

2025 NASCIO STATE IT RECOGNITION AWARDS

Project Title: Digital Government Transformation is a Journey – Building Missouri’s Digital State

State: Missouri

Agency/Division: Office of Administration, Information Technology Services Division

Award Category:
State CIO Office Special Recognition

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Contact:

Paula Peters, Deputy CIO
State of Missouri

paula.peters@oa.mo.gov

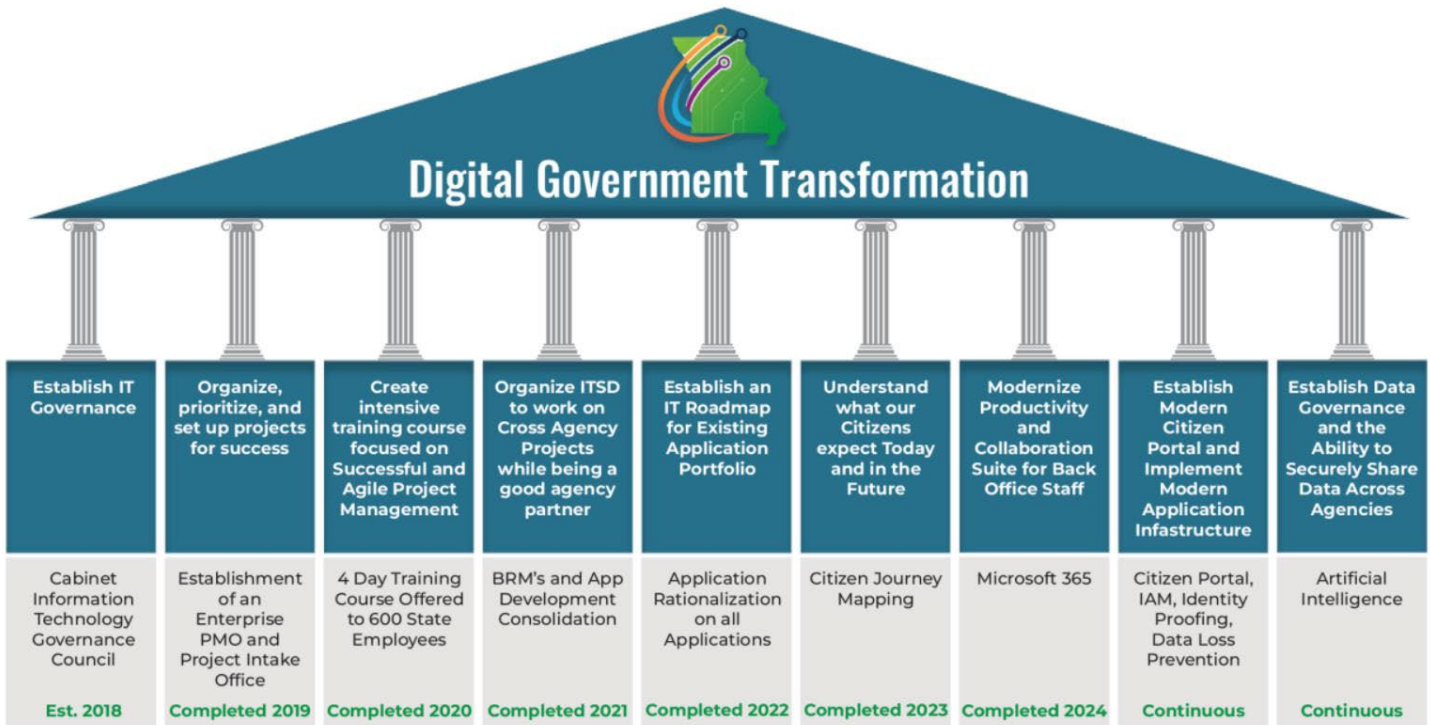


Executive Summary

Early in Governor Mike Parson’s administration as the 57th Governor for the State of Missouri, an emphasis was put on “Missouri Better Government”. The Governor challenged State employees to “meet Missouri citizen’s expectations so that we are good as any organization.” There was an expectation that that Missouri state government become more transparent, more citizen friendly, more efficient, more focused, and more accountable. In response to this directive, the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) at the State of Missouri began its journey to transform how Missouri state government serves its citizens using technology.



The image below shows the initiatives that were established and completed to systematically change the way our departments and the State looked at IT related projects to help achieve “Missouri Better Government”. We will outline each of these initiatives and why they were important to the overall success of our project.



Project Description

IDEA

What problem or opportunity does the project address?

