

Delivering Constituent-Focused Service Through Enterprise Content Management

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State and local governments across the United States are focusing on aligning the delivery of their services more closely to the needs of their constituents. Constituent-focused service requires agencies within a government enterprise or across levels of government to collaborate and share information so that each constituent receives the greatest value when interacting with government. An important aspect of interoperable information management is enterprise content management (ECM), which incorporates both strategies and technologies to capture, manage, store, preserve and deliver content related to organizational processes.

As governments develop enterprise-wide information management strategies to provide constituent-focused service, there are a number of points they should keep in mind:

- ECM allows governments to foster a broad information management framework while also addressing the pressing challenges they face on a daily basis.
- ECM solutions deliver the greatest value when they are strategic in scope. However, governments may benefit from taking an incremental approach – by first implementing ECM solutions to target specific business needs in one domain area and then leveraging the success demonstrated by those investments into an integrated, enterprise-wide ECM strategy.
- While ECM technologies enable any type of agency to share information and processes, agencies in the domain areas of criminal justice, health and human services and finance and administration are often the first within a government enterprise to deploy ECM solutions as they depend heavily on paper documentation in the context of process-driven environments.
- Successes within these types of agencies can help to promote greater adoption of ECM across domain areas, as well as across levels of government.
- Vertical collaboration and interoperability are critical to constituent-focused service as local, state and federal agencies capture distinct information. Hyland Software's OnBase is one ECM solution that state and local governments use to facilitate constituent-focused service. OnBase is a user-friendly, flexible and scalable solution that targets formal, multi-step processes defined according to precise timelines. Nearly 500 governments have deployed OnBase, including four of the 10 largest counties in the United States.

THE 'CONSTITUENT-FOCUSED SERVICE' VISION

State and local governments operate in a unique environment. Providing a vast array of valuable services ranging from public safety to public assistance benefits programs to utilities payment assistance, state and local governments operate across a number of domain areas that could be considered industries in and of themselves – such as financial services, healthcare and transportation. The sheer breadth of services that state and local agencies provide poses enormous challenges as government at all levels – including federal, state and local – struggle to become more agile and effective. Aligning organizational goals with the needs of the constituents they serve is an important goal for many state and local government agencies. Adopting a constituent-centric approach means moving away from the traditional model, in which services delivered are driven by an agency's own internal processes, and toward a model that is driven by a constituent's particular needs. While this shift is not easy, it is precisely this constituent-focused approach that will help state and local government agencies achieve greater agility and effectiveness.

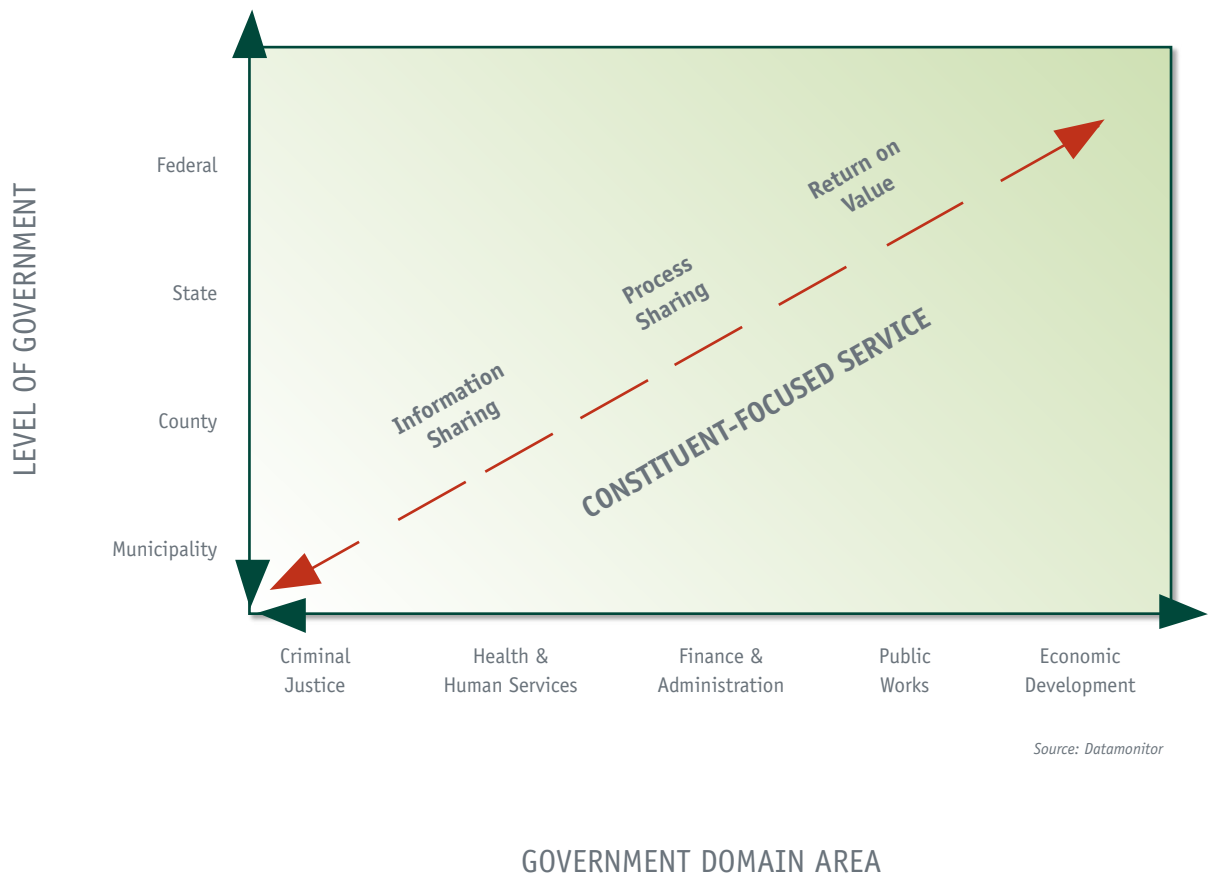
How can state and local agencies achieve constituent-focused service? An iterative process, becoming 'constituent-focused' means that at the most fundamental level agencies must develop an information management strategy that connects silos of data. Through a comprehensive information management strategy, agencies serving the same constituents can share information and processes, thereby increasing the value they deliver to the public. Developing this holistic view of constituents' needs requires agencies to share information and processes both within their particular domain area as well as across levels of government (see Figure 1 for an illustration). By employing an enterprise-wide information management strategy, governments can deliver stakeholder value by making better-informed decisions and acting more quickly to resolve issues – ultimately providing more individualized service to constituents.

