



MANAGING SHARED IT SERVICES ON A BIG SCALE

An integrated management model helps Texas deliver advanced data center, cloud, application, and security services to agencies statewide.

Delivering on the Mandate for Improved IT

Texas has long been a leader in implementing a shared technology services model to build and manage IT infrastructure. In recent years, the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) expanded its shared services to meet legislative mandates to modernize more of the state's IT infrastructure. The department's Statewide Technology Center now offers customer agencies services for infrastructure, cloud, software, web tools, and application development — all delivered by approved providers.

Smooth integration and automated management of the many different IT services and providers is critical to success. For assistance with this complex challenge, DIR chose Capgemini as a Multi-sourcing Services Integrator (MSI) and ServiceNow as the technology to manage and automate the IT services.

The ServiceNow solution replaced a mix of narrowly focused tools that previously managed individual IT systems, infrastructure elements, applications, and services. Today, ServiceNow helps Texas DIR and its MSI manage 34 technology services, with thousands of orderable options. More than 900 users access ServiceNow information and tools to serve the needs of DIR and Capgemini, as well as service providers and agency customers.

Key Measures Show Program Success

In 2014, 60 percent of mission-critical applications in Texas were considered obsolete, while only 20 percent of state agencies were satisfied with their IT services. Current metrics show the Texas program has achieved significant results, including cost savings associated with a 77 percent server consolidation.

Automation enabled by ServiceNow helps the department meet growing demand for services without a directly corresponding increase in costs. ServiceNow also provides a single source of truth for many of the metrics monitored by DIR and its MSI. Selected metrics are also shared with agency customers.

By obtaining IT services from DIR, Texas agencies can better serve citizens and fulfill their missions through a modern and cost-effective IT infrastructure and technology services. Texas citizens enjoy a modern experience when doing business with

participating agencies. These factors, along with competitive costs and reduced IT management burden, contribute to a 95 percent customer satisfaction rating for DIR services.

Texas DIR Shared Services Offerings

The Texas program offers shared services in five broad categories.

Data center services. As a core DIR offering, agencies can access central IT infrastructure, including servers, mainframe, and network services. The department delivers these resources from two redundant, statewide data centers that consolidated and standardized the previously separate IT infrastructures in 28 state agencies. DIR agency customers can also use pre-negotiated contracts to purchase subscriptions or licenses for standard business software like Microsoft Office 365 and Salesforce.

As more applications and data move away from on-premises systems, the DIR data center program offers compute and storage resources in a private cloud. Agency customers can also use public cloud services within a closed, secure network on a shared infrastructure that separates each agency's data for protected access.

Managed application services. DIR resources help agencies with application development and maintenance. These resources include fixed-rate

Workflows Automated in ServiceNow

-  Online services catalog and ordering processes
-  Cloud services provisioning, billing, performance monitoring, and regulatory management
-  Financial chargebacks and management
-  Service-level exceptions and approvals
-  Major incident management for security
-  Process compliance monitoring
-  Integrated test, defect, and release management for new software deployments

project services and access to temporary staff at set hourly rates.

Managed security services. DIR offers its agency customers consistent management of data security, as well as security monitoring, device management, and support for incident response, risk assessment, and compliance.

Texas.gov website. DIR develops and maintains Texas.gov, the state's official website. The site also offers agencies services for a dedicated web portal and the ability to accept online payments.

Open data portal. A secure cloud infrastructure supports a centralized portal that allows agencies to share open data with the public and other government organizations.

Integrated Management for Multiple Services

Offering so many broad and complex IT services means the department needs to easily manage and automate them. Previously, the separate IT infrastructures and their services were managed by a mix of solutions from multiple vendors. For its shared services, DIR wanted a single, integrated management solution that would enable:

- The transformation into an agile broker of IT services, with the ability to deliver services rapidly at competitive prices
- Cost-effective and fast service delivery and exceptional service transparency
- A modern service ordering experience for agency customers
- Visibility into application usage across the state to meet the department's mandate to reduce application sprawl and improve operational intelligence

ServiceNow offers the solution to meet these needs for the department, its MSI, and the agencies. Capabilities delivered by ServiceNow include:

- An online service catalog and automated ordering function that streamlines service requests for users, agency IT staff and providers
- A single, integrated management view and system for the DIR infrastructure, cloud resources, and vendor services
- Collaborative services monitoring and management by teams from the department, the MSI and

Snapshot: Department of Information Resources, State of Texas

The Texas DIR Statewide Technology Center delivers a variety of IT infrastructure and application services to:

-  279 state government organizations
-  261 county and local governments
-  15 courts
-  16 education institutions

agencies, with visibility and capabilities appropriate to each user's role

- Tools and data for service-level management, service desk support and help desk support for agency IT teams and their end users
- Digital workflows that make it easier to automate business processes, communications, and governance

The Right Views and Controls

Providing multiple users the right type of visibility and control can be a hurdle for implementing a shared model. In Texas, the ServiceNow solution delivers the right visibility and management capabilities to the department and its collaborators.

DIR and its MSI benefit from a wide view of all services, with "single pane of glass" management. Texas DIR and MSI teams have a single view across all offered IT services and resources, including servers, operating systems, network equipment, middleware, and applications. This platform avoids the burden and confusion of working with multiple tools covering individual services. A single services management platform also means agency IT teams need less training for the tools available to them.

Making IT Services Easy and Automatic

Ordering, provisioning, and managing any IT service typically involves a multistep process with many components, approvals, and providers. Automating these processes is vital to deliver IT services faster, more consistently and efficiently, and with appropriate cost and governance controls. ServiceNow helps Texas DIR streamline service processes by:

- Automating onboarding of new customers as well as new services and their providers
- Integrating catalog, demand, and project functions to allow managers to easily review, approve, and track demand for specific IT services
- Automatically generating configurations for new users, groups, providers, and configuration management database (CMDB) services
- Reducing provisioning time and data-entry errors for service orders

Automation also improves security because service orders and provisioning can be defined to require specific security elements.

“If someone orders a new server, we don’t want to leave it up to the user to install security software at the same time,” says Todd Kimbriel, DIR deputy executive director, and Texas state CIO. “Now, the server and security elements are ordered together and provisioned automatically.”

This automation has produced significant benefits for Texas DIR, including:

- 79 percent of server monitoring incidents generated automatically
- 80 percent of problem records created automatically based on incident trends
- 98 percent of automated change requests implemented successfully

The high level of automation has also dramatically reduced time-consuming emergency change requests. These actions now represent less than 10 percent of

the 15,000 change requests generated annually by agency customers.

DIR intends to automate more services, especially those in the cloud. For example, a DIR customer can currently specify which server and cloud environment they want for a particular workload.

“We want to evolve this to have the ServiceNow platform determine the best place to run that workload. The customer won’t need to know about the different cloud environments and figure out which one to choose,” says Kimbriel.

Bringing All Agencies to the Shared Services Table

“Our intent is that all 90 state agencies participate to some extent in all of the shared technology services we offer and that they will leverage ServiceNow to view how they use those services,” says Kimbriel. “But we know it can take a while for agencies to understand the value of offloading IT services to a provider, even when that provider is another state agency. We need to show them the value of outsourcing that IT infrastructure instead of committing valuable headcount to doing the ‘plumbing’ work.”

Texas DIR is already seeing adoption of this perspective. Kimbriel notes, “Many agencies now realize that outsourcing their IT entirely to our shared services allows them to redirect their workforce to focus on serving citizens within their core mission.”

This piece was developed and written by the Government Technology Content Studio, with information and input from ServiceNow.



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