

ReimaginingIT

in Colorado



CATEGORY

State CIO Office Special Recognition

START DATE

January 2019

END DATE

July 2020

NASCIO STATE IT
RECOGNITION
AWARDS



COLORADO
Governor's Office of
Information Technology

Brandi Simmons
Chief Communications Officer
Brandi.Simmons@state.co.us
303.764.6897

Executive Summary

In today's world, consumers have a vast array of choices for what services and goods they consume. The days of in-person or telephone interactions during set business hours are dwindling - and even non-existent in many cases. Consumers can order and access goods and services nearly anytime, from any place or device. This is even true in the private sector as businesses procure and use information technology. For many valid reasons, state government has been slower to adapt to this new culture.

To get to where we are today, the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) needed to take a short look back. A series of events culminated in the overwhelmingly bipartisan passage of Senate Bill 08-155 ("the consolidation bill"), which shifted the disparate IT services, functions, systems, and assets from the individual executive branch agencies into the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) on July 1, 2008. While the state's consolidated IT operating model has provided real benefits over the last decade, the technological landscape and customer needs have evolved. Though OIT recognized the need to make fundamental changes in the organization's service model, and even experienced successes along the way, change was slow; and because IT was considered a shared responsibility, there was no true accountability.

As the State CIO and OIT executive staff considered various options to once again transform how IT services would be delivered to state agencies, Colorado elected a new Governor. In 2019, Governor Jared Polis outlined a vision to build increased agency IT accountability and ownership, collaborative IT governance and oversight, and a more nimble and process-oriented IT organization. This drove the State CIO's Office to boldly reimagine IT in the state and pursue a programmatic investment in change. Thus, the statewide IT Transformation Program was born, officially launching in August 2020.

Since the program's implementation, 20 transformation projects have been identified to be completed over the next two years. Already, there have been significant improvements in customer satisfaction, transparency and efficiency. These include a program management approach to drive results, process improvements to make more data-driven decisions, and a new customer-focused operating model to co-create with agency customers and keep up with the evolving external environment. The above and more made the decision to reimagine IT a pivotal moment for the state's IT operations and service delivery.



Idea

The History

In 2008, the Colorado General Assembly passed legislation that moved the responsibility of information technology from state agencies into the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT). While the state's consolidated IT operating model provided real benefits over the last decade, the technological landscape was changing at a rapid pace; and despite having a centralized IT environment, a majority of the state's IT spend continued to focus on supporting disparate, redundant and unique IT solutions, many of which had similar business functions. Though OIT recognized the need to make a fundamental change, and even experienced successes along the way, change was slow; and because IT was considered everyone's responsibility, it was unclear where the accountability and ownership lied.

A state IT ecosystem consists of a complex set of interactions formed by the people, processes, and technologies that empower and support the business mission. The role of IT transformation in state government has become a focus of greater attention over the past few decades primarily due to drastic changes in technological needs, increased cyber threats, and budgetary demands. Many states, including Colorado, are facing serious challenges realizing the benefits of technological innovations.

When Governor Jared Polis took office, he outlined a vision to build increased agency IT ownership and accountability, collaborative IT governance and oversight, and a more nimble and process-oriented IT organization. This drove the State CIO's Office to boldly reimagine IT in the state and pursue a programmatic investment in change. In addition to the Governor's vision, OIT desired to:

- Improve its service delivery and overall customer satisfaction
- Increase transparency into project work and billing practices
- Standardize and improve product and service offerings
- Create new ways for agencies to have a voice in the state's IT direction

The result was the implementation of the State of Colorado's IT Transformation (ITT) Program: Reimagine IT.



