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*NASCIO 2023 State IT Recognition Awards*  
*Emerging & Innovative Technologies*

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## Providing Efficiency and Effective Services Through Innovation

**Description:** Tag Modernization Holds Future For Hunters

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**Start date:** 06/06/2022

**End date:** 01/25/2023



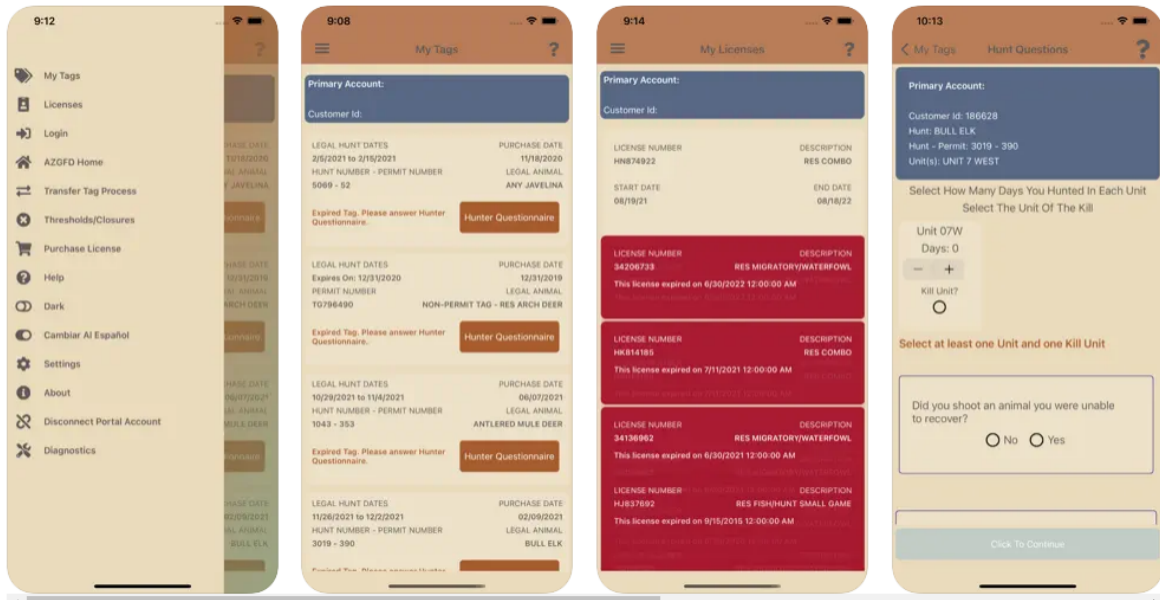
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## App Store Preview



**Arizona E-Tag** (4+)  
AZGFD Electronic Tagging App  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
★★★★★ 3.4 • 5 Ratings  
Free

## Screenshots [iPhone](#) [iPad](#)



Tag Modernization is an innovative technology that provides Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) customers the feasibility of receiving hunt permit tags and over the counter big game tags electronically to their smartphone. The mobile application also allows hunters to tag an animal in the field and immediately complete the hunter questionnaire. This provides customers with a variety of new conveniences while also positively impacting the department.

### Customer Benefits:

- Global access that is 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
- Enhanced customer communication avenues through the application.
- Faster delivery of tags.

#### Department Benefits:

- Cost savings on the printing and handling of issued tags.
- Increased submission of hunter questionnaires with more reliable data.
- Real time data on non-permit tag sales, customer participation, and harvest information.

## CONCEPT

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The project successfully addressed the following state government goals and objectives in accordance with existing constraints:

- The business problem involved creating an electronic tag solution that was integrated with existing draw processes that are run for a total of about two months for each draw, each year.
- Limited time was available between draws to accomplish the business goals, making implementation a challenging proposition.
- Additionally, the solution had to integrate with accounting, business, and federal certification systems and practices so as not to disrupt existing business systems and processes.
- Finally, the technology supporting the business solution had to be applied in a way that catered to a wide range of technical expertise that exists in the AZGFD customer base so that customer/user experience was positively impacted.

The project concept was guided by research across states who had partly or fully implemented an eTag system in their states. As information was gathered, it became apparent that Arizona's unique hunter-base required a solution that provided the following features to our hunting customers:

- Receive electronic tags following purchase at a Department office, and/or following a successful draw application.
- Receive and view hunting and fishing licenses.

- Ability to electronically tag a harvested big game animal in the field-even in remote areas with no cell phone coverage.
- Allow hunters to immediately answer the hunter questionnaire during the tagging process after their hunt, and in so doing, providing improvement to the current hunter questionnaire program and Department harvest data.
- Ensure secure, timely, verifiable, and correct data transmission that spans all areas of the state, even those areas where cell coverage is limited or not available.

