COLORADO
Governor's Office of
Information Technology



**State:** Colorado

**Agency:** Governor's Office of Information Technology

**Award Category:** State CIO Office Special Recognition

**Project Title:** Reimagining IT: Change Is the Name of the Game

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Modern technology platforms, mature processes and collaboration with state agency partners are all essential components of an IT service delivery model designed to support secure and accessible digital state services. Since 2008, the Colorado Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) has been the enterprise provider of IT support and services to 17 executive branch agencies. While organizational alignments evolved, the original service model mostly remained the same. It met the needs of the state at the time but as technology advances and customer needs change, our service delivery model needs reimagining as well.

During Governor Jared Polis' first term in office in 2019 he outlined a vision for state executive branch agencies to build increased accountability and ownership for their IT, collaborative IT governance and oversight, and a more nimble and process-oriented IT organization for the state. The governor's vision and a report released around that same time based on audit findings related to state IT services, provided a starting point for OIT and our state partners to reimagine IT. OIT's executive staff determined a programmatic investment in this change was needed. As a result in 2020, the statewide IT Transformation Program was born. Over the past two and a half years dozens of projects were launched to produce the foundational technology changes and process maturation that would ultimately transform the delivery of state IT services. Creating governance boards to work more collaboratively with our state agency partners, implementing a more transparent billing process and developing an IT hardware asset management program are just a few of the transformational accomplishments already achieved. With the completion of the first phase of the IT Transformation Program, we've built a strong foundation towards our ultimate goal of a modern, accessible and digital delivery of state services that supports a Colorado for all.
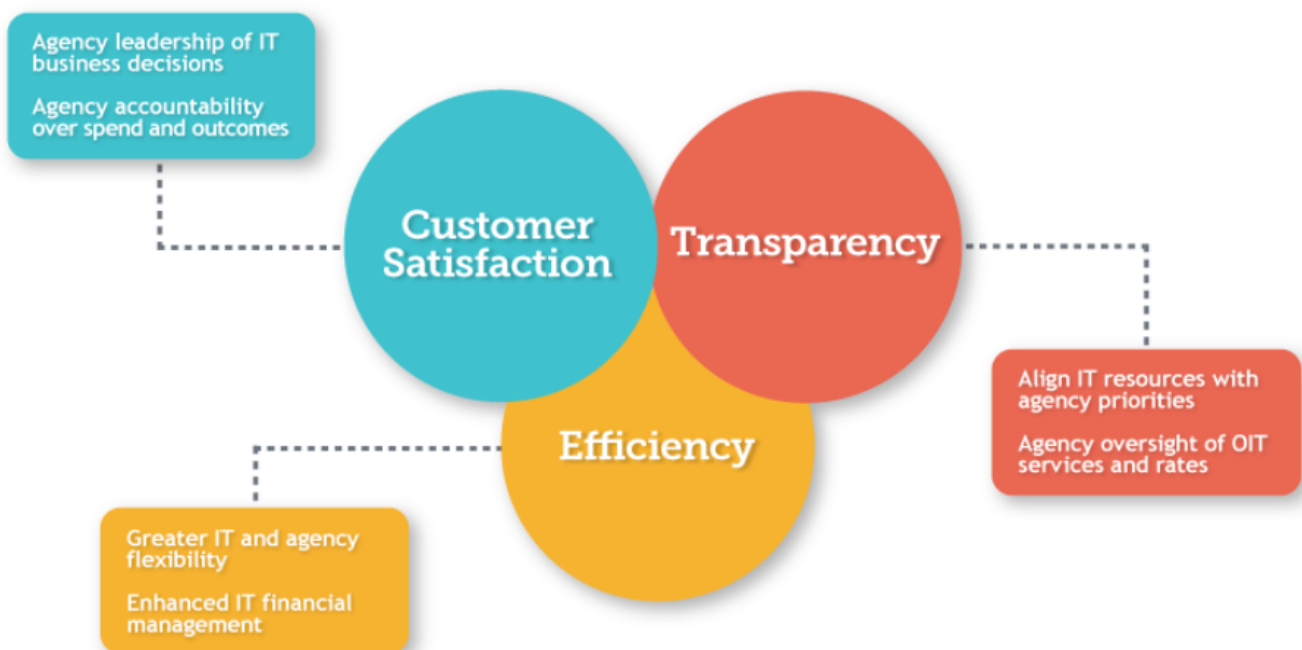
# Idea