A key component of an information management strategy is enterprise content management (ECM), which is used to create a coherent approach for managing, processing, protecting, and leveraging information found in paper documents and digital content files. The Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) defines ECM as the technologies used to capture, manage, store, preserve, and deliver content and documents related to organizational processes. ECM tools and strategies allow organizations to manage unstructured information, wherever that information exists. While individual agencies within a municipality, county or state often deploy ECM solutions tactically to address specific business needs, agencies can gain greater efficiency by using ECM applications suites to integrate existing information management processes into an enterprise-wide framework for constituent-focused service. ECM allows government agencies of all types to manage information

better, whether the agency is working with child support payments, environmental impact assessments or tax filings. Because criminal justice, health and human services and finance and administration agencies typically work with large volumes of critical information, frequently they are among the first to make coordinated use of ECM solutions to foster information sharing and create interoperability. Yet after making successful investments in these areas initially, governments can take their progress toward constituent-focused service one step further by expanding their ECM strategies across levels of government to facilitate information and process sharing between municipalities, counties and states.

Evolving into a constituent-focused organization requires agencies to develop an information management strategy, of which enterprise content management (ECM) should be a key component.

Figure 1: An information management strategy is a fundamental ingredient for providing constituent-focused service



ECM tools and strategies allow organizations to manage unstructured information, wherever that information exists.

BALANCING LONG-TERM VISION WITH THE CHALLENGES FACING GOVERNMENT TODAY

Achieving constituent-focused service via enterprise-wide information sharing may seem like a 'pie in the sky' vision for many state and local governments. After all, agencies face a number of pressing challenges on a daily basis, such as improving internal efficiency, formulating disaster recovery strategies and meeting regulatory requirements, to name a few. Yet achieving constituent-focused service is not about making big-bang changes; it is about making incremental changes that ultimately will enable agencies to place constituent needs at the heart of every decision the agency makes. Agencies can make this transition by ensuring that the decisions they make on a daily basis are informed by a longer-term vision of constituent-focused service. Enterprise-wide information sharing and collaboration, as part of a broader information management strategy, are important building blocks toward fulfilling this vision.

Meeting constituent expectations is a key government priority

Today, research shows that state and local governments are keenly aware of the demands that constituents are placing on them, especially constituent demands for not only better but also new services. And in many cases, such constituent demands drive state and local governments to invest in technology to support these interactions. In fact, customer demands for new and better service rank as the top issue driving agencies to invest in technology, according to a Datamonitor survey of 105 IT decision makers in state and local government (see Figure 2).

Looking ahead, state and local governments will need to invest in different types of technology to support their constituent services. Technologies that support an overall information management strategy are essential to providing constituent-focused service. As such, many state and local government agencies prioritize technologies such as document processing and document storage solutions to improve constituent service (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Constituent demands drive state and local technology investments

