

WEBSITE MIGRATION

Transforming Digital Services for Kansans



State of Kansas: Office of IT Services

Category: Digital Services: Government to Citizen

Initiated: August 2022

Completed: September 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Web Services, a critical arm of the Infrastructure Services department at the Kansas Office of Information Technology Services (OITS), plays a pivotal role in providing website solutions and consulting services to cabinet and non-cabinet agencies within the State of Kansas. Responsible for managing and supporting 26 websites, the team recognized the need to modernize current website services and solutions, prompting them to embark on a transformative journey – Website Migration: Transforming Digital Services for Kansans.

While the scope of the project targets the 26 managed websites, the Web Services team has also received requests from agencies outside of the migration to create new websites using our partner solution. In addition to our modernization efforts, we are also reaping the rewards of scalability and standardization, which enhances Kansans’ online experience when interacting with websites that share a consistent look and feel.

IDEA

PHASE 1: MODERNIZATION OF THE PLATFORM

In August 2022, the Web Services team began the initial planning of website migrations for 26 supported websites. Many of the websites required updates and rebuilds, but our web services environment was dependent on outdated software and the websites were dependent on outdated website templates. Support through the current solution was increasingly difficult and a change was needed as some of the functions are business-critical.

In response, the team launched an ambitious website migration project aimed at:

1. Modernizing the web services environment
 - Many of the websites will become nonfunctional within 2 years nor are they built to modern standards which means they’re not mobile friendly.
2. Enhancing Security
 - Modernizing the websites ensures continuity of services and prevents security vulnerabilities.
3. Enriching the user experience
 - Most Kansas websites do not follow a similar look and feel, leaving constituents with a lack of consistency. Standardizing our approach creates a more user-friendly experience for constituents as they can now navigate state websites that share a similar look and feel.

The 26 managed websites for this project include:

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| 1. Kansas Dental Board | 14. Board of Examiners in Optometry |
| 2. Attorney General | 15. Kansas Real Estate Commission |
| 3. Executive Branch Information
Technology | 16. Public Square |
| 4. Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board | 17. Kansas African American Affairs
Commission |
| 5. Kansas Commission for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing | 18. Office of the Governor Grants Program |
| 6. Kansas Department of Agriculture | 19. Kansas Department for Aging and
Disability Services |
| 7. Kansas Water Office | 20. Kansas Commission on Disability
Concerns |
| 8. Kansas Board of Mortuary Arts | 21. Board of Pharmacy |
| 9. Office of the Long-Term Care
Ombudsman | 22. Office of the Child Advocate |
| 10. KanCare | 23. Hispanic & Latino American Affairs
Commission |
| 11. State Board of Technical Professions | 24. Sentencing Commission |
| 12. Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs
Office | 25. Board of Healing Arts |
| 13. Kansas Department of Credit Unions | 26. Native American Affairs |

PHASE 2: STANDARDIZATION OF GUIDELINES

The project is a value add as we implement standards for State of Kansas websites. Phase 2, standardization of guidelines, is taking place simultaneously with Phase 1. As we continue to migrate websites to our modernized solution, we are developing a standardization of guidelines document for agencies to adopt.

The guidelines will first be implemented by the non-cabinet agencies; however, we are working with the cabinet agencies to set the foundation for achieving a similar look and feel across their websites.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project kicked off in August 2022, with the scope of migrating 26 OITS managed and hosted websites, that were using an outdated version of the CMS software and relied on deprecated web frameworks. The scope of the project includes moving all OITS hosted and/or migrated sites to one solution that would provide modern functionality, accessibility, mobile responsiveness, scalability, and reliability.

The project received extensive Project Management coverage from both the OITS Project Management team as well as Granicus.

The project followed a combination of waterfall and agile methodologies and had clearly defined milestones and expected deliverables.

Each proposed site scheduled for migration followed a structured implementation plan, which included kick off meetings, design meetings, site map planning, development, content migration, QA (quality assurance phases), website reveal, training, UAT (user acceptance training), Go Live, and project completion and hand-off.

