
ON THE SPOT RENEWAL SYSTEM
AND HIGHWAY PATROL SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Digital Government: Government to Business

State of Utah

NASCIO Awards

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B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Utah's On the Spot Renewal (OTS) (<http://onthespot.utah.gov/>) is an online application used by vehicle inspection stations to renew vehicle registrations at the point of sale and issue a decal immediately. OTS was originally available for cars and trucks, and is now also available for watercraft and off road vehicles. In addition to being a value added service that drive business to participating stations, increasing their revenue, OTS is also the most convenient, streamlined way for citizens to renew their vehicle registrations.

Prior to OTS, citizens had to take a vehicle to a certified emissions/safety inspection station for testing, then, using the emission and safety inspection certificate issued by the station, renew their registration, either online, in person, or through the mail. Now, everything can be completed at one location, on the spot. In addition, because the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issues decals directly to participating stations, station personnel can affix a new decal to the citizen's vehicle once the online process is complete. The citizen leaves with a fully renewed vehicle.

The State of Utah launched On the Spot Renewal as a pilot program in May 2005 and fully released the application in September 2005. Since May 2005, OTS has processed over 750,000 transactions. In the early months of the program, OTS processed anywhere from 1,000 to 3,000 transactions a month, with the number climbing higher every month. Currently, 298 stations participate in OTS, meaning that relatively few stations are handling this large number of transactions. These numbers indicate not only the rapid growth of On the Spot, but also the enormous potential of the program. With 2,000 stations in the state, OTS has the potential to positively impact 2,000 small businesses and over 1.5 million citizens every year.

About the same time, the new On-the-Spot service was being created; the Utah Department of Public Safety was being overwhelmed with help desk support issues from an older system used at almost 2,000 stations to track vehicle safety inspections. Working with the Department of Technology Services and Utah Interactive, a new online system was developed that virtually eliminated this burden and freed over 5 support personnel to work on other important tasks. Safety inspection data is seamlessly integrated with the vehicle registration system to create an easy-to-use, real-time process.

When combined, these two highly-used services provide service station business owners a seamless, easy-to-use vehicle inspection and registration solution for serving their customers.

Get your **DMV** decal here
on the  renewal

C. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Description of the Business Problem and Solution

Previously, the Safety Inspection Certificate was issued as a handwritten form. Inspection stations were required to purchase forms in advance, stock sufficient numbers, and spend time completing them. In an answer to simplify the process, the Utah Safety Section implemented an efficient web-based solution.

The Utah Highway Patrol Safety Inspection (UHPSI) system is a web-based application to record and process Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection (PMVI) information for vehicles registered in the state of Utah. The Inspection Module is the basic functional module of the online system. It allows the technician, at local safety and emission stations, to enter VIN/Plate and retrieve vehicle information from official vehicle registration records. The system checks previous data for the vehicle to determine if this is a new inspection or a re-inspection. The technician is prompted to enter the results for each system test, and the application applies business rules to PASS or FAIL a vehicle. Upon completion, the application generates an official state document used for vehicle registration with the State Tax Commission, and records the inspection results in a central database. This database allows citizens to immediately register their vehicle online or at the station through the On The Spot Program (OTS). The On The Spot program is offered through the Department of Motor Vehicles for on-site vehicle registration.

The challenge of implementing the UHPSI program was transforming a complex paper-based system to a mandatory web-based system and rolling out the program to over 1,900 Vehicle Safety Inspection Stations throughout the state, including private companies such as automobile dealerships, repair and service stations, fleet management facilities, and dedicated safety inspection stations.

Despite the challenge, the opportunity to enhance and simplify the vehicle registration process for citizens was incredible. By utilizing the UHPSI central database for the vehicle registration process, government resources were coordinated to result in an efficient, citizen-centric registration process affecting all vehicle owners in Utah.

- The Department of Public Safety launched the Utah Highway Patrol Safety Inspections web application (www.safetyinspections.utah.gov) in May 2006.

- The Division of Motor Vehicles launched On the Spot Renewal (www.onthespot.utah.gov) as a pilot program in May 2005 and fully released the application in September 2005.

The implementation of the UPHSI program began with newsletters and updates being sent to all stations to prepare them for the new web-based application. The next step included the completion of custom training with the Utah Highway Patrol supervisors and Safety Inspection technical program instructors. The staged rollout of the online system began with the 400 most active stations in the state throughout a six month time period. Next, Utah Highway Patrol instructed all stations to transition to the online system over another six month period, phasing out their reliance on paper-based inspection certificates over a one year period. There are a few low-volume rural stations that are grandfathered and still using the paper process; however, all new stations are required to use the system in order to be approved as a Safety Inspection station.

The implementation of the online system has realized the following benefits:

- **Increased Safety:** According to a study conducted by the Institute for Research in Public Safety, mechanical defects and/or worn equipment on vehicles was a causative or aggravating factor in **12.6%** of crashes. When applied to NHTSA's figures, over 850,000 accidents could have been avoided.
- **Better Enforcement:** The agency can use statistical analysis to determine which vehicles and vehicle systems fail more frequently, as well as identify anomalous stations that might be abusing the system. (i.e., a tire store is failing a statistically higher number of vehicles due to tires – undercover vehicles can then be sent to protect the public from predatory practices)
- **Self-Funded:** Fees paid by the vehicle owner fund the online program.

