Going Mobile in Illinois: State agencies develop mobile platforms to improve services for all

Summary

The State of Illinois has been modernizing, streamlining, and transforming its technology. Previously, the state's systems had been antiquated, inefficient, and non-productively siloed.

The transformation is built on the IllinoisFIRST IT strategy: Fast, Innovative, Responsive, Smarter, Technology deployment. IllinoisFIRST is founded on establishing a borderless culture for IT across the state, making the effort through a series of 75-day sprints with the premise of running IT as a business.

The journey is built on four key foundational pillars: using a common back-office enterprise ERP system, transforming the business of IT, establishing statewide data analytics practice, and **going mobile in Illinois**.

The initial results of the strategy have been overwhelmingly positive for the state. **The MobileFIRST initiative, launched in early 2016, has particularly exceeded expectations.**

To serve the growing number of people "going mobile" in daily life, the DoIT team in conjunction with agency leadership teams across the (7) services deliver verticals strategized the best ways to help state agencies become "mobile enabled," serving citizens, businesses, visitors and employees alike through mobile devices. DoIT released its first four mobile apps in 2016. With a scaled development strategy in place, the goal to work with agencies to release one mobile enabling solution per month was achieved more than twice over in the time that followed. Since the initial four apps were launched, the state has released 38 additional apps serving health and human services, public safety, regulation and compliance, employment services, education, environmental services and economic development.

With the rapid adoption of new mobile apps across the state, the MobileFIRST approach lead to the release of the IllinoisFIRST app, which hosts access to all current apps, portals and platforms provided by the state of Illinois. Through the app, users can easily search for available Illinois mobile services, and subscribe to receive updates when new services they need become available. This achieves both the mobile initiative's goal of improving state service delivery and the overall IllinoisFIRST goal of making state systems seamless and interoperable.

Further achievements of MobileFIRST included making 87% of Illinois websites mobile responsive, including Illinois.gov, and implementing a framework to guide agencies through developing mobile apps using the Mobile Innovation Center resources initially, then their own for final versions. The initiative has made great progress since the beginning of 2016.

- Citizen interaction points that are mobile enabled has risen from 1% to 32%
- Number of licenses being renewed online and via a mobile device has risen from 3% to 22%
- Number of state workers using mobile applications for their every day jobs has now increased to 20%.
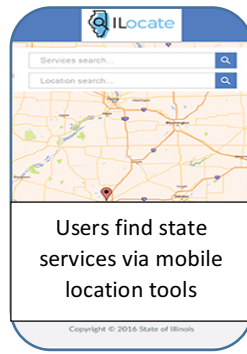
Problem

When IllinoisFIRST began, an unprecedented number of people used mobile devices, rather than PCs or other sources, as their main means of communication and research. But most Illinois agencies did not offer mobile platforms, services, or portals or provided them in limited fashion. In fact, at the start of that year, only 1% of the state's potential mobile interaction points were enabled, and few systems were in place to build technology to increase that coverage. DoIT, working as the service provider for Illinois agencies, recognized that becoming "mobile enabled" was crucial to serving state citizens, visitors and employees. Before mobile enabling took place, these users would be frustrated by the extra steps required, in person, online, or via traditional mail to access a state service or function that they could have instantly accessed on their phones or other mobile devices.

Analysis

The State of Illinois team addressed this problem both in the short term, by starting to develop relevant mobile platforms for various agencies, and in the long term, by empowering agencies to launch and maintain mobile solutions for themselves. Setting a goal of one mobile solution release per month, the project team focused on challenges faced by a few specific agencies, then assessed methods to scale solutions for a broader range of agencies. They implemented a common security system, mobile device management system and hosting platform, but left more granular developments largely to agencies themselves. Eventually, the process of providing initial lean training to agencies while letting them steer the mobile development proved to be a low-cost, high-yield approach.

Solution

In August 2016, DoIT officially released four mobile solutions. All are still functioning, and DoIT has since helped launch over 30 more mobile enabling options for various agencies.

| State employees receive tech updates | Users find state services via mobile location tools | Attendees find vendors & attractions | Students & parents access college choice & financial aid tools |

Throughout 2016 and 2017, DoIT's strategy for helping state agencies develop, release, and maintain mobile solutions proved successful. It continued to gain momentum.

