

## IACA MERIT AWARD SUBMISSION

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**OUR PROJECT** - Australasian mobile business searching app, "1 search two countries" - delivering to our SEM vision of a single economic market Australia-New Zealand business environment.



# **NZAUCONNECT PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Introduction**

The Single Economic Market (SEM) Outcomes Framework establishes a number of initiatives that help accelerate the creation of the SEM between Australia and New Zealand. .i.e.

- a single entry point for the registration of companies intending to do trans-Tasman business.
- a web platform enabling people to search both countries' corporate registers.

## **Background**

New Zealand Companies Office's (NZCO) most popular online service is 'Search the Register', where approximately 8 million free register searches are completed annually, while the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) enables over 15 million free searches and 120,000 paid searches annually.

Historically online services were accessed via desktop computer web browsers, however a global mobile movement is happening as smartphone adoption is becoming mainstream. Mobile devices have become indispensable in people's lives and are driving massive change in customer behaviour and expectations. Smartphone penetration in Australia is 65% and more than 51% in New Zealand, up 25% on 2012.

## **Opportunity**

Deliver to the strategic SEM statement using collaboration to achieve economies of scale in the scope, design and implementation of a single mobile search tool that can be supplied to both jurisdictions. "1 search two countries".

## **The Partnership**

NZCO contributed the project management, business analysis and technical development, leveraging existing assets and expertise, while ASIC leveraged their legal trademark / patenting and marketing expertise to ensure the product met market needs. Both countries collaboratively designed, funded and tested the application.

## **Outcomes**

- This project was the first step in delivering to the agency SEM agenda and the platform to enable more ambitious future phases.
- Meets NZ Government's priority to delivering 'Better Public Services' within tight financial constraints.
- Economies of scale make future collaboration very attractive, it is the key to doing more with less.
- Mobility, Simplicity, Convenience ..... integrated online government information, anytime – anywhere.
- Shared products and services across jurisdictions
- Leveraged existing corporate search web services in New Zealand and Australia and it leveraged NZCO's existing mobile server platform to decrease time to deliver this app to market.

<p><b>WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?</b></p>	<p><b>Product Development - Smartphone Application</b></p> <p>An apple and an android app called 'NZAUCONNECT', that enables consumers in New Zealand and Australia to simultaneously search more than 4.2 million registered businesses using their smartphone.</p> <p>NZAUCONNECT was designed to simplify the process of trans-Tasman corporate searching. The details consumers need are provided in an easy to understand format. It provides the ability to save searches to favourites, to email searches and to copy a search to clipboard.</p> <p>The app is available free from the Apple Store and Google Play Store.</p> <p>The app will see people able to search on the go, for free and from any location, provided they have a smartphone with a data/Wi-Fi connection</p>
<p><b>WHY DID YOU DO IT?</b></p>	<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>To deliver to our Single Economic Market (SEM) vision of a seamless New Zealand-Australian business environment, by extending our most popular online service (37M annual corporate searches), to be available via mobile, supporting business mobility making it quicker and easier to do business away from the desktop.</p> <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility, Simplicity, Convenience.... for our customers</li> <li>• Shared products and services across jurisdictions</li> <li>• Enhanced trans-Tasman business collaboration and efficiency</li> <li>• Integrated online government information, anytime - anywhere</li> <li>• A measured approach to understand how our consumers adopt mobile applications (mitigated business risk by starting small and planning to build out)</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHY WAS IT IMPORTANT?</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunity Addressed</b></p> <p>Delivers to the strategic SEM statement by both Governments collaborating to achieve economies of scale in scope, design and implementation. The project optimised products and services supplied in one jurisdiction to be supplied in the other.</p> <p>Officials from NZCO and ASIC have agreed an aspirational vision, to provide a future single entry point for the registration of companies intending to do business on both sides of the Tasman. This project was the first step building the agency SEM relationship and the platform to deliver reduced costs to business.</p> <p>Both Agencies agreed the economies of scale make future collaboration very attractive; it is the key to doing more with less</p>

<p><b>WHO DID IT?</b></p>	
<p><b>WHO ELSE WAS INVOLVED?</b></p>	<p><b>Stakeholders</b>  Hon Craig Foss NZ Minister of Commerce  MBIE CEO David Smol ; MBIE DCE Market Services Greg Patchell;  MBIE GM Business Integrity Services Mandy McDonald  ASIC Commissioner Greg Tanzer (AU)  ASIC senior management and staff</p> <p><b>Key Customers / Stakeholders</b>  NZ Law Society members; NZICA members; Banks; Customers on the go .i.e. mobile mortgage brokers, insurance agents; agencies conducting onsite inspections i.e. customs.</p> <p><b>Other Partners</b>  Apple Store; Google Play Store; IPONZ – for trade marks; In-house legal teams at NZCO &amp; ASIC. MBIE software providers.</p>
<p><b>WHAT DID YOU DO AND WHY?</b></p>	<p><b>Methodology</b></p> <p>The NZAUCONNECT project methodology consisted of 6 phases and 5 governance gates where approval was required by the Project Review Board and /or the Architectural Review Board.</p> <p><b>Monitoring and Evaluation via Video-conferencing</b>  Team meetings were held weekly to agree and track tasks, milestones and to manage risks and issues. Steering meetings were held fortnightly to make the required decisions and govern scope, time and cost and to review risk / issue management.  Our Post Implementation Review included ‘lessons learnt’ and a ‘use/evaluate/improve analysis’ to feed into future collaborations.</p>

