

EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Welcome to the new Public Sector ERP Insights, a publication that brings the latest industry perspectives, government thought leadership, and ERP solutions from CGI's AMS Advantage ERP program.

As an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution provider solving public sector challenges for over 30 years, CGI brings you something of new value this spring: a look at public sector themes that focus on issues relating specifically to government.

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TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Leveraging Service Oriented Architecture to Transform the Business of Government

By Atul Singh, Director Consulting, CGI Solutions Management

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ERP TRENDS

Trends of Public Sector ERP: The Best Approach for Government

By Charlie Johnson, Vice-President Consulting Services, AMS Advantage ERP Program

As governments work to transform their environments from an internal resource optimization to a process integration and external collaboration focus, ERP stands at the forefront of solutions that will achieve this goal. ERP is proven to significantly increase efficiency, improve information access, reduce total cost

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) improves productivity and federal reporting through CGI's built-for-government services and solutions

By Cheryl Smith, Senior Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program



With a statewide network of more than 60,000 miles of road, about 4,000 bridges, 1,900 miles of rail lines, 125 public airports and the Port of Lewiston, Idaho's transportation system is the backbone of the state's economy.

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CGI Government ERP Customers Recognized For Peak Effectiveness In Finance Operations

By Sean Wdowiak, Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program

CGI congratulates Colorado, Massachusetts and Mississippi, three government organizations using CGI's Government ERP solutions, for receiving the first-ever Performance Achievement Awards during the National Association of State Comptrollers (NASC) Annual

of ownership, and help government achieve the highest levels of accountability and constituent service. [More »](#)

ERP TRENDS

How to Harness e-Procurement to Standardize Procedure, Maximize Spending and Drive Efficiencies

By Susan Capstack, Executive Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program

Taxpayers and election campaign platforms seem to be in complete agreement when it comes to government spending—reduce it! Yet the demand for government services continues to grow. Stuck in the middle of these conflicting demands are the agency leaders and procurement professionals who have to find a way to "do more with less." [More »](#)

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AMS ADVANTAGE ERP

CGI Forum 2007 – A Passport to Discovery

By Alison Herbert, CGI Event Manager



Mark your calendar for [CGI Forum 2007](#), October 14-17, 2007, at the Portofino Bay Hotel at Universal Orlando®, A Loews Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

A Passport to Discovery, Forum 2007 is the premier networking and educational event for the AMS Advantage® community. With more than 100 in-depth sessions and abundant networking opportunities, the Forum is your can't-miss opportunity to share with and learn from others in your field.

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As an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution provider solving public sector challenges for over 30 years, CGI brings you something of new value this spring: a look at public sector themes that focus on issues relating specifically to government.

In this edition we discuss best practices and technology trends that are making governments successful:

- How to Leverage Service Oriented Architecture to Transform the Business of Government.
- Trends of Public Sector ERP: The Best Approach for Government.
- How to Harness e-Procurement to Standardize Procedure, Maximize Spending and Drive Efficiencies.
- ERP Beta program: how AMS Advantage 3.7 delivers new and enhanced operational capabilities, functionality and performance.
- Maximizing Performance with Best Practices and Consulting Services.
- Introducing CGI Forum 2007: our premier customer event; a great opportunity to share and learn from others in your field.

I would also like to congratulate Colorado, Mississippi and Massachusetts for receiving the first ever [Performance Achievement Award](#) at the 2007 National Association of State Comptrollers (NASC) Annual Conference.

I wish you good reading and useful insights into Public Sector ERP. And weather permitting, plenty of chances to enjoy this beautiful season upon us.

Sincerely,



Heidi Green

Vice-President, AMS Advantage Program

Leveraging Service Oriented Architecture to Transform the Business of Government

By Atul Singh, Director Consulting, CGI Solutions Management

One of the hottest IT topics in any market is services-oriented architecture, or SOA. SOA promises to be a significant innovation for government. Imagine the ability to pick and choose business and technology services; to trade out services based on organizational redesign, new strategic intent, legislative requirements or business process modifications; to reduce redundancy and improve data quality. SOA is not another new technology. It is a whole philosophy about sharing and decoupling business processes from technology to enable a fluid government that can change and change quickly. SOA is the strategy that will extend legacy applications to handle business processes across government.

This article discusses how SOA can be leveraged by governments to enable them to overcome their challenges and accomplish their mission. CGI touches upon the factors driving SOA, how it supports government enterprise architecture, delivers business value and enables real-time control.

What Is Driving SOA in Government?

