

2016 IACA Merit Awards

Nova Scotia – Restaurant & Accommodation
Industry Sector Bundle



NOVA SCOTIA

Executive Summary

Today, Nova Scotians have to figure out government. This takes valuable time, can be confusing, lead to delays in opening a business, or not accessing programs that may be necessary or beneficial.

Service Nova Scotia, acting as lead on behalf of the government of Nova Scotia, launched the Restaurant and Accommodations Industry Sector Bundle in June, 2015, as a feature within Nova Scotia's online service for business (www.novascotia.ca/mybusiness). This project was unique because of the client centered approach the project team employed. Too often, government is heavily focused on its own needs and requirements. The government-wide project team collaborated with industry to focus on what businesses needed to know from government in order to operate in Nova Scotia, then designed a service around those needs.

The outcome was a reusable framework for sector-specific bundling, jointly developed with business and government. It is now easier and faster for business to interact with government. This project represents a significant change in how government can design services to better meet the needs of Nova Scotians. This project is an excellent example of an innovative change that the International Association for Commercial Administrators (IACA) could benefit by learning from the experience of Nova Scotia.

Applicant Information

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Project Description

The Restaurant and Accommodations Industry Sector Bundle, launched in June of 2015, used a client centred service design approach to focus on what government information and requirements entrepreneurs need to know about and comply with in order to operate a restaurant or accommodations business in Nova Scotia. The Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle provides easy access to all of the information that an entrepreneur in this industry would need to start or grow their business in one online location without the need to understand how government is structured and operates.

Nova Scotia has been acknowledged by our peers as a national leader in client-centred approach to service design. This project represented a different way for government to work together (horizontally), and with business (collaboratively). This new approach allowed for the design of a service that makes it easier for business to interact with government, and can lead to higher program compliance and government efficiency.

This project was unique as it involved the creation of a cross-government management working committee to understand all of the regulatory requirements from a sector-based view instead of a departmental view. Furthermore, the focus was placed on the client's perspective (client-centred). Too often, government is heavily focused on its own needs and requirements. The government-wide project team collaborated with industry to focus on what businesses needed to know from government to operate in Nova Scotia, then designed a service around those needs.

The outcome was a reusable framework for sector-specific bundling, jointly developed with business and government. It is now easier and faster for business to interact with government. This project represents a significant change in how government can design services to better meet the needs of Nova Scotians.

Project Objectives

- To reduce the administrative burden for business associated with finding and then understanding what programs and services they need to comply with or have

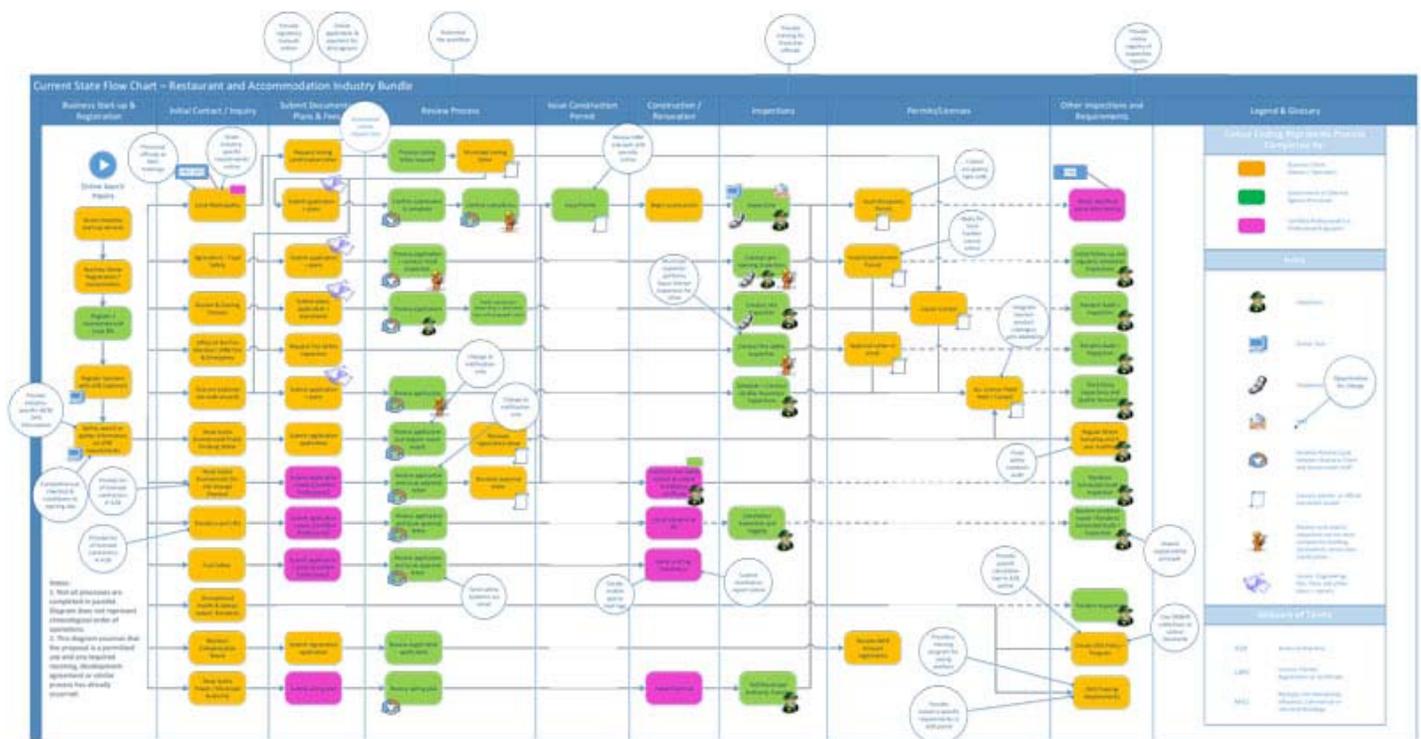
access to when starting or operating a business in Nova Scotia, and specifically a restaurant or accommodations business.