For context, we need to take a brief journey to the past. Before 2008, Colorado had a history of decentralized information technology that created an IT patchwork leading to negative outcomes in several areas. The state experienced redundant IT software and hardware purchasing, a disjointed approach to infrastructure, and failed IT projects that increased the cost of government and put mission-critical systems at risk. A series of studies and assessments concluded the state would be better served by consolidating IT functions, services and support into the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT). With the overwhelming support from state legislators, OIT became the enterprise provider of IT support and services to 17 executive branch agencies beginning July 1, 2008. In 2017, the Colorado General Assembly passed legislation (HB17-1361) for a third-party assessment to determine whether the 2008 promises of consolidation were being met, and a comprehensive report was presented in 2018. These findings served as the foundation to support the vision to reimagine IT and define the work to transform IT service delivery for the State of Colorado. It was then the state Chief Information Officer and his executive staff got down to the hard but exciting business of creating the IT Transformation Program.

It took some time to plan the 11 projects that would be part of the first phase of IT Transformation. In 2020 we were ready to begin the transformation work. We were thinking differently about how we work and how we serve. We were introducing plans to work together with our agency partners to increase efficiency, transparency and customer satisfaction while promoting the outcomes of enhanced IT financial management, agency oversight of OIT services and rates, and agency leadership of IT business decisions.

Agency leadership of IT business decisions

Agency accountability over spend and outcomes

**Customer Satisfaction**

**Transparency**

Align IT resources with agency priorities

Agency oversight of OIT services and rates

**Efficiency**

Greater IT and agency flexibility

Enhanced IT financial management

In February 2020, OIT began a deep-dive exploration of its past and present, trends in restructuring, and different operating models so that we could develop options to build a resilient and digital state government. Five ideas to accelerate and sustain effective changes in customer satisfaction, transparency and efficiency were constructed, using consolidated, decentralized and hybrid models. In June 2020, the ideas were presented to the Governor and the model designed to expand agencies' ownership of their information technology and increase their role in the overall strategic direction was selected. We needed to transform our statewide IT operations and delivery with increased access to secure, virtual government services for Coloradans.

The multi-year IT Transformation (ITT) Program was driven by the guiding principles to align, collaborate, empower and transform.
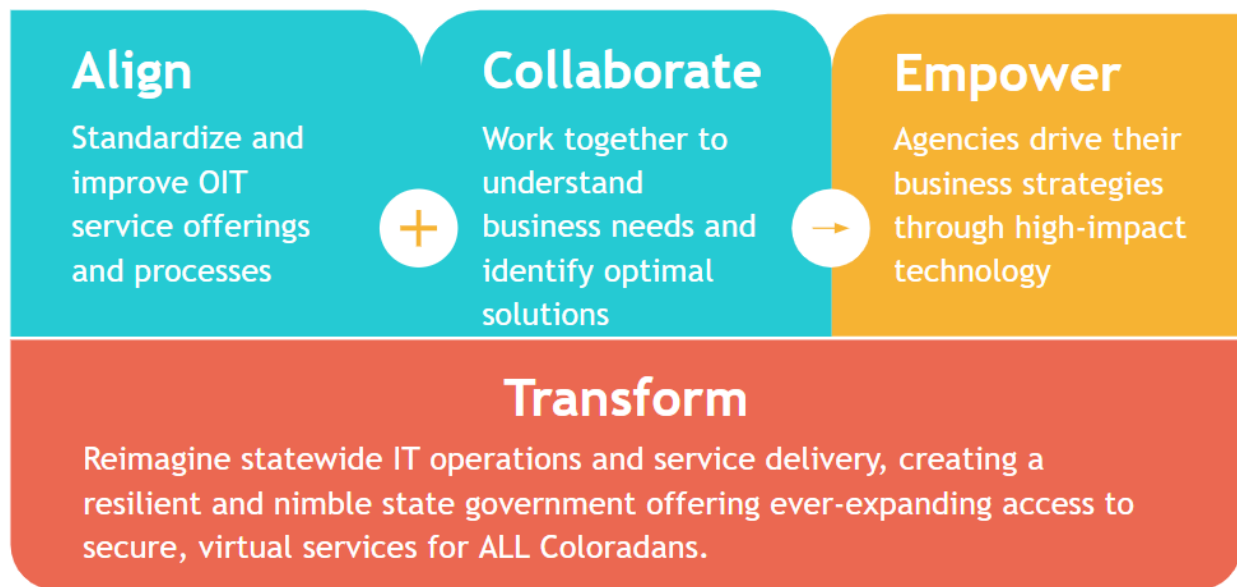


OIT's state Chief Information Officer & Executive Director and his executive staff decided the Program would focus its work in the five major areas of governance, finance, talent, technology and service excellence. In August 2020, Governor Polis officially announced the IT Transformation Program via this video.

