

NASCIO 2018 STATE IT RECOGNITION AWARDS
DIGITAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNMENT TO CITIZEN

MI Bridges

Helping Michigan Citizens
Every Step of the Way

STATE OF MICHIGAN

CONTACT

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INITIATION DATE

- **December 5, 2016**

PROJECT COMPLETION DATE: MULTIPLE PRODUCTION RELEASES

- Release 1 **September 9, 2017**
- Release 1.1 **October 14, 2017**
- Release 1.12 **November 11, 2017**
- Release 1.13 **December 15, 2017**
- ***Planned releases through 2018**

Executive Summary

In February 2015, Michigan’s governor signed an executive order to transform the State’s service delivery model to support greater flexibility to become more person-centric, reforming how the state interacts with customers through technology, and making the service delivery system more focused on the customer’s needs in an efficient way. In this announcement, he shared, “For the past 50 or 60 years, we’ve tried to solve problems by creating new programs, segmenting programs, and adding layers of government. Each program focuses on a finite segment of someone’s life without looking at the whole person and understanding what’s holding them back from success...the result? Government keeps getting bigger, the root of someone’s problem isn’t solved, and people are maintained in a status quo.”

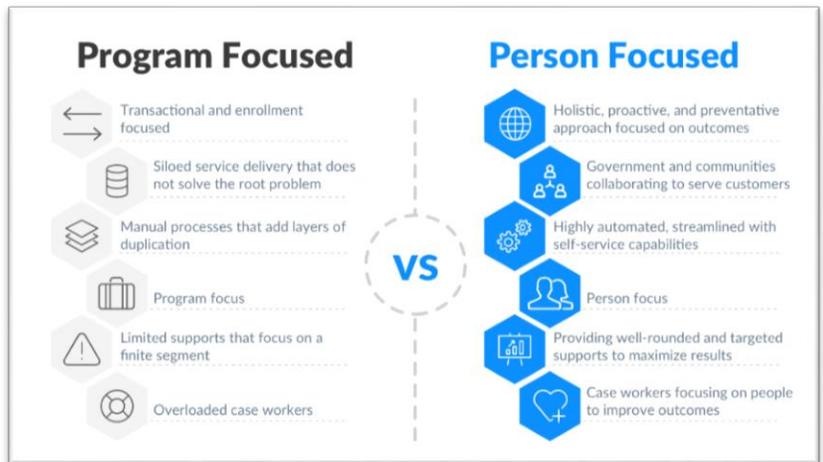


Figure 1: Integrated Service Delivery Strategic Objectives

To support this transformation, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Service (MDHHS) and the Michigan Department of Technology and Budget (DTMB) embarked on a mission to change the processes used to support Michigan residents, and build an intuitive digital platform to empower citizens to work towards self-sufficiency. Providing the technology to engage community partners in supporting Michigan citizens truly makes this initiative unlike any other implemented by the department. Michigan’s goal was to leverage existing State IT infrastructure and services to enable integrations with other State and external systems, and shift from a program- focused way of delivering services, to a person-focused delivery model. This included laying the foundation to transform their delivery model to focus on the circumstances that brings individuals and families to MDHHS’s door, and target the problems that must be solved to get them back on their feet, instead of simply focusing on programs the individual or family is eligible for.

A cornerstone of this transformation is MI Bridges, a new digital platform that offers an improved citizen self-service portal as an avenue to interact with customers. In alignment with Michigan’s Mobile First and Cloud First strategy, the solution is built on the leading enterprise scale Salesforce lightning cloud platform and hosted on secure FedRAMP certified Salesforce Government Cloud. MI Bridges transformed both the way residents interact with the State and the way the State interacts with its residents. When applying for benefits residents experience faster application times and, after they are determined eligible they have all the information needed to manage their own case. The ability for residents to take ownership over their case means State workers spend less time requesting verifications or explaining why benefits closed and more time focused on processing application correctly and efficiently. Customers now have the tools to help themselves and search for resources offered in their community. They can even send an electronic referral to a community partner through MI Bridges. MDHHS and DTMB worked closely with Michigan United Way to create an interface with their 2-1-1 repository of community resources. This groundbreaking partnership expanded the technology to serve all Michigan residents, not just MDHHS customers, as anyone can log in to find helpful resources and services in their local community. MI Bridges supports efficient, effective, and accountable government that collaborates on a scale never seen to provide excellent service and improve the long-term relationship customers have with MDHHS.