- To develop a repeatable approach that will enable the addition of new bundles more easily.
- To develop a service that makes it easier for business to interact with government at a time that is convenient for them (i.e. digital service available outside of traditional business hours).

Project Effectiveness

The Restaurant and Accommodations service bundle was launched in June, 2015, as a feature within Nova Scotia's online service for business. This is an industry-specific bundle of online information, services and applications (licences/permits). This sector was chosen as the first bundle because it represented one of the most prevalent small-to-medium sized business sectors in Nova Scotia, with a large number of new start-ups yearly that need to comply with a significant amount of regulatory requirements. It is well understood that the impact of administrative and regulatory burden on small-to-medium sized businesses is significant and can be a barrier to starting or effectively maintaining operations.

Prior to the launch of this service, clients had no clear way of knowing where to start, what requirements they had to comply with or which levels of government were involved in obtaining the necessary requirements for getting their business started. By engaging with multiple programs horizontally across government, the project team was able to develop a current state process map, outlining all potential touch points with government someone looking to start a restaurant or accommodation business in Nova Scotia could have:



Bundling this group of services makes it easier, faster and more convenient to start or operate a restaurant or accommodations business. It has created one place for clients to learn about: government requirements, including licence prerequisites; mandatory inspections; and licences, permits and other program opportunities from all three levels of government (federal, provincial, and municipal). Wherever possible, the bundle also affords the user the immediate ability to apply and pay for the required services, licences and permits online, right from the bundle. Clients are also able to create a personalized task list that will help to keep track of and manage all of the important steps required to start a business in this sector.

In addition to the core project team, a Management Working Committee was pivotal to the project's success. The Management Working Committee was a group of program owners representing municipalities and provincial departments responsible for providing input into the overall project direction, all of whom have a direct responsibility for regulatory requirements that touch the restaurant and accommodations industry. The group collaborated to create a holistic view of the industry that encompassed a wide variety of regulatory programs. The members chose to participate with a view to improving client service and ensuring that the information was delivered to the client in a meaningful and useful way. The Management Working Committee was vital to the success of the project and was an

excellent example of cross-governmental cooperation to help reduce the burden for businesses clients in the province. This collaboration has demonstrated how government can work together differently to improve services for Nova Scotians, while increasing program compliance and creating efficiencies.

Project Innovation

The bundle supports “Innovation” as it is based on a client-centered approach and perspective.

Government traditionally operates in silos and focuses on providing the information that best serves its own requirements and interests. The Restaurant and Accommodations project team approached the bundle work very differently. The approach was very collaborative and focused on the sector/client needs as opposed to those of the government departments and program areas.

To successfully achieve the client centered approach involved engaging our stakeholders in a completely differently way and with a completely different lens. By establishing a project stakeholder forum, called the Management Working Committee, the project team brought together a diverse group of government stakeholders who would not typically have been present in the same room to work on a focused project. This collaboration was key to understanding how each of their programs were connected, and helped to clarify differences in understanding between the government stakeholders. The Management Working Committee created a forum for government to think about its work differently.

