



**Mississippi Department of
Information Technology Services**

NASCIO 2017 State IT Recognition Awards

Mississippi Secretary of State
Mississippi Business One Stop Shop (BOSS)

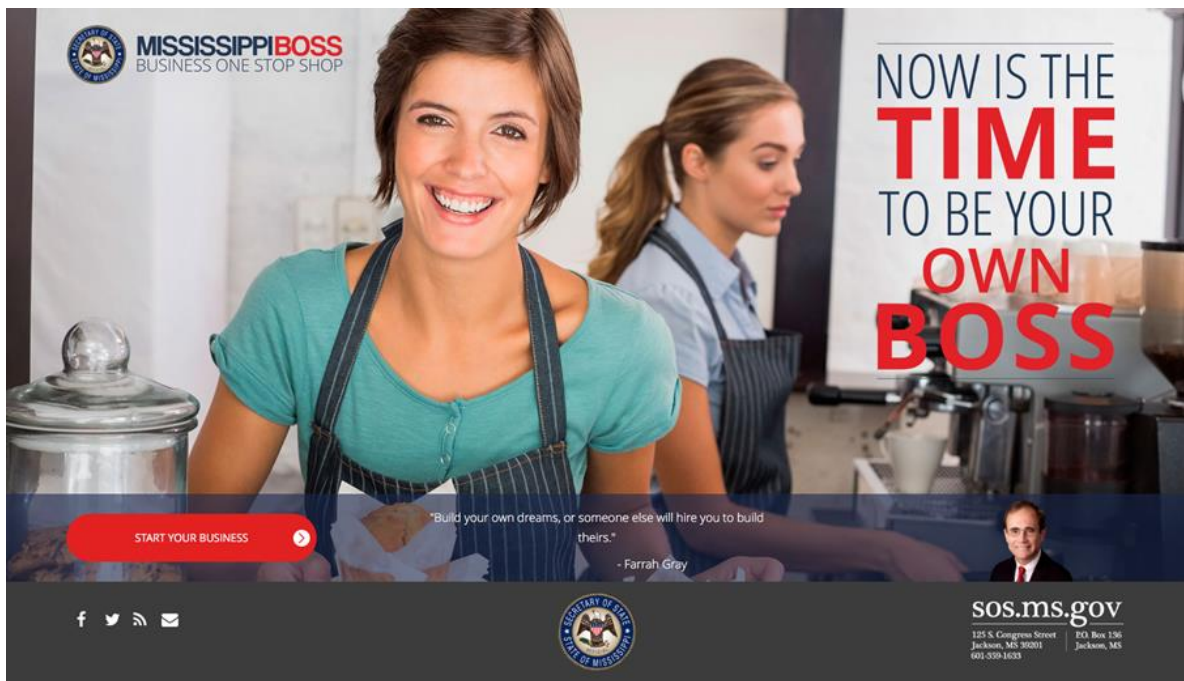
Category: Digital Government - Government to Business
State: Mississippi
Project Initiation Date: April 2015
Project Completion Date: October 2015

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Executive Summary

The Mississippi Secretary of State (SOS), in partnership with the Mississippi's eGovernment provider, Mississippi Interactive (MSI), launched Mississippi Business One Stop Shop (BOSS) in October 2015. The interactive BOSS application serves as an all-encompassing business startup portal, providing prospective business owners with all the information needed to start their business in Mississippi. The intuitive wizard walks users through five simple questions and based on their answers returns a list of business startup tasks required by state, county, and city government. Mississippi BOSS makes information quickly and easily accessible from a single website without individual agency structures to separate citizen navigation. Over the last six years the Mississippi SOS has been steadily adding to its online services offered on their award-winning website (www.sos.ms.gov). Mississippi BOSS taps into those electronic services while cross collaborating with other state entities involved in the process and supplementing with local requirements based on a user's location. The application is also featured prominently on the SOS's new award winning Y'all Business website (www.yallbusiness.sos.ms.gov) BOSS's presence on the site adds additional value to site giving users an opportunity to explore another great online service offered by the Mississippi SOS Office. Mississippi BOSS sets users on the track to make owning a Mississippi business a reality while providing increased efficiencies to prospective business owner and the SOS office by:

- Eliminating a large portion of phone calls to the Business Services Division regarding new business formation.
- Cutting costs associated with incorrect filings (postage, paper, clerical, copying, and processing).
- Giving prospective business owners more time to dedicate to other aspects of opening their new business by doing the research for them – saving time saves money.