Concept

MI Bridges allows MDHHS to work closely with customers and community partners to coordinate State and local resources in support of Michigan residents. The portal removes silos and empowers users to easily access more than 30,000 State and local resources such as food banks, shelters and childcare providers. This interface with 2-1-1 significantly reduces the silos in which services are delivered and increases the State’s partnership with community agencies who also support Michigan residents in their times of need. MI Bridges provides enhanced secure and accessible self-service capabilities for customers, so they have information at their fingertips instead of relying on MDHHS caseworkers to answer their questions. As caseloads continue to rise, MI Bridges offers the State of Michigan an avenue to continue to provide excellent service to customers with increased efficiency and reduced cost.

MI Bridges reimagines the way the State support its citizens, who now have more access to resources that help remove barriers to self-sufficiency. Learn more about this exciting transformation at <https://youtu.be/P1pJug-XW58>.



Figure 2: Scope of MI Bridges

Iterative Development & Project Management Approach

MI Bridges is designed and developed following a hybrid and distributed Agile with Scrum methodology aligned with the State’s SUITE project management processes. This approach is applied to user experience design, visual design, front-end engineering, platform development, and testing of the solution. In a series of 13 Sprints, over 487 user stories were completed from concept to the launch.

MDHHS uses this same process to test MI Bridges with customers and collect feedback. After each 3-5 week sprint cycle, MDHHS visits field offices and works directly with customers, who use MI Bridges and

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share feedback about their experience. This iterative process allows for rapid improvements based on real-time responses, resulting in a product that is truly customer-centric.

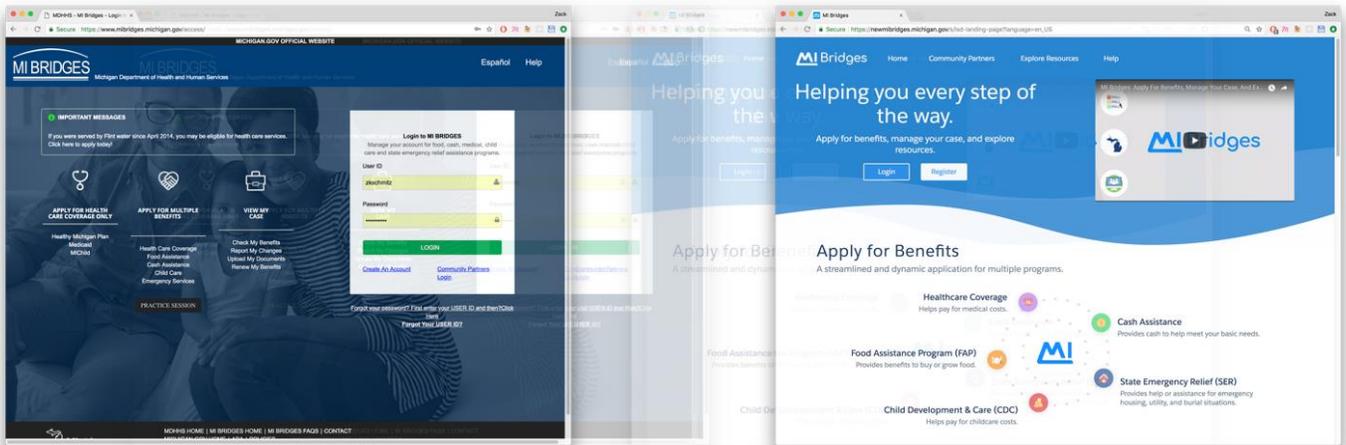


Figure 3: Old System vs. New System

Architecture

With MI Bridges, Michigan has re-imagined customer engagement and business transformation. The key architectural considerations that define our technology landscape are a cloud hosted portal and an API driven technology architecture. The MI Bridges portal is hosted on a highly available and scalable Salesforce Government Cloud. The Hybrid IT approach was utilized, where MI Bridges cloud-hosted portal interacts with applications within Michigan's enterprise network using APIs and the Enterprise Service Bus to reuse existing State assets. MI Bridges uses an agile transformation approach and is built with a focus on complete digitization, omni-channel support, and continuous improvements for the business features. It was built using the Salesforce Lightning Platform - the world's leading application platform as a service to build trusted cloud applications that are rock solid, secure, and scalable without having to worry about provisioning hardware or application stacks.

