagement will allow us to continue our momentum collaborating with departments, building business scenarios, and completing an application inventory assessment to understand system capabilities for meeting our goals moving ahead."

State Health IT Program Director and Coordinator

With the enhanced collaboration that will come out of the state's new interagency exchange platform, citizens will ultimately reap the benefits. From cost savings to operational efficiencies, the impact that the project will have on the state directly translates into improved services for citizens.

Next Steps

This government customer is currently in the vendor selection phase of the project. Knowing that it can leverage the industry knowledge and guidance provided by the Cisco Services team, the IT team is looking forward to building the technology foundation that will enable services to agencies and citizens. Says the state's health IT program director and coordinator, "Although there is still much work to be done, the technical tools, templates, and framework developed through our Cisco engagement will allow us to continue our momentum collaborating with departments, building business scenarios, and completing an application inventory assessment to understand system capabilities for meeting our goals moving ahead."

For More Information

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