ForgeRock®

State of Texas Embraces the ForgeRock Identity Platform™ for Enterprise-Grade Citizen Experiences

Customer Case Study

State of Texas Embraces the ForgeRock Identity Platform™ for Enterprise-Grade Citizen Experiences

Like other government agencies, the State of Texas discovered that improving citizens' online user experience takes more than just modernizing IT systems for mobile and redesigning agency websites. Delivering frictionless citizen services involves adopting technology that can readily identify users and manage their access privileges across multiple systems and services. For more than a decade, the state had a website – Texas.gov – where citizens could find information on a wide range of state services. But to engage those services, users had to enter information for each service individually, and each service had particular data requirements that made the site cumbersome to use. Deloitte Consulting won the contract to redesign and implement a new, integrated version of the website and selected ForgeRock® Identity and Access Management (IAM) Platform™ to reroute the IAM function from each citizen service application through the single, centralized platform. This strategic move vastly improved the citizen experience, boosted security, and reduced implementation times for application owners.

Challenge

Government agencies are discovering that improving citizens' online user experience takes more than just modernizing IT systems for mobile customers and redesigning agency websites. It also requires a more intentional approach to identifying and managing the access of users across multiple systems.

This is driving CIOs from federal, state, and local agencies to begin adopting more comprehensive, cloud-based IAM solutions – similar to those used by banks and other private sector organizations – in order to streamline digital transactions between government and the public.

Consumers who have grown accustomed to ordering goods, managing their finances, and locating services in real time from all kinds of companies using their smartphones expect a comparable

texas.gov

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Chris Keel
Principal, Deloitte Consulting

CUSTOMER

Located in the South Central region of the United States, Texas is the second largest state by both area and population, which is estimated at nearly 30 million people. Known as "The Lone Star State," Texas is a leader in the agricultural, energy, and healthcare sectors. It is home to five major cities: Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Austin, and Forth Worth.

HIGHLIGHTS

52 applications

The Texas.gov portfolio consisted of 52 applications that needed to be incorporated into the ForgeRock Identity Platform.

2 months

It took Deloitte only two months to get ForgeRock up and running on the State of Texas website.

experience from government. But many government agencies are saddled with aging IT systems and proprietary applications and have had a harder time delivering that same level of service online.

Until recently, most government agencies have been focusing on technology catch-up – trying to modernize aging infrastructures and applications in an effort to improve IT services, fortify security, and reduce a backlog of technical debt. That focus, however, is shifting. Across the federal government, for instance, improving citizen experience is a key component of the President's Management Agenda (PMA): "Individuals and businesses expect government customer services to be efficient and intuitive, just like services from leading private-sector organizations."

State and local agencies are taking similar steps. Central to improving the citizen experience is the need to ensure that the users of services are who they say they are and that they only have access to the information to which they're entitled. The foundation of delivering citizen services rests on adopting technology that can readily identify users and manage their access privileges across multiple systems and services.

When Deloitte Consulting took on the State of Texas website makeover project, their immediate focus was to consolidate and streamline the citizen experience. Chris Keel, Principal at Deloitte Consulting, sums up the primary need: "There was no concept, historically, of a citizen having an account with the state where the citizen could view all the information pertinent to them – a driver's license, professional license, hunting license, and more. The citizen had to know their vehicle identification number, their account numbers, etcetera, in order to renew. But Amazon, for example, has just two experiences – guest and login."

Deloitte had a big job on its hands. The consulting organization was responsible for the entire website architecture, along with integrations at the back and front ends. This entailed integrating the applications for various state agencies and a full complement of IT services, including application development, enterprise resource planning, business intelligence and data warehousing, technology migration, procurement, and project management.

Deloitte's previous work with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles helped the consulting organization make the case that a robust IAM solution was an essential ingredient for modernization. It also provided Deloitte with a baseline understanding of the requirements for the larger Texas.gov portal. It was clear at the outset why it was essential to implement a comprehensive IAM system in order to "move from a stove-piped experience to a customer experience solution."

"Centralizing the IAM capability and rerouting from each citizen service application through the single platform improves citizen experience, security, and implementation times for all application owners."

