

Government of British Columbia Achieves Large-Scale Transformation Success

Executive Summary

With a territory larger than France and Germany combined, population of 4.3 million people, and a GDP of US\$111 billion, British Columbia is the third most populated Canadian province. Forestry, mining, oil, and gas have been the backbone of B.C.'s economy for decades. More recently, the province has seen accelerated growth in tourism, film, and high-tech. The province includes citizens from 197 First Nations bands, and 35,000 new immigrants settle in B.C. every year. Eighty-six percent of citizens live in urban areas.

The [Government of British Columbia \(B.C.\)](#) has set these aggressive goals for the province in the next decade:

- Make British Columbia the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent
- Lead the way in healthy living and physical fitness
- Build the best support system in Canada for persons with disabilities, those with special needs, children at risk, and seniors
- Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management
- Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada

CHALLENGES

With a territory this large and population so diverse, B.C. has faced many challenges in providing equal development and growth opportunities to its citizens, and in ensuring the delivery of quality education, health programs, and social services to everyone. When a new government was elected in 2001, it faced the challenge of an ailing economy, underserved remote communities, and an inefficient government apparatus.

The newly elected government recognized the huge role that information technology and modern telecommunications play in solving some of the province's key issues. With citizens and economic growth as its top priorities, the government embarked on a major transformation effort to improve its level of service, become more efficient, and make the province a leading jurisdiction globally.



Prepared by Cisco Systems, Inc.
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Consolidated Service Delivery Model: Ministry of Management Services

One of the first steps in the overall transformation was to establish government-wide, shared services under the responsibility of a single ministry, with a framework capable of delivering results quickly. The ministry focused on the following key areas:

- Service delivery to citizens and businesses (Service B.C.)
- Service delivery to the public sector (Solutions B.C.)
- Service transformation (electronic service delivery, alternative service delivery, bridging the digital divide)
- Office of the CIO

Every organization established a set of aggressive goals and developed a set of initiatives to achieve them.

“WE MADE A COMMITMENT TO BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND ENSURE B.C. COMMUNITIES HAVE ACCESS TO BROADBAND CONNECTIONS. BY PROVIDING BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACROSS THE PROVINCE, WE ARE OPENING UP A WHOLE NEW REALM OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES TO BRITISH COLUMBIANS.”

Gordon Campbell, premier of British Columbia

Multichannel Service Delivery: Increasing Citizen Satisfaction

B.C.’s multichannel service delivery strategy was developed to help the government deliver services in a cost-effective way while constantly increasing citizen and customer satisfaction. As part of the strategy, the government consolidated all service delivery channels—counter, telephone, online, and kiosk—under one umbrella: [Service B.C.](#) The government also looked at increasing capabilities across electronic channels, including the development of a state-of-the-art government portal environment, consolidating hundreds of independent government sites for one-stop, online service.

Shared Services: Breaking the Silos and Achieving Greater Operational Efficiencies

The government looked internally and evaluated strategies of achieving additional operational efficiencies by implementing a shared service model to deliver accounting, payroll, IT, and purchasing services to the various ministries. The government formed “[Solutions B.C.](#)”—an organization characterized by a centralized service delivery model and associated processes, and enabled by advanced information technology capabilities, including enhanced use of Internet applications and capabilities. Processes were re-engineered to meet best practices, and the various ministries were given responsibility to control service demand.

Alternative Service Delivery Vision

The Government of B.C. decided to take a broader view of service delivery and procurement mechanisms, and developed an alternative service delivery (ASD) model that recognized the potential of forming strong public-private sector partnerships while retaining the ability to innovate and remain flexible.

Security: A Foundation for Electronic Service Delivery

As the B.C. government moves forward to offer Internet-based services to citizens across the province, it must establish and maintain a high level of trust that citizens' personal information will be protected. Adequate security measures are required to ensure that high-speed, high-volume interconnections with a variety of outside agencies and citizens can occur, while at the same time protecting private information and information systems. To that end, the B.C. government initiated the [Security Enhancement Project](#) (SEP) in November 2004. This project is broadly tasked with improving the security of the government's information assets. The overall objective of SEP is to enhance trust and protect the interests of all parties relying on government-managed information and information systems from harm resulting from failures of availability, integrity, and confidentiality.

"WE CREATED A VISION TO BE A LEADER IN CONNECTING CITIZENS, COMMUNITIES, AND BUSINESSES WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICES, AND IN VASTLY IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF INNOVATIVE SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC FROM THE BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR."

Dave Nikolejsin, chief information officer, Government of British Columbia

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: THE NEXT FRONTIER

The delivery of any electronic government service is highly dependent on the availability of solid information technology infrastructure across the province. Through dedicated investments in the past, B.C. had already established itself as a leading Canadian province regarding Internet connectivity. Some 250 communities, however, still remained out of broadband touch.

The government vowed to change that scenario by enabling electronic delivery of services to the farthest corners of the province. "We made a commitment to bridge the digital divide and ensure B.C. communities have access to broadband connections. By providing broadband Internet access across the province, we are opening up a whole new realm of social and economic opportunities to British Columbians," says B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell.

Broadband connectivity is just the beginning. The digital divide issue gets to the heart of enabling a true democracy and fueling a growth engine. "We created a vision to be a leader in connecting citizens, communities, and businesses with government services, and in vastly improving the delivery of innovative services to the public from the broader public sector," says Dave Nikolejsin, chief information officer for the B.C. government. "This is a compelling vision, but it is one that presents significant challenges for governments as they seek to bring together services seamlessly so that citizens can access them based on their wants and needs."

