Service BC Project
Alliance Management Office Report
August 2008

1. Initiative Overview

Service BC was formed in 2004, centralizing service delivery for government to citizens and businesses. The channels to deliver these services include: in-person through Service BC Centres (formerly known as Government Agents offices); via the telephone through the Service BC Contact Centre (formerly known as Enquiry BC); and over the internet through the government's homepage (gov.bc.ca) and BC OnLine. While the formation of Service BC centralized both management and policy for these channels, it did not provide a mechanism to connect and integrate information systems and information delivery. This resulted in;

    a) inconsistent information and messaging across channels;

    b) inability to complete transactions within and across channels;

    c) a fragmented approach to program governance, messaging and branding;

    d) duplicate costs to maintain and extend aging infrastructures; and

    e) an architecture that did not support the objectives of transforming operations
        to a citizen-focussed approach.

In June 2006 a master services agreement between the Province and IBM Canada was signed, the scope of which includes the management and operation of Service BC's contact centre and enterprise website environments, as well as various projects to improve service delivery such as the development of a channel management strategy which will provide the framework for integration efforts within and across Service BC's service channels. This agreement will help the Province to meet the following objectives:

    a) integrate the telephone, online and in-person service channels to provide
        consistent information and services to its citizens;

    b) develop an approach to service channel management in which access to
        information and services, technology platforms, and business processes were
        developed around the needs of the citizen; and

    c) more effectively meet the needs of its clients and customers within a new
        integrated, cost-effective and efficient service delivery environment.

In order to achieve the strategic outcomes identified above, the following projects were identified as foundational work to be completed:

  a) maintain the existing service levels for contact centre services;

  b) replace the existing contact centre infrastructure with current, IP-based technologies capable of integrating with other channels while providing additional features and functions;

  c) replace the current, aging portal infrastructure with newer equipment with the ability to handle increased demand for capacity and functionality;

  d) develop a new Web presence to replace gov.bc.ca and migrate the existing content to the new platform; and

  e) deliver five "transformational" projects to enable Service BC to provide greater value to clients, stakeholders and customers.

For a more detailed description of the Service BC Project, please refer to the Project Summary found at http://www.saip.gov.bc.ca/ASD_Projects.htm.

2. Status Update (second year)

Highlights – Year 2

- The second phase of Web development was completed. This second phase provides the foundation for implementing citizen services horizontally across government by enabling the integration of information and services across channels (telephone, online and in-person).
- The above new Web development has allowed the Province to develop important new websites for clients such as Canada Pacific Gateway, Online Resource for Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, Welcome BC for Ministry of Attorney General and the Ministry of Labour and Citizens Services Intranet.
- The Web operating environment continues to consistently meet service levels.
- The replacement of the contact centre infrastructure was successfully implemented in February 2008. The new technology will allow clients to implement features such as interactive voice response; automatic skills based routing, computer telephony integration, call back and Web chat.

3. Challenges

- The delays of the contact centre infrastructure replacement caused expected improvements to be unavailable until February 2008.
- Growth Strategy requires IBM Canada to have agility when meeting the capacity and capability demands associated with this agreement.

4. Contract Objectives

The following are objectives taken from the project summary that was posted when the deal was originally signed. Where two or more objectives were substantially the same, only one was used here to provide status. The primary objectives of the contractual relationship are to:

a. Objective - Provide service at the first point of contact with government.

Status - The transformational projects completed in 2007 identified the needs of clients, customers and of effective citizen-centred service delivery. Operational capabilities have been built into both the contact centre and the Web to enable Service BC to provide service at the first point of contact. Where possible, the service delivery channels will provide integrated service, i.e., the same information/services are available over different delivery channels. To accomplish this, Service BC is starting to work with partner programs in government to extend its service offerings consistently across channels. This work will evolve over time and be guided by parallel work towards citizen centred service delivery and guided by processes such as the "Citizens First 4" research.

b. Objective - Facilitate growth of the services, and the extension of the services to the broader public sector.

