



NASCIO State IT Recognition Awards

Digital Government: Government to Business (G to B) Award Nomination

State of Wisconsin One Stop Business Service

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Executive Summary

The One Stop Business Service (www.OpenForBusinessWI.com) is the product of a successful collaboration across multiple State of Wisconsin departments and offices, and mitigates many of the pain points which in the past hindered the establishment of new Wisconsin businesses.

Officially creating a business in the State of Wisconsin requires interaction with no less than three departments to establish the business entity, set it up to be able to pay taxes, and be prepared to hire employees.

In the past, business creators' frequent requests for support illustrated just how much difficulty they faced in planning and opening their business. Most businesses created in Wisconsin each year consist of just a single owner. It is a huge undertaking to determine what information is required and what resources are available for a first-time business creator, most of whom do not have the luxury of experienced full-time legal and accounting staff to advise and assist.

Like many states, Wisconsin also offers a variety of resources for business creators, including (but by no means limited to) instructional courses on entrepreneurship, certified facilitators and financial analysis, workforce training, community development, and grants, loans and tax credits. For business creators, the trouble is in locating these resources, scattered across the many agencies and their websites.

Once they began the official process with the state, creators were faced with needing to set up multiple logins, and having to manually re-enter names and addresses for their business numerous times. Each department had its own complex set of steps, and there was no indication to business creators where they were in the process, or even how many steps the process would take.

The One Stop Business Service resolves all the above issues for business creators. There is a single place to locate links to the resources, education and funding that is available. The process is broken down into three simple steps, with a dashboard clearly indicating which step they are on. Users receive emails that confirm completion and convey clear instructions for moving forward. The system interacts with multiple state agencies in order to provide authentication; prefill fields by reusing information across separate departments; and reduce the chances of data entry errors to increase data quality.

Project Narrative: Concept

Before the One Stop Business Service, creating a business in Wisconsin was a complex, multi-agency process requiring an assortment of information related to business management, locations, plans, sales, taxes, permits and employees.

Many business creators did not know where to start and which department was first (or if it even mattered). Many were not aware of which processes were required to officially create their business with the State of Wisconsin.

Information was not shared or validated among departments, placing the burden on business creators to accurately enter unfamiliar and lengthy identifiers to help the agencies distinguish their business from the thousands of others created each year. Depending on which part of the process was started first, in some cases these identifiers were not even available yet.

If an owner was able to complete a part of the process, it was left to each department's support staff to follow up with business creators to correct inaccurate data. In some cases, forms had to be cancelled or refunded and started over, creating time and resource drains on business creators and state employees alike.

Also, resources for business creators were scattered across the various state departments and offices. While the state offers significant resources to business owners and creators to help them plan, fund, open and expand their businesses, they were virtually impossible to find. Business creators simply did not know where to look.

Under the direction of the Governor's Office, with leadership support by the Department of Administration (DOA), a number of state agencies and offices collaborated to create a new comprehensive resource guide and online service to assist business creators in locating the many resources available and registering the necessary information electronically in one application to officially create their business. The agencies included: Department of Administration, Department of Financial Institutions (DFI), Department of Revenue (DOR), Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Office of Business Development, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and Wisconsin Small Business Development Center.

Once business creators begin using the One Stop Business Service, they are authorized using the State of Wisconsin's official Wisconsin Access Management System (WAMS), which offers free, online sign-up and automated self-service password recovery. Managed by DOA's Division of Enterprise Technology, WAMS offers access to many services provided across all agencies.

The One Stop Business Service offers a Registration Dashboard providing insight into the business creation progress that has never been available before. It organizes the vast amount of information required to create the business into three simple steps. First,

business creators form their business by filing with the DFI. Then, they complete tax registration with the DOR. Finally, they take an assessment with the DWD.

Business creators can drill down by clicking on each step to view the status and verify their progress. This display allows business creators to quickly and easily understand the process, and eliminates the need to contact state support staff to find out what is complete and what is next.

Registration Overview

Registration in Progress

Business Name	Status	Last Modified
DFI Test 1234 LLC	Step 2 of 3 in progress	5/1/2016

Registration Dashboard

TEST Company LLC

Step One: File with the Department of Financial Institutions

Continue your application

Status: DFI application in progress

[Continue Filing](#)

Have questions about your filing? [Contact Wisconsin Interactive Network](#).

Apply for your federal credentials

Step Two: Register with the Department of Revenue

Step Three: Take Department of Workforce Development Assessment

The system features an Address Book that allows users to re-use and validate addresses. Since address information for many businesses, owners, and locations is frequently reused, this feature greatly improves usability and reduces data entry errors. Verification of addresses by the United States Postal Service helps ensure that mail arrives at its intended destination, while saving agencies money from sending undeliverable mail.

Thanks to feedback from users and suggestions from both the Department of Financial Institutions and Department of Revenue, an enhancement after the initial launch now collects data from the business formation filing that is also required for the following step of registering for taxes. This information is often difficult for users to find, and can create support and validation issues. By sharing this information directly from one agency to the other, and removing the need for users to enter it, this feature improves usability and removes potential errors and support issues related to matching businesses. It also improves data quality, which directly leads to more efficient tax collection efforts.

After the tax registration is complete with the DOR, data is shared with the Department of Workforce Development to assist them in tracking down businesses that may need to register for Unemployment Insurance. For users, the One Stop Business Service requires completion of an assessment written by the DWD in order to help business owners understand their obligations related to Unemployment Insurance. Owners are then offered

assistance by the DWD in completing the assessment if needed. For those who do, this is a critical component of keeping business owners who are also employers in compliance.

Significance

The One Stop Business Service represents a successful collaboration among multiple state agencies to provide an essential government-to-business service – namely, a comprehensive, all-in-one-place, user-friendly application that makes it much easier to create a business in the State of Wisconsin. Sharing data across departments benefits both users of the system and state data quality and support alike.

Impact

The service was officially launched by the Governor in October 2015 and more than 1,100 businesses have been created using the One Stop Business Service.

One month after the launch, an enhancement was deployed with two goals:

1. Reduce data entry errors, and
2. Introduce even more data sharing between state agencies.

Since this enhancement release, user adoption has continued to rise, while support efforts have been reduced.

New business creation saw a rise of 188 percent over the six months prior to launch, while requests for customer support rose only 25 percent, clearly demonstrating the gains in efficiency and usability.