IACA 2008 - SALT LAKE CITY

UNITING LOCAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Merit Award
Application and Criteria

Completed applications must be received by: <u>March 15, 2008</u>

Send completed application to: Randy Moes
1019 Brazos, Suite 505
Austin, TX 78701

Criteria:

1. Any technology project initiated by the filing office that improved the efficiency of the office, service to the customer or otherwise benefited the office; or
2. Any innovative changes in your office that have been implemented that have allowed the office to continue or increase its efficiency.
3. Only those projects that have not been previously selected for recognition and which are presently in operation may be nominated (projects which are planned or currently under development are not eligible)
4. Application must be accompanied by a separate detailed description of the project or innovation and must demonstrate how it has enhanced your office. Award recipients will be given 10 minutes at the 2008 IACA Conference to present their project.
5. While specific content of the submission is not mandated, project should include; an introduction to the project, description of the project, results of implementation, cost-benefit of project and lessons learned.

Jurisdiction: __State of Hawaii_____

Submitted by: __Tung Chan, administrator for the Business Registration Division of Hawaii

Date Submitted: _March 15, 2008_____

Brief Description:

Hawaii Purchase Documents Online application is an innovative solution, which provides the public with online access to public documents. Customers who wish to buy copies of their articles of incorporation or other filed documents may preview and order documents online, and receive a copy of the requested document electronically. This application improves the efficiency of the agency's ordering process significantly. It incorporates an internal workflow for redaction of private information from the documents and back-scanning of paper copies into .pdf's for emailing. This service allows more convenience and faster service to the public, especially those who live on the neighbor islands off of Oahu. The website for the service is at **http://hbe.ehawaii.gov/documents/**.

Detailed Description:

In its continuous effort to offer more services online and improve these services, Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs (DCCA), Business Registration Division (BREG) launched the Purchase Documents Online application in January 2008.

The online service lets the public easily purchase most BREG filed documents online. This is a new service that is part of a redesign of the pre-existing online Certificate of Good Standing issuance application. Buyers can now begin the purchasing process of any BREG documents with a simple business name search online. When the entity name appears on the screen, the buyer can confirm the business entity by reviewing the accompanying company information along with a list of available documents for purchase (including documents such as filed annual renewal applications, articles of incorporations and other initial business filings, and trade name, trade mark and service mark filings). The buyer may use the preview feature to see a sample of a document before purchasing it. The preview feature is only available on documents that have been redacted or reviewed previously by BREG staff. After the payment is processed, there are two types of availability. About 50,000 documents are available immediately so that the user may download the document instantly from the webpage (purchasers also receive an email copy). For all other documents that are ordered that are not instantly downloadable, these documents need to be scanned in or redacted and are emailed to the purchaser within 1-3 business days after staff processing.

For these documents that need staff processing, the internal DCCA BREG workflow was re-engineered and streamlined on the backend to accommodate electronic processing. A Manual Review queue was created as part of the system for these kinds of documents that require staff attention to back scan or redact the document. When the public requests such a document, the request goes into the manual queue. Staff pick up the request from the queue, scan and review the document and then mark it in the database as available. This triggers the fulfillment process where the automated system then retrieves the scanned document and sends it by email to the customer. The same document is now available for preview and instant purchase the next time a customer requests this document through the online system. It no longer requires additional staff processing the next time it is requested.

Cost-Benefit:

The online system was developed at no cost to the tax-payer. The DCCA ISCO and the Hawaii State Portal Manager, Hawaii Information Consortium LLC (HIC) developed it in partnership. HIC and ISCO have partnered on many applications in the past including the online filing application (Hawaii Business Express) and annual filing registrations.

Prior to the online system, BREG received on an average of 1,000 requested documents per month. Each document cost $0.25 cents per page and customers had to come to the office to physically retrieve the documents. If they couldn't come to the offices, they could make a request by phone and pay by check but had to wait for the check to clear before a document would be sent. So the public had to choose either an expensive trip downtown or a long delay by mail.

By contrast, with our new application, customers can request documents online and pay by credit card. If the document is immediately available, the system lets the customer download the document instantly. For documents that are not immediately available, the document is processed by staff and emailed to the customer within 1-3 business days. The processed document becomes instantly available for online purchases the next time it is requested. The online system eliminates the need for someone to come to the office, find and pay for parking, wait in line, and then paying only by cash or check. For remote orders, users no longer need to wait for check clearance and mail time before receiving documents. It is a vastly improved service for the public in both speed and efficiency, especially for businesses located on the neighbor islands who have a much harder time traveling to the registration offices on Oahu.

The online system also improves the document imaging work flow within BREG. Once a document that needs staff processing is ordered, scanned, and stored, then the same document will not require further review/scan to fulfill future orders of that document. This reduces staff resources of reviewing the document again, improves efficiency and reduces redundancy, allowing staff to concentrate on other work that requires attention.

For someone who lives only 25 miles away from the office and drives to our counters to get a document, it will cost them over $8.25 for parking, gas and cost of the document in order to get a single page copy of a document. If they live on a different island, that cost increases by $60-$100 to fly over to purchase a document. If that same person orders by phone, the delay of mailing a check in and then receiving the document may increase by two weeks. The online service is far more convenient and efficient. It costs $3.00 flat for any document and documents are available either instantly or emailed within 1-3 business days.

Lessons Learned:

Redaction of private information like the SSN from filed documents was a major challenge. Our information is stored with a vendor that does not allow us to easily extract the information in bulk and modify it. Because of this, redaction was particularly expensive and difficult. We thought this might indefinitely delay the project.

But after much thought, we came up with a solution. We decided to divide the documents into two groups and find solutions for them separately. For the group of electronic documents we were confident did not contain private information, we made the documents available immediately.

For documents that might have private information, we developed an entirely separate queue system that staff used to receive requests, scan and review requested documents for private information and mark as reviewed. We called this the Manual Review queue. This queue also works for paper documents that need to be scanned into electronic form. Once a document is marked as fully processed from the Manual Review queue, the computer system then automatically retrieves the reviewed document and emails it to the customer.

The two primary lessons from this experience were, first, that we did not need to make all the documents available instantly at once. By breaking the project up into two separate parts where we made some documents available instantly and created a system to provide the rest in a timely manner, we were able to give the public an online service without additional delays. The second lesson was that it is a good idea to build in a Manual Queue alternative for such a big project. Subsequent problems with some of the documents were quickly addressed because we had the option to move documents to the manual queue when there were problems with the instant access documents.

Awards will be presented at the 2008 IACA Conference. Award recipients should be prepared to give a brief presentation (approximately 10 minutes) about their project.