

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Government

## Customer Overview

Mass.gov is the state's one-stop gateway to comprehensive, integrated online government services and information. The portal is transforming the way the government conducts business by providing citizens, businesses and local governments intuitive access to a wide range of valuable information on public services and community concerns including housing, education, employment, recreation, transportation and health.

## The Challenge

Once a pioneer in Internet offerings, the state of Massachusetts' Web offerings were less than impressive in recent years. One of the first states to let drivers renew car registration online and to institute an electronic procurement system for agencies to purchase supplies, the Commonwealth fell behind other states' aggressive pursuit of online portals and other e-government initiatives.

This lack of technical innovation meant constituents experienced inconveniences and inefficiencies. Massachusetts citizens and businesses faced complicated processes, overwhelming bureaucracy, and a paperintensive and time consuming process when conducting business with the Commonwealth.

The pressure was on the Commonwealth to create a high utility portal that would be a full service, enterprise-wide site providing access to all information and services of the Commonwealth, rather than to serve as a disparate collection of agency Web sites. The site sought to give customers convenient access to Massachusetts government on their own schedule, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and save time and money for the state and customers by encouraging citizen self-service.

## Portal Goals

The Commonwealth had a number of objectives they wanted to meet, including to connect with citizens more effectively, organize information more intuitively according to customer needs or intentions, provide a unified face to the public and remove the bureaucracy of government structure.

## The Solution

"The Commonwealth of Massachusetts envisioned a portal that would shape the future of digital government in Massachusetts by providing easy and reliable access to improved services, while increasing government efficiency and accountability," explains David Lewis, Chief Information Officer, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Via Mass.gov, the public can retrieve relevant information online and conduct transactions conveniently and efficiently across multiple agencies, without navigating the bureaucracy of government. In specific areas of the portal, such as "online services," a user can access transactions directly from one site, even if the delivery of the service involves multiple agencies. Mass.gov is intentions-based, giving customer access to information by broad themes – such as "doing business," "work and education," "having fun," and "your government" – rather than connections to specific agencies.

Customers then select from progressively more specific topics to find the services they are seeking. For example, the "home and health" category on Mass.gov covers housing and family concerns. "A customer doesn't know or care if they deal with Medicare or the Office of Child Services," says Steve Crosby, Chief of Staff to Governor Jane Swift, "All they know is they're getting access to all child services."

The Mass.gov portal enables users to visit a central gateway, rather than going to multiple agencies' Web sites for tasks such as renewing car registration, purchasing commuter passes, searching for childcare or ordering a duplicate driver's license. As a result, the average citizen is offered improved access to services, as well as the resources to research and follow-up at their own convenience.

## The Results

The Mass.gov portal significantly transforms the manner in which citizens interact with the government. With faster self-service turnaround, the portal encourages user adoption of online government interactions and supports the electronic aggregation of state information and services. The portal streamlines operations, simplifies procedures and cuts costs, all while expanding online services.

- Citizen self-service translates into lower service administration costs
- Electronic vs. manual aggregation of state information and services means faster transactions and fewer errors
- Replacement of antiquated processes and bureaucracies with sophisticated customer service oriented model gains efficiencies
- Shared infrastructure lowers operational, development and hardware costs
- High perceived value and greater convenience for constituents leads to increased user satisfaction and adoption
- Efficiencies, standardization and economies of scale translate into reduced IT costs

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With the unveiling of its new portal, Massachusetts is back as one of the strongest e-government players. The portal has been shaped not only by officials from the three branches of government, but also by representatives of municipalities, businesses, consumer groups and academia. Together, they have recast Massachusetts’ constituents as customers, and have focused on replacing antiquated processes with a more sophisticated customer-service focus.

Mass.gov will enable Massachusetts to transform their Web site into a transactional hub, and transition their bureaucracies into efficient, citizen-convenient organizations.

According to the Delphi Group’s Hadley Reynolds, states like Massachusetts are proving more innovative in portal deployments than their private sector counterparts, “It’s such a natural for state governments to move as much of their business as they can to the Web. In some ways, they get more bang for the buck from their portal implementations than businesses.” Portal technology is ideal for government because of the breadth of services that states offer, the size of their constituencies and the need to connect the two.

## About Vignette

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