Industry representatives were also heavily engaged throughout the process. When this project was initiated, an Industry Advisory Group was established that included association representatives and business owners from the restaurant and accommodations industry. This group provided critical input to the project strategy and approach by providing the project team with information on issues, objectives and overall design approach. Additionally, when designing the service, representatives from the restaurant and accommodations industry were involved with design testing (known as usability testing) which helped the team build a design

based on their needs. The bundled service was approached from the business client's perspective that allows a business person who uses the service to understand what they need to do.

The combination of the Management Working Committee, the Industry Advisory Group and the client-centric (sector) approach created a very innovative solution that government can continue to refine, but also take away the lessons learned to the design of other services it delivers.

Project Originality

As the first of its kind in Canada, the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle successfully demonstrates a completely new way for governments to design and build digital services that are focused on the needs of the end users.

The industry sector-based approach that was used in the development of the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle removes government silos and provides easy access to all of the information that an entrepreneur in this industry would need to start or grow their business in one online location.

The bundle contains industry-specific information on which services, licences, permits and approvals are needed to start or expand a business in the Restaurant and Accommodations industry. Wherever possible, the bundle also affords the user the immediate ability to apply and pay for the required services, licences and permits online, right from the bundle.

This is a new way for government to present information to its clients and also a new way that business clients are being asked to interact with government. The bundle removes the need for our clients to understand the structures of government and how it works. This new approach leads to a complete, seamless, efficient and satisfying experience for our clients which is a major goal of all service providers.

The technical and strategic approach taken while developing the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle ensures that we can leverage this work as the foundation

upon which to design, build and more quickly launch subsequent sector bundles that will benefit more of our business clients in other sectors.

One of the objectives of this project was to build a service that clients find so easy and useful that they actually want to use it. To accomplish this goal for the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle, a completely new stakeholder consultation and engagement approach was required that would inform the project team as to what the end users (the clients) needed out of the service.

The overall approach to the development of the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle was based on a client-centred service design principle which is a new and innovative lens through which we asked our government partners to view and build this service.

In practical terms this means that instead of government providing information that it believes to be important and useful, the end users are asked what they feel would be useful information to help them complete their transactions with government.

Understanding the differences in these two perspectives can often be enlightening and can significantly influence how government and information providers view their services. Client-centred service design is based on evidence and feedback from real end users of the proposed service.

In the case of the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle, this meant that the project team worked closely with industry associations and business owners to involve them throughout the life-cycle of the new bundled service from ideation and design to prototype testing and plain language review. The result of this type of approach is a product that meets the needs of users as defined by them.

The success of the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle is directly related to the authentic and collaborative engagement approach that the project team had with internal and external government partners through the Management Working Committee and direct industry engagement with business owners and their associations via the Industry Advisory Group. The active involvement of both these groups ensured that the result would be of value to the individuals using the service. They truly helped to shape and design the final service.

Significance and Transferability

Governments around the world are facing greater pressures and expectations from their citizens to provide higher levels of services using increasingly limited resources. To meet these challenges, governments (including Nova Scotia) have recognized the opportunities that digital services offer for provision of high quality services at a fraction of the cost of other service delivery channels.

The government of Nova Scotia is one of the leading jurisdictions in Canada who is developing and delivering services to its citizens via the digital channel.

The Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle, as the first of its kind, is a building block upon which more sector-specific bundles can be based. It is too early to estimate government's overall operational efficiencies that have been realized by the implementation of the bundle, but the cost of delivering online services in general is significantly less than those associated with all other channels.

The economic and social benefits of the bundle on Nova Scotia's business community, while hard to measure, will be significant as they will no longer need to spend their time and resources on navigating government requirements and visiting government offices. They can instead focus on starting and growing their business which will help to grow the economy of Nova Scotia.

Digital service delivery, including the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle, creates a better environment for people wanting to start a business in Nova Scotia by removing the barriers to service access for people with disabilities and for those who live in rural areas.

Digital service delivery also significantly decreases the environmental foot print of government service delivery by removing the need for clients to travel to government offices as they can access the services from their homes or businesses.

Ever increasing service delivery efficiencies for government will be realized as more bundles and services are offered online because they afford the ability to reduce the resources assigned to the in-person and telephone service delivery channels.

