

NASCIO Recognition Awards Nomination 2007 Cross-Boundary Collaboration and Partnerships

Nebraska Department of Roads Project Management System

Executive Summary

The State of Nebraska recently completed an inter-agency collaborative project between the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Office of the CIO.

The Nebraska Department of Roads needed to replace their mainframe DB2 project scheduling system with a system that makes use of current technologies and provides information to the user in a friendly, web-based environment. In addition, the Department of Roads needed a true project management tool which was responsive to project changes made use of Gantt charts, improved collaboration and communication, and could grow as the organization grew. The Department of Roads also lacked staff with SQL server knowledge.

The Project Management Office (PMO) within the Office of the CIO was already using a portfolio and project management system called CA Clarity®. The Department of Roads and Office of the CIO decided to embark on a collaborative project to develop a shared services solution using existing resources within the State.

By partitioning and configuring the existing software already in use by the Office of the CIO and by leveraging existing resources, the two departments were able to develop a cost-effective solution, saving an estimated \$500,000 in hardware and software costs. The Department of Roads was also able to implement the project without adding additional IT support personnel.

The project formally began in May 2006, going live in December 2006. The project was completed on schedule, within budget, and met the objectives of the Nebraska Department of Roads. The Department of Roads has been pleased with the smooth implementation of the project management solution. Over 950 projects were imported into CA Clarity® from the previous application. These projects average 350 tasks and span an average of 4 years each. Some of these projects are scheduled as far into the future as 2034.

The development of a shared services solution with both the Office of the CIO and the Department of Roads sharing the costs of hardware, software and support has advanced Governor Heineman's priority of increasing government efficiency by sharing IT resources and services. Prior to this project, the Department of Roads and the Office of the CIO had a limited history of collaboration. Through the Department of Roads Project Management System project, a partnership between the Department of Roads and Office of the CIO has been developed. There is now a greater willingness to collaborate on future projects. Project management is also being evaluated as a potential shared service that can be offered to additional agencies.

Business Problem and Solution

Problem

The Nebraska Department of Roads needed to replace their mainframe DB2 project scheduling system with a system that makes use of current technologies and provides information to the user in a friendly, web-based environment. In addition, the Department of Roads needed a true project management tool which was responsive to project changes made use of Gantt charts, improved collaboration and communication, and could grow as the organization grew. The Department of Roads also lacked staff with SQL server knowledge.

Solution

The Department of Roads and Office of the CIO began researching solutions for moving Department of Roads projects off the 35-year-old mainframe to a new software solution. The State of Nebraska Office of the CIO had been using CA Clarity® to manage IT projects. The two agencies began exploring if CA Clarity® could meet the unique challenges offered by the Department of Roads, developing a proof of concept using project templates and samples of actual, complex Roads projects. Because the Office of the CIO was not utilizing all of its licenses, the Department of Roads was able to start testing the product with minimal cost and connectivity issues, and no additional hardware. By leveraging an existing resource, the two departments were able to develop a cost-effective solution, saving an estimated \$500,000 in hardware and software costs. The project formally began in May 2006.

CA Clarity®/Open Workbench is a robust project management tool set and is feature-rich in customizable views, auto scheduling, baselining, resource availability options, dependency diagramming, and many other features. Even though CA Clarity® is primarily an IT-oriented product, it was configured to work with roads scheduling projects. In addition, through the use of partitioning, both Office of the CIO projects and Department of Roads projects exist in the same environment, reducing support costs. CA consultants assisted with the knowledge transfer, development of custom attributes, sub-page development, conversion of data, importing and exporting of data, and development of a custom report.

The project went live in December 2006. Over 950 projects were imported into CA Clarity® from the previous application. These projects average 350 tasks and span an average of 4 years each. Some of these projects are scheduled as far into the future as 2034. 750 projects are currently active.

The Office of the CIO houses the software and servers and provides administrative and some technical support to the Department of Roads. The Department of Roads schedules projects, assigns resources, and manages the projects. Department of Roads staff have been trained on CA Clarity® to perform some administrative tasks.

The project was completed on schedule, within budget, and met the objectives of the Nebraska Department of Roads. The Department of Roads has been pleased with the smooth implementation of the CA Clarity® project management solution.

Operational Improvements

The development of a shared services solution with both the Office of the CIO and the Department of Roads sharing the costs of hardware, software and support has advanced Governor Heineman's priority of increasing government efficiency by sharing IT resources and services. Prior to this project, the Department of Roads and the Office of the CIO had a limited history of collaboration. Through the Department of Roads Project Management System project, a partnership between the Department of Roads and Office of the CIO has been developed. There is now a greater willingness to collaborate on future projects. Project Management is also being evaluated as a potential shared service that can be offered to additional agencies.

Public Benefits

The Nebraska Department of Roads Project Management System has benefited Nebraska taxpayers, the State of Nebraska, and the Department of Roads by saving approximately \$500,000 in hardware and software costs by adopting a shared services solution rather than purchasing a separate system. Additionally the Department of Roads has been able to implement the system without hiring additional IT support staff.