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*Pennsylvania Business Filing Services Modernization*

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**2023 NASCIO Submission  
Business Process Innovation**

Employment, Banking, and Revenue IT Delivery Center

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Office of Administration

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## Executive Summary

The [Pennsylvania Business Filing Services](#) modernization project replaced a legacy, custom built system that served as the records repository for Business Entity registrations and Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) filings for the Department of State (DOS), Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations (BCCO). The project also added a new document management solution for document storage and retrieval.

The new system is a Customized Off the Shelf (COTS) solution that provides increased flexibility and scalability, streamlines processes for staff, and is more user friendly for businesses that submit filings and those with an interest in viewing these filings. The department issued a solicitation and selected the cloud-based SOS Enterprise Platform by Tecuity. The project began in October 2021 and was completed in October 2022, making it the fastest implementation by the vendor of this solution.

The new Pennsylvania Business Filing Services system has resulted in remarkable improvements in overall program performance, customer service, and user experience. Key highlights include:

### Increased efficiency and productivity

- **Faster Processing:** The average processing time for Business Entity filings in the legacy system was 5 to 15 days. The average processing time for Business Entity filings is currently less than 5 days, and BCCO is closing in on its goal to process filings in less than 2 days.
- **Increased Volume of Online Filings:** Online Business Entity and UCC filings increased from 40% to 84% with the new system. From October 2022 to April 2023, there were 87,648 online filings compared to 20,487 paper filings. The percentage of filings submitted online is expected to increase as more customers onboard to the new system.

### Improved customer service/transparency

- **Increased Convenience:** Self-serve functionality is now available for users to access copies of Business Entity and UCC filings.
- **Enhanced Transparency:** Customers have access to a dashboard for document tracking and submission status. Payments are processed electronically with immediate receipts provided.
- **More Forms Online:** There are now 120 filing forms available online for use by customers. In the legacy system, complex forms could only be filed on paper; these forms are now available online.

### Streamlined business processes

- **Increased Automation:** Data entry for online filings is now automated, eliminating previous manual entry by staff. The average time to enter a form manually was < 2 minutes. Additionally, automated data entry has significantly improved data accuracy.
- **Enhanced Financial Management:** Staff have access to necessary accounting tools to reconcile revenue according to DOS practices.
- **System Flexibility:** Staff can make changes in real time to online and back-office processes.

In the future, the Pennsylvania Business Filing Services solution will continue to enhance and streamline the Commonwealth's ability to conduct internal corporation registration and Uniform Commercial Code functions, as well as providing new self-service options and increasing transparency for users.

## Idea

The mission of Pennsylvania's Department of State (DOS) includes supporting economic development and protecting consumers against fraud, misrepresentation, and other conduct by requiring the registration of all businesses and individuals (Business Entities) doing business in the Commonwealth. The department also processes filings of secured transactions under the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC). In FY 2021-22, Business Entity and UCC filings generated more than \$55 million in revenue, with more than \$43 million of that total going to the General Fund. The majority, approximately 60 percent, were submitted in hardcopy.

The department's Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations (BCCO) maintains the records repository of more than 4 million active Business Entities, in addition to inactive, withdrawn, cancelled, and terminated records which must be retained permanently. In the previous fiscal year, staff received 283,900 filings; approximately 70 percent were new Business Entity registrations, and the remainder were changes to existing entities.

The BCCO is required by law to process UCC documents in no more than five business days, but endeavors to accomplish them in two days or less. There are four types of UCC filings, with the bulk of UCC filings being either initial financing statements (UCC-1 filings) or amendments to existing financing statements (UCC-3 filings). Each year, the bureau receives approximately 98,000 UCC-1 filings and 44,000 UCC-3 filings. Financing statements are generally effective for five years, unless they are continued, terminated, or amended. There are approximately 639,600 effective financing statements in the UCC database, with lapse dates through 2025.

Dissemination of information contained in its records is a major function of the bureau. Over 260,000 copies are provided to the public annually via online orders and by mail. Bureau staff annually satisfies thousands of search requests and issues more than 50,000 certified documents. The bureau also accepts and submits information electronically to the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, [PA Business One Stop Shop \(business.pa.gov\)](#), and the [PA Open Data Portal](#). It also processes payments (credit card, ACH, check and money order) and manages customer deposit accounts from which filing fees are deducted.

In early 2021, DOS identified the need to increase its ability to deliver services to its stakeholders. The legacy Business Entity and UCC filing system was largely paper based with limited self-service functionality. The legacy infrastructure did not meet security standards, performed poorly, and was nearing end-of-life. Additionally, the legacy system was not flexible and scalable enough to accommodate present growth and future demand. DOS wanted the replacement system to enhance and streamline its ability to conduct internal Business Entity registration and UCC functions, while also providing additional government transparency and self-service options to its customer base through the implementation of a document management solution for document storage and retrieval. The department issued a solicitation for a robust solution to make the internal workflow more efficient and increase ease of use for external customers. The cloud-based SOS Enterprise Platform by Tecuity was the Commercial-off-the-Shelf (COTS) product selected by the department. It is an adaptable platform that includes functionality and features that help streamline processes and create more efficiencies for both the BCCO and business entities operating in the Commonwealth.

## Implementation

The Pennsylvania Business Filing Services replacement project began in October 2021 with an estimated duration of 18 to 24 months. It was completed much sooner, in just 13 months, making it the fastest implementation by the vendor of this solution. The project consisted of 19 sprints and almost 28,000 development hours.

The department required all data and files be migrated and retained in the new system. Data from the legacy system required cleansing, data mapping, and an iterative migration approach for internal staff to validate. As a result of this effort, over 20 TB of data and files from 25 years to the current year were made readily available.

The new system utilizes Keystone Login, the Commonwealth's single sign on for access to online services across state agencies. The PA Business One Stop Shop also uses Keystone Login, allowing businesses to interact with both systems using the same digital identity.

External stakeholders were an integral part of the implementation process. Extensive communication and coordination were required to ensure the solution was thoroughly tested and met customer expectations. The agency performed a soft launch of the new system with a pilot group of external stakeholders to minimize the risk of application defects or deficiencies that would impact implementation success.



Video [Pennsylvania Business Filing Services \(Ctrl + Click\)](#)

## Impact

### Increased efficiency and productivity

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