There are many factors driving the new emphasis on SOA, from the expectations of the coming generation to economic drivers to project management approaches to balancing time and cost. SOA has become the development and deployment strategy to deliver mass customization, composite solution development, reuse, reassembly and dynamic approaches within information technology that enables agility in government. The three key aspects of the government IT landscape driving SOA in government include:

1. Integration issues
2. Operating and maintenance costs
3. Legacy applications slowing down government transformation efforts

SOA is particularly suited to help government agencies deal with the obstacles to implementing the new systems that will enable them to modernize their business architecture, integrate agency service delivery and share information across organizational boundaries. With SOA, the focus on service interface definition treats integration as a primary issue. Integration is designed upfront, helping agencies to deliver functionality that can be shared between internal business processes and external government and private sector partners, without having to first implement complex integration architectures or take on separate costly integration projects.

SOA is particularly suited to government as it assumes that implementations will occur in diverse environments. Standard SOA infrastructure components provide interface points that not only work with J2EE or .NET implementations, but also enable interaction with the variety of legacy architectures used in government IT systems.

With SOA, governments can design application components that duplicate the elements of business service delivery in explicit pieces. The application components directly enable business service components, allowing organizations to define components that can be shared across governmental entities or across internal organizational boundaries, as well as program-specific services. The net result is an application architecture that mirrors the business architecture — a striking contrast to the current state of government legacy applications.

With SOA, the design approach is highly collaborative and iterative to address the issue of cost. Governments can now budget for smaller projects with smaller commitments and provide results in phases, taking on significantly less project risk and building a convincing argument for ongoing

application investments.

How Can SOA Support Government Enterprise Architecture?

Service-oriented architecture is not a replacement for enterprise architecture. SOA supports the overall enterprise architecture by enabling agility so that the organization can respond quickly to government trends and disruptions, such as constituent needs and regulatory changes. The enterprise architecture receives several benefits that the whole entity can leverage with SOA influencing:

1. The business architecture with well-defined, reusable business processes
2. The application architecture to use components and service interfaces
3. The data architecture to use XML
4. The technical architecture with standards for infrastructure to support services, consumers of those services, services proxies and messaging infrastructure

How Does SOA Deliver Business Value to Government?

Doing business in government today requires the communication and collaboration of all levels and departments of government. Business verticals in government consist of public services, social services, regulatory compliance and government operations all working toward achieving the needs of constituents in the most effective way possible. Working across levels and branches of government is a complex and difficult undertaking that is further complicated by the governance and infrastructure that must exist to support it.

Today, government leaders expect to move quickly, using all information appropriate to make effective choices that benefit constituents. Enablement of this expectation requires an organizational culture that embraces the sharing of assets and information. Unfortunately, today's government infrastructure is not well suited to respond to the demands for responsive interconnectivity.

As the information technology industry matures, its ability to meet the needs of government will be determined by its ability to become ever-present in cross technology communications at high rates of speed, in a manner that simplifies the ability of government to achieve requirements. To accomplish this, SOA can be used as an effective tool for the business side of government. Technology now becomes an enabler by:

1. Reducing time and cost to implement solutions
2. Reducing solution maintenance costs
3. Reducing time to deliver constituent services
4. Increasing utility from existing investments
5. Increasing the number of features available to the organization

SOA focuses IT on being business-driven. The underlying assumption in SOA is that not everything in technology can be the same, so standard methods and processes must be defined to enable disparate technologies to communicate, regardless of manufacturer or language. The real value delivered through SOA is government's ability to respond to change and to optimize services using differing technologies as vehicles for maximizing constituent value.

How Can SOA Help Government Maintain a Real-time View of the Organization?

SOA enables real-time control when integrated with business intelligence capabilities. This capability can take the form of dashboards that provide agencies and departments with real-time metrics on performance. Establishing better visibility into the business operations provides management with the ability to detect problems and quickly intervene. An SOA solution using loosely coupled web services provides the ability to communicate with multiple business applications dynamically. SOA provides the following advantages in business processes monitoring of the organization:

1. Flexible and economic integration approach
2. Business process optimization through logical process modeling
3. Non-reliance on proprietary interfaces and expensive message bus/broker

4. Shorter timeframes for implementing new initiatives

To achieve the promises of SOA, government organizations must develop a clear vision for the role that this approach can play in their transformation, and make sure that all key stakeholders share this same vision. CGI stresses an incremental rather than "big-bang" approach, which helps SOA evolve into the culture while building credibility and keeping focus on the "big picture" of SOA's end state. During this evolution, it is important to establish the IT management principles and governance processes that ensure it can perform as promised.

CGI views SOA as playing a critical role in transforming the business of government by supporting, enabling, driving and sustaining change in government's internal and external processes and relationships. The end result will be optimized government service delivery, constituent participation and governance.

Trends of Public Sector ERP: The Best Approach for Government

By Charlie Johnson, Vice-President Consulting Services, AMS Advantage ERP Program

As governments work to transform their environments from an internal resource optimization to a process integration and external collaboration focus, ERP stands at the forefront of solutions that will achieve this goal. ERP is proven to significantly increase efficiency, improve information access, reduce total cost of ownership, and help government achieve the highest levels of accountability and constituent service.

