



**State of Vermont**

**DMV Express**

**Nomination for NASCIO's 2009 Recognition Awards for  
Outstanding Achievement in the Category  
*Digital Government: Government to Citizen (G to C)***

---

**Submitted by Harry Bell  
Director of Web Services, Office of the CIO  
State of Vermont  
June 3, 2009**

## **B. Executive Summary**

DMV Express is a multi-platform online service allowing Vermont citizens and businesses to renew their vehicle registrations, make address changes, and purchase duplicate registration certificates for any and all of their vehicles—a category that includes automobiles, trucks, buses, snowmobiles, motorcycles, tractors, and boats. In addition to the online service available over the Internet, the department has also provided touch-screen kiosks in 11 separate DMV branch offices as well as developed a comprehensive and easy-to-use telephone IVR (interactive voice response) system. First launched in March 2005, DMV Express was also enhanced in June 2008 by the placement of credit card swipe machines in two of its busiest branch offices.

DMV Express was created by the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to allow citizens to renew their vehicle registrations without having to travel to the state capitol of Montpelier, which had been a requirement prior to 2005. By allowing users to renew closer to home, or even from within their homes, the service provides a major convenience for Vermonters. The service itself is relatively simple: both the web and kiosk service take users through four simple screens, and the IVR service has been written to allow users to complete their registration renewals within two minutes.

The system also allows users to log in with their driver's license number and renew multiple vehicles in one transaction, a convenience that especially appeals to business users with multiple vehicles. In addition to allowing registration renewals, the service also conveniently allows users to change their address and order duplicate registrations. Registration stickers, renewals and duplicates are mailed to citizens as soon as they are processed, and arrive in citizen mailboxes within four to six business days.

Today the service is a bona fide success: its adoption rate (the % of online, kiosk, and IVR users as compared to the number of total registrations) has grown from 10% in 2005 to nearly 18% in 2008, and transactions totaling over \$9 million went through the system last year alone. By contrast, the costs for the service have been minimal. Vermont DMV paid up-front for both the development of the back-end application and the hardware associated with the kiosks at a cost of approximately \$40,000, and each kiosk cost approximately \$2,000.

Developed in compliance with Section 508 of the American Disabilities Act in Java (programming language), the service was built and is maintained by Vermont Information Consortium (VIC), the state's private sector partner for eGovernment services. A subsidiary of the eGovernment company NIC, VIC is fully PCI-DSS compliant, and handles all ongoing maintenance, support, hosting and payment processing for the application, which DMV finances through transaction fees generated through use of the service.

### **C. Description of the business problem and solution, including length of time in operation.**

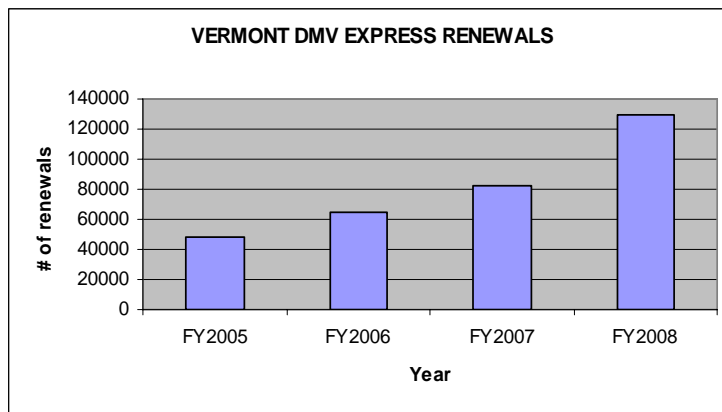
Interestingly, and prior to 2005, vehicle registration renewals, while administered by the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), could not be transacted at a DMV branch office. This meant that although citizens and businesses could go to an area branch office to renew their driver's license, they could not also renew their vehicle registrations there, but were forced to travel to their town office or the Montpelier DMV to do so. This had the result of creating lengthy lines and burdensome paperwork for citizens, DMV staff, and town administrators.

This time-and resource-heavy process was a drain on municipalities, DMV resources, and the citizenry; further it was extremely wasteful in terms of paper, ink, and gasoline. Additionally, many, if not most, of the town offices did not allow for payment with a credit card for registration renewals. DMV Express online was created to alleviate some of these problems, and the kiosk solution allowed for registration renewals at all DMV branch offices with payment by credit card.

The combination of the online service with the kiosk program (which offers the same service) is essential in a rural state which has traditionally offered limited broadband access and challenging road conditions, especially during the winter season when an hour-long drive can take twice that time in inclement weather. The Vermont DMV made a strategic, and budgetary, decision to invest in state-of-the-art touch-screen kiosk technology in 2005 to help solve this problem and deliver an easy-to-use service for citizens.

In the four years since the service launch, its success can be attributed primarily to two main factors: its relative simplicity and multi-faceted approach. The web and kiosk service, for example, has considered the user base carefully, understanding users are a very self-directed audience who have arrived at the service because they know exactly what they want to do. Therefore the online and kiosk designs are extremely utilitarian, with few distracting embellishments. Likewise, the IVR (interactive voice recognition) service moves the potential registrant through the renewal process very quickly. Taking the approach of "less is more", the different platforms of the service allow citizens and businesses to renew any and all of their vehicle registrations in a matter of minutes.

As you can see from the graph below, the success of DMV Express is becoming evident over time.



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

As e-government services go, Vermont's DMV Express service has gone a long way to help streamline governmental operations for the Department, both from a cost-savings perspective and an administrative point-of-view. By providing for online, IVR, and kiosk registration renewals which now account for nearly 1/5 of all renewals, DMV Express saves the Department on the order of 20% in administrative resources and costs.

From a customer service perspective, the value is less quantifiable but certainly as important. Customers at the DMV today report back favorably on a nearly daily basis as to their feelings for DMV Express. Some recent comments include:

- "I don't think there is any room for improvement. It was awesome. It was so easy." (Nancy M., 4/23/09)
- "THIS is a wonderful service for the people of this great state to speed the renewal and not have to wait in lines and get frustrated...way to go DMV. Thank you." (Janice R. 5/11/09)
- "Love the DMV Express..it is so easy to use as well, it saves time. Keep up the great work. It also saves money in stamps. Thank you Vt. DMV." (Tina R. 1/25/09)

It is these kinds of testimonials which can slowly change perceptions about state government and which demonstrate the human effects of technological advances.

**E. Benefit of the Project - In this section please address the financial and non-financial reasons why this project was worthy of the investment made.**

A primary consideration for all governmental agencies when approaching a project is project cost. Because DMV Express was developed at a nominal upfront development cost with ongoing maintenance costs funded on a transaction basis, the Department's revenues have not been adversely affected since project launch, and in fact, have created a moderate cost savings as mentioned above.

In addition, DMV Express has offered tremendous value in other ways. No longer required to travel to the state capitol to fulfill their registration needs, Vermont citizens have benefited by conducting business with the state in a more time- and cost-effective manner—on their own schedules. The online service is so quick and convenient that it takes mere minutes to conduct a renewal or duplicate registration transaction; should the user need to go to a branch office, the kiosks allow them a second choice to the more traditional (and often more time-consuming) method of waiting to process their transaction with a representative. Although difficult to quantify, the savings in time, anxiety, and waste has been significant to the success of the service, and will help it grow into the future.