Tommy Cathey
RVP of Public Sector for ForgeRock

As the primary system integrator/architect for the eight-year contract, Deloitte opted for an IT system design that would work with a full spectrum of modern technologies, including cloud capabilities. An application programming interface (API)-driven architecture would provide maximum choice and flexibility over time as new technologies emerge. The importance of this type of approach lies in its support of standards like the REST API. REST, or "Representational State Transfer," establishes rules for uniform interfaces. Most cloud providers use a REST-based architecture, which makes the functions of an application easier to use. Providers of legacy systems, on the other hand, typically try to adapt to a cloud environment by creating wrappers, an outer layer over the applications that can only expose the specific designated functions but that limit overall flexibility.

Additionally, the IAM solution had to be easy to integrate with the department's back-end systems. And equally important, the licensing had to be cost-effective, as Texas has the second-largest population in the United States – and every adult constituent needs an online account.

Solution

After reviewing a number of options, Deloitte selected the cloud-based ForgeRock Identity Platform. ForgeRock's API-first design fit into their vision, with its ability to offer feature parity across all delivery options, including on premises, any cloud environment, and as a service.

ForgeRock, a leading provider in digital identity, has been recognized as a Leader by Forrester Research in The Forrester Wave™: Customer Identity and Access Management (CIAM), Q4 2020. ForgeRock received the highest possible scores in multiple areas – from customer identity verification (IDV) and registration to identity analytics and threat feeds to data orchestration,

workflows, and user management. Forrester recommends ForgeRock as "a great fit for firms that have many customer-facing applications with complex authentication and workflow requirements."

Deloitte collaborated with team leaders from the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) to deploy the platform on AWS. The State of Texas was able to retire the old system at the end of its lifecycle and ease the transition from the incumbent contractor to Deloitte. "It took us about two months to stand up the first application for the first of many agencies relying on the portal," Keel says. "All things considered, that's relatively quick, and now we had a blueprint to work with other agencies."

After the first application was enabled with the ForgeRock IAM Platform, it took only a few weeks for the applications used by other agencies to follow suit. In a short period of time, 52 applications in the Texas.gov portfolio were incorporated into the new IAM system. "We needed an agile environment," Keel says.

Now citizens coming to Texas.gov first create an account through the platform, which then manages access to the website's affiliated services. Tommy Cathey, RVP of Public Sector for ForgeRock, underscores the advantages of this approach for all levels of government:

"Centralizing the IAM capability and rerouting from each citizen service application through the single platform improves citizen experience, security, and implementation times for all application owners."

Results

For government agencies like the State of Texas that are looking to upgrade the citizen experience to enterprise standards, Keel believes that a modern IAM solution like the ForgeRock IAM Platform is central to realizing that vision. "It's not an option to consider – it's a requirement," he says.

For the State of Texas, the ForgeRock Identity Platform provides more than access to appropriate, targeted services – it also provides security. With data breaches

routinely making headlines and people becoming more concerned about the privacy and security of their information than ever before, all the components in an online citizen experience need to include the latest security measures.

The seamlessly integrated IAM system balances security with technical requirements. The ForgeRock Identity Platform keeps data secure while saving Texas government agencies money.

As Cathey says, "It will save money, and future-proof their investment so they can integrate with best-of-breed solutions, such as the latest biometric solutions as requirements change over time."

Here are some key takeaways for government agencies embarking on a complete IAM overhaul:

» **Begin with high-impact, low-risk projects:** Start small and achieve early successes to lay the groundwork to elevate the system's use more broadly.

» **Look at web-based opportunities:** Determine how a web interface would benefit from applying a modern IAM technology to its core identity functions, such as account creation, multi-factor authentication, and federation support.

» **Choose a systems integrator that understands IAM:** By taking into account the unique mission and needs of a government agency, the right systems integrator can map out the necessary steps to make the implementation a success.

Peter Barker, Chief Product Officer at ForgeRock, observes that "ForgeRock's unique approach to identity is making it easier for large enterprises [and government agencies] to deliver great digital experiences at a time when remote work and life remains a reality."

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