

State of Nebraska Improves Efficiency of its Projects with IT Governance



CLIENT PROFILE

Industry: State government
Company: State of Nebraska
Employees: 16,500-plus

BUSINESS

Nebraska, the 37th US State, is home to more than 1.8 million Americans. The Nebraska State Government is charged with providing essential services and governance to the State.

CHALLENGE

With two departments alone generating more than 1,300 projects, the State needed a way to not only identify which initiatives to progress but also establish a consistent and flexible framework for project management.

SOLUTION

The State has expanded its deployment of CA Project & Portfolio Management to cover non-IT initiatives. This will enable the Project Management Office to apply the same governance rules to all State projects and create a single repository for information.

BENEFIT

By improving its control and visibility of projects, the State has been able to lessen both risk and costs. The Project Management Office can also assist in delivering projects more effectively, which helps it deliver on the Governor's promise of efficiency in government.

Business

A governor's drive for efficiency

Famous for its cattle farming and celebrity credentials that stretch from Fred Astaire to 'Buffalo' Bill Cody, Nebraska's 77,000 square miles in the central US are home to more than 1.8 million Americans.

Under the supervision of 39th Governor Dave Heineman, the state collected over \$3.7 billion dollars in 2005 in taxes and other receipts. Like all public administrators, the Governor needs to show his electorate that the State manages this money wisely. So it's no surprise that a key pillar of his vision of the future for the State is 'efficiency in government'.

The State's IT organization, the Office of the CIO, is an important enabler of that vision, providing technology services that lead to 'effective, responsive and efficient' government.

Challenge

Prioritizing projects and resources

How well an organization manages change across its operations often has a direct impact on its efficiency and costs. As part of managing that change, the Office of the CIO's Project Management Office (PMO) was charged with supporting project methodologies for both IT and non-IT programs and projects.

Increasingly seen as a service group for agencies outside the Office of the CIO, the PMO has been involved in a diverse range of State initiatives. For example, it was asked by the Department of Roads to help with scheduling road building and maintenance projects.

To cope with its expanding mission, the PMO needed to provide a dependable framework through which, in time, any State project could be managed. But while a consistent approach to projects would provide cost-efficiencies, it was also important that the framework could be easily 'flexed' to answer the requirements of other state agencies.

Andy Weekly, Project Office Manager for the Office of the CIO, comments, "We were moving into portfolio management, becoming more strategic in our objectives, and making decisions about what were the right projects – with the best ROI – for the State to undertake. We needed to establish some metrics by which we could measure ourselves and determine if we were making progress."

"We were moving into portfolio management, becoming more strategic in our objectives."

Andy Weekly

Project Office Manager,
State of Nebraska

Solution

Taking a consistent approach to State projects

“CA Project & Portfolio Management has moved us closer to the objective of greater efficiency across the State.”

Andy Weekly

Project Office Manager,
State of Nebraska

To answer the State’s cost and efficiency goals, the PMO needed more than just a project management tool – it needed an integrated solution that could reduce the complexity of project and portfolio management while also enabling good governance. As Weekly explains, “We were looking for a solution that would enable us to carry out resource management, that was technologically current and had the capability for future growth. We were also looking for a platform where we could centralize all of our resources into one location, so that we didn’t have projects sitting on people’s hard drives.”

CA Project & Portfolio Management had already helped the PMO address these requirements for the State’s IT projects. But, for Weekly and his colleagues, the question now was whether the project and portfolio management solution was flexible enough to answer the needs of other, non-IT agencies. It would mean embracing a new kind of project lifecycle and a very different vocabulary. Instead of IT analysis, design, coding and testing, the solution would need to manage bid-letting, roadway design and right-of-way processes.

Working with CA Technologies, the PMO partitioned the solution to give the Department of Roads its own area, with its unique attributes that mirrored its own organizational structure, for example for the management of access rights. “We had the opportunity to bring together two agencies onto a single software and hardware platform, and under a unified support structure,” comments Weekly. “Although there are different methodologies, they reside together – which all goes toward the goal of efficiency in government.”

Benefit

A vanguard for best practice

Such was the success of the implementation that CA’s Project & Portfolio Management solution is now as integral to the State’s Department of Roads as it is to IT projects. By expanding its use of the CA Technologies solution, the State has been able to:

- Support more effective IT governance, with better control over project costs and risks
- Improve visibility of project status and resource allocation
- Reduce costs and streamline operations via a single project environment

These achievements have been made despite Nebraska’s project volume growing substantially, with over 650 IT related initiatives and more than 700 Department of Roads projects now co-existing within the same CA Technologies solution.

“Without some mechanism of pulling all of these projects together into the same repository it would not have been possible to run them,” comments Weekly. “We wouldn’t have any idea how many projects we had, what the status of them was, whether they were over or under allocated and how much time was being devoted to each project. Those things just simply would not have been possible prior to centralization.”

Crucially, the implementation has proved that the PMO is able to migrate elements of its own best practice in project governance to other agencies within the State's administration. As Weekly explains, "We've been able to demonstrate that we can execute similar projects with other State agencies and make them successful. Most importantly, CA Project & Portfolio Management has moved us closer to the Governor's objective of greater efficiency across the State."

**Please note that, in September 2014, the product name in the original customer success story was updated from "CA Clarity Project & Portfolio Management (CA Clarity PPM)" to "CA Project & Portfolio Management"*



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