Concept

The State of Mississippi partnered with Mississippi Interactive (MSI) to redesign the Mississippi BOSS application, which was developed to help streamline a cumbersome process of finding the information needed to start a business in Mississippi. Users previously would have to search several state agency and locality websites to find out how and what was needed to start their business in our state. Furthermore, the Mississippi SOS was determined to find an electronic way to create in-office efficiencies; cutting calls, postage, clerical time, etc.

Mississippi BOSS provides users collective information to get them on their way to starting and owning their own business with less hassle. In Mississippi, there are dozens of forms from numerous state entities that business owners may be required to file with the state to begin their journey to starting their business and to remain in good standing. Along with these forms, there are various associated fees to be paid to state, county, and city governments for a business to be properly established in Mississippi. The Business One Stop Shop compiles this information, and based on user responses, provides all the crucial business information needed to complete

state forms and pay the costs associated with business ownership. The targeted user base for Mississippi BOSS is under the age of 35, signifying the need for Mississippi BOSS to help young business owners follow their dream of owning a business in Mississippi.

- The mobile responsive Mississippi BOSS application provides a high level of comprehensive, easily navigated functionality that utilizes a five-question wizard to guide users to information quickly and easily from any device.
- The Mississippi Secretary of State's office has also marketed the application through its award-winning website www.sos.ms.gov, and via their new award winning Business portal Y'all Business (www.yallbusiness.sos.ms.gov), and via social media channels run by the Secretary of State, Delbert Hosemann.
- By utilizing the public-private partnership (PPP) between the State of Mississippi and Mississippi Interactive (MSI), the Mississippi Secretary of State was able to leverage Mississippi's eGovernment fund for funding of 90% of the project cost. Mississippi BOSS was developed, tested, launched, hosted, and maintained by Mississippi Interactive, LLC.

The Mississippi Interactive (MSI) team dedicated design resources for CSS, development team members built the application, and the project manager worked daily with the SOS to facilitate testing and updates to the application prior to launch. MSI provided marketing through the ms.gov social media channels, and promoted the service online on the award-winning ms.gov portal.

Significance

The BOSS application was a significant priority for Secretary of State, Delbert Hosemann. His goal was to make the business services offered by the SOS office accessible online at any time. The BOSS service was launched in conjunction with the launch of the new SOS business website, (www.yallbusiness.sos.ms.gov). The site features the BOSS application along with others offered by the Business Services Division at the SOS office.

The Mississippi BOSS application allows the SOS office to serve its clients more efficiently by providing the following functionality:

- **Business Questionnaire Wizard:** By answering the five multiple choice questions provided, the online system communicates with a database to display a printable PDF results page relevant to the answers selected by the user. This quick survey and subsequent results page eliminates the guess work out of “what to do or where to go” when starting a new business in the State of Mississippi.
- **Help Text and Quick Links:** Help text is available throughout the application to users who may not know some of the terminology of business ownership. For example, “Am I an LLC or Corporation? And what is the difference in the two?” After each question is answered the user advances to the next page. Relative “Quick Links” are accessible on each page to provide the user with additional information as they proceed through the wizard.
- **Customized Results:** After completion of the wizard the user has the option to print a dynamic PDF document with their customized results and/or may choose to email the results to themselves.
- **Mobile Optimization:** To seamlessly integrate the web-based application with the mobile user population, the online application wizard was responsively designed to fit any mobile or tablet device. The implementation of a mobile responsive design significantly increases usability by increasing the platforms and times when users can access profile information and quickly get on track with starting a new business in Mississippi.