Yet implementing ERP in a manner that achieves its promises is no easy task. Public sector organizations often rationalize their ERP modernization initiatives within the context of budgetary constraints and are faced with multiple ERP providers that, on the surface, are difficult to discern. In addition, adjudicating between competing ERP solutions on their functional merit is not only difficult because of the complexity of ERP systems, but it is further complicated by the intricacy of the government acquisition process. Therefore, it is particularly important that the business value be sold at the executive and political levels of government and, to be successful, that government embeds the ERP solution within its culture and processes. What's more, the level of detailed analysis required to map functional requirements to ERP solutions is an arduous task that, even if done thoroughly, hasn't always delivered a successful implementation.

In this article, CGI works to address these issues by examining the evolution and shortcomings of ERP solutions; by defining the features and functionality needed to address government transformation; and by recommending the steps to take to position for success.

Evolution of ERP in Government

In public sector markets, federal, state, and local ERP systems evolved due to advancements in the commercial sector in the 1980s. Specifically, independent financial systems were augmented to include those functions required to manage the "business of government," where constituents replaced the consumer in the value chain and accounting and budgeting were required to account for tax revenue expenditures.

During this evolutionary period, many ERP vendors specialized in industry-specific ERP offerings. This was not based on a well-planned and executed vertical strategy, but based more on short-term business dynamics and heritage. In short, if a vendor sold a financial application to three or more pharmaceutical businesses, they would then advertise a pharmaceutical business focus. This ERP supplier would expand their offerings to include pharmaceutical-specific modules, such as inventory control and MRP. Over time, the supplier had a solid offering for the pharmaceutical sector and would then branch out to somewhat related sectors like oil and gas, chemicals and biotechnology. Again, this was not founded on a well-planned and executed market strategy, but was more of a marketing campaign.

Organizations outside of an ERP vendor's target vertical typically paid a premium to have ERP software customized to handle their unique requirements. This holds true today, when organizations acquire ERP applications that are not specifically designed for their vertical.

As ERP vendors evolved within specific vertical markets, over time, they began to compete with one another as they expanded their sales strategies toward industries outside of their core competencies. As market saturation in the commercial sector truncated ERP vendor growth strategies, larger ERP vendors began pursuing public sector opportunities to increase market share and revenues.

What Does Government Need from an ERP Vendor Today?

The scope of functionality required by government is more than any single vendor can provide, given the requirement for both government specificity and the enablement of all processes. The deployment decision does not boil down to a simple choice between purely single-vendor vs. best-of-breed approaches. Instead, the decision concerns the *degree* of single-vendor-centricity that is appropriate for the organization. Efforts will rely on a robust, integrated, organization-centric suite of applications that are based on open architectures and capable of real-time information exchange. In essence, government will need to leverage the following core features of ERP solutions to enable them to achieve their mission:

- Deeper functionality and more specific government requirements and processes
- Technology that leverages the Internet for both inter-enterprise connectivity and a unification of the end-user experience
- Open architectures that allow for easier integration and interoperability

What Is the Right ERP Strategy?

Government needs to set a vision for integrating all organization-centric business processes without requiring a single-vendor approach. This allows users to determine the degree of vendor centricity required to fulfill the enterprise's process requirements and, via the integration capabilities, the best-of-breed components to include.

CGI supports Gartner's ERP application and deployment focus, which touches on business, application and technology strategies. The focus includes:

- **Role:** Expose information to enable collaboration with other agencies and departments
- **Domain:** Public sector focus
- **Functions:** Government specific processes and functionality
- **Process:** Externally connected
- **Architecture:** Web-based, open, componentized
- **Data:** Internally and externally published and subscribed

As users demand more specific functionality within government, vendors are moving toward providing government-specific functionality. The challenge is for users to determine when vendor solutions are as mature — and as functionally robust — as best-of-breed applications. If both conditions are met, the integrated choice is likely more prudent. If either or both of the conditions are not met, organizations must assess the risks and costs inherent with either choice and make the decision that best meets government needs.

Who Should Government Partner With?

Today, most ERP solutions are deficient with regard to government-specific functionality, resulting in organizations facing difficult decisions regarding a particular vendor's suitability for government, let alone their particular organization.

Investment decisions force vendors of these solutions to make difficult decisions about which domains, industries and segments they will pursue. Not only will user demand for deep government focus force vendors to change their marketing strategies, but a new integrated process focus from users will require application vendors to consider focusing on process optimization rather than best-of-breed functionality to meet the needs of government.

As a result, in addition to the government-focus vs. application breadth decision, vendors will adopt either a process optimization focus or a functionality focus. Therefore, governments should heavily weigh ERP vendors' demonstrated domain expertise within their industry. Organizations should emphasize complete process integration when evaluating application vendors. If utilizing a vendor with a broader functionality focus, governments should plan to supplement the core solution with point solutions designed to optimize functions.