Implementation

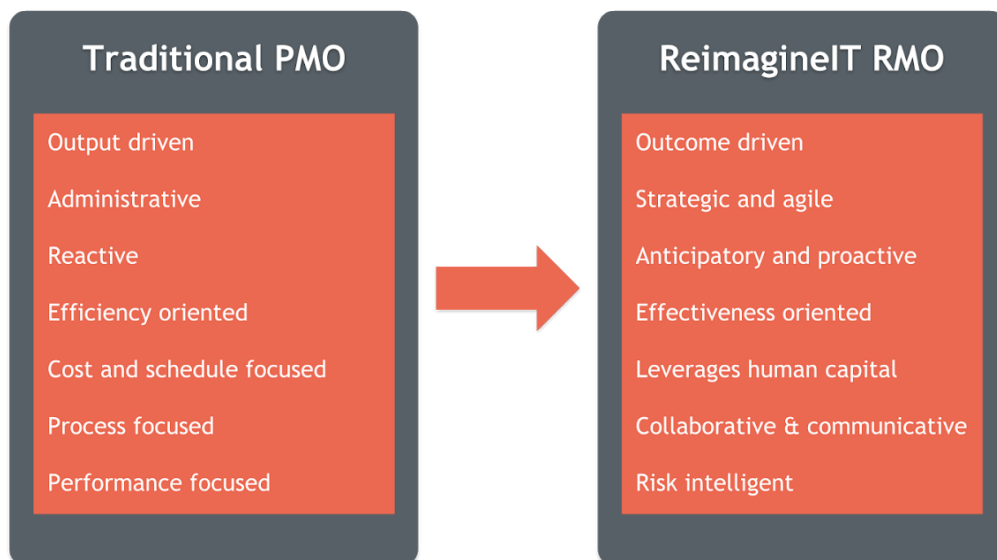
The Transformation Journey

Just as Rome wasn't built in a day, laying the groundwork for statewide IT transformation didn't happen overnight. From January to December 2019, OIT conducted analyses of the state's IT operations and environment. These efforts identified gaps in the state's service delivery environment relative to industry-leading practices. Findings included the need to establish a new business model to support more customer-focused service delivery - especially for major IT projects - increase IT resource sharing, align IT priorities with business needs, and improve OIT's business processes.

The IT Transformation Program is unique in that the management approach involves OIT actively working with customer agencies as partners with common goals and objectives. OIT solicited input from state agency partners, business leaders, and IT leaders to inform the state's IT transformation plans. Participants identified improvements needed in customer satisfaction, efficiency and transparency.

To transform state IT and ensure its long-term success, OIT had to do more than track and monitor its progress. The sheer scope of the effort needed a solid foundation, sturdy framework, and strategy focused on influencing the program's direction, outcomes and value delivery. Thus, the program's infrastructure took shape.

The ITT Program Manager implemented a Results Management Office (RMO) to drive ITT. While different from a traditional Program Management Office (PMO) focused on execution, the RMO is an enhanced approach that establishes and communicates value-based metrics, realistic time horizons, and well-defined levels of effort to drive lasting change, efficiency, and effectiveness. This approach is more in line with agile delivery, and the benefits can be found in the graphic below.