Impact

Since its launch in October 2015, the SOS staff’s overall productivity has been significantly enhanced. It is estimated the project, since inception, has resulted in a 1,000+ resource hours saved by the SOS Office and a significant decrease in customer calls, due in part to BOSS. These savings allow SOS to redirect resources to tasks that need their attention. Additional hours have been saved by not fielding calls and emails about what is required to start a new business, and not having to return through the post office an incorrectly filed form or filing fee. The SOS has seen

an 11.5% increase in new users visiting their website since the Mississippi BOSS service was launched.

MISSISSIPPI BOSS
BUSINESS ONE STOP SHOP

1 LOCATION 2 TYPE 3 CITY 4 TAX ID 5 EMPLOYEES

Do you want to form a new Mississippi company or register your existing foreign company?

Form a new domestic (Mississippi) company

Register an existing foreign (out of state) company

Not sure yet

"Domestic" means your business is formed in and operates under the laws of the state of Mississippi.

Need Help?

"Domestic" means your business is formed in and operates under the laws of the State of Mississippi.

A company is considered "foreign" if it is already formed in another state and under the laws of that state. A company formed in Mississippi is considered "domestic."

Other Helpful Links

[More about corporate structures](#)

NEXT

With 417,052 corporate documents and UCC's filed with the State in 2016, Mississippi BOSS has greatly benefited the Mississippi SOS by substantially reducing redundant paper work and staff costs.

Along with the statewide positive reception, the Mississippi Secretary of State's website has seen a 18.8% increase in page views on the site since last quarter of 2015 along with a 17.08% increase with new users since the launch of the Mississippi BOSS service.

Users visiting the online application have responded very positively to the new online business resource that includes the following business process enhancements:

- It saves users a significant amount of time by delivering in-depth custom results based on the 5-question online wizard. On average, BOSS saves each user an estimated 45 minutes, compared to calling individual county, city and state agencies looking for business information.
- Internally, BOSS has cut down significantly on “How do I?” phone calls to the agency. Business Services receives over 72,000 phone calls annually with a large majority dealing with how to form a business. The BOSS website helps resolve many of these questions. As site traffic continues to grow so will the reduction in the amount of calls to the agency.

This application is accessible to any private organization, any one person or persons with internet access who may want to know more about how to start a business in the State of Mississippi.



 **MISSISSIPPI BOSS**
BUSINESS ONE STOP SHOP



DELBERT HOSEMANN
Secretary of State

Success - You are well on your way to starting your own business. Based on your answers, we have created a list of what you will need to provide to the State, county and city government.

Please note, this information is supplied as a guide and should not take the place of legal advice. The Secretary of State's Office recommends the consultation of a lawyer or accountant when forming a business.

 Print  Email

JUMP TO

Start your business in Mississippi
Open Your Business
Business Type
County and City
Filing Federal Business Taxes
Filing State Business Taxes
Employee Verification
Business Insurance
Other Registrations
Special Registrations

START YOUR BUSINESS IN MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Secretary of State's Office would like to assist you in starting your new business. What may seem like a daunting task may be accomplished with relative ease, once you have chosen the type of business which best fits your needs. It is important to consider all of the possibilities when choosing your business structure.

Business Entities

Business may be conducted in Mississippi using many different types of entities, which may require registration with the Secretary of State. Each has advantages and disadvantages.

When choosing how you want to operate your business, it is important to keep in mind:

- How many owners you will have.
- The relationship among the co-owners.
- The ability to sell your ownership interest.
- Liability for taxes and business debts.
- Record keeping requirements.

We recommend consulting with an attorney or accountant to determine the appropriate type of entity before setting up your business.

Business Plan

Now that you are starting your business, you will want to begin writing your business plan. A business plan is just a roadmap defining your business and identifying your goals, and how you will achieve them. There are basic components every good plan should include, and resources available to help you craft a business plan.

For more information and assistance with writing a business plan, contact the [Mississippi Small Business Development Center](#).