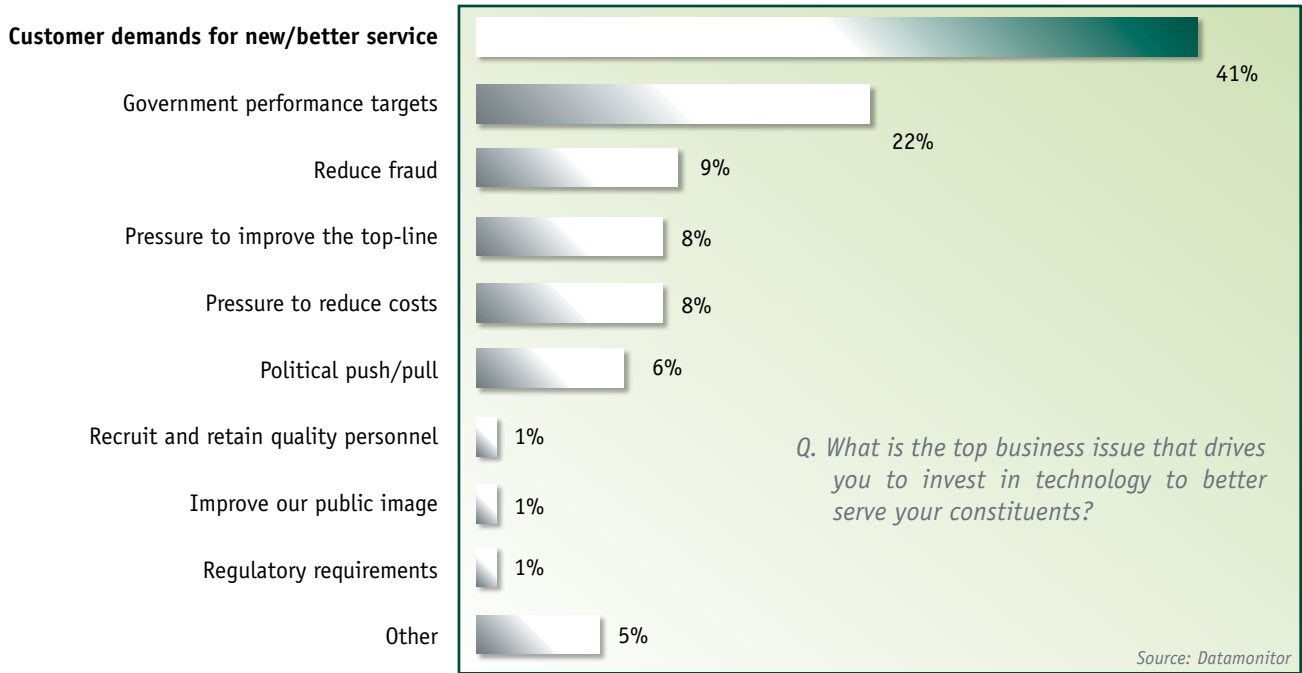
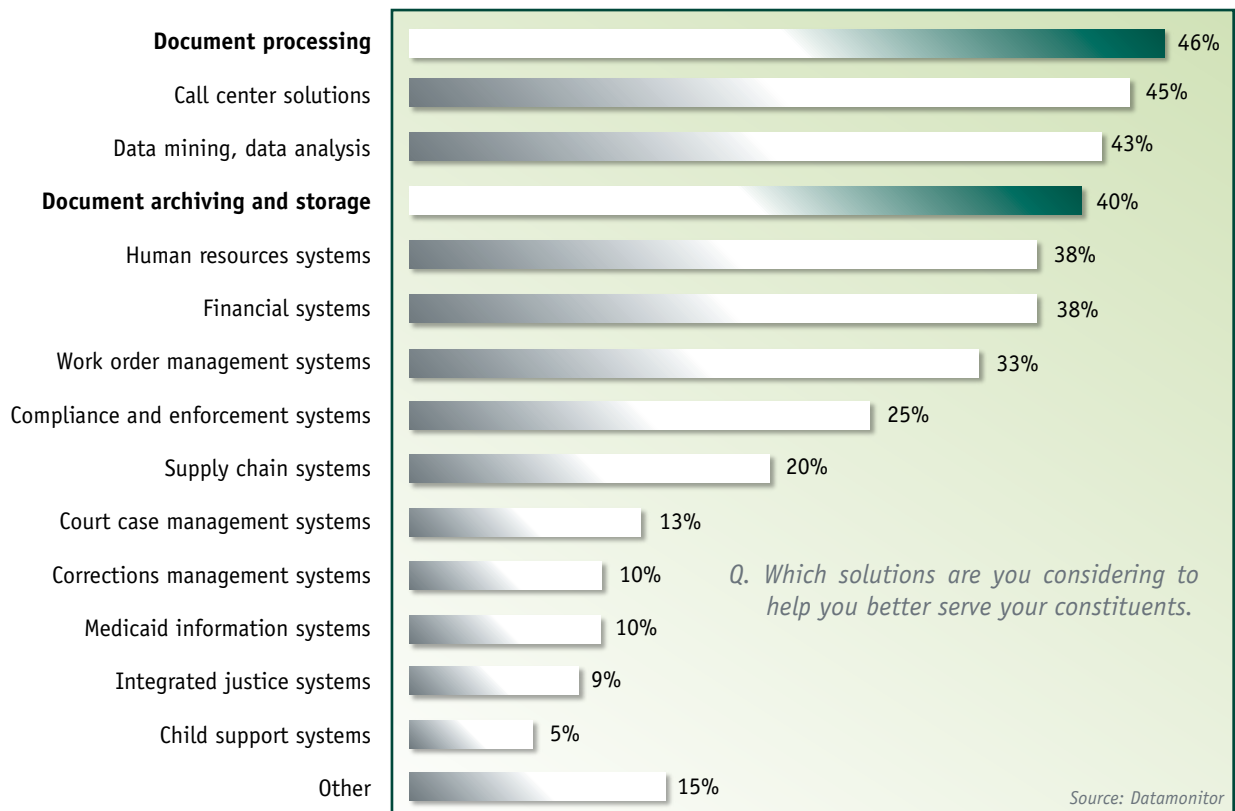


Figure 3: Information management technologies are important enablers of constituent-focused service



TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

State and local government agencies can turn the daily challenges they face into opportunities to establish enterprise-wide information sharing and collaboration through an overarching information management strategy. Decisions that government agencies make on a day-to-day basis usually derive from the following challenges:

- Improving internal efficiency;
- Increasing security and disaster recovery;
- Complying with regulatory requirements;
- Providing accountability and transparency;
- Mitigating the impact of retirements and staff turnover.

Within each of these challenges exists an opportunity to make decisions that will enable agencies to move toward their vision of constituent-focused service.

Improving internal efficiency

In times of tight budgets and increasing public scrutiny into management of their finances, state and local governments must find ways to improve the quality of service they provide to constituents while expending fewer resources – both in terms of funding and human capital. While they may represent a large up-front cost, investments in new technology often provide governments with cost-saving solutions to make their small budgets go farther. Datamonitor expects total state and local government spending on technology to grow from \$58.2 billion in FY2005 to \$62.4 billion by FY2009 as agencies seek opportunities to improve both constituent services and internal efficiency. However, it is not enough to merely purchase and deploy new software. Agencies also need to leverage and add value to their existing technology investments, which often include older mainframe databases, various line-of-business applications – such as agenda and minutes applications, case management systems, constituent resource management (CRM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) – as well as advanced geographic information systems (GIS).

Sometimes it seems that every function in government starts with a form and ends with a form. Unfortunately, government service delivery often mirrors this laborious and arduous process. Enterprise-wide interoperability and information management enable multiple employees to simultaneously access needed documents from their desktops and eliminate the need for staff to manually search for paper files. Additionally, government agencies require content that exists in many formats to make independent and informed decisions. By deploying solutions that integrate documents with line-of-business applications and route documents through workflows, agencies provide staff with consistent and accurate data earlier in the decision-making process. The resulting increases in productivity and efficiency allow agencies to resolve issues more quickly and take on more responsibilities, which ultimately leads to better

constituent service. For example, ECM solutions have enabled human services agencies to reduce the time required to process Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) applications – which used to take up to 10 days – so that checks are now issued the same day a constituent applies.

Increasing security and disaster recovery

In addition to inefficiency, manual dissemination of paper files often lacks security and control measures, as users who need a single record are granted access to an entire file, which can then be misplaced or viewed by passersby. Furthermore, privacy concerns arise as these files often contain personal constituent information such as Social Security numbers (SSNs), health records and payroll data. According to the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), 41 states and the District of Columbia display SSNs on at least one type of public record. While many government agencies and oversight bodies are developing policies to eliminate the open display of SSNs, there is currently no uniform practice at any level to protect them.¹

Paper files also lack sufficient disaster recovery procedures. The hurricanes of 2005 highlighted governments' need for digital storage and central management of documents, as paper can easily be destroyed by natural disasters or even human error. Nearly one million people displaced by Hurricane Katrina lost all of their paper-based medical records. By developing ECM strategies that incorporate digital imaging, storage and secure access, governments can significantly increase the privacy-related control of information while simultaneously improving the safety and preservation of these sensitive records.