ON-THE-SPOT PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

The DMV launched OTS as a pilot program in May 2005 and fully released it in September 2005. The three above objectives were met through the following tactics:

Inform citizens through existing communication channels:

- The DMV website highlights OTS and lists all participating stations
- The OTS instructions are included in the state's renewal notice mailings. OTS window decals are posted at participating stations. Banners are available for participating stations. A marketing website containing suggestions and support information is available to participating stations.
- DMV telephone agents were trained to alert callers to local OTS stations

Market the program to stations and gain their participation and support

- High volume stations in metro areas received individual phone calls and personal visits
- Direct mail was sent to the remaining stations (~1800), inviting them to attend OTS “roadshows”
- “Roadshows,” explaining OTS in detail, were hosted around the state
- Initially, DMV staff conducted personal OTS trainings
- After the full launch, an online training and certification program was built

Encourage and provide assistance for stations to market OTS to customers

- An entire section on the OTS website is devoted to helping stations market the program
- Each station receives a large banner and two point of sale posters for use at their station
- The OTS logo is available for unlimited use
- Print ads, mailers, and point of sale campaigns were designed for station use
- Price point marketing research was conducted and shared with stations
- Recognition is routinely given for outstanding sales
- The marketing tactics were successful in achieving its objectives:

Inform citizens:

- In 2006, every citizen (over 1.6 million) in Utah received OTS information with his renewal

Station participation:

- Nearly 300 through May 2009

OTS is a win-win solution, benefiting the state, businesses, and vehicle owners

- In 2006, both Jiffy Lube and Just Emissions (two large inspection chains) sent direct mail to their customers highlighting OTS; an estimated 2 million impressions at no cost to the DMV
- According to station data, approximately 50% of citizens, when offered, select the OTS option
- Some stations incent employees to sell the OTS option; these stations see an 85% OTS sale rate

D. SIGNIFICANCE TO IMPROVED GOVERNMENT OPERATION

The operation of government was improved by coordinating and streamlining the efforts of two major departments, the Department of Public Safety and the Tax Commission/Division of Motor Vehicles. Through shared technology and information from a central database, this enterprise effort results in a win-win situation for all parties. Government efficiency is increased by working cross-boundary effort increased government efficiency and significantly reduced the burden on requirements for businesses, i.e. the safety and emissions stations, to submit government required data by implementing a web-based application

There are approximately 1,900 stations and 11,000 inspectors trained and authorized by the Utah Highway Patrol to conduct inspections and utilize the online system.

E. PUBLIC VALUE OF THE PROJECT

Since its launch, the Utah Highway Patrol Safety Inspections program has processed 1,486,366 inspections with 1,900+ stations participating, and the numbers continue to grow each month.

The Utah Safety Section has been thrilled about the system and the impact it has had on their agency and for the state of Utah. The UHPSI system is efficient, convenient and it has dramatically changed the inspection process. The web-based solution has been beneficial to the Agency in many ways.

The Agency realized the greatest benefits:

- Removed the burden of software development and self-loading upgrades
- Eliminated an excessive amount of phone support calls
- Created an ability to see real-time inspection data
- Created the ability for the Agency to see and analyze the data on Safety Inspections to demonstrate the program's effectiveness and to enforce higher standards of safety on Utah highways

Along with the benefits, the web-based solution has created many opportunities for growth. Initially, inspections were performed on passenger vehicle and light trucks. Now, we have seen some growth through expanding the program to Heavy Trucks and Buses, Motorcycles, and ATVs. In addition, there is further growth through collecting registration fees and enforcement fines from inspectors and stations. Inspection stations have the opportunity cross-sell the On-the-SPOT vehicle registration, a true one-stop vehicle safety/emissions/registration system.

A major benefit is that the Department of Public Safety has been able to realize the cost savings in off-loading the expensive work to private stations. Not only does this save the Department of Public Safety money but it also helps keep Utah's highways safe.

The state of Utah pays no annual operation costs for The Utah Highway Patrol Safety Inspection because Utah Interactive, the state's private partner in electronic government, absorbs the ongoing costs of the system in exchange for passing the cost onto the vehicle owner. The expenses saved by having the inspection stations do the work further covers the operational costs of the system. Much of the cost of the UHPSI program on the inspection stations, however they are able to more than compensate for this cost by charging an additional fee for the service.

TO GOVERNMENT

- **Increased Safety:** According to a study conducted by the Institute for Research in Public Safety, mechanical defects and/or worn equipment on vehicles was a causative or aggravating factor in **12.6%** of crashes. When applied to NHTSA's figures, over 850,000 accidents could have been avoided.
- **Self-Funded:** Fees paid by the vehicle owner fund the safety program.
- **Better Enforcement:** Agencies may use statistical analysis to determine which vehicles and vehicle systems fail more frequently, or use the data to identify anomalous stations or predatory business practices.

TO CITIZENS

- **Increased Safety:** States with PMVI programs have traffic crash rates 17% lower than those without such programs.
- **Increased Confidence:** Citizens receive the same testing and results based on state-standards and online inspection processing.

TO BUSINESSES

- **Efficiency:** Faster, easier system to use.
- **Up-sell opportunities:** Complementary programs such as On-the-SPOT to provide additional revenue streams.

Program Growth with Add-On Services since inception:

The agency expanded the Safety Section program by adding

- Heavy Trucks and Buses in 2008, increased inspection volume by 5%.
- ATV inspections became available in October 2008, capturing recreational vehicles such as four-wheelers, small trucks, and utility vehicles.

Future Add-On Services

The development of a complete back-end Officer Console and Administrative Interface to provide complete transaction processing of fees and fines, purchase of training materials, and facilitate in monitoring and enforcement of the Safety Inspection program is underway.

- Inspector Console, due in 2009, will consolidate all fees, including registration fees, penalties, inspector fees, and paper inspection certificate sales within the online application

Future Growth:

Due to the additional components already added to the program and future additions, the projected growth is 1.6 million inspections by the end of 2010.