

STATE OF MISSOURI

MISSOURI ACCOUNTABILITY PORTAL (MAP) ENABLES GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

Digital Government: Government to Citizen (G to C)

Submitted by

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Executive Summary

The Missouri Accountability Portal (MAP) site is a free, Internet-based tool that provides users easy-to-use data about the State of Missouri's spending.



Through this site, Missourians can see how state government is using their tax dollars. MAP is one of the first comprehensive databases of financial records based on real-time data in the nation. The MAP site is updated at the close of each business day to provide up-to-date access to information about state spending.

Anyone can search the MAP site by budget category, vendor or contract. The MAP site allows Missourians to review state expenditures by state agency and information regarding many tax credits. The site also provides easy to access, real time information on state employee salaries. Links to other public information maintained by the state are also available on the MAP site.

The project team delivered the initial release of this highly successful and well executed project in only two months. The first phase of the MAP project, the expenditure module, started on 1 May 2007 and the website was released into production on 30 June 2007. The website became available to the public on 11 July 2007. *“What Missouri has done is the most extensive, and it got there first,” said Americans for Tax Reform President Grover Norquist.*

Business Problem & Solution

In 2006, Congress passed a law requiring a searchable Web site for federal contracts and grants. Governor Matt Blunt commissioned the Missouri Accountability Portal (MAP) website as part of his ongoing efforts to capitalize on emerging technologies to improve state services and provide more information to Missouri's citizens. Governor Blunt authorized the Missouri site through an executive order.

The Missouri Accountability Portal (MAP) is a free, online tool that provides easy to use data about how the state spends tax dollars. Each year Missourians pay more than \$3,500 per capita in state and local taxes, according to the nonpartisan educational organization the Tax Foundation. Missouri is striving to ensure that state government is accountable to Missourians for every dollar spent. The portal quite literally maps Missourians' tax dollars.

MAP is one of the first comprehensive searchable databases of financial records based on real-time data in the nation. Astonishingly, the website is able to process millions of records spanning all the fiscal years, since the fiscal year 2000, within seconds or even sub-second response time and the MAP data is updated nightly.

Governor Blunt has stated that the citizens of Missouri deserve a state government that is efficient and effective, one that uses new technologies to improve services. MAP takes advantage of Missouri's existing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and leverages emerging technologies to improve state services and provide Missourians with more information. The site was developed using existing state resources.

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July 2007. The Tax Credits portion of the web site was added in October 2007. Tax Credits can be viewed by tax credit issuances by Customer, Legislative District or Tax Credit Category. The Employees module within the MAP site was added on 2 January 2008. A state employee salaries module includes multiple ways to search the data including employing agency, position title or employee name and gross pay amounts by the last pay cycle and year to date. Each new module, significant website hit milestones, and project awards have been communicated via press releases.

The team's efforts are especially notable because during the project, the team needed to learning new skills and establish a new technical environment and new toolsets (C#.Net, SQLServer) that can be used by subsequent web projects. . The core MAP team members support the State of Missouri's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool known as SAM II. SAM II is developed in a COBOL Mainframe environment. The team achieved in two months a transition of development skills that often takes a year or more to accomplish and used Missouri's Project Management methodology to help ensure the project was delivered on-time and within budget.

Significance of the Project

The MAP team launched a first of its kind website that allows the citizens of Missouri to easily search a database of state expenditures, tax credits, and employee salaries, in order to see where their tax dollars are being spent. Missourians can now easily search the new site to find information that previously required a sunshine law request to obtain thereby reducing costs and time delays associated with such types of requests.

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Benefits of the Project

Through consolidation and the creation of the Information Technology Services Division, Missouri was able to establish the MAP site within existing state resources.

The government transparency provided by the MAP site enables Missouri citizens to be better informed and to better understand their government spending. "Missourians deserve openness in state spending," Blunt said in a press release. "We must be transparent. These dollars belong to the people of our state. We can use technology to allow Missourians to better see how their tax dollars are being used."

Benefits of this site were touted a quote from Associated Press (AP) released after the MAP site became available online. "From utility to hotel bills, the curious now have an easier way to see how Missouri is spending its tax dollars."
- David Lieb, Associated Press, July 12, 2007.

As a direct result of the MAP site, fewer "sunshine" requests are received because interested parties are able to locate valuable information about how their tax dollars are spent via the website. This information was previously available via a "sunshine" request.

The MAP project team made the Governor's vision a reality and put Missouri on the MAP for Government transparency and accountability to citizens and has set the standard for others to follow.

Since launching the new Internet site last year there have been more than 7,079,864 hits to the MAP site. <http://mapyourtaxes.mo.gov>