Complying with regulatory requirements

Agencies face a complex regulatory environment with which they must comply in order to fund many programs. Tightening budgets, rapid staff turnover and complicated procedures make it even more difficult for agencies to meet legislative requirements. Compliance involves more than simply filing paperwork before specific deadlines. Agencies must also demonstrate that the correct constituents are receiving proper services by documenting processes, measuring performance and reporting project status internally and externally.

¹ Social Security Numbers: Governments Could Do More to Reduce Display in Public Records and on Identity Cards, United States Government Accountability Office, November 2004.

For example, state housing finance agencies (HFAs) receive the bulk of their funding in the form of incentive-based performance grants from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In order to maintain this funding, HFAs must document and verify that they are meeting their individual service level agreements. HFAs can even earn incentives by achieving compliance requirements and milestones early. Furthermore, agencies that receive grants to administer federal programs also risk losing funding for subsequent years if they do not properly use an entire funding grant in the current year. ECM solutions allow agencies to more easily comply with regulations by streamlining workflow processes, providing management with status oversight, issuing alerts as deadlines approach and creating audit trails that agencies can report to program funders.

Providing accountability and transparency

There is growing public and media attention to the misuse of government programs. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the US federal government doled out \$37.3 billion in improper benefit payments in FY2005 as a result of inadvertent errors, inadequately supported claims or outright fraud and abuse. While this total is a decrease from the \$45.1 billion recorded in FY2004, it shows that governments face a widespread and significant challenge in allocating benefits to constituents accurately and effectively.² Datamonitor believes that improper payments are as

serious an issue at the state and local level, if not more so, where agencies must manage tighter budgets, rapid staff turnover and a greater dependence on paper-based processes. In order to limit the occurrence of improper payments, agencies must ensure not only that the correct people receive benefits but also that procedures are transparent to external review. Information management strategies that include the creation of audit trails enable third parties or internal groups to verify processes. In addition, ECM technologies can automate processes, ensure that internal procedures are followed and assist in reducing human errors.

Mitigating the impact of retirements and staff turnover

State and local governments are facing a human resources crisis as a large segment of the public sector workforce nears retirement. Many agencies currently face the “45/45 dilemma” where 45% of their staff are 45 years old or older and expect to see a wave of retirement in the next 5 to 10 years. Because many government programs rely on paper-based processes rather than automated procedures, agencies often depend on a small core group of long-serving employees who have developed ad hoc systems and amassed deep procedural knowledge. By institutionalizing knowledge and informal procedures, ECM strategies enable agencies to prevent the service and workflow stoppages that would result if these employees retired without securing adequately trained replacements.

Figure 4: Benefits ECM provides to state and local government



² Improving the Accuracy and Integrity of Federal Payments, Office of Management and Budget, February 2, 2006.

ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT IN ACTION

ECM technologies are a key enabler for state and local governments developing constituent-focused service. ECM solutions allow organizations to electronically organize, store and access structured and unstructured information located in documents, e-mail, photos, images, constituent records and other types of content. ECM also provides electronic tools to automate workflow by routing tasks from one step in a business process to the next. Most importantly, ECM enables seamless information sharing and collaboration through a common knowledge base of content.

- A cornerstone of ECM is the central information repository that allows authorized end users to access content files regardless of where the file is physically stored. Agencies can store information on file servers and storage devices throughout the enterprises while the central repository maintains the metadata with pointers to the content files. With this configuration, viewing of a document is no longer limited to a single user. Instead, any user with the proper pre-defined security rights can simultaneously view a document.
- Digital content is also more secure than paper records. ECM systems maintain a record of everyone who views a document, when it was viewed and what actions were performed. This record acts as an audit trail so that agency managers can analyze and report on the actions taken relevant to any case. Another security and disaster recovery feature of ECM is original document preservation since documents cannot be altered once they enter an ECM system. Personal information may be redacted and notes can be added during workflow, but these are simply surface-level adjustments and not changes to the original data. At the same time, ECM supports collaboration by enabling agencies to manage the revision/rendition and check-in/check-out needs of dynamic solutions – such as agenda and minutes – that require multiple users to provide input by various means.
- Finally, ECM solutions can be configured with business process rules that consistently route projects through a defined workflow from inception to resolution, recording which actions are performed and generating e-mail alerts when steps are delayed or skipped. Not only do ECM solutions help staff perform their jobs with workflow tools, they also enable agencies to manage performance proactively by documenting, measuring and reporting program status.

The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency is an example of a state organization that initially deployed an ECM solution to meet a specific program need and then incrementally expanded that deployment to address more business-related needs.

By using ECM solutions to digitally store and maintain documents, agencies ensure continuity of operations in case original paper files are destroyed by natural or man made disasters.

ECM IN ACTION: AFFORDABLE HOUSING AGENCY

CASE STUDY: MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY

Organizational Structure: The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (“MassHousing”) is the state’s affordable housing bank. Its mission is to provide home ownership and rental opportunities to low- and moderate-income families and to support developers and management companies that build and operate affordable rental housing.

Business Challenges: MassHousing also works with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to act as its “contract administrator” for 33,000 units of low-income Section 8 rental housing in Massachusetts. Because this program is paper-intensive and highly monitored for compliance, MassHousing must document its responses to a variety of situations within strict timeframes. According to Leo J. Saidnawey, IT Manager for MassHousing, the agency purchased Hyland Software’s OnBase solution in 2000 in order to automate its administration of this program from the onset.

ECM Solution: MassHousing chose OnBase for both its records management and workflow capabilities. These features allow the Agency to comply with HUD’s requirements by providing a transaction log that records all actions taken on each document; which employees are performing those actions and when those actions were completed. OnBase has also enabled MassHousing to improve efficiency by reducing the amount of time required to locate and retrieve the documents associated with any Section 8 contract.