Leveraging the State of Michigan's interface with the Federal Marketplace and Enterprise Service Bus, MI Bridges integrates with many State systems including Michigan's single sign-on (MILogin), Master Person Index (MPI), Michigan 211, Integrated Eligibility System (Bridges), and external document storage (FileNet).

MI Bridges underlying enterprise level integration platform provides the technical foundation for speed, built-in-controls, scalability, and analytics, and fosters reuse, standardization, innovations, and unprecedented collaboration using API driven architecture. The State of Michigan Enterprise Service Bus based integration platform helps MI Bridges connect to heterogeneous and legacy systems efficiently and easily, by encapsulating the needed communicational transformation and routing complexity. The integration platform supports sharing data in a standardized, secured, and simplified manner between cloud services and on-premises data sources, not only in the department but across multiple agencies to support enhanced customer service and data security. Additionally, the integration solution is scalable so it can continue to expand with additional datasets over time.

Accessibility and Security

Today's cyber threat landscape requires a laser focus on security to protect the State of Michigan systems and their data. The security architecture was designed in close collaboration with the Michigan Cyber Security team to not only comply with the State and Federal security standards, but provides a comprehensive 360-degree approach to security with prevention, detection and mitigation. Our solution incorporates key security building blocks such as authentication, authorization, audit, assurance, asset protection, availability, administration, identity proofing, encryption, alerting and threat protection.

MI Bridges leverages MILogin, a shared enterprise service solution, to provide cross agency, state-of the art security and privacy with comprehensive capabilities around application access and user account lifecycle management. MILogin is an Identity, Credentials and Access Management (ICAM) system providing an enterprise Single-Sign-On (SSO) architecture capable of assimilating multiple credential/user stores beyond the department's Active Directory (AD).

To meet complex security, compliance, auditing and governance requirements the solution is hosted on Salesforce Government Cloud infrastructure. Salesforce maintains compliance with comprehensive privacy and security standards and certifications including FedRAMP, HIPAA compliance, PCI DSS Level 1, ISO 27001/27018, SOC 1/SSAE 16/ISAE 3402, SOC 2 and SOC 3.

Partner and Citizen Outreach

A distinguishing feature of this transformation is the collaboration with community organizations. MI Bridges removes barriers between MDHHS and its partners, and lays the foundation for increased partnership to support Michigan residents. Agencies in Michigan are closely connected with their communities, and understand the unique challenges facing their local populations due to geography, age, demographics, etc. To fully engage partners in the transformation, the team executed a broad organizational change management strategy and plan. Outreach to partners began 6 months before the scheduled launch and included a monthly partner bulletin, twice monthly webinars, presentations at over 20 partner conferences, standing-up a dedicated Help Desk, and launching a brand new training curriculum. Through these efforts, 450+ agencies and over 2200+ individuals collaborate with MDHHS as MI Bridges partners.

Significance

A successful implementation has a vision and a balance between the technical components, the user experience and the business need. MI Bridges utilizes a forward-thinking and citizen-centric approach to deliver a useful product directly to the residents of the State of Michigan. MI Bridges is the first of its kind and redefines the Michigan service delivery model by uniting community partners and MDHHS to support customers. Through this initiative, residents of Michigan have the ability to securely access information about their benefits as well as connect to valuable resources and community partners willing to help.

Distinguishing Feature



MI Bridges integrates with various State systems and resources through a modern API based integration model. All these integrations are secured using robust enterprise scale appliance-based security design purpose-built for distributed computing models, based on ubiquitous open security standards, centralized integration, and security policy configuration and enforcement that eliminates the need for custom security code.

