



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Year:

2013

Status:

Laureate

Organization Name:

Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry

Organization URL:

www.dli.state.pa.us

Project Name:

Pennsylvania JobGateway

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.)

In 2012, Pennsylvania was experiencing rising unemployment as well as significant debt and structural insolvency with the Unemployment Compensation trust fund. Additionally, the Commonwealth began mandating work search requirements for Unemployment Compensation claimants effective January 1, 2012. To help Pennsylvania address these issues, in February 2012, the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry launched the "Job Match Initiative" to help Pennsylvanians find jobs. As one of the key programs that form Governor Tom Corbett's Jobs First PA strategy, the purpose of the Job Match Initiative was to transform how job seekers find sustaining employment and employers find skilled candidates. The team approached the challenge by designing, developing and implementing a new portal focused on re-employment

services using leading technologies to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers. With the initial portal launched in under five months, an iterative approach was taken to initially provide services to Unemployment Compensation Claimants, then to all job seekers, and ultimately to employers. The new portal, based on commercial best practices in online career services, offered simplicity and improved access to re-employment services and new tools, while maintaining seamless integration with existing career services. The team established a new domain and website, known as the Pennsylvania JobGateway for Job Seekers, which leverages the same data and infrastructure as the existing online career services system provided by the Commonwealth. Despite aggressive timelines, the portal was successfully launched on July 17, 2012. The portal provided a simplified registration process targeting Unemployment Compensation claimants, a modern user experience, a Job Seeker Dashboard, improved job searching, job search activity tracking, and integration of a job feed that pulls from numerous common job sites, including CareerBuilder, LinkedIn, and Monster, to increase available jobs from 40,000 to over 200,000.

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.)

The initial implementation was in July 2012. Minor updates were made to the JobGateway for Job Seekers portal in October 2012. The next implementation is scheduled for January 25, 2013, which will include the launch of the JobGateway for Employers portal.

This is a new project that has not previously been submitted. 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 Job Match Initiative project consists of multiple phases, as content is determined by project management under the guidance of PA Department of Labor & Industry leadership. The project is currently in the testing phase of its third release and will launch a JobGateway for Employers portal on January 25, 2013. This portal includes a simple, intuitive user interface for job posting and candidate search. Employers have the ability to manage candidate search activities in one location through a dashboard that includes candidate recommendations for most recent job postings. Employers are provided a summary of candidate recommendations before posting jobs and are able to connect to candidates during the search process. The Employer portal provides the ability to manage candidate referrals using various filter and sort capabilities including the option to sort based on the number of candidate profile elements that match a job posting. In addition to launching the new portal, the release also

includes the integration of PA Career Coach, which provides job seekers with insights into employment data such as current and projected job openings, recent job growth areas, estimated earnings and occupations that match with a user's current skills and knowledge, as well as specific educational programs in the local area that prepare an individual for a given occupation. The next phase of the Job Match Initiative project is scheduled to be released in April 2013 and includes the implementation of a mobile web application for job seekers that allows them to more easily access job search functions via mobile devices and tablets. This phase also includes the integration of a new search engine for job seekers that enhances their job search capabilities and includes labor market information for employers to better assist them with their job posting and candidate search.

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.)

The initial launch of JobGateway for Job Seekers had tremendous impacts on Unemployment Compensation claimants who, as of January 1, 2012, were federally mandated to register online for completion and tracking of job search activities in order to qualify and remain qualified for benefits. This regulation had serious impacts on not just claimants, but also on service center and PA CareerLink staff who were required to assist claimants with the registration process and help confirm compliance. The launch of JobGateway for Job Seekers in July 2012 included a new registration process that incorporated data capture through a step-by-step process flow that removes uncertainty of registration completion. No longer were claimants left wondering if they had completed all requirements in order to receive their benefits. The new registration process includes a progress banner and captures progress memory so if a user exits during the process, they do not have to repeat completed steps. The new integrated registration solution captures key components in one streamlined process that results in UC registration compliance and elimination of additional steps after registration. Ultimately, the implementation of a simpler, more intuitive registration process has resulted in more claimants using the site to search for jobs. Since July 2012 through December 2012, JobGateway has seen 80,186 fully registered job seekers; 70,966 of these are Unemployment Compensation claimants. There is an average of 3,800 complete registrations per week in the site and registration compliance has increased to 70%. JobGateway sees approximately 575,000 visits per month and close to 20,000 visits per day, and the average visit length is 15 minutes. Traffic data also indicates that 36% of JobGateway visitors are new visits while 64% are return visits, indicating that job seekers find the site very helpful for ongoing job search activities.



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.)

The project team took a comprehensive approach to delivery by developing a working model that employs both an integrated team and an iterative deployment schedule. The result is a continuous improvement delivery model that engages a cross-functional agency workgroup willing to be fearless and constructively critical of every decision made and action taken. This best practice model supports an ongoing process of frequently trying to achieve a new and better way of providing re-employment services to the unemployed citizens of PA. The model allows the project to take deliberate action to make changes to the site quickly as well as to deliver new functionality to the end user every 8 weeks. The working model for this project supports a proactive approach to fundamental endless improvement and promotes continuous innovation, which will ultimately help the Commonwealth of PA inch even closer to its goal of consistently exceptional performance. This is evidenced by the model's success in building a "best of breed" website that is consumer friendly and considers not just governmental policy objectives but also the specific needs of the end user. The team's delivery approach has been recognized as a success and other divisions within PA's Department of Labor & Industry are considering adoption of a similar model.