## Impact

Now two and a half years later, the IT Transformation Program is firmly in place and operationalized. OIT has made significant progress in transforming statewide IT operations and service delivery. The following are just a few examples of what has been achieved through the Program's oversight.

- **Real-time Billing** was one of the first major foundational shifts brought about by IT Transformation. Imagine the confusion of being billed two years after you purchase something. Would you remember what you bought and the price you expected to pay? OIT went from an outdated system that billed our customers for services delivered two years prior to a system that billed as services are consumed. Real-time Billing improved billing detail transparency and increased customer engagement **reducing past-due receivable balances by 40%!** The new interactive and user-friendly billing [website](website) developed as part of the project has also helped reduce billing disputes and questions.

- Agencies depend on technology to deliver services to Coloradans and yet they felt that decisions were being made about them without their input. **Establishing two governance boards** with our agency partners gives all participants more of a say in IT decision-making and rates. Fifteen state agencies are represented on the boards. The **Strategy and Planning Board** oversees the strategic IT direction, while the **Rates and Services Board** reviews and approves IT services and rates. This solid governance foundation helps us to effectively manage IT resources, enhance transparency, build trust and satisfaction with agencies, and make crucial decisions that affect every aspect of the state's IT infrastructure. In the first two years, **25 services have been introduced or modified by the Board**.

- Our agency partners heavily rely on the products and services we offer to deliver state services to Coloradans. Previously, it was challenging for our state agency customers to understand and budget for our service offerings. Now a modern **Service Catalog,** available on a dedicated website at [oit service catalog.state.co.us](oit service catalog.state.co.us), provides up-to-date, critical information to assist agencies in better purchasing our products and services. Since its launch on April 6, 2021, the site **has more than 47,000 page views**. We are now taking things up a notch by automating the Service Catalog via the soon-to-launch ServiceHub Customer Portal.

- Keeping track of our IT hardware and understanding what devices are connecting to the state network demonstrates responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars and strengthens the state's cybersecurity posture. These are just two of the benefits we are seeing from the **IT Asset Management Program** that was created as part of our IT transformation. Upwards of **40,000 assets and counting** are being tracked through the IT Asset Management (ITAM) system, providing a source of truth for our valuable state IT resources—tangible and intangible. This ensures that IT assets are accounted for, maintained, upgraded, used correctly and disposed of when the time comes. Since the launch of the program, we've worked with our partner agencies to identify **95.9% of the hardware assets** in use across executive branch agencies. We've also created hardware refresh schedules to ensure the IT asset life cycle is managed to avoid expensive fixes for older equipment or security issues.

- An **IT Service Management tool suite** that we call ServiceHub was implemented upon which we can iteratively add new modules to help us deliver, support and manage IT services all on one platform. It's **a modernization and maturation of our service delivery that was previously impossible**. The modules within the tool are enabling efficient project management, demand and resource management, the transformation of inefficient cybersecurity risk management processes into an integrated risk and audit management program, and providing the information necessary to generate Real-time Billing invoices. This tool gives us a platform on which to grow. For example, we are adding an intuitive self-service portal where customers can find information to solve common IT problems, learn how to use their IT hardware and software, request IT help and more.

- Technical debt refers to the costs associated with maintaining unsupported and insecure technology to provide services. If left unaddressed, it can have severe consequences across organizations. The state's technical debt from outdated infrastructure, end-of-life applications and security vulnerabilities is estimated to be at least $465 million. By working with agency partners to **remediate technical debt** we've identified **$10+ million in annual savings, improved accessibility and reduced security risks.** In 2022, we assessed the health of **1,064 applications** and **created 14 Technology Planning Workbooks** to guide our efforts to update, replace or retire applications. Reducing tech debt across all state agencies can help cut costs, increase security, improve compliance, modernize systems, and allocate resources more effectively.

- **Collaborative partnerships** are critical to our success and the success of our partner agencies serving Coloradans. **Effective stakeholder management and communication** are a core part of keeping relationships with our customers strong. Based on **feedback from more than 4,800 state employees** receiving IT services from OIT, we collaborated with a vendor to develop a comprehensive set of strategies for relationship management, branding, and communication to improve efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction. By implementing these strategies, we have established feedback loops to continuously enhance customer relationships, ensuring timely, relevant, and easily understandable communication.

Last year our CIO & Executive Director explained in this short video how our work to think differently and reimagine IT operations is enhancing the lives of all Coloradans. While our first phase of IT Transformation is complete, there is still much more to reimagine. We will continue to work with our state agency partners to shape a shared vision for the future of technology in the state of Colorado.