"We at ACCESS have had a wonderful experience with the new MI Bridges system. The interface is much easier to navigate and more user-friendly, and the application process is seamless and simple. Customers and staff have both loved using this platform to apply for and view their benefits, and have found it very convenient to have a full view of their case information on the portal. We are so happy to be using the new platform within many departments at our agency, and it has increased collaboration between our programs already!" – MI Bridges Community Partner

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Customers can access MI Bridges in the comfort of their own home with intuitive and completely responsive portal using mobile, desktop or tablet.

With MI Bridges, MDHHS and DTMB have made significant progress on meeting the department's Integrated Service Delivery Strategic Objectives, and improved how community agencies and MDHHS staff interact with Michigan residents. Because of the new MI Bridges, customers can submit an application in half the time and no longer have to visit an MDHHS field office to submit documents. MI Bridges has reduced the phone calls to caseworkers because customers can answer their common benefit questions and reprint letters directly from their smart phone. Community partners now have access to the same information as their customers that can be viewed from their customized dashboard – and because partners are trained in MI Bridges, customers have more support than ever before. The partnership with Michigan 2-1-1 helps customers who require more support, easily find a community organization in their area who can help.

Government and Communities Collaborating to Serve Customers Better

Prior to the new MI Bridges, many MDHHS customers used an online application to submit a request for benefits – with the average application time of 40 minutes. With the new simplified language and application process, the average application time was cut by over 50% to 17 minutes. With the new MI Bridges, users are able to take a picture of a requested document on their smartphone, and upload a tif, jpeg, png, or pdf file directly to their case – significantly reducing the need to find a fax machine or scanner to provide critical case documents and allowing customers to share information with their caseworker quickly and easily.

“The setup for uploading documents is GREAT. It's nice not to have the hassle of getting things printed/scanned/faxed. Awesome feature to have.” ~MI Bridges user

Highly Automated Streamlined Self-Service Capabilities

The MI Bridges team recognized that in order to offer a truly exceptional user experience, MI Bridges must be mobile-friendly and intuitive to use – a feature not available on the previous site. MI Bridges uses Lightning Components and VisualForce to build a fully responsive website that renders on most mobile devices with rich user experience. During the development process, MI Bridges is tested on a wide variety of smartphones, tablets, personal computers, and browsers. The team intentionally tests on a broad range of phones, including those provided by the government Lifetime Assistance program. This process verifies that the new website is available to as many Michigan residents as possible.

MI Bridges is available in the top three languages spoken by Michigan residents; English, Spanish, and Arabic. With the simple click of a button, users are able to view the entire website in their chosen language. By building MI Bridges on a Salesforce GovCloud platform, MDHHS and DTMB were able to reduce dependencies on antiquated style guides and enhance MI Bridges using the latest web technology available. By strictly following Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, MI Bridges is fully ADA/508 compliant and is rigorously tested for accessibility throughout development.

“Love Love Love this new website set-up! It is SO much easier to navigate and SO much quicker! I can't tell you enough what a breath of fresh air this was to use compared to the last version!” ~MI Bridges user

Impact

While adequately meeting the business needs, the legacy system was outdated and focused on applying for and managing federal/state assistance programs. With the new MI Bridges, citizens have a renewed confidence in the ability of MDHHS to help them in their time of need. The transition to a cloud based

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system modernizes MI Bridges, transforms how the State engages with, and delivers services to its customers. MI Bridges paved the way for Michigan to build on its Mobile First, Cloud First initiative in ways that would never have been possible with the previous website. With the previous system, customers primarily used the website to submit applications, with the improved MI Bridges, more users are using the portal to view their benefit information than submit applications – greatly reducing the burden on customers to visit field offices, and limiting visits and phone calls to State workers.