Executing a digital divide solution clearly went beyond technology alone. Organizational change management, governance, and the ability to structure complex partnerships were critical success factors. The government formed a dedicated office, [NetWork B.C.](#), to develop a program to bridge the digital divide and enhance converged connectivity cost-effectively. Given the aggressive time frame and limited budgets, the office decided to look at this issue in nontraditional ways and came up with a unique strategic framework to solve the issue. Key elements were a focus on public-private partnership and the aggregation of all telecommunications demand in the broader public sector to achieve major savings and economies of scale.

SOLUTIONS

The government realized that a new public space is emerging, driven by demands for government services to be delivered in new, better, and integrated ways. The major challenge was building organizations equipped to oversee and sustain integrated service delivery efforts.

Three-Phase Roadmap

Phase I: Foundational

- Create common infrastructure across the broader public sector, building a foundation for communication, collaboration, and seamless delivery of services such as e-health and e-education
- Extend the infrastructure to remote communities, bridging the digital divide to deliver on the promise

How Will It Be Executed?

- Consolidated view of supplier contracts; scaled economies and improved negotiations; realized operational efficiencies—cost savings of US\$54 million
- Some of the efficiencies were then channeled to connect 151 new communities, and more are in the works
- Created information technology architecture including MPLS backbone and security foundation

Phase II: Innovation

Now that the foundational capability is in place, the B.C. government will be challenged to create and deploy next-generation services more broadly to ensure that the foundational investments reach their potential. Specific objectives include the following:

- Partner with broader public sector to deliver education and healthcare services over this communications network
- Elevate the role of the IT organization from an operator to an orchestrator and innovator

How Will It Be Executed?

- Sustain governance structures to prioritize services and coordinate delivery over the common infrastructure
- Proactively lead and direct service providers to deliver infrastructure services to support application requirements
- Provide the executive sponsorship to review realized returns and guide targets against key metrics

Phase III: Transformation—Moving B.C. to a Networked Business Model

As B.C. becomes successful at delivering virtual services, there may be an opportunity to move the government to a networked business model that brings customized services efficiently to citizens. This will enable the government to sense and respond to citizen needs more effectively, creating a digital democracy.

How Will It Be Executed?

- Enable service integration across the diverse range of organizations that participate in public service delivery
- Provide information and systems sharing where, when, and as authorized throughout the extended network of service delivery partners
- Support secure communications and collaboration across the entire workforce associated with public service delivery
- Ensure security and privacy, thereby increasing the public's trust as British Columbia moves forward to provide valuable information to authorized citizens, when, where, and how they need it

STRATEGIC OUT-TASKING CONCEPTS

The government adopted a systematic approach of assessing capabilities and determining which processes are core to its functions and which are auxiliary. This approach included a structured assessment process with defensible output on which functions should be retained in house, and why.

In the process, the government learned that it needs to prioritize mature capabilities and retain the “brain” (intellectual aspects of the services lifecycle). Aligning partners with government goals became a priority. The government learned that it is critical to lead with ongoing innovation in mind, rather than bulk cost take-out as a key driver for traditional outsourcing.

In addition, operating within a strategic out-tasking framework provides for better business alignment, more likelihood of returns, superior process visibility, better risk mitigation, and greater innovation. “The Government of B.C.’s ability to embrace innovation is impressive,” says Val Stoyanov, managing director, enterprise and public sector, of the Cisco® [Internet Business Solutions Group](#) (IBSG) in Canada. “We are excited to share global best practices, bring ideas, and recommend approaches because of the government’s willingness to listen, reflect, and adopt. Many can learn from British Columbia.”

REALIZED BENEFITS

The various transformation efforts have already started generating major benefits for the government and the province’s citizens. Aggregating broader public sector demand for telecommunications services and bridging the digital divide will generate financial benefits of US\$54 million through cost reductions and incentives for transitioning from older traditional services

to next-generation services. Some of the savings will be reinvested to achieve even greater technological capabilities. Citizens will receive greater benefits, with the opportunity to:

- Improve their education and training by upgrading skills online, without leaving their communities
- Receive up-to-date medical information and treatment through reliable medical sources available using the Internet
- Access government services without traveling
- Start a home-based business and market it around the globe
- Get connected to the wealth of information that exists on the Internet

NEXT STEPS

Going forward, the B.C. government will continue to take advantage of the transformation outcomes and capabilities that have been developed over the last few years.

Enhancing the framework for public-private partnerships will remain a key element of the government's execution strategy. The focus on citizen-centered service will remain strong. There will be new emphasis on one-window access to government services through the Internet, tele-help, and front-line offices.

British Columbia would like to build upon this spirit of innovation to consolidate the province's role as the nation's driving force of democratic renewal—through direct citizen involvement and digital democracy.

MORE INFORMATION

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Corporate Headquarters

Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA 95134-1706
USA
www.cisco.com
Tel: 408 526-4000
800 553-NETS (6387)
Fax: 408 526-4100

European Headquarters

Cisco Systems International BV
Haarlerbergpark
Haarlerbergweg 13-19
1101 CH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www-europe.cisco.com
Tel: 31 0 20 357 1000
Fax: 31 0 20 357 1100

Americas Headquarters

Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA 95134-1706
USA
www.cisco.com
Tel: 408 526-7660
Fax: 408 527-0883

Asia Pacific Headquarters

Cisco Systems, Inc.
168 Robinson Road
#28-01 Capital Tower
Singapore 068912
www.cisco.com
Tel: +65 6317 7777
Fax: +65 6317 7799

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