Overcoming Challenges for Government

Government faces their own set of challenges in navigating the trends of ERP. The good news is that the vendors' efforts will reduce application cost of ownership and complexity over time. The

bad news is that government still has to overcome challenges in four main areas:

- Integrating best-of-breed components into core vendor offerings, as single vendor-only solutions are no longer the best strategy
- Managing ERP deployment in an environment where the technology infrastructures and application portfolios are in a constant state of change
- Dealing with an increasingly constrained supply of resources available for the effort
- Balancing ERP investment with other critical technology initiatives

Governments must consider the degree of integration that can be achieved. Each best-of-breed component will increase ownership costs and, as more components are introduced, the number of custom connections can multiply rapidly. Consequently, many organizations will forgo functional supremacy to simplify the overall application architecture.

This choice, however, can also negatively impact ownership costs. Where an application is functionally deficient, users may choose to develop their own customizations. Customizing packaged applications can become a habit-forming exercise that, if not tightly managed, will significantly impair an organization's ability to migrate to later versions without significant manual intervention. This balance between integration costs and development costs becomes paramount to managing total cost of ownership (TCO) on an ongoing basis.

To overcome these challenges, government must develop implementation strategies that are appropriate to their domain and that enable efficiency and effectiveness in their operational, financial and collaborative processes. The achievement of that goal can be more single-vendor-centric or more best-of-breed in nature. Regardless, the final product is a government-specific rendering of the best available ERP applications.

How to Harness e-Procurement to Standardize Procedure, Maximize Spending and Drive Efficiencies

By Susan Capstack, Executive Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program

Taxpayers and election campaign platforms seem to be in complete agreement when it comes to government spending—reduce it! Yet the demand for government services continues to grow. Stuck in the middle of these conflicting demands are the agency leaders and procurement professionals who have to find a way to "do more with less."

To help solve this issue, government leaders are increasingly looking toward web-based procurement as a way to reduce costs and increase the efficiency of their purchasing process. Here we look at the trends toward e-procurement and examine how the Commonwealth of Virginia and CGI's award-winning eVA partnership is meeting the promises of procurement transformation.

A need for e-procurement

When raising taxes or raising sales revenues is not the easy cure, one answer for both governments and businesses has been to control spending. When the income is uncertain, make the outgoing certain. The answer has three deceptively simple principles:

- **Spend what is budgeted.** Standardize procedures and establish controls and accountability for everyone authorized to spend.
- **Spend effectively.** Don't miss opportunities to leverage the full buying power of an agency.
- **Spend efficiently.** Eliminate the costs associated with manual systems.

Yet while these sound simple, they traditionally have been difficult to execute.

According to the Aberdeen Group, "...the lack of spending analysis capabilities are costing businesses \$260 billion in missed savings opportunities annually resulting in corporate epidemic that is keeping enterprises from controlling costs and maximizing performance." In another study by Texas state officials, researchers found that current manual systems can cost state procurement officers \$75 to \$100 in costs, labor and paperwork to process a single transaction. In addition to these costs, governments fragmented by different agencies purchasing separately from each other keeps the entity as a whole from leveraging potential buying power.

An efficient and cost-effective procurement solution

Leading solutions providers such as CGI have developed practical e-procurement approaches and tools to overcome these trends and to make the best use of any budget, achieving benefits that:

- Increase efficiency
- Save cost
- Reduce paperwork
- Leverage spending
- Increase competition
- Implement better purchase tracking and reporting
- Increase buyer capacity

CGI's specialty is helping complex, decentralized organizations reduce their purchased expenses and increase procurement process efficiency. We have a portfolio of proven, end-to-end e-procurement solutions that assist with all phases of the e-procurement process, from managing requests and solicitations to evaluating responses. While procurement's mission is to get the right products and services as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, our e-procurement tools achieve this through shortened order cycle times, better overall spending visibility and the ability to guide compliance.

The solution in action

The Commonwealth of Virginia's partnership with CGI demonstrates what is possible when developing a state-wide electronic purchasing solution. Called eVA, the end-to-end system is widely thought to be the most successful e-procurement solution in the nation.

Before the partnership with CGI, the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Virginia was decentralized over their 171 state agencies, institutions and other public entities using a variety of desktop applications and manual processes for procurement. The manual processes of purchasing as individual organizations limited the Commonwealth's ability to operate in the most efficient manner in the following ways:

- No real system to keep accurate data on purchasing
- No ability to leverage purchasing power and to maximize market benefits
- High administrative costs due to lack of electronic purchasing
- Limited access for private sector businesses to take advantage of opportunities for working with Virginia

Through two of CGI's spend management offerings, e-procurement and strategic sourcing, the Commonwealth established a statewide electronic purchasing system, eVA, which funnels procurement through a single, secure, electronic portal, and renegotiated and consolidated multiple contracts to achieve best value through the VaPP partnership. These strategies and tools enabled Virginia to transform their procurement environment, which has resulted in:

- Connecting more than 170 agencies and 490 localities to 32,000 vendors selling 5 million items
- Leveraged buying power – \$36.5 million annual savings and cost avoidances
- Leveraged buying power that has resulted in 90 new statewide contracts in 15 categories of goods and services, achieving 12 percent savings on an annual baseline of \$309 million.
- Increased administrative efficiency with a 50% reduction in cost to process a purchase order
- Conducting business more efficiently with up to a 70% reduction in processing time from solicitation to award
- Reduced cost of goods and services with a 4-70% savings on individual purchases
- Increased competition with a 200% increase in supplier registrations

"eVA creates efficiencies for government and for private businesses by eliminating paperwork and unnecessary steps—saving both time and money," said Secretary of Administration Sandra Brown.

Rebecca Garnett, eVA's business manager, said, "We've been very fortunate; we've had support from three governors now, members of our Legislature and a lot of our agencies we work with. Another critical success factor has been our core team. The third success factor is a true partnership with your vendor. In our case we've partnered with CGI."

For more information on e-procurement and strategic sourcing and how your organization can start standardizing procedure, maximizing spending and driving efficiencies, please contact CGI at 1-800-321-0267 and www.cgi.com/publicsectorerp.

To receive a copy of a new CGI white paper on e-procurement transformation please click on the following link:

[Procurement Efficiency in Government: Policy, Process, and Technological Transformation](#)

To view CGI's Procurement Insight newsletter please go to www.procurementinsight.com.

AMS Advantage ERP Beta Program Paves the Way for Successful Product Launch

By Tara Arrington-Franklin, Director Consulting, CGI Solutions Management

Throughout the product development cycle, it's critical that the public sector community assist in identifying and eliminating issues, validating new product features, recording enhancement requests, promoting instruction accuracy and validating overall product readiness.

CGI has thus invested deeply in quality assurance practices and ultimately packages ERP solutions that deliver the performance and improvements that government demands for now and the future. In an effort to ensure a high-quality release for CGI's government-specific ERP applications, CGI has embarked on a mission to further enhance the development, testing and product launch process via the AMS Advantage Beta Program.

Paying off in the long-run

Software reliability and performance are critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector clients. Recognizing this component for success, CGI has dedicated significant time and resources toward application planning, development, testing and subsequent product releases, resulting in numerous client benefits, such as:

- Providing direct government influence into AMS Advantage product direction
- Enhancing and optimizing existing operational efficiencies and performance
- Introducing new operational capabilities and functionality
- Improving documentation and training materials
- Providing stable code for deployment that mitigates and prevents application issues
- Increasing assurance that complexity and application multiplication will not overwhelm the AMS Advantage community

Dedicated collaboration

Collaboration is similarly a critical component throughout the Beta process to ensure that new product enhancements attain the highest possible levels of quality. For example, through partnering with CGI development and delivery teams, the City of Gainesville and Columbus Consolidated Government were exposed to and tested AMS Advantage 3.7 for Financial and Human Resources Management prior to market release. Each site committed to the following provisions to ensure an efficient process achieving desired results within the allocated timelines:

- Provided the required hardware to adequately install and test the product(s)
- Installed the product within 2 business days of receipt
- Tested the product for a minimum of 8 to 12 hours a week
- Completed system test cases covering numerous client business scenarios
- Reported issues found during beta testing within 1 business day
- Provided remote access to the site's test environment to expedite support and issue resolution, as required
- Applied issue resolutions to product code, where necessary
- Provided periodic feedback to CGI development and delivery teams on reliability, stability and readiness of the product for the marketplace
- Provided feedback regarding product training, documentation and overall application help facilities

Similarly, CGI provided significant time and resources to facilitate the Beta Program through the following activities:

- Provided detailed application-specific new release training
- Provided on-site technical installation assistance to expedite and optimize product installation
- Provided dedicated Beta project managers to facilitate the overall planning, installation, and

testing efforts

- Provided dedicated functional and technical expertise to facilitate all subsequent client Beta testing efforts
- Facilitated ongoing communication channels such that constructive input from the Beta sites could/would be integrated into the final product

With AMS Advantage 3.7 now available for general release, public sector organizations will be able to leverage new and enhanced operational capabilities, functionality and performance. Acting on the three P's—process, people and product—CGI's AMS Advantage applications will continue to offer significant results, enabling government organizations to accomplish their mission and expand their horizons.

For More Information on AMS Advantage 3.7

- Email us at ams.advantage.program2@cgi.com
- Call us at 1-800-321-0267
- Visit us at CGI Forum 2007. For more information, visit www.cgi.com/forum2007

Maximizing Performance with Best Practices and Consulting Services

By Jay Leach, Senior Consultant, CGI Client Services

Public sector organizations are unique and require best practice insights into how their peers leverage technology, optimize business processes, implement governance models and strategically align their organization to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Research clearly shows that across the board, public sector organizations spend less, use fewer staff and generate superior results in finance, IT, procurement, HR and other processes when incorporating best practices into their organization. A key element of how they accomplish this is through their use of technology to enable process improvement. Without real change in the underlying processes, organizations can easily end up using software to simply do the wrong things more quickly, and generate little value.