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## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

### **1. Effectiveness –Tangible Results and Outcomes achieved:-**

#### **Tangible Results**

- An Apple and an Android app, "1 search two countries" delivers integrated Australasian business information without completing a 2-step search via 2 websites.
- 6,644 downloads in the first 6 months and 82,708 searches to date.
- Average Android Rating = 4.6 & Average Apple Rating = 4+ (*out of 5*)

#### **Customer Feedback**

- "Awesome – simple to use, great app"
- "Very good software – fast and easy to use. I can see this being used by us daily"
- "Can we have a search of Directors and addresses for Australian Companies please."

#### **Success Factors**

- Leveraged existing corporate search web services.
- Apple and Google accepted the app on first submission.
- Completed the first step in delivering to the New Zealand and Australian Governments strategic SEM statement.
- Launched achieving 2,652 downloads and 34,679 searches in the first 3 months - experiencing accelerated growth since.

- Unobtrusive smart banner technology prompts all consumers searching on our websites from a mobile device, that an app now exists and indicates they can download it for free – which minimised our marketing efforts and costs.

## **Outcomes**

- This project was the first step in building the agency relationship and the platform to enable more ambitious future phases.
- Meets NZ Government's priority to delivering 'Better Public Services' within tight financial constraints.
- Economies of scale make future collaboration very attractive, it is the key to doing more with less.
- Mobility, Simplicity, Convenience ..... integrated online government information, anytime – anywhere.
- Shared products and services across jurisdictions
- Leveraged existing corporate search web services in New Zealand and Australia and it leveraged NZCO's existing mobile server platform to decrease time to reach the customer
- A measured approach to understand how our consumers adopt mobile applications (mitigated business risk by starting small and planning to build out)

## **2. Originality – Introduction of a substantially new technology:-**

New Zealand is consistently rated as one of the fastest countries to start a business. We are continually looking for opportunities to maintain that edge, a mobile channel is one of these.

NZAUCONNECT embraces the transition of our focus from a traditional local registry focus to an international industry-wide focus, and supports increased trans-Tasman trade.

Our trans-Tasman jointly funded venture committed NZCO and ASIC to work together and share project challenges, its success means both parties are confident and passionate about achieving the future vision for our customers. e.g. extending searches to include directors (including paid searches for ASIC) and enabling maintenance transactions (changing addresses, etc) and eventually enabling annual return transactions.

NZAUCONNECT is MBIE's and ASIC's first smartphone app, our peers are following our progress and seeking out our guidance e.g. NZ's Insolvency and Trustee Service would like to follow our lead and collaborate with their Australian counterparts to share economies of scale in developing a trans-Tasman search app.

The innovative collaboration between NZCO and ASIC is the key to doing more with less in the future. NZAUCONNECT ensured both the New Zealand and Australian public benefited from economies of scale.

NZAUCONNECT leveraged existing corporate search web services in New Zealand and Australia and it leveraged NZCO's existing mobile server platform to decrease time to market and decrease cost. A mobile application server reduced UAT test time and reduced the risk of change on our registers. (Note - this was essential for ASIC who were running new register stabilisation projects in parallel.)

For a modest total investment (NZ\$150,000), NZAUCONNECT tests the demand for a corporate register mobile application and provides real mobile market statistics to determine the viability of future mobile services.

It provides a future platform to deliver enhanced mobile services to clients. E.g. Director searches, maintenance transactions and annual return transactions.)

### **3. Significance and Transferability 20%**

Australasian corporate digital regulatory services are typically accessed by customers via desktop browsers, however these digital services do not lend themselves well to display on the smaller format of mobile devices. As smartphone adoption is moving mainstream, mobile devices are driving massive changes in customer behavior and expectations. NZAUCONNECT enables services that integrate features of a native application, arguably suiting smartphones best, allowing as they do for application richness and for integration with calendar, contact management, camera, GPS, alerting, charging and other smartphone features.

With 27% Smartphone growth in New Zealand and Australia over the last 12 months it is essential that government services are online and also perform on the platforms and systems most commonly used by customers. NZAUCONNECT delivers a seamless and integrated service via a mobile platform that is increasingly being used by our customers.

Customers no longer need to search for the correct government websites, they are directly linked to the correct services via an app, the differing government agency structures between New Zealand and Australia become transparent.

NZAUCONNECT has transformed trans-Tasman corporate searching services, it is a true example of connected and collaborative digital government services. The project optimised products and services supplied in one jurisdiction to be supplied in the other. |

### **4. Lessons Learnt on the Implementation Road**

- NZCO and ASIC had to gain an appreciation of each other's culture and working protocols which was a little challenging at times. Collaboration meant compromise. The projects' successful outcome provides ASIC and NZCO confidence for faster delivery so future timelines can move at a faster pace.
- Working with multiple Sponsors, multiple Government Ministers and officials that were geographically disparate consumed additional time and extended our Go Live date by two months. We would initiate Ministerial liaison a lot earlier in our next project.
- Legal processes to trademark NZAUCONNECT took twice as long as planned, our next timeline would incorporate additional legal time.