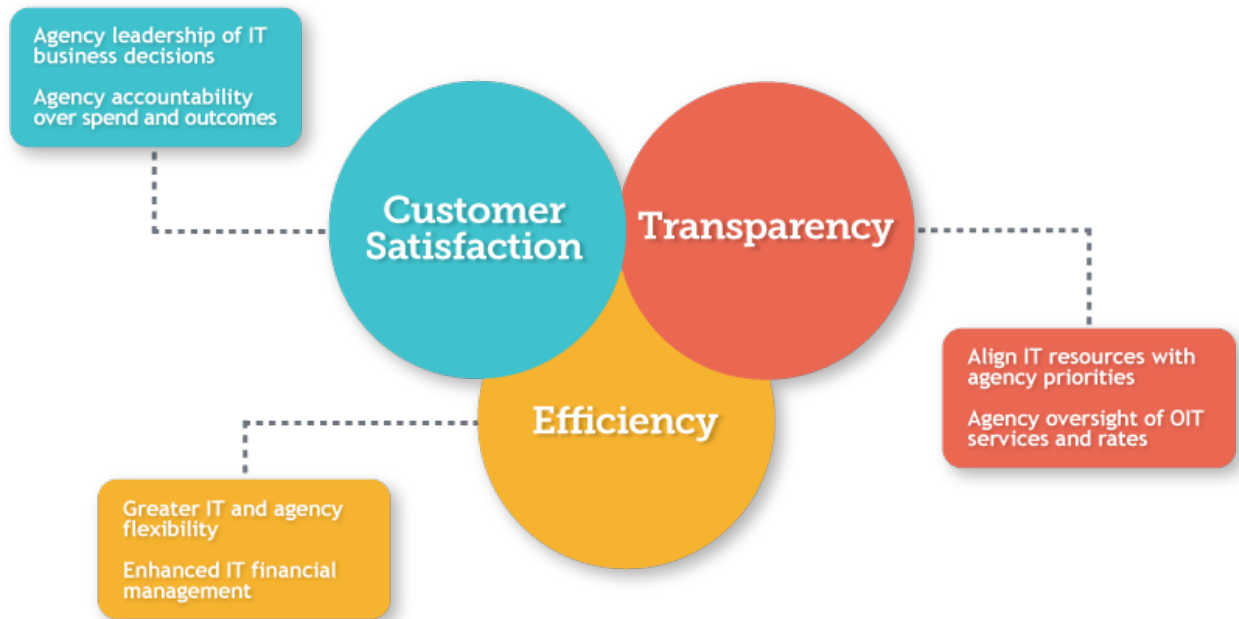


Organizational change management and communication plans were embedded at the program’s launch to ensure full enterprise adoption. The team developed a structured and organized communication strategy to effectively deliver clear, concise, consistent, and timely messaging about the ITT program, including tactics, channels, tools, and cadence. As well, the team developed a brand campaign (ReimagineIT) and messaging strategy to highlight program value, raise awareness and support continued stakeholder buy-in. A key tool for stakeholder communication was the digital heart and soul of the program: the [ReimagineIT website](#).

Impact

The Result

Though OIT had made some strides in changing its service delivery and was steadily improving customer satisfaction, projects were sometimes undertaken in silos. The ITT Program created a solid foundation for making the desired changes in a planful, inclusive and accountable way. Since the program’s implementation, 20 transformation projects have been identified to be completed over the next two years; and already, there have been significant improvements in the areas of customer satisfaction, transparency and efficiency. These include the ability to make structured improvements to OIT processes, expand agency ownership and accountability of IT in the state, and collaborate with our agency customers more than ever before.



The program brought agency collaboration to an all-time high with staff involved in all areas from governance boards to working groups, which represents a significant shift in the way OIT and agencies have operated over the years. Decisions about the state’s enterprise IT product

and service offerings are no longer made in a vacuum, giving agencies a seat at the table and their voice heard.

In addition to a Customer User Group, two governance boards were created with members from OIT and agency partners to provide the structure, strategy, and processes necessary for collaborative IT direction-setting and decision-making. The two boards listed below have also helped to reduce silos that once inhibited information-sharing and allow for the reuse of resources and assets that will produce cost savings and cost avoidance over time.

- **Strategy and Planning Board** – Develops Enterprise IT Strategy in alignment with business requirements; provide executive oversight and resource prioritization.
- **Rates and Services Board** – Guides the portfolio of enterprise IT services, associated service levels, and development and dissemination of transparent chargeback rates.

The results management approach ensured that each of the 20+ projects within the program’s portfolio were guided through the transformation process. The RMO established the framework for each ITT project to effectively achieve strategic results. This framework included a comprehensive project intake and development process to outline business needs, scope and approach, deliverables, team roles and responsibilities, and success criteria. From intake to exit process, each project was guided and supported through the entire project life cycle.

Process improvements have allowed OIT the ability to operate more efficiently and transparently and to make data-driven decisions that improve the organization’s impact to agency customers, and ultimately, all Coloradans. The decision to reimagine IT was a pivotal moment for the state’s IT operations and service delivery. The effort not only provided a more effective operating model, it set the stage for Colorado to keep pace with the changing technological landscape and become a more resilient, nimble and process-oriented IT organization.