In 2018, ITSD had no overall project governance or centralized priority ranking of projects, and no consistent IT project intake process. Most agencies were just using the IT people assigned to work with their agency to try to get their projects done. Many of the systems built were duplicative and data sharing was very manual. Few people outside of ITSD had any formal project management training and there were many failed IT related projects. ITSD had an aging application portfolio, static web pages, and little to no modern application architecture tools to use. With the Governor’s challenge to all state employees to “meet Missouri citizen’s expectations so that we are good as any organization”, ITSD began to work with State leadership to advocate

for change so that the State of Missouri would be able to thrive into the future. This was the start of our Digital Government Transformation project.

Why does it matter?

One of Governor Mike Parson's priorities put an emphasis on "Missouri Better Government" and the pandemic made all of us very aware that our citizens expected government to come to them, not them to have to go to government for services. Urgency for digital government services has increased exponentially as technology has become essential to remote working, distance learning, maintaining economies, and keeping governments running. Citizens had to go to offices for services. Citizens had to use different department websites to access information. Citizens had to submit the same information over and over. Citizens had to wait for items to be mailed to them. They expected to be able to interact with state government like they interact with places like Amazon or Domino's Pizza.

What makes it different?

We know that many states are taking on similar digital transformation efforts, but we believe that we have done it in a very systematic way by building a good foundation of governance, prioritization, project identification, and relationship management with our agencies. We have done our homework on what needs to be modernized and what our citizens expect from us. We believe that this will make all of the technology efforts sustainable into the next administration in Missouri.

What makes it universal?

The NASCIO 2025 State CIO Priorities lists DIGITAL GOVERNMENT / DIGITAL SERVICES as one of its top priorities. This same priority is true in Missouri, but this project goes way beyond the top priorities. This project touches all of the priorities in one way or another. Most of this project is not particularly specific to a certain state because most states perform many of the same services. We believe that Missouri learned many lessons during the past six years of this project that could serve as a blueprint and help other states that might be taking on a similar journey or just some of the individual projects that were done as a part of this bigger program.

IMPLEMENTATION

What was the Roadmap?

When the Information Technology Services Division put forth the proposal to carry out Missouri's Digital Government Transformation, we knew that this was going to be a once in a lifetime chance to make a major difference in the future of State government and the citizens of Missouri. The guiding principle to this project was fairly simple – "better government". The approach to the project included:

- Central governance and priority of what projects ITSD should be doing with input from the state's cabinet members.
- Establish a central intake of projects and no project should be started before a business case was fully vetted and approved.
- Upskill our workforce so that we can have the best chance of project success.
- Business and ITSD had to be a partnership for us to be successful.
- Establish a roadmap to modernize our portfolio by using a standard rationalization methodology.
- Understand what our citizens expect from us.
- Provide the necessary tools to our workforce so they can serve our citizens efficiently and effectively.
- Establish a citizen portal for our citizens to interact with government.

- Establish data governance so that data is kept safe but used to help our citizens.

Below is the Mission and Values developed for our entire Digital Transformation project.

MISSION Deliver an easy and seamless experience across all state government services

In order to simplify the experience so that it's easy for citizens no matter what agency they're interacting with, we must deliver on the following promises

We promise to...

- 1** *"Make it easy"*
We will minimize the effort required and make it hassle-free
- 2** *"Ensure satisfaction"*
We will make sure you finish your interaction with what you need
- 3** *"Earn your confidence"*
We will demonstrate why we are reliable in every interaction
- 4** *"Be Consistent"*
You will have the same experience across all departments and agencies

When interacting with our citizens, we must ...

- Keep an eye on quality
- Deliver the stellar experiences across agencies
- Make it easy
- Demonstrate and offer knowledge
- Build confidence
- Be different

This means...

- We work hard to deliver quality results
- We work to resolve even if not our problem
- We carry the burden for citizens
- We stay up to date on people, process, technology
- We give reason to have confidence in the state
- We think, act, and operate differently

OUR VALUES

Accurate | Consistent | Easy | Knowledgeable | Confident

Who was involved?

The concept was originally developed by ITSD Leadership and then presented to the Office of Administration Commissioner's Office. Then together we started discussing the project with the Governor's Office, Cabinet leaders, and several key legislators to gather support for the project. We prepared numerous written and verbal communications to help key leaders understand the vision and what we wanted to accomplish. We knew that this would be a multi-year effort and it would be hard. What we did not expect was a worldwide pandemic in the middle of our project. But as many have stated, "Never let a good crisis go to waste", we were able to speed up our project by several years because of the ARPA dollars that we were appropriated by the general assembly. We were appropriated \$126 million in in July 2022 to carry out the last four pillars.