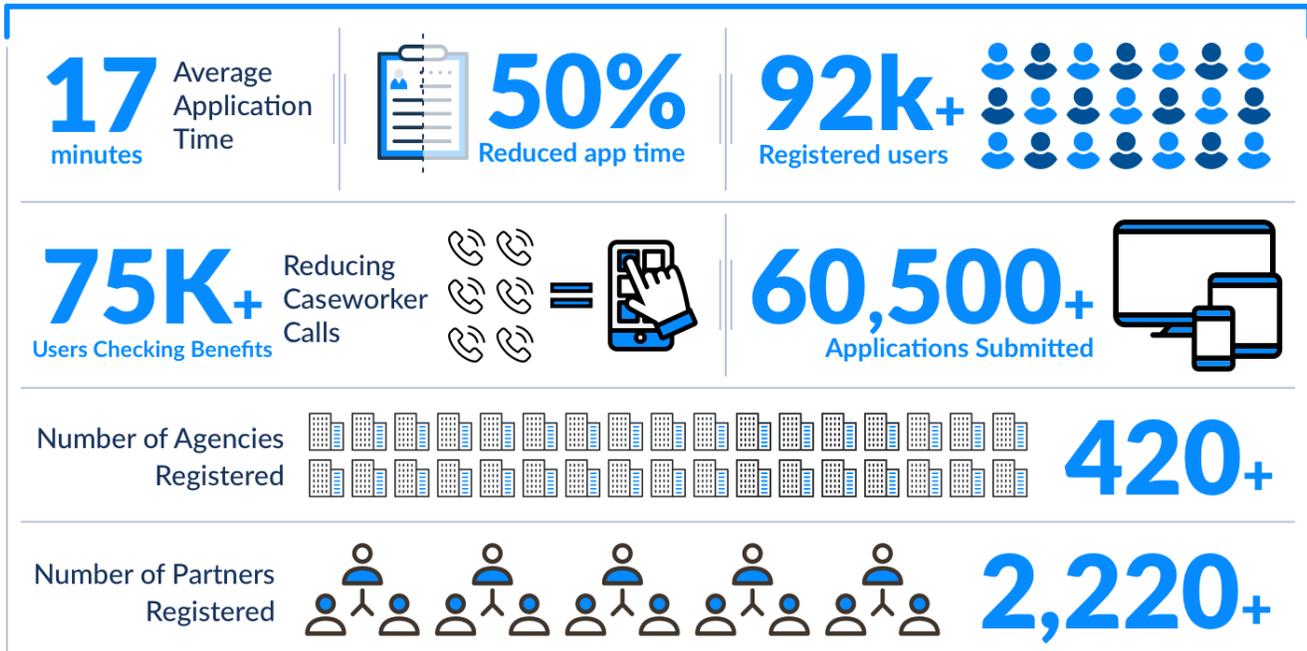


Figure 4: MI Bridges Success Metrics

MI Bridges: A Cornerstone of the Future

Through MI Bridges, Michigan has taken bold steps towards transitioning away from a program-focused, application driven data entry model to achieving a truly user- centric service delivery model based on supporting the holistic needs of a customer who experience higher levels of self-sufficiency and support. With the Salesforce GovCloud platform of the new MI Bridges, the possibility for enhanced features in the future is limitless. Already MDHHS and DTMB are working on adding additional integrations with other agencies, such as the Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) program, and adding an interface with Great Start to Quality, helping customers find child care and early education programs. DTMB General Manager Ward Beauchamp shared, “The department was able to rapidly transform legacy systems into an integrated service model by leveraging the latest cloud technology to deliver citizen-centric government.”

Now in MI Bridges any MDHHS customer or Michigan resident can identify and connect with State programs AND with helpful community organizations. With this revolutionary change, MI Bridges is no longer just a tool for customers, but an asset that can be used by any Michigander to look for help on their road to self-sufficiency. MI Bridges is transforming how the State interacts with Michigan residents, allowing for an interaction that aims to support the holistic needs of an individual or family. By implementing MI Bridges, the State of Michigan is working to transform itself from a transactional provider of assistance to a partner in growth and betterment. MI Bridges is working collaboratively with the existing eligibility system and other Michigan infrastructure systems to enhance the partnership and operations of the State. Through MI Bridges, MDHHS and DTMB deliver focused services and local support that address the individual needs of each person – helping all Michiganders lead healthier and more productive lives.