The Computerworld Honors Program

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Final Copy of Case Study

Year:
2013

Status:
Laureate

Organization Name:
EKUBER VENTURES INC

Organization URL:
WWW.EKUBER.COM

Project Name:
GSA OFFICE OF CIO SALESFORCE

Category
Economic Development

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

The Office of CIO within GSA drives its objectives to support innovations which improve productivity, enhance public services, reduce government spending through technology, and encourage standards to support sharing of information within government, business, and for the public. They chose the cloud-based Salesforce platform, with mobile and open standards. With this project, the performance of the organization's mission was significantly improved. 1) Reduced time to deliver services. New IT services delivered through cloud computing with Agile development cut down development costs (conception to production in about 6 weeks for most applications). Approximately 75%

improvement in delivery cycle time and 90% improvement in total cost of operations. Consolidated and migrated 1,700 Lotus Notes applications to 15. Concept to deployment of more than 20 applications (both Salesforce and CMS). 2) Cost reduction. Capital investment pushes the cost base lower. Salesforce solutions have no infrastructure costs. Other approximate cost reductions or saving are infrastructure operating costs reduced by 90%-95%; $5.5M by Ideas The Great Hunt for Ideas; $11M by Event/Conference Approval; $1.2M in savings by IT Spend Tracker, expected to be over $6M over the year. Congressional Assets Inventory System replaces a high-cost maintenance system. 3) Improved utilization of resources. Chatter implementation resulted in 10,000-12,000 active users and over 1,500 online communities. Ideas implementation resulted in improved productivity and cost reduction – 632 ideas with 20,000+ votes. Five ideas have been implemented for significant cost savings. 4) Improved mission performance. The following systems have improved transparency, communication, oversight and productivity: Event/Conference Approval System Project Central allows visibility across hundreds of GSA projects, IT and non-IT; IT Spend Tracker allows visibility of all IT spending; FedRAMP allows collaboration and information sharing with other external federal agencies and OMB.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

Cloud, collaboration, social media, and mobility are part of the new technology framework that is enabling empowerment, connectivity, communication, transparency and productivity at a much faster pace and at a fraction of the cost that is disrupting the business models of most organizations, public and private. GSA is paving the way in being the first federal agency to meet with the Cloud First requirement. GSA OCIO efforts have been an example and a model to be adopted by others. GSA OCIO is being requested by other federal agencies and state governments to share the architecture, governance, security and standards, best practices and lessons learned, and we have jointly made presentations to many of these agencies. The National Institute for Standards and Technology is another agency that joined hands with GSA in resolving the securities issues related to the cloud deployment. There are many characteristics of innovation and ingenuity in this project: 1) The platform and the applications are multi-tenant solutions; 2) repeatability is inherent as it can be adopted by other agencies with minimal change; 3) challenges related to security resolved at GSA have hampered Cloud First initiatives at other federal agencies; 4) best practices are being adopted by other agencies; 5) applications are based on disruptive technologies that have changed the way the workforce thinks and does their work. Embedding Chatter in daily work practices and mass-scale ideas submission, tracking and deployment are disruptive. Enabling transparency to IT

spending, project tracking and events participation across the divisions is disruptive.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

The key objectives included improved productivity, enhanced public services, reduced government spending through technology, and encouragement of standards to support sharing of information. Around January 2012, the operational readiness of the Salesforce platform was complete. The new Systems Integrator began to add value right after, on both the Salesforce as well as Open Standards Web CMS/Portal platform. With Chatter rollout, the implementation of this 2nd phase was over. Each of these objectives was met in a shorter period of time than anticipated and each effort surpassed the expectations of the stakeholders. The combined team has shown exceptional performance and superior execution capability for the success of the project. We have accomplished the following within scope, budget and time. Chatter rollout brought social collaboration in the daily workflow and increased the productivity across the various divisions of GSA while cutting the cycle time for public service responsiveness (improved productivity and public service). The Ideas launch has brought a sense of inclusion amongst the employees and savings of $5.5M for GSA. Migrated 1,700 applications (cost reduction); FedRAMP (sharing information across agencies); IT Spend Tracker and Event/Conference Approval reduced government spending, approximately $9M-$10M in savings/avoidance and 20 new applications. Project Central gives visibility to hundreds of projects and increases public service.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Writing to the Office of CIO, one customer from the Citizens Services Department wrote, "Just wanted to let you know that the OCIO Enterprise Solutions Team knocked our socks off today. They have gone above and beyond our initial request and have delivered (in an amazingly short amount of time) capabilities that let us more agilely respond to our customer requests." An anticipated outcome of this project was to provide the government with a comprehensive, customer-oriented, easy to navigate Portal/Content Management System and collaborative cloud-based applications that follow industry best practices, incorporating personalized and collaborative features that can improve customer intimacy, operational excellence and innovation through 1) employee productivity; 2) enterprise efficiency; 3) elimination of redundancy and duplication across the