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from the development and release of the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle has already informed and improved the efficiency of how similar service bundles will be rolled out.

The second industry sector bundle, focussing on the convenience store sector, was launched in the fall of 2015 and realized significant savings in development and implementation costs (from \$800,000 for Restaurant and Accommodations bundle to \$100,000 for Convenience Store bundle). The costs for additional industry sector bundles will continue to decrease as more efficiencies are realized by the work that was started by the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle.

The Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle has been recognized by the Public Sector Service Delivery Council of Canada (PSSDC) as being the first service of its kind in Canada. The sector-specific focus of the bundle is unique in Canada, and other jurisdictions are using it as a model for how to build their own industry sector service bundles.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses has recognized the government of Nova Scotia's work on the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle with a Golden Scissors nomination for its part in reducing red tape for businesses.

As part of government's responsibility to growing Nova Scotia's economy, online bundling of services represents a significant step in making it easier to do business in Nova Scotia.

Additional Information

Clients can access the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle service through Nova Scotia's online service for business by visiting www.novascotia.ca/mybusiness and clicking on the "Start or Grow My Business" link:

Clients can use the Restaurant and Accommodations Bundle service on Nova Scotia's online service for business in the following three easy steps:

1. *Review the steps:* A client will review all of the steps in the interactive step-by-step guide and easily explore each step to learn more about the tasks, and determine the ones that apply to their unique business situation.



Step 1: Review the steps.

2. *Review the tasks:* When they have determined which tasks apply to them, they can select a task to learn more about the options available to them.

You are viewing the steps for operating a **Full-Service Restaurant** located in **Halifax (Regional Municipality)** for **Janina's Cafe** Change

1 Register Business

Categories	Tasks	
Planning Your Business	Research industry »	Find a location and consult the municipality office »
Registering Your Business	Search & reserve your business name »	Register your business »
Business Programs and Policies	Plan for workplace health and safety »	Determine if workplace injury insurance is required »

Business certificate and Business Number issued

Add your business to your online account »

[See all tasks in this phase](#) Phase 2

- Apply for Licences and Permits +
- Build or Renovate +
- Schedule Inspections +
- Additional Licences, Policies and Programs +
- You're In Business +

Step 2: Review the tasks.

3. *Complete task specific activities:* When they have found a task that applies to them, they can easily complete the task (i.e. complete a licence application form).
- For tasks that are unable to be completed online, a client can find out more information to complete the task.
 - Clients can save any of the tasks to a personalized task list to come back to later.
 - Online application forms are prepopulated with their business specific information.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for '1. Register Business'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'View All Tasks for 1. Register Business' and a dropdown menu. To the right are three buttons: 'Save Tasks', 'View Saved', and 'Print Tasks'. Below the navigation bar is a blue header with the number '1' and the text 'Register Business', and an 'Expand All' link. The main content area is divided into sections. The first section is 'Prerequisites: In order to complete this phase of business startup you must have already completed: N/A'. Below this are two expandable sections: 'Category: Planning Your Business' with the task 'Research Industry' (plus sign), and 'Category: Registering Your Business' with the task 'Search and reserve business name' (minus sign). The 'Search and reserve business name' section is expanded, showing three sub-tasks: 'Business Incorporation' (Required by anyone who wants to incorporate a business in Nova Scotia. Complete Form Save Form), 'Business Name, Sole Proprietorship or Partnership: Registration' (Required by anyone who wants to carry on business in Nova Scotia, either on their own or with partners. Complete Form Save Form), and 'Business Name: Search and Reservation' (Find out if a business name is already in use in Nova Scotia. Reserve a business name for their own use. Complete Form Save form). At the bottom, there is another expandable section: 'Category: Registering Your Business' with the task 'Register business name' (plus sign).

Step 3: Complete task specific activities.

Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHJEDC-ej4E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GY3KARa0Vxo&feature=youtu.be>

News Reports

CTV

<http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/nova-scotia-streamlines-processes-in-restaurant-and-accommodations-sector-1.2457984>

CBC

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-government-brings-business-permit-applications-online-1.3141379>

Chronicle Herald

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1297635-n.s.-website-caters-to-restaurant-accommodation-sector>

Metro News

<http://www.metronews.ca/news/halifax/2015/07/07/one-stop-online-shop-province-launches-new-website-for-restaurant-operators.html>

CTV News (Convenience Store bundle)

<http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-s-government-launches-new-convenience-store-bundle-1.2621318>