After using OnBase exclusively for Section 8 contract administration for 18-24 months, MassHousing took incremental steps to deploy the solution agency-wide. MassHousing understood from the beginning that OnBase could eventually be used for the agency’s back-office processes such as using workflows to initiate wire transfers in the Accounting Department and maintaining resumés in the Human Resources Department. The workflow function in particular has helped the agency manage its internal processes. MassHousing is now using OnBase to address the document management and workflow needs of all of its divisions.

INFORMATION SHARING ACROSS GOVERNMENT DOMAIN AREAS

While state and local governments can realize the greatest value from ECM solutions when they are strategic in scope, the fragmented nature of state and local government technology budgeting and decision-making processes lend themselves more easily to tactical, department-level deployments in the short term. And governments can benefit from taking an incremental approach to ECM – by first implementing ECM solutions to target very specific business needs in one domain area and then leveraging the success demonstrated by those investments into an integrated, enterprise-wide ECM strategy.

ECM technologies enable agencies in any type of government domain area – such as economic development, public works and environmental protection – to share information and foster interoperability in order to provide more constituent-focused service.

Because they depend heavily on paper documentation in the context of process driven environments, criminal justice, health and human services and finance and administration are often the first domain areas within state and local governments to deploy ECM solutions. Successes within these types of agencies can help to promote greater adoption of ECM across different domain areas, as well as across different levels of government. The benefits of ECM easily span many different types of government agencies.

ECM solutions connect silos of data so public safety agencies have access to the most comprehensive information available as they work to prevent crime and investigate security threats.

ECM in action: bringing much-needed secure collaboration to criminal justice agencies

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have called attention to criminal justice agencies' fundamental need for access to the most relevant and timely data in order to prevent future attacks and combat crime. Not only do criminal justice agencies – such as police departments, crime labs, prosecutor offices, courts and corrections departments – need to share information with other agencies in the same jurisdiction, they often need to collaborate with their counterparts in other levels of government.

Criminal justice agencies generate and manage large amounts of paper in order to perform their duties – including criminal history jackets, incident reports, evidence reports, discovery information, warrants, hearing reports and inmate records. ECM applications enable organizations to manage and share all of these different types of content while also providing simultaneous access to documents by multiple users and increasing security.

- **Information sharing:** Criminal justice agencies have traditionally maintained disconnected stovepipes of information. Yet safety threats are rarely confined to a single jurisdiction or functional area of government. ECM enables important interoperability by allowing agencies to retrieve and utilize all of the critical data related to a case or constituent, regardless of which agency actually collected the information.
- **Multiple simultaneous users:** Limitations on access to paper files are inefficient in any business setting, but the issue is magnified in the criminal justice arena as many professionals are involved in the resolution of a single case – including police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, crime lab technicians and corrections officers – and time is a critical factor in maintaining public safety. By allowing multiple simultaneous users, ECM enables criminal justice agencies to serve constituents more quickly and effectively.
- **Increased security:** Security rights, audit trails and record preservation are critical to criminal justice agencies as original, unaltered documents are often needed as evidence in trials and hearings. Digital archiving with continual back up is essential in this arena as the loss of documents has serious repercussions for criminal cases.

The Dallas County District Clerk's Office is an example of a criminal justice agency that is currently using an ECM solution to address many of these business challenges. The Clerk's Office also has plans to roll its investment out to other government departments so that the county can provide constituent-focused services based on shared information.

ECM IN ACTION: CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCY

CASE STUDY: DALLAS COUNTY DISTRICT CLERK’S OFFICE

Organizational Structure: The Dallas County District Clerk’s Office supports all of the District Courts in Dallas County, which includes Criminal, Civil, Family and Juvenile courts. As District Clerk, Jim Hamlin is the custodian of the record and has statutory records management oversight duties for all court pleadings, including disaster recovery, security and maintenance.

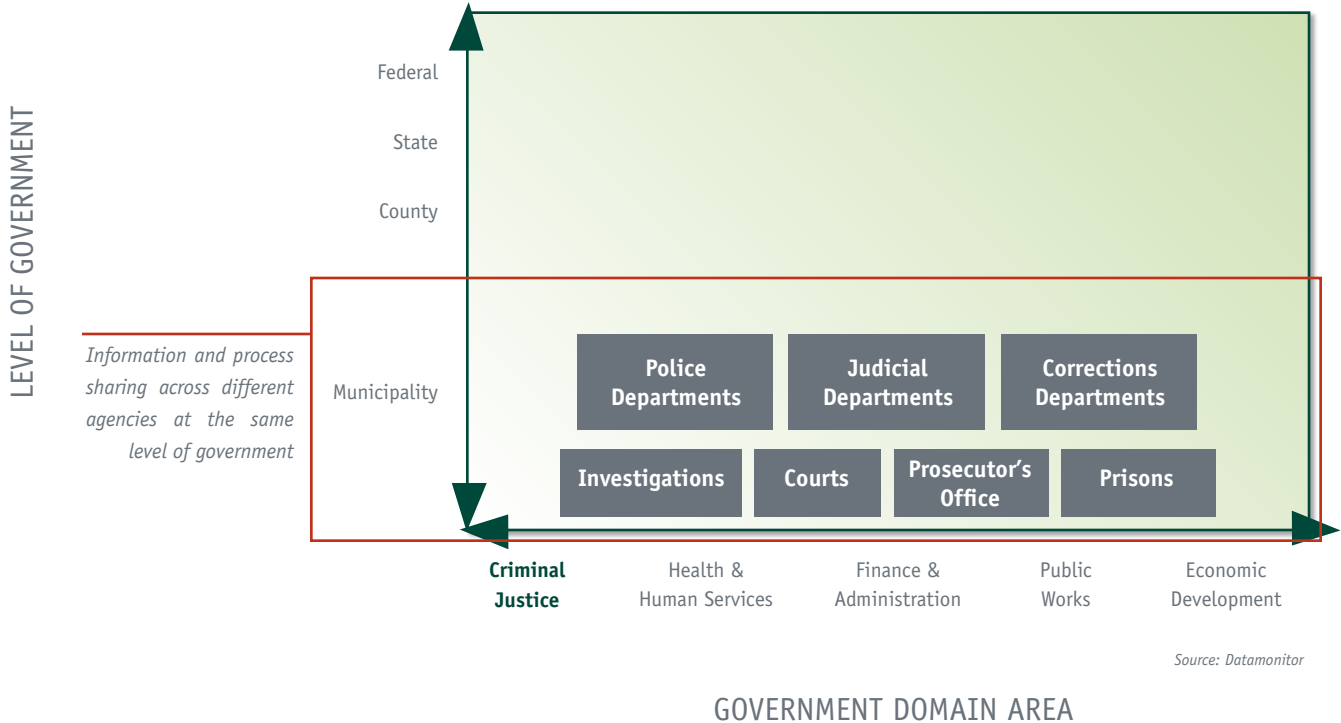
Business Challenges: One of the primary reasons the District Clerk’s Office developed an ECM strategy was to enable multiple simultaneous viewing of case documents. In addition, because older pleadings are stored offsite, requestors could wait up to five days to receive copies of pleadings necessary for follow-up actions in a case or external requests. Furthermore, due to its dependence on paper documents, the District Clerk’s Office had very few well-defined disaster recovery measures in place related to document management.