silos of the enterprise; 4) leveraging the strength of each individual's skills by collaborating across the fabric of the enterprise and across other governmental organizations. The primary customers of the project are citizens, other government agencies and GSA's own workforce and contracting staff. This program aspires to enhance external customer-facing GSA.gov and GSA's internal employee portal, integrate them with cloud- and mobile-based applications for real-time information, and provide state-of-the-art functionality that incorporates 1) collaboration and communication amongst the workforce, customers and partners; 2) leverages social media for all stakeholders; 3) provides a common platform that is scalable and cost effective; 4) fosters innovation by inviting diversity of ideas and converting them into real-world use through rapid prototyping and application development based on Agile methodology that cuts across the artificial boundaries of GSA divisions and other governmental agencies. The benefits align well with the organizational priorities associated with serving the external customers, cost reductions, operational excellence and innovation.

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

We utilize the Agile methodology to deliver solutions, cutting the concept to delivery cycle time from 6 month to 6 weeks. Applications such as IT Spend Tracker, Project Central, Event/Conference Approval and Chatter enable transparency in spending and performance, improved governance, and public service and enable innovation and diversity by following the "Every Brain in the Game" concept. Many of the applications developed by GSA OCIO can be used by other government agencies with minimal change and customization. The impact of the cloud- and CMS-based applications has been across GSA to its entire workforce and contractors as well as GSA's customers and other federal agencies. For example, FedRAMP allows collaboration and information sharing with other external federal agencies and OMB, where as FDCCI application supports data center consolidation efforts across agencies. This data, previously worked through Excel spreadsheets, is accessible on Cloud to federal agencies with immediate reporting capability. This project has delivered significant cost savings/avoidance to the tune of at least $10M in the first year of its operation. It has been of tremendous value to the different departments within GSA, the workforce, partners and customers. At this rate, over the four-year life of the project, its value in savings and cost avoidance can be significant. With requests from other agencies for best practices and lessons learned, the impact of the GSA's leadership in cloud, social media, collaboration and mobility is going to be felt across the federal government. There are plans to incorporate other features

of mobility and collaboration, such as communities and HTML 5, that will enable access and collaboration in a secure fashion.

If there are any other details that the judges should know about this project, please note them here. (In 300 words or less.)

The quality of customer experience is tremendous. For example, Project Central enabled all the program managers, team members and management to have access and visibility to each program's success individually or in aggregation and each one of them can respond to the public in an informed way. FedRAMP enables sharing of information across agencies. Chatter and Ideas empower the workforce and enable better customer service to all stakeholders. Following are some of the statistics: 12,000 social collaboration accounts; 50% are active on average; about 70% active in some months; 1,200 communities; 1,200-1,400 weekly posts; 1,100 files shared. Some of these applications have been in the media: GSA launches data dashboard for GWACs (Federal Computer Week); Event/Conference Approval System, The General Services Administration projects it will save $11 million from April to September thanks to reforms to employee travel and agency conferences (http://www.federalnewsradio.com/935/3012552/GSA-expects-11M-savings-from-travel-conference-cuts); Chatter and Ideas Chatter has helped increase workspace collaboration, cutting cycle time and improving productivity and visibility; Ideas Hunt has resulted in $5M + in savings (http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/gsa-expects-to-save-55-million-annually-based-on-employees-suggestions/2012/08/22/142b2a94-ec91-11e1-a80b-9f898562d010_story.html).