How did you do it?

The project total was over \$150 million in hard costs and the time involvement of State team members was extensive but not tracked in all areas. ITSD has had most of its leadership and workforce driving to these goals during the six years we have been on this journey.

IMPACT

What did the project make better?

Our journey began in May of 2018 with the establishment of the Cabinet Information Technology Governance Council (CITGC). The purpose of the CITGC is to oversee the management of IT projects and programs from across the departments that are considered State of Missouri priorities and managed as part of the State's strategic IT portfolio. The voting members of the council are comprised of the Commissioner of OA (who will serve as the chair), a representative from the Governor's Office, and the 13 additional department directors/commissioners. The CITGC reviews, on a monthly basis, materials to assess the state of the strategic IT portfolio and then develop recommendations for the most effective path to deliver the strategic IT projects and programs. This involves approving new projects of significant scale, scope, complexity, and risk. The

CITGC provides input, guidance, and oversight over individual departments' technology implementations when such projects are considered "strategic" or any project over \$500,000 and ensure such projects are being completed within projected time periods and within projected budgets.

In 2019, ITSD established an Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) and developed a centralized Project Intake Office within the EPMO that required business cases and project charters before a project could be considered for approval. The goal of developing the EPMO instead of the existing PMO was to go from "doing IT related projects right", to "doing the RIGHT IT related projects right". Most of these business cases are then sent to the CITGC for approval before beginning the project. This ensures that ITSD is only working on the most urgent and important projects for the State of Missouri.

In 2020, ITSD developed a four-day intensive course on Successful Project Management and Agile Project Management. After establishment of the CITGC in 2018, a guiding principle of the CITGC was that the department Directors were responsible for the success or failure of their IT related projects and that the departments should be overseeing their projects with help from ITSD. A request was made to ITSD from the CITGC to teach their agency staff how to perform successful project. Most State of Missouri Project Managers had little to no formal project management training. We put state 600 team members through the 4-day course taught by ITSD project managers. The course covered creating a compelling business case and project charter, vendor and contract management, building high functioning teams, traditional and agile project management techniques and much more. This course was one of the highest rated courses and is still one of the most requested trainings in ITSD.

In 2021, it became apparent that the desire was for ITSD to become more of a broker of IT related services across departments. To assist with this new operating model, ITSD established the Business Relationship Management (BRM) role within ITSD to serve our departments as a strategic member of their agency leadership team to help them solve their business problems by using technology and being aware of cross agency collaborations that could be leveraged. Eleven BRM positions were created and filled to serve the departments. Those BRM's are in place today and they serve as the conduit between ITSD and the agencies. They are instrumental in helping the agencies determine the right IT related projects.

In 2022, ITSD completed a formal application rationalization on all 1,200 applications in the ITSD portfolio. We knew that if we were going to provide better government, we were going to need to modernize our systems and we needed to do that in a systematic fashion so that we did not waste time and resources doing the wrong projects and duplicating efforts. As a part of the formal rationalization, we were able to create a modernization roadmap that is used to inform our agencies about their systems and ongoing modernization efforts. During this rationalization, we also mapped the business capabilities of each application so that when modernizing we can combine like applications across agencies. This saves both time and money.

In 2023, ITSD completed a Citizen Journey Mapping project so that along with the application modernization efforts we truly understood what our citizens are looking for from State government. We knew to be citizen focused, the customer's voice must be heard, measured, and managed across their journey with us. Citizen Journey Mapping is a visual representation of the customer journey a citizen goes through when doing business with the State of Missouri. Citizen Journey Mapping is important because it is a strategic approach to better understanding citizen expectations and is crucial for optimizing the citizen's experience with the State. This mapping has served both our modernization and citizen portal efforts.

In 2024, ITSD completed the purchase and installation of Microsoft Office 365 for the State workforce. If we were going to improve the citizen's experience, we could not keep running our back office with the 2016

standalone version of Microsoft Office. We know that to increase worker productivity and collaboration to better serve our citizens, we had to make sure that our workforce had the tools necessary to do the jobs they needed to do. While the applications are installed, the benefits of M365 will continue to be realized by our team members as they learn to utilize all of the new functionality that has been given to them. M365 will also allow for responsible use of AI as we move forward in our AI journey.

