

2003 NASCIO Recognition Awards

NOMINATION FORM

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Category for judging: 3 - Digital Government: Government to Business (G to B)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MyFlorida.com Portal project is maintained by the State Technology Office of Florida (STO) and serves as the flagship to online state government information. This highly advanced Internet application allows a wide variety of users to conduct transactions online and quickly locate information 24 hours a day, seven days a week through an easy-to-use, topically organized navigational menu structure. MyFlorida.com serves as an important tool utilized to open up Florida to the global marketplace by creating an exciting, state-of-the-art worldwide initiative to stimulate the state's economic growth and ultimately improve the public's access to state and local government services and information. MyFlorida.com provides these services by centralizing information that would ordinarily come from a variety of state agencies into six main navigational views, the default Home Page, Visitor, Floridian, Business, Government and a dynamic personalized option known as My Page.

The purpose behind the newly designed Myflorida.com Portal is to provide a unique and centralized user-friendly Internet environment to access multiple-layered quality information, and highly advanced Web-based applications. This approach in design allows citizens and businesses direct and easy-to-use, one-stop access to conduct transactions through e-Government Services offered from a wide-variety of state organizations throughout the enterprise.

The current MyFlorida.com e-Government Services provide citizen-based interactive applications such as Driver's License Renewals, Vehicle Registration Renewals, Fishing and Hunting Licenses, Unemployment/Reemployment, High Tech Job Openings, Business and Professional Licenses Renewals, Health License Renewals, Insurance Licenses Renewals, Corporate Filings and Searches, Business Tax Filings and County Official Records Search and Purchases. Additional e-Government Services are slated to be developed, as Myflorida.com Portal Partnerships and other information sharing agreements continue to be forged in the near future.

Written Justification

a) Description of project, including length of time in operation.

The initial purpose behind the newly designed Myflorida.com Portal was to provide a unique and centralized user-friendly Internet environment allowing citizens direct and easy-to-use, one-stop access to information about Florida. Additionally, this highly advanced mechanism would provide the ability to conduct online transactions 24 hours a day, seven day a week. Ultimately, the newly designed portal would provide a friendly interface for citizens and businesses to locate quality information and services through a single point of inquiry.

The method and theory behind the newly designed Myflorida.com Portal was to initiate a partnership with an already proven and established technology that would ultimately launch Florida out beyond the cutting edge of the Information Technology industry. The State of Florida launched its next generation MyFlorida.com portal on April 24, 2002. Florida partnered with Yahoo!, Inc. to assist in the design and implementation for one of the most technologically advanced state portals in the nation. Additionally, this newly forged partnership with Yahoo! technology will allow Florida to establish other industry-wide partnerships, which will redefine Florida's technological future.

b) Significance to the improvement of the operation of government.

Examples include:

- Provides faster and more efficient user-based access to information and services throughout state government.
- Provides direct access to online services, allowing users to conduct business with the state, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Creates efficient electronic partnerships with other state agencies, public organizations and private businesses in Florida to share knowledge across previously insurmountable barriers.
- Provides tremendous reductions in duplication and waste, not only from within state of Florida government, but between local governments that would have otherwise gone undetected.
- Builds and leveraging existing state of Florida information infrastructures, while providing the best services for the buck. It's bigger, better, faster, cheaper!

c) Benefits realized by service recipients, taxpayers, agency or state.

The MyFlorida.com primary customers include all State Agencies, Cities, Counties, Municipalities, certain Non-Profit Organizations, Florida Citizens and our many great neighbors around the world. In total, an estimated 31 million unique users annually, compiling 1.8 billion views on the MyFlorida.com domain. As additional online service-oriented applications are developed, the potential customers will eventually become immeasurable. A hopeful estimate would be 25 to 50 percent growth annually.

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Currently, because of our newly applied technologies, our portal-based efforts have ultimately enabled such innovative creations and concepts as:

- Florida economic development opportunities will increase by providing a business environment to support state, national and global electronic commerce.
- Promoting government services and transactions across all communities in Florida, linking grids of terminals and kiosks throughout the state.
- Working to facilitate and assist community development of information infrastructures.
- Organizing network and information oriented services around relevant community issues in Florida by providing the communities with a clear voice and recognition in government.
- Promoting private sector involvement in local infrastructure development by helping Florida businesses give back to their communities and patrons.
- And finally, continuing to provide online applications to meet the needs of our communities in Florida as they evolve.

d) Return on investment, short-term/long-term payback (include summary calculations). Projects must exhibit measurable operational benefit.

