



The Perfect Storm

As demand for services grows and budgets contract, the right ECM solution helps governments steer a straight course.

The recession has created a perfect storm of anxiety for state and local governments. Demands for public services have soared. In North Carolina, for instance, the number of people needing food assistance swelled by 231,000 between December 2007 and April 2009.

This summer, a north Texas TV station reported that applicants were lining up at 5 a.m. outside a Dallas food stamp office, and some people had waited months to receive their benefits. Members of the New York State Association of Counties complained that demand for unemployment insurance, food stamps and public health care was rising, while sales tax revenues had dropped by nearly 10 percent.

In this tough economy, governments cannot simply add more employees to satisfy burgeoning demand for services. In fact, many governments are seeing their staffs shrink. As the work force ages, governments are losing experienced employees to retirement. But tight budgets and hiring freezes make it impossible to replace those employees, let alone add more workers. Even as the economy starts to grow stronger, governments will take years to recover from the current era of revenue shortfalls and budget constraints.

When you need to get more done, but your resources are tight, the best plan is to become more efficient. Effective technology, implemented wisely, can help a government do business in a new

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA. Workload Surges, Payroll Holds Firm

When officials in Arlington County, Va., decided to standardize their content management technology enterprise-wide, they investigated all the leading solutions on the market. They put OnBase at the top of their list.

"Some of the unique features of the software, particularly its ability to integrate with line-of-business applications, were key factors in selecting OnBase," said Paul Carter, the county's enterprise records program manager.

Arlington County launched its ECM implementation in 2004 with two pilot applications. Since then, it has used OnBase for more than 50 applications for 10 of its 16 agencies. The system currently manages about 1.8 million documents — 15 million pages — and it will capture nearly 20,000 documents daily in the near future.

One application that has yielded significant process improvement manages taxpayers' real estate assessment appeals. "Once they file an appeal, that automatically kicks off a workflow that moves things to the proper appraisers for further assessment and review," Carter said. "That has cut the review time down by as much as 50 percent in any given year, and has allowed us to handle an increased volume of appeals."

"We haven't had to add bodies over the years as the county has grown and the number of records they record on a daily basis has surged."

— Paul Carter, enterprise records program manager, Arlington County, Va.

Also thanks to OnBase, the Land Records Division is handling an ever-growing workload without straining its limited resources. "We haven't had to add bodies over the years as the county has grown and the number of records they record on a daily basis has surged," Carter said.

A litigation holds and e-discovery system makes it easier to assemble documents that might figure in pending litigation. OnBase provides a repository for the documents and indexes their contents. "We can apply full-text searching to find relevant information," Carter said. "It's at least 50 to 75 percent faster than finding relevant documents by traditional methods."

Besides helping county employees work more efficiently, OnBase is making life easier for constituents. A resident who needs a copy of a marriage license doesn't have to wait while a clerk searches a year's worth of paper documents. A merchant doing business with the county no longer has to trek from office to office assembling the necessary paperwork. It's all right at hand, Carter said. "Now they can do it from a single location."

way, re-engineering processes, automating tasks and eliminating waste. These changes help save money while meeting the demand for more services.

An enterprise content management (ECM) solution such as OnBase® from Hyland Software provides an ideal vehicle for sailing through the economic storm that governments face today. By cutting out paper, automating labor-intensive processes, streamlining workflow and reducing the need for storage space, ECM reduces costs and eliminates busywork. That means governments can reassign employees from less productive tasks to jobs that provide greater value.



Hyland Software has been delivering ECM to state and local governments since 1991, so its experts know how to tailor an OnBase solution to a government's unique needs. And providing that solution doesn't require a year or more of expensive custom programming. OnBase is an off-the-shelf package, entirely point-and-click configurable, so OnBase applications get up and running fast.

The whole implementation cycle, from needs assessment through configuration, testing and deployment, takes as little as a couple of weeks and no more than a few months. A government can make the investment and start enjoying the returns in the same budget cycle, making an OnBase deployment a budget-neutral decision.

With an ECM system such as OnBase, you can transform your perfect storm of economic distress into a perfect opportunity to better serve the public.



WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH. Investment Brings Quick Return

Economic pressures have forced local governments to find innovative ways to cut costs and Washtenaw County, Mich., is no exception. With reductions to its work force, remaining staff need to do more work in less time. It's no longer practical, for instance, to send employees from one office to another to get documents completed, reviewed, approved and signed.

The county's old document management system didn't provide the workflow functions the county needed to boost efficiency, said Kimberly Wraight, ECM coordinator of Washtenaw County. Upgrading that system would have been cost prohibitive, she said. And an upgrade wouldn't have provided all the functions the county required.

"Instead of pushing paper, they're able to focus on providing direct services to citizens."

— Kimberly Wraight, ECM coordinator, Washtenaw County, Mich.

The county had \$300,000 set aside in its IT budget for upgrading the existing document management product. After weighing all the pros and cons, county officials decided to use that money instead to invest in a new, full-featured ECM system.

OnBase offered the right solution at the right price, Wraight said. The fact that Hyland Software's integration partner, ImageSoft, would train the county's IT staff to develop workflow applications on their own was another big plus.

Washtenaw County started implementing OnBase in May 2006. Within 15 months, 15 of the county's 27 departments were using applications built on the ECM solution. The system currently holds about 4.5 million documents.

The investment in OnBase started to pay off quickly. Thanks to an ECM application developed for the Friend of the Court Office, for example, it now takes just one day, rather than seven to 10, to process a divorce or other domestic case.

Another application automates the process for requesting a warrant. By circulating paperwork electronically, rather than making officers drive it from place to place, the county and local police will save time and fuel, get accused criminals arraigned faster and free officers for more critical duties. "It's amazing, the difference in the time it takes," Wraight said.

Washtenaw County's investment in OnBase is well on the way to paying for itself. In its first year, the solution saved the county \$100,000. Ongoing savings in software maintenance should amount to \$50,000 a year, Wraight said, with additional "soft dollar" savings still to be determined.

And while it's hard to put a dollar figure on better customer service, that's another big benefit that OnBase delivers, as the technology frees employees to use their time more effectively. "Instead of pushing paper," Wraight said, "they're able to focus on providing direct services to citizens."

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, N.C.

Demand for ECM Keeps Growing

Mecklenburg County, N.C.'s government was buried in paper, and the information technology staff was buried in requests for document imaging technology. Six departments had deployed stand-alone solutions, and at least three more wanted them as well.

But it's more efficient to manage and maintain a single solution, said Gary Morehouse, IT project manager for the county. "We decided we needed an enterprise solution to save money and improve quality."

OnBase met the county's needs not only for document imaging, but also for full-featured ECM with rich functionality the county could start using as needed. Currently Mecklenburg County is rolling out OnBase for imaging, storage and retrieval to 20 departments. Eventually it will add workflow functions, and some departments hope to use the system to go entirely paperless.

Although the rollout is in its early stages, some departments already are enjoying big benefits. Code Enforcement, for instance, used to out-source the job of imaging and hosting archival documents for public access as required by state law. But the county found that using the OnBase system was so easy and the quality was so good that it brought the job back in-house, saving \$5,000 to \$6,000 per month.

The Department of Social Services is working to replace many of its paper forms with electronic documents. "When they go paperless, it will save them approximately \$2 million on paper," Morehouse said.

Easy retrieval and the ability to share electronic documents also helps the county's large pool of mobile employees work more efficiently,



giving them access to documents they need in the field or at multiple locations. "It doesn't matter where a worker is located," said Nancy Slover, technology integration engineer and one of the county's two full-time OnBase administrators. "If they need to service a customer, they can access that image from anywhere."

As the implementation and use of OnBase continues to grow, interest from departments outside the original scope is also growing, said Slover. "They see how it's helping other groups make their jobs more efficient and service the customer better, and want to find out more or how they can participate."

"It doesn't matter where a worker is located. If they need to service a customer, they can access that image from anywhere." — Nancy Slover, technology integration engineer and OnBase administrator, Mecklenburg County, N.C.

OnBase
a Hyland Software solution

For additional information visit www.onbase.com/government