Also in 2024, ITSD stood up the Citizen Portal and modern application architecture to enable us to be more citizen friendly and to modernize our portfolio to better serve our citizens. In addition to the Citizen Portal, we have single sign on capabilities for the entire population of the State of Missouri and identity and access management to assist with fraud prevention. We also have multi-factor authentication for all State employees. We stood up a modern workflow engine, an API management tool, a low code platform, a forms management tool, and digital signature abilities. We have also significantly upgraded our data center, network, cloud environments and security posture so that services for our citizens are always available and their data is safe. Projects on these platforms will never be complete but the infrastructure put in place as a part of our digital transformation efforts will serve the State of Missouri well into the future.

Finally in 2024, ITSD has developed data and AI governance. These governance policies are so important for us moving forward into the future so that we can ensure that our citizens' data can remain safe but also be used to assist us in helping them to have a better and more personalized citizen experience and potentially better outcomes when using State services. This is what we consider to be better government!

How do you know?

In many ways the project speaks for itself.

- After 6 years, the CITGC Meetings are still held monthly with an exceptional attendance rate. When asking for appropriations from our general assembly they want to know if the project has been approved by the CITGC. Most projects that have been approved by the CITGC governing body have been approved by our governor's office and general assembly for funding. Millions of dollars have been invested in the RIGHT IT projects in the State of Missouri and it is making a difference for our workforce and our citizens.
- In 2018 the industry average of IT related projects completed on-time and on-budget was 62%. The average of on-time and on-budget IT related projects in Missouri was 42%. The current average of on-time and on-budget IT related projects in Missouri is over 80%, well above the industry average. According to the Project Management Institute's 2018 Pulse of Profession study, they estimate that 9.9% of every dollar is wasted due to poor project performance. Missouri has over \$100 million of IT related projects every year, so a 40% increase in on-time and on-budget IT related projects is a potential savings of almost \$4 million a year.
- Our BRM program is helping our agencies solve their business problems with technology solutions that are not duplicative of solutions already in place. We are seeing many projects being done collaboratively across agencies and sharing in the costs of these projects. This makes it cheaper to build and cheaper to maintain less items in the portfolio.
- Our application rationalization has already given us great results. Our agencies are now aware of the business value and technical viability of their applications. They know how much money is spent on them per year and this helps them to make good decisions when it comes time to replace them and how much maintenance really needs to go into them. They no longer go with their gut, but rather the facts. An additional benefit of the rationalization was a 20% immediate decrease in our portfolio because of so many applications that our agencies determined were no longer needed and could be retired. This has given us more money to do actual projects instead of just maintaining the existing

outdated applications. We also have a good roadmap moving forward for modernization of most of the portfolio.

- Our citizen journey mapping project has given us immediate and long-term positive results. We identified 62 of the top services that are important to Missouri citizens after starting with over 300. We grouped those services by 22 citizen needs. This gave us a set of services that have high volume and value for our Missouri citizens. We surveyed over 7,000 citizens and conducted 38 one-hour citizen interviews. This led us to identify 28 statewide initiatives aligned to 5 themes. We identified 13 high value initiatives and identified key next steps. The results from this project have led all our statewide digital transformation efforts and additional statewide efforts to strengthen citizen experience. It is hard to quantify citizen experience, but we believe that this is the right thing to do for Missouri and we are getting positive feedback.
- Our M365 implementation has gone smoothly and our many of our state workers are enjoying the new tools that are available to them. According to a 2022 Forester report, organization's end users become more productive by combining the communication features of Microsoft Teams with the collaboration and document-sharing capabilities afforded through Microsoft 365 Apps, Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint, and Azure AD SSO. The composite organization's end users save an average of 72 minutes per week, valued at \$750 per user, per year. For the State of Missouri that would mean an annual productivity savings of \$25-30 million per year.
- The citizen portal and modern application architecture will continue to provide benefits well into the future. Missouri has already been able to reduce call wait times by building out on the new architecture. There are many more projects using the platforms in development and this is something that will continue to benefit our state workforce and our state citizens well into the future.

What now?

As a result of this project, we have a roadmap of where we want to go. The foundation items are completed and have been practiced. The new technology platforms are installed, and projects are being implemented on them. We have the Citizen Portal stood up. We have single sign-on and identity and access management to ensure a seamless experience. We are incorporating systems into the portal as defined on our roadmap.

Imagine an experience for State citizens so dynamic that they have everything at their fingertips to “chart their own path.” They understand how best to interact with the State to get the most out of their interactions. “Dots” automatically connect. Messages are tailored to needs and guidance is offered before it's needed. Every citizen has confidence in the State at every point in the journey. A relationship has formed and is cultivated through deeper connections with citizens. This is what we are building in Missouri, and we believe that this is “better government.”

