Colorado Oversize/Overweight Permitting Overhaul

Nomination Category	Digital Government: Government to Business (G to B)
State	Colorado
Project Initiation Date	August 30, 2013
Project Completion Date	November 11, 2014

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2014, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) implemented a new oversize/overweight vehicle permitting system called Colorado Oversize/Overweight Permitting and Routing (COOPR) to overhaul the way regular oversize/overweight permits are issued. CDOT is responsible for issuing oversize/overweight vehicle permits for the Colorado state highway system.

This initiative, COOPR, replaced a 12 year-old legacy system that was no longer meeting business needs. The new system is a 100 percent web-based application, accessible to all users with an Internet connection. Based on a complete routable geographic information systems (GIS) database of the State of Colorado, COOPR provides safe, effective routing and permitting on state-maintained highways. It includes all oversize/overweight restrictions in the state and is integrated with COTrip, CDOT's traveler information service. It allows for 24/7 self issue for permits within CDOT's envelope, and provides bridge analysis for very large loads.

II. PROJECT NARRATIVE

a. Concept

Two years ago, CDOT's oversize/overweight vehicle permit system was grossly outdated and not meeting current business or customer needs, including drivers, permit purchasers, and law enforcement agencies.

Because of the system's limitations, turnaround times for permits were extended and required manual interaction from office staff. Permit analysis required writers to pull pertinent information from up to 15 different resources, and error rates were higher than they would be with a more up-to-date permitting system -- causing safety concerns with both infrastructure and customers. This old system did not allow for access to the necessary tools and databases to effectively and efficiently route loads, impose restrictions or issue permits. Furthermore, workload for permits had increased by 27 percent over a 24 month period, while staffing levels remained the same.

To fix this business problem, the State of Colorado engaged with ProMiles Software Development Corporation on a project to develop the new system, COOPR. It is a web-based system designed to allow companies that have their own accounts with CDOT -- giving them access every day and every hour of the year. All the information a customer would need -- including vehicle restrictions, best routes, etc. -- is loaded in the system. This data is managed and updated on a daily basis by CDOT permits office staff.

b. Significance

With COOPR, CDOT is able to issue permits quickly while retaining complete oversight of every permit and increasing efficiency.

Additionally, companies that frequently obtain permits from CDOT are able to self-issue certain types of permits that fall within specific criteria. Customer companies that are used to working with web-based applications are finding COOPR particularly helpful, and it has freed up CDOT employees to work on other priority projects -- instead of wading through frustrating and duplicative permit applications.

The COOPR system can also respond immediately when new data is entered regarding changing road restrictions or conditions, including construction or maintenance project parameters. As long as CDOT receives information from the field in a timely manner, COOPR allows customers to get the right routing on their permits.

The transformational point for customers is that companies are now able to issue most of their own permits. For the State of Colorado, it has freed up permit writers' time to work on other projects.

On top of it all, this project fits directly into Governor John W. Hickenlooper's gubernatorial priorities of efficiency, effectiveness and elegance by completely elevating the quality and timeliness of the oversize/overweight permitting service for Coloradans. It transformed the way that Colorado government is able to do business with permit-holders; and allows the state to grow in line with the Governor's goal of making Colorado the best place to live, work and play.

c. Impact

Since COOPR was launched in November 2014, more than 80,000 permits have been issued generating approximately $10.8 million (numbers as of April 15, 2016) -- more than five times its $2 million purchase price. The system has turned around the permitting process, streamlining the work of the CDOT Permit Office. Prior to COOPR, CDOT was receiving 60 percent of its permit applications by facsimile. By March 2015 that figure had dropped to 30 percent, and as of July 2015 CDOT no longer was accepting permit applications by facsimile.

On top of that, error rates have been reduced to zero. Error rates prior to COOPR's launch were 6 percent for the office. With the automation of COOPR the permit error rate is now at 0 percent.

The benefits don't end there. Since the project launch, CDOT has expanded COOPR's use to issue regional oversize/overweight permits for the 12 states that form the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Additionally, final negotiations are underway to allow CDOT to issue combined permits with the City and County of Denver for streets under Denver's jurisdiction.