

Title: Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles Suite of Services
Category of Entry: Digital Government: Government to Citizen

Executive Summary

The Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) has faced many challenges over the past few years. This includes budget cuts, a full system conversion, staff shortages, and unfavorable press. In order best serve Maine citizens and alleviate challenges during this transitional period, the BMV has modernized its information infrastructure by offering a suite of services online. Mainers no longer must leave their homes or offices to register a vehicle, renew a license, purchase a driving record, or order a vanity license plate.

The BMV Citizen Services offer the following innovative uses of technology:

Rapid Renewal (<http://www.informe.org/bmv/rapid-renewal>) is the nation's first online vehicle registration renewal system that processes fee payments for local and state governments in one transaction. The Rapid Renewal System has eliminated the problem of the citizens having to visit one or more government offices to complete their annual vehicle renewal, collecting both excise taxes (which stays with the municipality) and registration fees (which belong to the BMV) in one simple and secure online transaction and is available to citizens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Driver License and Identification Card Replacement and Renewal Service (<http://www.informe.org/bmv/dlr/>) – As stated above, staff shortages and a system conversion contributed to an increase in not only dissatisfied customers but also overworked employees at BMV branch offices. One of the most popular services at BMV branch offices is renewing a driver's license, a service that has been online for more than two years. In response to increasing demand and in order to encourage adoption of the online service, Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap recently removed a one dollar processing fee from the online service, creating parity between online and in-person renewals. The online service allows license or ID card renewal or replacement online without needing to visit a branch office. Any Maine licensed driver with an active digital license, digital motorcycle license or digital Maine ID card can use the service and receive their renewal or replacement card in the mail within 7-10 days.

Driving Record Check (<http://www.informe.org/bmv/drc/index.html>) provides instant access to a 3-year or 10-year driving record retrieved directly from the BMV database. Rather than traveling to a branch office or submitting a written request to the BMV main office, citizens can download the driving record directly online and print it. These records are displayed in accordance with the Driver's Privacy Protection Act.

Vanity Plate Search & Look-up Service

(<https://www10.informe.org/bmv/vanity/>) was designed for Maine registrants with a current vehicle registration who wish to display a personalized license plate on

their vehicle. A simple search is conducted regarding the availability of the desired plate and can be submitted for ordering and processing by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. The official registration and plates are received in the mail.

A. Concise description of the business problem and solution, including length of time in operation.

Agency commitment has been vital in creating the efficiencies provided by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles' online services. The staff of the Maine BMV has demonstrated a willingness to offer online options, which in turn, have truly lessened that agency's workload. With substantial cuts in budget and staff, the productivity provided by online services takes the edge off as automated systems carry some of the burden.

The online services have resulted in a substantial decrease in telephone, in-person, and mail requests, causing customer service at the agency counter to be greatly improved. Other tasks that were once put on the back burner due to lack of time can now receive proper attention. Citizens save time from not traveling to and from the various agency offices, not waiting in lines, and not taking time off from their already busy schedules to make office hours. Time savings through Internet technology is a win-win situation for both government and citizens.

For citizens, the Rapid Renewal Service is a money-saving transaction. Maine residents normally pay between \$3.00 and \$5.00 per registration to the municipality in the form of an agent fee. By completing the transaction online, the agent fee is reduced to \$2.00. As for the other services, citizens can use them at a time that is convenient for them, thus saving time that was previously spent traveling to and from the BMV and/or municipal offices and waiting in line for service.

On October 3rd, 2005, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles eliminated its \$1 processing fee for online transactions through the Driver License Replacement and Renewal Service. The service now costs the same as it would to obtain a license in person.

The BMV also offers truckers the ability to apply for over limit permits from the state online. Trucking companies hauling over weight loads simply log onto the service and can obtain a permit without needing to contact the BMV office directly, and are provided with a permit immediately. (<https://www.informe.org/overlimit/>)

Development and maintenance of the BMV citizen services is sustained without the use of appropriated funds as the result of a partnership with InforME (the Information Resource of Maine the State's self-funded portal manager. Nor are there additional convenience fees to burden the user. The funding for the service is generated through the portal agent fee of \$2.00 for Rapid Renewal and the Vanity Search & Order service, which is \$1.00-\$3.00 less than the agent fee charged by municipalities.