At CGI, an AMS Advantage ERP implementation is more than innovative software delivered on time and on budget. It is the foundation of a lasting relationship between CGI and the public sector. A client's success is as important to CGI as its own — which is why CGI offers a resource to help public sector organizations receive maximum value from their solution and public sector best practices.

Reaching Full Potential

To achieve peak operational performance, CGI provides the public sector with access to software, technology and public sector experts to enable organizations to operate at peak performance levels by leveraging best practices in public sector processes. Through CGI's consulting services, clients identify opportunities for improvement that might otherwise remain hidden. These services draw on the experience and best practices of AMS Advantage implementations and top-performing public sector organizations.

Many organizations don't reach their full potential because they focus almost exclusively on technology implementation, ignoring the critical issues of process simplification, organizational alignment and information delivery. To overcome this, CGI takes into account an organization's unique characteristics — users' level of experience, the complexity of the organization and the amount of training needed — and uses the specific client environment to focus on complex processes and setup for improved operational performance.

Client Success with CGI Consulting Services

Many public sector organizations have found CGI's consulting services to be a great asset in enabling them to reach their full potential for peak operational performance. Sanjiv Shekhar, Manager of Application Services for the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, answered several questions regarding CGI's consulting services and their results.

What were your challenges prior to using CGI's consulting services and what goals were you trying to accomplish by partnering with CGI?

Prior to receiving CGI's consulting services we did not use the full support of AMS Advantage-related products. It was difficult for our organization to get domain expertise in the fields of finance, HR and payroll. We needed to examine how we could better use the system and be more efficient in our operations.

How did CGI help you overcome challenges and meet your goals with the consulting services?

I have been working with CGI for over two years now and they have been extremely helpful in partnering with us to achieve our AMS Advantage product implementation vision. CGI has participated in all aspects of planning to deployment. Their technical team has been very consistent

in their follow-ups and it appears that their sole goal is to satisfy the client. Without the help of their outstanding consulting team, our team would not have received the several compliments that it did.

What makes CGI's consulting services unique?

The CGI consulting team is very focused on understanding the customer's needs and challenges. They delivered quality service on time with a deep understanding of government processes and how we can leverage best practices from similar government experiences.

What value and benefits did the consulting services bring your organization?

We were able to achieve our target goal — improved performance and efficiency — and complete the project on time and budget. The documentation and support teams were a real asset in guiding us through the project.

Why should clients consider using CGI's consulting services?

CGI provides a great team who understands government and is focused on customer needs; they are ready to work with the client's internal team and come up with solutions that help organizations overcome their challenges.

For further information on CGI's consulting services, including the value and benefits they can bring to your organization, contact Jay Leach at lay.leach@cgi.com or 1-800-321-0267 and visit www.cgi.com/publicsectorerp.

CGI Forum 2007 – A Passport to Discovery

The premier AMS Advantage community event takes place October 14-17 in Orlando

By Alison Herbert, CGI Event Manager

Mark your calendar for [CGI Forum 2007](#), October 14-17, 2007, at the Portofino Bay Hotel at Universal Orlando®, A Loews Hotel in Orlando, Florida.



A Passport to Discovery, Forum 2007 is the premier networking and educational event for the AMS Advantage® community. With more than 100 in-depth sessions and abundant networking opportunities, the Forum is your can't-miss opportunity to share with and learn from others in your field. Discover how to expand your knowledge, leverage networking opportunities with peers from across the community and secure the best practices and success stories you need to maximize your investment in AMS Advantage. Sessions cover financial, human resources, budget, reporting and procurement management, as well as numerous

technical and general interest topics. Set against the beautiful Italian-inspired backdrop of Portofino Bay Hotel, your passport includes:

- Targeted learning sessions tailored to your specific area, system and level of expertise
- Access to other users as well as CGI leadership, project staff and partners
- Abundant networking opportunities with daily activities and evening events
- A technology Showcase that includes hands-on experiences with the full suite of AMS Advantage ERP solutions
- Access to CGI partners, whose best-of-breed solutions complement our ERP solution
- General sessions with industry and keynote speakers as well as valuable business updates from CGI leadership
- Updates from your Steering Committee chair and results of the Steering Committee elections
- Opportunities to earn valuable continuing professional education (CPE) credits

Best of all, each AMS Advantage customer site receives two complimentary registrations, making it easy and affordable to participate in this important event. Stay tuned to www.cgi.com/forum2007 for additional event details!

Registration Details

Online registration will be made available this summer, along with a full course agenda.