ECM Solution: According to Sharon Camarillo, Information Systems Coordinator for the Dallas County District Clerk’s Office, deploying OnBase, (an ECM solution from Hyland Software,) into the Courts and District Clerk’s functional sub-divisions, provides immediate processing efficiencies. Previously, if a judge needed case

documents, such as prior orders, judgments, or related pleadings, the administrator or clerk needed to physically search for and retrieve the documents, which could significantly slow the case resolution process if it was an unanticipated action or the case jacket was offsite. Now, because judges, administrators, and clerks have access to electronic case jackets stored and managed in OnBase, they can more quickly obtain pertinent information. This increased access to information allows the courts to provide faster service to its constituents. Jeff Coen, Judge of the 254th Family District Court, has been the pilot court and worked with the District Clerk’s Office to fine tune the ECM interface.

The District Clerk’s Office has developed an incremental approach to its deployment of OnBase. It is first targeting case documents related to the Family District Courts since these cases have more activity and span a longer period of time than cases in other courts. Once the Clerk’s Office has brought all of the courts’ documents into its ECM strategy, it will roll OnBase out to related departments and agencies in Dallas County, creating efficiencies across the board. The Clerk’s Office migration strategy incorporates a phased approach where the agencies with the greatest need for court documents, such as the Child Support Office, will be integrated first, followed by departments with a less urgent need.

Figure 5: Expanding information sharing from one domain area to across the government enterprise: criminal justice as one example



Source: Datamonitor

ECM IN ACTION: STREAMLINING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROCESSES

Health and human services agencies rely on process-oriented applications to provide constituents with services or assistance, whether it is public health services, TANF, Medicaid, affordable housing or child support enforcement. As they attempt to accomplish this mission, agencies must also ensure proper governance by limiting fraudulent activity, complying with regulations and assuring internal performance. In addition, since constituents rarely require only one social service, health and human services agencies within a government enterprise and across levels of government must have the means to share constituent information and collaborate in order to provide constituents with the full scope of service they need.

- **Internal efficiency:** ECM tools streamline the service application process by automating information entry, regardless of how constituents choose to deliver necessary personal or financial documents, whether in person, by fax, over the phone or via the Internet. ECM's central information repository enables interoperability so that related programs in complementary agencies can access any data related to a constituent.

- **Regulatory compliance:** Many health and human services agencies are required to meet performance-based targets to maintain funding. Some agencies can even earn financial incentives by surpassing deadlines. ECM's workflow tools ensure that agencies conduct performance assurance and comply with regulations by routing projects through a lifecycle according to pre-configured business process rules and keeping an audit trail as actions are performed.

The Marion County Health Department in Indianapolis, Indiana developed its ECM strategy in order to provide constituents with faster service related to vital records, such as birth and death certificates. After early success in this area, Marion County expanded its use of ECM tools to develop interoperability across the Department.

ECM tools enable health and human services agencies to share information and collaborate in order to develop a holistic view of each constituent's service needs.

ECM IN ACTION: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CASE STUDY: MARION COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Organizational structure: Vital Records is the department of the Marion County Health Department in Indianapolis, Indiana that is responsible for registering, maintaining and issuing the county's birth and death records. In addition to storing all of these documents, Vital Records must also perform any needed amendments and corrections to the records as well as handle all constituent requests for copies.

Business challenges: The Vital Records department developed its ECM strategy in order to improve customer service, increase employee satisfaction, consolidate document storage and retain documents more securely. Previously, Vital Records stored records in paper files, microfilm, microfiche, computers and card files. Constituents requesting a copy of a record typically waited 45 minutes to two hours as employees searched and located the proper record. The department has seen an upsurge in requests for birth certificates since September 11 as citizens now have an increased need to verify their identity.

ECM solution: The Vital Records department chose to deploy Hyland Software's OnBase as its ECM solution for both its document management and workflow tools. Now that the division has converted its paper and microfilm records into digital images, it can more easily preserve and retrieve documents. According to Julie Bishop, Vital Records Administrator, since implementing OnBase, the department has decreased the waiting time for in-person records requests from up to two hours to an average of about 10 minutes. Vital Records also routes all documents for processing through any of 13 pre-defined life cycles. Workflow has enabled the Vital Records department to reduce the time needed to process a mailed application for records from two weeks to one day.

Scalability was a key feature that drove Vital Records to choose OnBase rather than competitive products. Although Vital Records initially purchased OnBase to satisfy its own information management needs, it has the capability to expand OnBase throughout the County Health Department in the future. Shortly after Vital Records implemented OnBase, it rolled the solution out to the Housing and Neighborhood Health division and the Department's corporate and legal divisions. The County Health Department is currently considering making OnBase available for medical records storage and retrieval in order to manage this information need as well.