Status - The deal has seen significant growth in the second contract year as Service BC has provided expertise around segmentation, client relationship management and Web development to its client base. It is anticipated that additional work will continue to be on-boarded, including the broader public sector, to the operational streams (contact centre and Web).

c. Objective - Enable the transformation of the delivery of services to the public with continuous improvement.

Status - Service delivery improvement on the Web has improved the time required to develop, approve and post new content. Similarly, the ability to deploy changes quickly has been greatly enhanced. Web content delivered on the new platform now meets accessibility standards for visitors with disabilities. The contact centre capabilities have also greatly improved with the implementation of the new Internet Protocol Contact Centre (IPCC) technology.

c. Objective - Provide the services in an efficient, cost-effective, transparent and accountable manner.

Status - The operational services being provided in the new environments are more efficient. More services can be provided with the same number of staff and the effort required to provide these services is less than in the previous environment without added resources. In addition, the business model for the services is improved. Service BC's clients are achieving greater autonomy from Service BC and more direct control of their web presence.

d. Objective - Build Service BC to be a centre of expertise and excellence for service delivery to the public.

Status - Service BC continues to be recognized nationally as a leader in citizen-centred service delivery. The Service BC Project enhances both the business and operational capabilities of the organization and it is anticipated that this will directly impact and improve the ability of the citizens of B.C. to get the information and services they require. By providing this enhanced capability, Service BC is improving the overall satisfaction of citizens with government.

e. Objective - Protect the security and privacy of personal information.

Status - During this first two years of the contract, the security and privacy of personal information was maintained at all times. Both the Province and IBM Canada continue to work proactively to ensure all possible safeguards are in place.

5. Service Commitments

Contact centre
IBM Canada provides the facilities and technology to establish, operate and maintain the Service BC contact centre each weekday, except statutory holidays, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. These services include:

- toll-free telephone referral and information services;

- e-mail referral and information services;

- demand transfers to verified government phone numbers;

- electronic forms completion for the Multiple Address Change Web form;

- management of information in the database;

- provision of service in English and other languages used by callers; and

- planning, design, implementation and testing of the new technology.

The new technology, over time, will provide the core platform for the Service BC contact centre, using Internet-protocol as the foundation for communication. The new technology has the following features:

- interactive voice response so that callers can receive information and be routed to the appropriate destination by using either their touch-pad or through speech input;

- automatic skills based routing, so that employees who are able to handle more than one type of call (or e-mail, fax or web chat query) will receive those inquiries that fall within their pre-determined skill profile. E-mails and faxes will be queued with calls, with calls having a higher priority;

- computer telephony integration, which would allow a caller (such as someone with a specific and ongoing relationship with a certain area of government) to enter some information prior to speaking to an agent (for example, a phone number or some other unique identifier). This information would then appear with the call to the contact centre agent; thus saving the customer from having to give that information again. There may also be a requirement for a call to be redirected to a specific program or ministry. In these situations, the customer and the information collected so far, would be transferred to program or ministry;

- a call-back feature so that customers can enter their phone number and maintain the same place in the queue, or enter their number and time they would like the call to be returned; and

- the web chat feature would be used by customers who are, for example, filling out forms online. It would allow both the customer, and the contact centre agent (should it be required), to view the form at the same time.

These features are available for use by various client ministries or agencies depending on their needs. This provides greater options for Service BC clients in how services and information are received; thus making it easier for customers to interact with government.

Web Services
The new web service provides the foundation for implementing citizens' services horizontally across government by enabling the integration of information and services across channels (telephone, online and in-person). The result is information and services being provided based upon citizens' requirements, rather than on government structure. The improvements to the web provide the Province with:

- proven technology;

- a solution that is less expensive to operate and maintain;

- a simpler, more robust and stable Web environment; and

- the operational risks of the portal being shifted to the private sector.

The improvements increase government's ability to move more services and information online. Expanding both the depth and breadth of information and services will provide a more positive experience for citizens. IBM Canada provides the following web hosting services as part of this agreement:

- public access to portal services while protecting government infrastructure and data in a secure environment;

- internal access to government information and services in a secure, protected manner;

- a technical environment that is robust, secure and kept current over the term of the agreement; and

- services including processing operations, production control services, systems software management, hardware management, storage management services, asset management, network services, reporting, security, and service recovery.