Early Bird Registration (on or before August 17)	\$995.00
Late Registration (after August 17)	\$1195.00

Passport to "La Dolce Vita"



Discover la dolce vita...the sweet life...at [Portofino Bay Hotel](#), A Loews Hotel, located onsite at Universal Orlando® Resort. Nestled along a picturesque bay, this well-appointed hotel recreates the charm and romance of the sunny seaside village of Portofino, Italy, right down to the cobblestone streets and outdoor cafés. Guests enjoy stylish, spacious guest rooms featuring authentic Italian furnishings, plus impeccable and attentive service. A block of guest rooms has been set aside exclusively for Forum attendees. The hotel is now accepting reservations for our

program so be sure to confirm your accommodations today.

Hotel Information

[Portofino Bay Hotel](#)

5601 Universal Blvd.

Orlando, FL 32819

Phone: 407-503-1000

Reservations: 1-866-360-7395

Room Rate: \$195 USD per night (single/double occupancy) + tax

Hotel Cut-off Date: September 17*

To make reservations, contact hotel reservations and reference "CGI Forum 2007." The program will begin on Sunday evening and conclude on Wednesday afternoon. Please make travel arrangements accordingly.

* Please note: Once the room block is filled or the hotel reservation cut-off date has passed, rooms will be reserved on a space-available basis and may be subject to higher rates.

Stay Tuned

Be on the lookout this summer for the Forum 2007 brochure mailer and email announcements launching the registration website. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please visit www.cgi.com/forum2007 or contact:

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A Word From the AMS Advantage® Users Group Steering Committee

By Trucynda Hawkins, City of Tucson, Arizona

The Steering Committee has been very busy over the past few months working with CGI on several initiatives, with the goal of achieving enhanced product quality and improved communications between CGI and the AMS Advantage community. The following is a brief summary of the activities that we have been working on.

CGI Training Symposium – This year we are initiating something new for the Symposium-virtual training. CGI has designed sessions that allow clients to attend the Symposium via the Web. The first week of the two week-long event will feature technical and 2.x course onsite in Fairfax. During the second week, sessions will be completely virtual and accessible by all registered attendees from the comfort of their own office. Virtual training will be instructor-led by the same skilled CGI experts via the Web, but without the added expense of travel. The intent is to give clients a way to have more staff attend more sessions. The Symposium is scheduled for May 14 through 25, with onsite courses offered from May 14 through 18. Learn more at www.cgi.com/trainingsymposium.

Product Enhancement Request Feedback – We've been working to establish a method to provide feedback on enhancement requests so users will know where their enhancement request is in the review process. Remember, the best place for all enhancement requests is through eAccess since it provides the opportunity for others to comment on a request. We encourage users to continue to use the enhancement request process and remind users that even if they don't have enhancement requests, they should still routinely look at the enhancements that have been submitted and provide feedback. This allows the Steering Committee to see how the user community feels about various requests.

CGI Forum – The May Steering Committee meeting is approaching, and the agenda includes CGI Forum 2007 content development. I encourage users to contact Steering Committee members with any concerns, issues, feedback, kudos and ideas for CGI Forum 2007. Now is the time to let us know. Additionally, if your organization is doing something innovative, the CGI Forum is a great opportunity to showcase your work by leading a session. This not only highlights your innovations, but also allows you to get feedback to enhance your work and share best practices with your colleagues.

Software Change Control Board (SCCB) Enhancements – All enhancement requests are reviewed and prioritized by the Software Change Control Board (SCCB). The SCCB is comprised of Steering Committee members and CGI experts that help guide the software for optimal use and performance at all customer sites. The Steering Committee continues to work with CGI to review all enhancement requests and to incorporate the requests into the baseline product where appropriate. The enhancement request guidelines and criteria used by the SCCB can be reviewed on CGI's website at eaccess.ams.com.

These are just a few items that the Committee has been working on, and we want to remind you that we are on this Committee to represent you—the users. We strongly encourage you to contact us if you have concerns, questions or comments. We are here to advance the effective utilization of all AMS Advantage solutions and provide a channel of communication with CGI for matters of interest from the AMS Advantage community. Please contact us through the Discussion Gateway at <https://support.cgi-ams.com/discussiongateway/>.

Customer Spotlight: Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) improves productivity and federal reporting through CGI's built-for-government services and solutions

By Cheryl Smith, Senior Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program

With a statewide network of more than 60,000 miles of road, about 4,000 bridges, 1,900 miles of rail lines, 125 public airports and the Port of Lewiston, Idaho's transportation system is the backbone of the state's economy.

Of these, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) has jurisdictional responsibility for almost 5,000 miles of highway (or 12,000 lane miles), more than 1,700 bridges, 30 recreational and emergency airstrips, 30 rest areas, 10 fixed ports of entry and federal grants to 12 rural and urban public transportation systems. The department also provides state rail planning, rail-project development, and bicycle and pedestrian planning and projects.