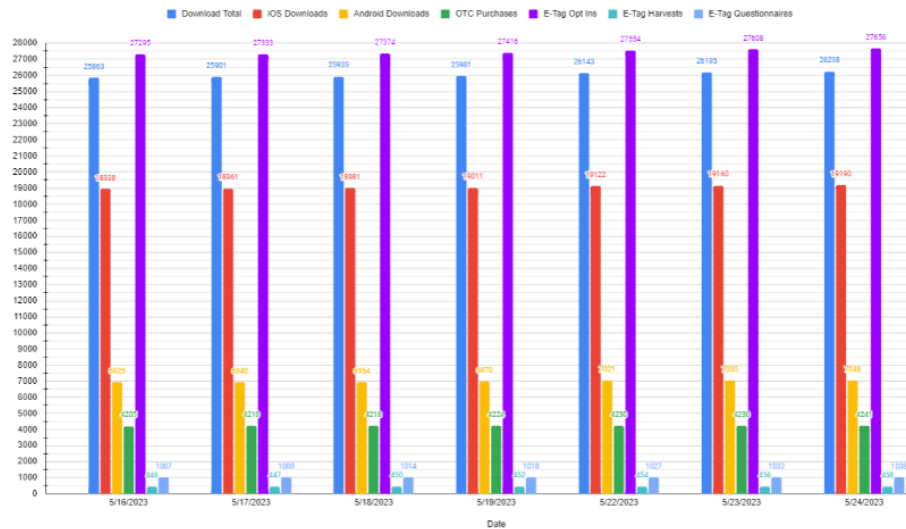
AZGFD's Draw Section leadership and customer service staff engaged with the Department's Application Development Team and the Project Management Office (PMO) to test design concepts that met the requirements of the technological and customer-oriented solution. As the design concepts became more solid, project sprints involved a hybrid agile-waterfall approach with a high degree of iteration, testing, rework, and validation through the course of the project.

Finally, when the project had produced a release candidate, the same teams engaged with Department staff who were part of the Department's hunter-customer base to test, review, and make final adjustments to the release candidate as the initial phase of implementation. As implementation continued, customer feedback was monitored to provide additional feedback with which the teams could improve the product.

While it was not part of a larger project, this system had to integrate with other business systems and processes in use by Game and Fish, such as Licensing and Customer Administration tools for Department Customer Service Representatives (CSRs). The project also had to ensure that it generated data summaries that would be used by accounting and finance, as well as the draw and licensing teams in support of Federal Certification efforts with which the Department must comply on a periodic basis. Usage and adoption rates have helped gauge the impact and usage of the application. A graph containing this information follows:

# Tag Modernization (E-Tag) Stats

Arizona E-Tag Stats 5/16/2023 - 5/24/2023 as of 5/24/2023 8:14am



**26,238 Total Downloads**

**19,190 iOS Downloads**

**7,048 Android Downloads**

**4,241 OTC E-Tags Delivered**

**27,656 E-Tag Opt Ins**

**458 E-Tag Harvests with Questionnaire**

**1,038 Total E-Tag Questionnaires**

**2,786 E-Tags Issued for the 2023 Mid Winter Draw (11.2% of Total Tags)**

## Tag Modernization (E-Tags)

Craig McMullen, Sponsor



### SIGNIFICANCE

The project is consequential, relevant, and transformational for state government and constituents in that it augments the Department's state-encouraged efforts to streamline processes and reduce paper content and handling.

- The scope of this project is literally worldwide, although most customers are residents of the State of Arizona. Our stakeholders are not only our customers both in and out of state, but also our employees who work with licensing, draw, customer service, regional offices, accounting and finance, law enforcement, and scientific wildlife assessment and management staff members.
- Arizona's eTag process appears to be more integrated with central business systems in comparison with other states who have implemented a similar system. As a result, outcomes are more reliable, more secure, more easy on which to report and certify, and easier to maintain and adjust.
- Successful implementation provides access to information on the AZGFD website as well as through the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store, which provide worldwide access to the

application, security features, and electronic guidelines for standardization of design and usage. Game and Fish, the State of Arizona in general, and our customers around the world and in Arizona will benefit from the level of service, data, and reliability provided by the eTag tool.

- State “paperless” and other environmentally aware initiatives, policies and strategies that have been encouraged across multiple gubernatorial administrations are fully supported by the eTag process. It does still provide some paper tag usage, but hopes are to fully phase paper out as a continual department focus into the future. The effort has enjoyed support by and inclusion into our enterprise architecture, business plans, state and federal mandates, and Game and Fish Commission and Arizona priorities.

## **IMPACT**

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The project leads to substantial and measurable change that improves state government.

- Arizona as a state and Arizona Game and Fish in particular are impacted and recognized as a leader in this technology as we are one of the only states to have developed this capability in-house. It has led to direct and immediate recognition of Arizona across academic and professional venues and has led to process improvements in AZGFD business and customer service methods.

- Detail the immediate and longer term impact of the initiative. The application provides convenience and flexibility to our customer base while at the same time reducing printing, handling, and mailing costs associated with paper tags. In the long term, it is providing benefits to our Information Technology department by embedding skills and toolsets that will help benefit the state and the Department in other modernization methods.

- The benefits to customers, stakeholders, the Department, and the State include flexibility, simplification, and better field verification of harvest, operational improvements (adhering to industry standards and streamlining business and business reporting processes), security and/or privacy (adhering to security and privacy standards), transparency of government (increasing customer satisfaction and trust of Department and state applications, reports, and processes), and transformation of government (moving the Department and the state to ever-increasing environmental awareness and impact mitigation).

- Both quantitative (12% of all tags issued in the past year are eTags, almost 5,000 tags successfully delivered, over 27,000 opt-ins and over 24,000 application downloads) and

qualitative benefits have resulted from this project. Customer monitoring is trending in the positive with respect to eTags. Customer service representatives, law enforcement, and game management branches are all reporting positive outcomes, including improved customer engagement, enhancements in field license and tag checks, a significant increase in hunter success surveys being submitted, and survey submission time improvement.