ECM IN ACTION: IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE BACK OFFICE

Finance and administration departments perform the business or “back office” functions of government, such as human resources, accounting and payroll. These departments focus on keeping the government operating on a daily basis, including the following responsibilities:

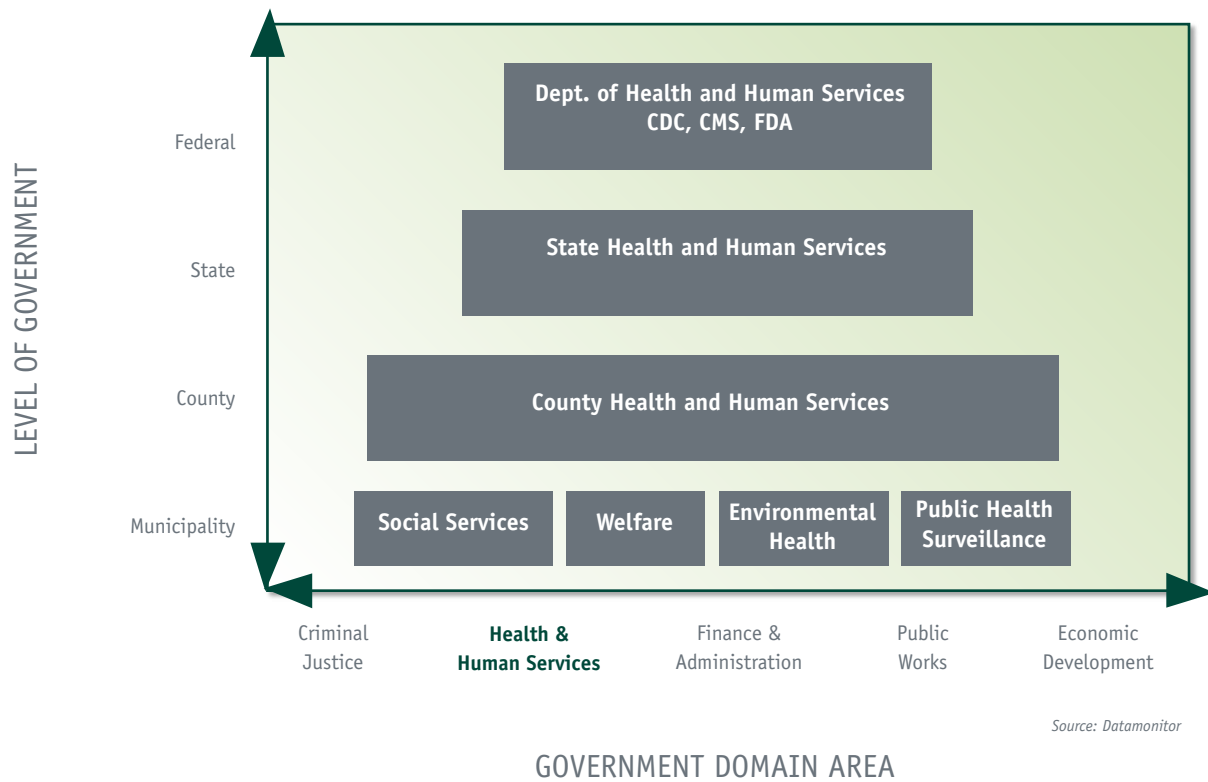
- **Regulatory compliance:** Just as constituent-facing domain areas of government must collaborate with related agencies in order to provide better service, finance and administration departments must share information and processes in order to keep governments operating efficiently. ECM workflow tools enable these departments to meet budget timelines and ensure regulatory compliance. At the same time, document management tools in ECM solutions allow these departments to track activities and report on performance for audit purposes.
- **Internal efficiency:** Many of the tasks finance and administration departments must perform are time-consuming due to the amount of oversight and paperwork required to complete them. For example, in many state and local governments, multiple managers must approve an invoice before it can be processed. Departments can speed the time it takes to process those invoices by using ECM workflow tools to automatically route invoices and associated documents (e.g. purchase orders, contracts) and remind managers of their status at pre-determined intervals. In addition, human resources departments can better manage hiring processes by using similar timers to remind employees to accomplish specific tasks. If those tasks are not completed, ECM solutions can generate e-mails to managers informing them that the process is in danger of slipping or falling behind schedule.

Information sharing across levels of government

In addition to enabling information and process sharing across domain areas, ECM solutions allow government enterprises to collaborate vertically across agencies at the municipal, county, state and federal levels. Interlevel information sharing is critical to constituent-focused service as governments at different levels capture different types of information. For example, state and local public health agencies report disease occurrences to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which track infectious outbreaks nationwide. In turn, the CDC provides state and local agencies with information about health threats or concerns so they can inform their communities on a more granular basis. This type of vertical collaboration and information sharing often follows on the heels of integrating data management and processes across government domain areas (see Figure 6).

Cross-vertical information sharing is particularly important for programs such as disability determinations that are maintained by states but enforced at the local level. Just as states must push information down to counties to administer these programs, local governments must pull information back up to the state once activities have been completed. By enabling this push-pull of data between levels of government, ECM solutions provide government enterprises with a mechanism to communicate information related to a common case and process applications, forms and other documents so that constituents receive more timely and personalized service.

Figure 6: Expanding information sharing across the government enterprise and levels of government: health & human services as one example



Augmenting information and process sharing across domain areas and across levels of government

TAKING STEPS TOWARD THE 'CONSTITUENT-FOCUSED SERVICE' VISION

ECM strategies and solutions allow state and local governments to make better-informed decisions, act more quickly to resolve issues and ultimately provide more individualized service to constituents. As governments redefine their goals to concentrate on offering services that address the full scope of constituent needs, enabling agencies to access and share information captured across the government enterprise is essential. Deploying ECM solutions is an important step for governments towards constituent-focused service. As you develop your ECM strategy, consider these three points:

- **Focus on operational challenges to receive optimal benefits**
Developing constituent-focused service may seem like an unattainable goal to state and local governments that face more immediate obstacles as they perform their daily business. While ECM solutions are a key enabler of constituent-focused service, they also provide state and local governments with return on value related to these business challenges. As agencies evaluate technologies, it is important to recognize which solutions best meet their operational as well as information management needs.
- **Address one domain area and move horizontally**
 - The fragmented nature of state and local government budgets and the sector's general reluctance to take a "big bang" approach to implementing technology limit the ability for organizations to develop a truly enterprise-wide ECM strategy. It may be more effective for individual agencies to deploy ECM solutions tactically to address a business need, such as records management, regulatory compliance or process efficiency. That agency can then act as a catalyst to develop a broad framework for ECM that integrates solutions previously deployed by individual agencies.
 - Agencies that plan to take an incremental approach to deploying ECM should look for solutions that offer the flexibility and scalability to make this a seamless process. It is critical that governments choose a solution that will allow them to easily add users or expand beyond a single business need so that early implementations of ECM technology can enable deeper interoperability and information sharing at the enterprise level.
- **Integrate vertically after connecting horizontal silos**
As state and local governments redefine their goals to concentrate on providing more constituent-focused service, organizations recognize the need to share information and processes within a domain area, between domain areas and across levels of government. This type of cross-domain and inter-level information management strategy enables governments to make better-informed decisions and act more quickly to resolve issues, both of which are key factors to providing more individualized service to constituents.

IN SUMMARY

In addition to being a key component of broader information management strategies, ECM provides solutions to governments' operational challenges, such as systemic inefficiency, insufficient security, regulatory compliance, the looming human resources crisis and stakeholder pressure for greater accountability and transparency.

KEEPING CONSTITUENTS AT THE HEART OF YOUR STRATEGY

Developing constituent-focused service does not have to be a daunting task for state and local governments. An important step towards constituent-focused service is the formulation of an ECM strategy that integrates information and processes across the government enterprise. ECM solutions that enable government enterprises to bridge domain areas and collaborate across levels of government while returning value to constituents are critical elements of any enterprise-wide information management strategy. When implemented as part of a broader information management strategy, ECM solutions ultimately benefit constituents, enabling state and local governments to offer more targeted and personalized service that covers the full scope of their needs.

ECM VENDOR PROFILE: HYLAND SOFTWARE

OnBase is one ECM solution that state and local governments are currently using as an element of their information management strategies to facilitate constituent-focused service. Developed by Hyland Software, OnBase is designed to help organizations streamline work processes and share information among multiple stakeholders. OnBase is flexible enough to address the needs of enterprise solutions as well as small and medium businesses.



Because OnBase targets formal, multi-step processes defined according to precise timelines, this solution is a good match for the process-driven environment of many government agencies. In addition, OnBase easily integrates with other applications, which is critical for agencies that must manage legacy and proprietary systems related to their particular service line or domain area.

There are a number of key selling points that differentiate OnBase from other ECM products, including:

GOVERNMENT FOCUS

Hyland Software places a strong emphasis on its government customers. OnBase currently has nearly 500 government deployments, including four of the 10 largest counties in the United States and multiple statewide agency deployments. OnBase offers program-specific solutions including affordable housing, criminal justice information systems, finance and administration, health and human services, and public works. Having this type of focus enables Hyland to develop software features and modules designed to address the business needs that affect governments on a daily basis. Because OnBase can be deployed at the department or enterprise level, governments can leverage agencies' early successes with the solutions into a government-wide ECM strategy aimed at providing constituent-focused service.

Government is the third largest industry for Hyland Software and accounts for approximately one-fifth of its revenue. Hyland staff include former government officials who have deep industry knowledge and understanding of its unique challenges.



With Application Enabler, OnBase manages content in the background while users work in line-of-business applications. Users can simply double click on a name, case number or address in their current program and OnBase will pull all the documents related to that data point.

EASE OF USE

Too many state and local agencies have purchased technology solutions that promised to transform their operations but ultimately went unused because they were too difficult to deploy. Because governments rely more heavily on legacy systems than organizations in other industries, ease of use is a critical factor. In addition, high-profile technology failures in this sector have made officials reluctant to invest in new systems that appear to complicate processes. Unlike other ECM solutions, OnBase does not require extensive programming or outside services to implement. Rather, its “point-and-click” configurability makes OnBase easy for business users to operate out-of-the-box.

OnBase’s user-friendliness is enhanced by its capability to integrate with existing line-of-business applications. One of the easiest means of integration is via the Application Enabler, a tool that enables agencies to incorporate OnBase functionality into applications employees are accustomed to working with as part of their daily activities, including legacy mainframes and ERP systems such as SAP® or Oracle®, as well as GIS and other mapping applications. Once agencies “app enable” these programs, employees can easily retrieve documents from OnBase that are associated with information managed by other applications. This type of process integration and content enablement deepens constituent-focused services as OnBase allows governments to leverage information captured and stored in multiple systems.



FLEXIBILITY

State and local government agencies of all types use OnBase to manage and access electronic content and to automate internal workflow. Just as MassHousing deployed OnBase to automate its Section 8 contracts administration, Marion County installed OnBase to streamline the application process for vital records and Dallas County District Clerk's Office implemented OnBase to manage its court documents, governments use OnBase to perform tasks related to specific programs more effectively. OnBase eliminates many of the necessary but tedious administrative tasks staff traditionally perform so that employees can focus on increasing the frequency and quality of their interactions with constituents.

SCALABILITY

While OnBase is flexible enough to target both program-specific and operational needs, it can also quickly "scale up" to accommodate more users or expand to additional parts of an organization after initial implementation. OnBase offers the advantage that this expansion can be accomplished with minimal professional services.

Scalable technology is vital to government enterprises that are looking to integrate existing ECM solutions into an overall information management strategy. Many agencies perpetuate the silo mentality of government information management by deploying ECM solutions in a single agency or department. Agencies that deploy OnBase typically address a specific agency's needs with the intent to create interoperability by growing the solution horizontally. Alternatively, other state and local governments have been able to break down bureaucratic walls and implement OnBase as an enterprise-wide solution shared across all agencies from initial deployment. This approach enables governments to share information throughout the enterprise by capturing and storing content only once and making the data available to all users. In addition to providing a more cost-effective solution, this approach also allows governments to centrally manage and support the application.



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