

**TITLE OF NOMINATION:** The Alabama Trucking Portal: [trucking.alabama.gov](http://trucking.alabama.gov)

**CATEGORY:** Digital Government: Government to Business (G to B)

**STATE:** Alabama

## Executive Summary

In August 2004, a plan was signed to promote cross-boundary integration for motor carrier services throughout the state. As a result, several Alabama state agencies worked together in the federally sponsored Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) planning sessions designed to improve commercial vehicle operations safety and efficiency through the use of advanced technologies and increased sharing of information.

Alabama Interactive's objective was to develop a web-based Trucking Portal, designed to bring together the offerings of several state agencies related to commercial trucking. Access to the portal is through a unique website ([trucking.alabama.gov](http://trucking.alabama.gov)), which is also available through [alabama.gov](http://alabama.gov) and several agency websites.

The trucking portal is an easy to use website which houses existing and new state-offered digital services in a central area creating a one-stop system for motor carriers. The development of the portal required cross-boundary collaboration between Alabama Information Services Division, Alabama Department of Transportation, Alabama Department of Public Safety, Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Alabama Department of Revenue, Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, and the United States Department of Transportation. This unique partnership between Alabama Interactive and the agencies resulted in a superior trucking portal, meeting the needs of truckers nationwide. Each agency did their part in providing quality efforts and due diligence to make the portal a reality.

As the State of Alabama's partner for electronic government services, Alabama Interactive was able to provide the trucking portal as an in-kind service, at no cost to the State of Alabama. Alabama Interactive was proud to contribute to the cost saving effort of the state which supported the Alabama trucking community and its constituents. The portal features links to and between online state and federal transportation-related services and information, including:

- 7 Day Trip Permits
- 7 Day Fuel Permits
- Oversize/Overweight Permit
- Hazardous Materials Endorsement
- Fuel Free Registration/Information/Renewals
- Commercial Driver's License Record Search
- Federal Form 2290 (Tax Payment)
- I-65 Progress News
- Emergency Road Closures
- Anywhere, Anytime Mobile Weather Info
- ALDOT News Releases

- Alabama Trucking Association e-Press Room
- State Directory
- Welcome Center and Rest Area Information

### **Description of the business problem and solution**

Prior to development of Alabama's trucking portal, truckers were faced with the daunting task of gathering all necessary licenses or permits from each individual department. The goal of this portal was to simplify the process by which these permits/licenses, which are necessary to comply with the current state and federal regulations, are obtained. Multiple agencies are required to contribute information from, and access to, their database in order to make the portal work.

The Cross Boundary Integration of 10 different applications spread across 6 Alabama state agencies and the US Department of Transportation (DOT) appeared to be an insurmountable barrier. Inter-agency communication, accessibility, and consolidation were paramount to bringing these repositories of widely spread information together.

After the major barriers were overcome, the next step was promoting the portal to truckers and trucking associations nationwide. Recognizing the difficulty in contacting thousands of truckers and trucking associations, a nationwide press release was issued notifying the trucking community about the convenience of the new portal.

Collecting the appropriate permits and licensing can be a time consuming and often confusing process for truckers on the go. However, technological opportunities are creating efficiencies in processes required to travel from state to state. In essence, the portal becomes a one-stop shop providing not only licenses and permits but also information which may be found beneficial to a trucker passing through Alabama. As awareness increases, compliance with the regulations and laws governing the trucking industry in Alabama is also increased. This portal provides everything truckers need at the click of a button.

Discovery meetings were conducted with the individual agencies to build a base outline by which the portal could be developed. Because of the contract with the State of Alabama, Alabama Interactive was able to develop this portal for the state agencies, tax payers, and constituents at no cost through an in-kind service.

### **Significance to the improvement of the operation of government**

The new portal had significant improvements to state agencies, service sectors, and businesses alike. It increased the awareness of five state agencies by featuring websites for these agencies and all they have to offer within each website.

By focusing on the transportation sector, the portal benefits the trucking industry as a whole. Truckers who were accustomed to obtaining licenses and permits the old fashioned way, have been introduced to all the benefits technology has to offer. They are not only able to obtain their necessary requirements but also learn more about the

governing agencies and their other offerings. The portal is a means for several trucking businesses to access the different agencies website for the first time. While the primary focus is to make everything easier and more accessible to the trucking industry, it has also served as a learning and informative tool to promote the agencies independently.

Directors and managers from the state agencies included in the portal have benefitted tremendously. The intuitive and easy-to-use website was developed with everyone in mind. Alabama Interactive as well as the other state agencies recognizes that many people still choose not to use technology when conducting business. While this portal may not sway all truckers from the traditional way of business, the agencies agree that many new first-time users will be willing to give it a try. One of the goals of the application was to reduce the number of phone calls and inquiries made to each of the state agencies. This portal helps to eliminate the workload of the resources within these agencies considerably allowing them to focus their efforts on other important internal matters.

Alabama Interactive has strengthened its partnership with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management in a collaborating effort with a third party vendor (Enfotech) by developing a merchant service application for the new Hazardous Waste Notification Permit. Once the application is completed in June of 2008, it will be added as an additional feature to the trucking portal allowing truckers to apply, pay and obtain their permits online. This is just one enhancement which will create efficiencies and save time for truck drivers who carry hazardous materials through the state.

The Alabama Trucking Portal was ultimately designed to create a single source web based system and provide information to truckers in or passing through Alabama. With accurate information at their fingertips, truckers can stay informed of all reports and communications from the Alabama Department of Public Safety and other agencies. These departments and agencies can send information to the masses without having to make direct contact with any of them. Colonel J. Christopher Murphy, director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety, pinpoints benefits in his nationwide press release "Alabama's state troopers welcome the development of this new portal as a means of quickly and reliably communicating information vital to commercial drivers, which contributes overall to highway and traffic safety in our state."

"Trucking is integral to all facets of the Alabama economy," said the state's Chief Information Officer Jim Burns. "We want to make traveling in and dealing with Alabama as convenient as possible for truckers so that they can transport goods without undue delays or hardship. The trucking portal provides everything needed in a convenient, easy-to-use location, and it shows our appreciation for the vital contributions to Alabama that are made by the trucking community."

### **Benefit of the Project**

In undertaking a project of this magnitude, Alabama Interactive devoted time, personnel, and resources to the State of Alabama. The return on investment has manifested itself in many ways for both the State of Alabama and truckers. Since the trucking portal was

developed as an in-kind service from Alabama Interactive, all costs were absorbed by Alabama Interactive, making this an even more cost saving improvement for the trucking community.

The trucking portal promoted efficiency and communication between the trucking industry and the regulatory agencies. This helped to increase the awareness of specific information pertaining to trucking. The results of the creation of the portal are an enlightened trucking community as well as an increase in efficiencies for state agencies. With opportunities continuing to emerge through Internet technology and the use of computer devices the trucking portal should persist to advance and improve the trucking community and its approach to government business.