DoIT Strategy: Helping State Agencies Create Mobile Solutions Preparations

Ideation	Development	Launch

- **Agency** defines mobile solution needs & budget
- **DoIT** designs a mockup of potential solution, based on knowledge of enterprise technologies

- **DoIT** collaborates with Agency through "lean" mobile training
- **Agency** uses **DoIT**, in-house & outside resources to create mobile solution

- **Agency** releases solution independently

Impact

By mid-2017, DoIT's strategy to grow mobile coverage showed significant results.

Goals for Going Mobile in Illinois	Achieved by June 2017
Release **1** solution per month from August 2016 **(16 total)**	Average of **4.6** solutions released per month **(39 total)**
Increase mobile coverage **from 1% to 80%**	Increased coverage **to 32%**

The increased mobile coverage showed its intended impact: improving the Illinois government's delivery of services, especially to citizens. Results range from an app that helps out-of-state visitors learn about historical sites of interest, to a program that issues mobile phones to DCFS employees so they can accurately record home visits and ensure their assigned children are safe.

DoIT's mobile releases in April 2017, **Illinois.gov** and **Illinois FIRST**, both synthesized existing digital services. **Illinois.gov** now includes a mobile-optimized portal that lists the websites for all 88 Illinois state

agencies. It acts as an easy-to-check directory for anyone with a phone who is looking for services. **IllinoisFIRST** is a mobile app that provides a list of other available state apps and mobile services.

Noted "Going Mobile in Illinois" Successes:

Mobile Enabled Licensing Continues to Expand at DFPR

THe Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (DFPR) announced Nursing as the latest in their mobile enabled online license offerings. DFPR is on target to have 75 percent of new licenses available online by the end of June. The agency oversees more than 200 licensing categories for businesses and residents in Illinois. More on their mobile enabled online licensing can found here.

New Look for State Fire Marshall

The Illinois State Fire Marshall (SFM) launched their new mobile enabled website. The development focused on a new design and features that make it easy for users to navigate, including dynamically driven listings of the most frequently used forms and applications.

Illinois Department of Agriculture Modernizes Egg Inspections

The Illinois Department of Agriculture's Egg Inspection Program recently used technology to improve the inspection process for day to day regulatory functions. Prior to the fall of 2015, the program had been using an outdated, largely paper-based system. The program now uses a new mobile web-based system that allows for data to be updated and accessible in real time.

Mobile Case Management Bringing Benefits to DCFS

DCFS has been using mobile technology for over a year and the new system is showing impressive results, including the ability to now complete critical tasks in days rather than weeks. The mobile app is deployed to nearly 1,000 DCFS front line investigators, caseworkers and supervisors. Future plans include rolling out the app to private agency caseworkers to achieve full integration.

'Experience History' with IHPA's Innovative Mobile App

The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) is announcing the release of their new mobile app known as 'Experience History'. The app brings history alive with pictures and information, making it easier to learn about historic sites in Illinois. Additionally, 'Experience History' is the first app to integrate mobile payment functionality through the E-Pay Program, which DoIT will be including in other states sites in the future.

IEMA Launches New Version of WebEOC

The team at IEMA recently launched the latest mobile friendly version of the WebEOC (Emergency Operations Center) tool to support the mission of crisis management, public safety and emergency response personnel. The new application features a fresh interface for an improved, customizable web and mobile use. DoIT helped enable the operations team at IEMA's vision and provided training opportunities to ensure user readiness prior to going live on February 6. The new version will help meet IEMA's need for improving real-time information.

Improvements

A goal of "Going Mobile in Illinois" is to mobile enable all interaction points by citizens, businesses, visitors and employees. Agencies who provide these services have diverse needs, resources, goals, and "customers" to consider. It is essential for agencies who participate to assess exactly what a mobile solution should offer their "customers". They should also identify specific parameters that make this solution possible to achieve, ultimately independently. These agencies should share their learnings with other agencies, so the mobile solution strategy can keep growing faster and more efficient. Finally all entities involved, including DoIT, can continue learning from enterprise mobile solutions, implementing the best practices they see succeed in business fields.

References

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