The portal initiative was undertaken as a necessary technology refresh project. To effectively support Florida’s information and services enterprise, it became critical to move the portal infrastructure to a robust, reliable/redundant environment supported by industry leading development and support tools. The table below lists the more significant financial and operational returns on investment we expect. Our performance measures going forward will define methods for assessing and validating these expectations.

Project Investment Component	Quantitative/Qualitative Return
Portal Development and Implementation: \$4.1M • This total investment includes the software, hardware, and services costs for developing and implementing the re-engineered portal	Cost avoidance: ~\$6M • Creating a strategic partnership with Yahoo! and leveraging State staff technical skills, the portal was re-engineered and deployed in 4 months, within budget. Florida’s development cost is compared to similar efforts in other states costing \$10-12M.
	Improved access to on-line services reduces operating cost: \$700K annually • A conservative estimate of annual staff costs for manually administering services that could be conducted on-line is ~\$7M. We conservatively estimate the new portal will improve visibility and increase the use of on-line services by a minimum of 10% - providing a \$700K savings or re-deployment of resources.

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	<p>Advertising and Marketing Capability and Cost Avoidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upgraded portal environment enables real-time changes to highlight government programs, services, and accomplishments, spotlight appropriate tourist and business events of interest that support the state’s economic development, and supports instant notification of public safety and emergency management events. This avoids the significant cost of presenting this information in private, less widely distributed forums and media.
<p>Software infrastructure: \$2.1M</p>	<p>Future development cost savings: \$450K annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The re-engineered portal environment reduces development and change effort by 75%. This provides the equivalent of a \$450K annual cost savings • More practically, the improved development tools enable staff to be more response to the dynamic change requirements of state agencies and our stakeholders, and provide better service and more effective enhancement with the existing staff.
	<p>Call Center (state wide) cost avoidance: \$1.5M annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservatively, state call centers handle over 10 million calls annually directing citizens to the correct organizations and information. The improved search engine is directing citizens to the correct agencies and information faster and more accurately. A 1% reduction in annual calls will result in annual staff savings of \$1.5M (based on an industry standard cost estimate of \$15 per call)
<p>Redundant hardware infrastructure: \$600K</p>	<p>Increased system availability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upgraded environment, increased capacity, and redundant configuration improves response time for delivering information and services, increases availability for 24 x 7 access on-demand, and provides growth capability consistent with size of the Florida enterprise.
	<p>Faster, easier access to desired information and services on demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ultimate operational benefit to our agencies, our citizens, our visitors, our businesses, and all our stakeholders is improved, effective access to services and information on-demand.

Brief Narrative on Hardware and Software

The State of Florida launched its next generation MyFlorida.com portal on April 24, 2002. Florida partnered with Yahoo! to design and implement one of the most technologically advanced state portals in the nation. The new portal runs on a dedicated enterprise hardware platform consisting of 7 Sun Microsystems servers. The portal architecture links these high-capacity, high reliability servers in a mirrored, fault-tolerant, load-balanced network configuration.

The State Technology Office selected Yahoo! Portal Builder software, the Inktomi Content Classification Engine and Search software, and QuickBlocks content management software for the portal software platform. All portal pages are template driven and modular. A citizen-focused taxonomy design aggregates statewide links by interest group: Visitor, Floridian, Business, and Government. In addition, users can personalize their portal experience using the MyPage feature.

The entire implementation is Java-based and uses XML and XSLT extensively for aggregation, management and presentation of the citizen-focused taxonomy (content areas, subcategories and links). The MyFlorida.com Portal Team developed an XML database and web-based management interface to generate the more than 30,000 lines of XML code which in turn dynamically generates more than 60 pages of MyFlorida.com taxonomy-based content navigation. XSLT generates the pages without manual HTML page authoring.

The end result is an easy-to-use portal that efficiently aggregates content from more than 40 web sites statewide (currently more than 150,000 web pages). The new portal is a high-productivity platform that will fuel the continued growth of Florida web-based information, product and service delivery.

MyFlorida.com

Welcome to Florida

Visitor

Floridian

Business

Government

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