Alongside of the defined phases and milestones, the Project Management team conducted multiple vendor, customer, and agency meetings (weekly and biweekly) to ensure transparency and project success.

Funding: The funding for this effort was secured from two different funding sources. We utilized a portion of the cost from a Repair and Restore fund and the additional came from ARPA grant. The secured funding allowed OITS to eliminate any migration costs for the agencies and minimize the financial impact on OITS.

The project is currently on track to be completed by September 27, 2024.

As of May 22, 2024, the following websites have migrated and are now live:

1. Executive Branch Information Technology (<https://www.ebit.ks.gov/home>)
2. Kansas Dental Board (<https://www.dental.ks.gov/>)
3. Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board (<https://www.ksbsrb.ks.gov/>)
4. Kansas Water Office (<https://www.kwo.ks.gov/>)
5. Kansas Board of Mortuary Arts (<https://www.ksbma.ks.gov/>)
6. State Board of Technical Professions (<https://www.ksbtp.ks.gov/>)
7. Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (<https://www.kcdhh.ks.gov/>)

IMPACT

IMPACTS AND MEASURING SUCCESS

While the project is still in flight, we continue to see new and beneficial impacts of the website migration.

1. Scalability: Collaborating with our vendor partner, Granicus, this is the first time they've embarked on a website migration that encompassed 26 websites being migrated simultaneously. The project now serves as a model for how Granicus can execute a project of this size in other states.

2. Modernization and Agility: Migrating to a modernized platform allows us to evolve alongside technology advancements and adapt swiftly to changing requirements and emerging trends.
3. Security: Migrating away from an outdated, legacy platform solves for vulnerabilities and other security concerns.
4. User Experience: Citizens now have a more consistent and user friendly experience when using our websites.

LOOKING AHEAD

The project is slated to be completed by September 27, 2024.

Larger cabinet agencies are seeing the benefits of the website migration, and it has prompted several of them to utilize our existing contract with Granicus to transition their websites. The Kansas Department of Labor is one example of a cabinet agency that recently transitioned to a Granicus supported website (<https://www.dol.ks.gov/>).

TESTIMONIALS

“The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) provided a preview of the new website at regional staff meetings over the past two weeks. We received great feedback from KDA staff, especially from those who work remotely across the state and use the website frequently, and from those who work directly with licensees that use our website to access forms and licensing information for their businesses. They’re all very happy with the layout and design and eager to share it with the public! We were very happy to hear such a positive response!” - Heather Lansdowne, Director of Communications, Kansas Department of Agriculture

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“OITS is spearheading the effort to standardize State of Kansas websites. As we transition to a more modern, user-friendly platform, citizens can more confidently interact with state websites and have a consistent experience across the different agencies. Additionally, it sets the tone for agencies outside the scope of the project to update their websites utilizing our vendor partner.”

- Jeff Maxon, Executive Branch Chief Information Technology Officer



The Kansas Office of Information Technology Services (OITS) had a transformation and modernization initiative to unify the websites of all state agencies under the same webspace. In the past, state agency websites were set up and hosted in different ways: Some were on-prem and some were with vendors who were underperforming.

Through the close partnership with Granicus, Kansas discovered an opportunity to not only host this new webspace on secure government servers, but to create an integrated government experience that State residents and staff are eager to use.

This has created a wonderful and innovative win for Kansas, decreasing the amount of time and IT resources used to maintain its web presence and making updating webpages as simple as drag and drop.

At the same time, OITS is helping Granicus better understand and meet the needs of large states with multiple websites and stakeholders, in a partnership that will help Granicus — and Kansas — pave a way forward for future innovation in web and customer experience at the State level.

“We have so many great partnerships in Kansas, and Kansas State CTO Tanya Rodriguez-Heffel and the Office of Information Technology Services are among our favorites,” said Granicus State Enterprise Account Executive Matt Russell. “Their work — going beyond a simple website overhaul — is a perfect example of how a holistic, human-centered transformation can deliver a truly unified digital government experience.”

- Matt Russell, Enterprise Account Executive, Granicus