Application Management Support Services

The application management support activities are focused on the ongoing support and custom development that enables the overall Web solution. IBM Canada provides the following application management support services:

- application support for the existing technology until it is replaced;

- application management and administration;

- application support and workload management;

- emergency fixes; and

- enhancements and project support.

Application management services also include application change and configuration management; application operations support; content management system repository administration; service request and problem management; documentation; and other services.

Appendix A – Contract Objectives: Reporting on Results

Objective 1
The Service BC Contact Centre is to provide:

- equal access to current, reliable provincial government information for all British Columbia residents;

- excellent service at the first point of contact with government and refer and/or transfer to correct point in government;

- direct answers to common program enquiries;

- cost effective methods of accessing information about or communicating with the provincial government; and

- assistance to individuals in identifying the responsibilities of various levels of government.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Maintain existing service levels.	Achieved
Maintain existing satisfaction ratings.	Achieved

Objective 2
Implementation of IP based technology to replace existing call centre infrastructure.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Launch of Internet Protocol Contact Centre (IPCC) project.	Complete

Objective 3
Implementation of new Web technology to replace existing portal infrastructure.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Install, test and operate Web infrastructure to support new Web application.	Complete

Objective 4
Provide application maintenance and support services for the current, and new, Web technologies.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Staffing of application maintenance team, development of roles, procedures and policies for support.	Complete

Objective 5

Design, develop and implement new Web application to replace existing site.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Complete first phase of project (external site).	Complete
Migrate existing content (external) to new application.	Complete
Design, development and implement internal Web site.	Complete

Objective 6

Implement "transformational" projects to enable Service BC to enhance service to clients, citizens and stakeholders while streamlining internal processes.

Activities (undertaken to achieve objective)	Results (Year-To-Date)
Perform Stakeholder Assessment.	Complete
Develop Client Relationship Management Strategy.	Complete
Perform Customer Needs Assessment and Segmentation.	Complete
Develop Performance Management and Review Strategy.	Complete
Develop Channel Management Strategy.	Phase I complete

Appendix B – Service Commitments: Reporting on Results

Service Commitment 1
Contact Centre Service Levels

Description	Results
85% of calls offered to the Service BC Contact Centre general enquiry and Multiple Address Change (MAC) queues will be answered within 20 seconds during operating hours, on a monthly average.	Service Level met
95% of all calls offered will be answered, on a monthly average.	Service Level met
Each day 75% of e-mails received before 2:00 PM will be processed by end of business day, on monthly averages. All routine e-mails will be processed within one business day. E-mails requiring extraordinary research will be processed within two business days.	Service Level met
The currency of information disseminated by the Service BC Contact Centre staff utilizing the database will at no time exceed 100 days.	Service Level met

Service Commitment 2
Web environment server availability Service Levels

Description	Results
Production supported servers will be available 99.9% during prime hours.	Service Level met
Production supported servers will be available 99.5% during non-prime hours.	Service Level met
Development, Test and training servers will be available 99.5% during all hours.	Service Level met

Service Commitment 3
Web environment application availability Service Levels

Description	Results
The external Web, internal Web and search applications will be available 99.5% during all hours.	Service Level met
The Content Management System (CMS) application will be available 99.0% during business hours.	Service Level met
Web analytics application will be available 99.5% during business hours.	Service Level met
Applications on the development and test environments will be available 99.5% during business hours.	Service Level met

Service Commitment 4

Web environment application availability Service Levels

Description	Results
The Web application will execute a test transaction in less than two seconds 95% of the time.	Service Level met
The search application will complete a test query in less than two seconds on average.	Service Level met
The Content Management System will load a typical Data Capture Template in less than 10 seconds on average.	Service Level met
Applications on the Development and Test environments will be available 99.5% during business hours.	Service Level met

Service Commitment 5

Problem Management Service Levels

Description	Results
Severity 1 problems are responded to within one hour during Business Hours and two hours outside of business hours.	Service Level met
Severity 2 problems are responded to within two hours during Business Hours and four hours outside of business hours.	Service Level met