B. Significance to the improvement of the operation of government.

Municipalities save time and resources by not manually processing registration renewals, entering vehicle registration data and collecting and reconciling registration fees. State agency personnel also save time that was previously lost to customer visits.

Time savings through the use of Internet technology are readily seen through customer satisfaction. The following testimonies were taken through feedback surveys after completing the online renewal process:

"I waited around two hours last time I registered. Hurray for Rapid Renewal!"

"This program is excellent!!! What a pleasure to renew this way instead of taking a day off to go to the Department of Motor Vehicles and then to the Town Hall. What an improvement!!!"

"As a tax payer and a very busy employee for a computer software company in Portland, I appreciate governmental units at all levels providing this type of service. It will reduce government overhead (taxes) and allow government employees to provide better personal service for those who choose to attend to these matters in the traditional way. Congratulations on this process."

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles has been especially appreciative of the kudos from customers. "We're the BMV," said Cathie Curtis, Director of Vehicle Services in Maine. "We don't usually get calls from customers to thank us for our great service, and tell us how happy they are. It has really had a positive impact on our staff."

C. Benefits realized by service recipients, taxpayers, agency or state.

The municipalities and the BMV measure their return on investment in time saved and in customer service improvement. Citizens save time from not traveling to and from the BMV and Municipal offices, not waiting in lines, and not taking time off from work or life to make office hours.

Each service in the BMV suite was designed with efficiency and convenience for the citizen as its focus. The impact for the agency is phenomenal. Not only have these services freed up their time to focus on other duties, it has allowed the public to transact business with the BMV at their convenience. These online applications are used each and every day and their numbers are growing:

- Rapid Renewal currently has 98 municipalities participating in the service with an 8% overall adoption rate. Individual towns have as many as 23% of their population using the service. More than 50% of the citizens in Maine have the option to renew their vehicle online.
- The Driver's License Replacement and Renewal Service transacted 11,028 replacements and renewals in 2005. As of April 30, 2006, there have been 6,415

transactions, which is more than half of last year's number in just 4 months. This service continues to grow.

- Driving Record Check has allowed more than 8,000 citizens to purchase their driving record online instead of in-person or through the mail since its launch on November 1, 2004.
- Vanity Plate Search and Look-up Service launched on April 18, 2006. In just 13 days, the service allowed 20 citizens to purchase their vanity plate online.

The Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles has made government more accessible through their online services. Citizen-centric design and architecture were carefully implemented throughout development for each service and prototyping was employed to ensure usability.

The reaction from Maine residents has been tremendously positive due to the convenience and ease of navigation. This is what the users have to say:

- Rapid Renewal: "Nothing to improve - this eliminates waiting in line and trying to find parking at city hall, plus it's quick and easy!"
- Driver License Replacement and Renewal: "This service was very easy and very quick. Much better than standing in line and waiting forever at the BMV...THANKS!!!!!!"
- Driving Record Check: "I was very impressed at the ease of using this service. The site is well laid out and everything is presented up front and clearly."
- Vanity Plate Search and Look-up Service: "THE SITE IS GREAT AND IS SO EASY TO USE!"

D. Realized return on investment, short-term/long-term payback (include summary calculations).

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles Suite of Services was developed through a public/private partnership and utilizes the self-funded enterprise model. Therefore, the BMV did not pay upfront costs for service development, but rather funds each service through a small transaction fee paid to the portal manager. The benefits of the model include: no appropriations by agencies in order to build the much needed service; a motivated private partner who delivers services on time and with an ease of use that encourages adoption; and improved access to constituents at no cost. Additionally, many of the solutions and features offered by the BMV are provided at no-cost (including the Vanity Plate search and the hosting of the services themselves), delivering value added services to the State of Maine and the BMV.

InforME is a self-funded state portal that derives revenue from a wide variety of eGovernment services. InforME provided the development and design architecture of the

Secretary of State's Evidence of Insurance service at no cost to the state, constituent users, or insurance users.