

Digitalization of processes helps authorities enhance governance and decision-making

Overview

This nation in the Caribbean islands has a governing system which is a combination of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The governance structure is layered, and paper-intensive processes often add to their woes.

Four major government departments responsible for finance and planning realized the need to automate day-to-day functions and transform paper-based systems in order to speed up processes. The Customs Department, and Ministry of Finance and Planning, were among the four departments that decided it was essential to become more digitally sound in the way they function.

Challenges

In order to ensure better governance and quicker response to requests initiated by citizens, it was important to manage documents and process requests faster. The four departments which recognized this need are:

Tax Administration, the country's premiere revenue collection agency whose primary goal is to foster voluntary compliance, collect revenue in an equitable and efficient manner, contribute to a competitive business environment, and facilitate economic growth and development.

Customs Department, primarily responsible for equitable collection of revenue, protection of the nation's borders against illicit imports, and facilitation of trade.

Ministry of Finance & Planning responsible for the Government's fiscal and economic policy, collection and allocation of public revenue, and socio-economic development of the nation.

Accountant General Department is a legal entity within the Ministry of Finance & Planning, and consists of a single incorporated office which is charged with facilitation and reporting of the flow of funds within the public sector.

Key Challenges

- **Absence of efficient monitoring-** Paper-intensive workflows and absence of a common-access repository made it difficult to monitor requests and progress
- **Paper-intensive processes-** Duplication of documents, slow distribution of physical files and misplacing of original documents led to a clogged-up workflow
- **Higher turnaround time-** Time spent on answering information requests was massive and lead citizen dissatisfaction arising from long waiting time on the requests
- **Absence of a Centralized Digital Information Repository-** Difficulties in accessing information caused lack of collaboration between departments and offices, thereby lowering productivity of government agencies
- **High operational costs-** Higher overhead costs are associated with the purchase of paper and storage of paper documents

Goals of the Project

Ensuring equitable collection of revenue, reducing and maintaining the national debt at sustainable levels, and preventing illegal trade practices within the nation's borders are among the few goals these departments look to achieve.

They were looking for a technology partner to help transform their paper-intensive processes, and attain the following objectives:

- Provide an efficient, effective and easily accessible document archival repository
- Enable exchange of information and help build knowledge base for information
- Ensure faster processing of requests
- Reduce storage and purchase-related costs
- Foster collaboration by ensuring documents are easily accessible across departments
- Integration with their in-house application for document retrieval

Newgen's solution helps fast-track processes

The authorities were in need of a solution which could help manage the complete range of processes in the administrative flow, ensure content integration, process orchestration, and enhance collaboration. Newgen proposed a solution built on its enterprise-wide Business Process Management Solution (OmniFlowiBPS) and Enterprise Content Management Solution (OmniDocs) equipped with centralized bulk scanning through OmniScan.

Here's how the implementation helped government departments with faster processing and document handling:

Document Capture



- Helps capture physical documents and application form for initiation of the application
- Makes documents available to the Document Management System (DMS), Record Management System (RMS), and Workflow solution for the processing and archival

Document Management



- Acts as a centralized content repository and allows various operations to be performed on stored content, such as check out / check in, metadata association
- Serves as back end repository for workflow documents

Workflow Process Management



- It directly associates a document to a specific workflow process, and automatically routes the document as per workflow definition
- Documents can be reviewed, routed sequentially, parallelly and based on defined rules

Departments Which Underwent Process Automation

Tax Administration Department:

- National Motor Vehicle Registry (NMVR)
- Returns Processing
- Taxpayer Registration Number Process



Customs Department:

- Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) Process
- Customs Broker/Customs Broker
- Clerk Application Processing
- Delinquency Collection



Ministry of Finance and Planning:

- PSMAE Case Assessment
- Financial Investigation Division (FID) Cash Seizure Process
- Loans Process
- Revenue Appeal Process
- Revenue Protection Division Case Management
- Scholarship & Assistance Unit Processes



Accountant General Department:

- Delinquency Collection
- Tuition Refund Process
- AGD Loan Processing
- Treasury Deposit Unit (TDU) Process



Implementation Impact

Prior to the implementation, the absence of a centralized knowledge repository caused restrictions in access to information. There was absence of structured work allocation, and lack of standardization leading to accountability issues.

As a result of the implementation, the following improvements were seen:

- Initiation of application with the help of relevant data and documents
- Operational efficiency and cost reduction
- Increased performance visibility and Transparency
- Improved consistency in following best practices
- Easier Long Term archival of documents and records
- Electronic circulation of application to the members/officers
- Alerts and reminders issued through email notifications
- Increase in productivity through instant access to digitized case content
- Fast tracking of cases by reducing the number of hand-offs
- Tracking of case files, manage user access and identification of security breaches

Major benefits achieved through implementation

- **Shortened turnaround time:** The time taken to reply to requests was reduced due to streamlining of processes across departments/ agencies. This also leads to reduction in the time taken in movement of request letter and files between departments
- **Compliance and increase in transactions:** SLA adherence was improved, and there was significant increase in the number of transactions processed on a daily basis. Also, the number of cases on which rework was required reduced
- **Cost Reduction:** Digitization of paper documents led to saving of costs incurred in document storage and paper purchase. Efficient management of electronic records/physical files from generation to disposition was also ensured
- **Enhanced decision-making:** Anytime-anywhere, and secure access to information through the rights based access system helped foster better collaboration and smarter decision-making. This, in turn, led to more empowered officials
- **Reduction in paper usage:** Officials can access correspondences, schedule meetings, approve/ edit notes and perform other activities on-the-go. This also leads to lesser pressure on the environment by reducing paper usage

About Newgen

Newgen Software is a vendor/provider of Business Process Management (BPM), Enterprise Content Management (ECM), Customer Communication Management (CCM), Document Management System (DMS), Workflow and Process Automation software. The company has a global footprint in over 60 countries with large, mission-critical solutions that have been deployed in Banks, Insurance firms, BPO's, Healthcare Organizations, Government and Telecom Companies.

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