ITD serves the state's 1.2 million residents by providing cost-effective transportation systems that are safe, reliable and responsible to the economical and efficient movement of people and products.

The Challenge

ITD recognized that to better achieve its mission and prepare for the state's future requirements they needed a truly integrated fund accounting and enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. In looking for a solution built with government in mind, ITD sought a user friendly system they could operate on their own with few customizations.

For example, ITD had been relying on two disparate systems to track federal highways projects—one of the department's most important requirements—and to accumulate reimbursable expenditures and generate weekly reimbursement billings. After years of waiting for a federal aid billing component from their then-ERP vendor, they realized the current system was not a good fit for them as it wasn't built to serve government needs.

The Strategy

In June 2003, ITD issued a request for proposal (RFP) for an integrated fund, highways project accounting and ERP system to replace their current Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS). After careful review, ITD selected CGI to replace their aging system because of CGI's web-based, built-for-government AMS Advantage® ERP solution.

At A Glance

Organization

ITD is responsible for ensuring the quality transportation of interstate commerce, out-of-state visitors and Idaho's 1.2 million residents. The department oversees:

- 1,829 employees
- \$500M annual budget

Why CGI

- Understands government
- Built-for-government software
- Experienced and consistent team

The Results

- All Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and other federal project reimbursement components reside in one system
- First state to electronically submit NHTSA budget change and reimbursement requests
- Web-based timesheets for all employees, with detailed codes to support grant and project accounting needs
- Inventory and purchasing workflow

By talking the same government-specific language, ITD and CGI quickly identified solutions to

meet ITD's business needs. And by applying CGI's built-for-government AMS Advantage 3 Financial Management, Human Resources Management (HRM) and reporting software to the problem, together they achieved results.

CGI offered the federal aid billing component out-of-the-box, so ITD didn't require a lot of customizations to plug it in, which addressed their biggest challenge from a department of transportation perspective. In addition, the architecture of the event type concept, which identifies common accounting events within CGI's solution, was very similar to the transaction codes of Idaho's statewide STARS payroll system. This enabled ITD users to more easily grasp the use of the new system, reducing training time.

Another challenge focused on the lack of integration with the statewide STARS system, leaving ITD with regular manual reconciliation and data entry tasks. With AMS Advantage's service-oriented architecture (SOA) and XML-based integration standards, along with CGI's experience with the STARS system, the development of the statewide interfaces was easier to accomplish. This put the emphasis where it belongs, on the process and user experience, rather than on the individual application components.

Having been through the implementation process before, the ITD team understood the effect that customizations have on a system and themselves. Finding a way to eliminate customizations was a major goal, and with CGI, they were able to achieve this.

ITD was open minded enough to say, 'How would CGI go about doing this?' ITD worked with CGI through the solution, rather than having to customize the solution. That was really important to help deliver the desired results. By choosing carefully where to adapt the business to the system, ITD kept their focus on business-specific customizations, for example with indirect costs and with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) electronic filing.

As a result, ITD is better positioned to keep up with product upgrades and enhancements as well as the benefits of emerging technology.

The Technology

- Open standards
- n-tiered architecture
- Web-based ERP
- Service-oriented architecture (SOA)

The Results

On Monday, February 13, 2006, the Idaho Transportation Department went live with the web-based AMS Advantage 3 Financial Management, HRM and reporting software. What CGI brought was reliability and consistency. The same CGI consultants who started the project ended the project with ITD. There were CGI consultants with years of experience, not just days, on the project.

Today ITD achieves its mission through a built-for-government solution that does the following:

- ITD now uses distributed timesheet entry department-wide to all 1,800+ employees.
- Instead of standard rates, ITD now uses actual costing of payroll expenditures for federal reimbursement. This alleviates the need to prepare reconciling entries to balance to the statewide STARS system.
- Instead of manual Microsoft Office entries, ITD now tracks and maintains payment plans for outstanding receivables, fully automating the processing of delinquent receivables (dunning and collection referrals).
- With workflow and approval processing, ITD eliminated much of their manual paper processing.
- Instead of invalid chart of accounts combinations, ITD now has tighter controls of acceptable chart of account coding combinations, particularly for highway projects. This eliminates the time-consuming effort of manually identifying and correcting erroneous data.
- Instead of manual reconciliations and adjusting entries, ITD now uses an interface to

automatically reconcile financial information with the statewide STARS system for payroll-related expenses.

- With CGI and AMS Advantage3, ITD introduced automated forward and backward document referencing.
- With CGI and AMS Advantage 3, ITD now has the ability to purchase off of master agreements.

Finally, thanks to their partnership with NHTSA, ITD became the first state to electronically submit NHTSA budget change and reimbursement requests. Today, other states across the country are inquiring into ITD's innovative solution.

For more information, contact CGI at 1-800-321-0267.

Customer Spotlight: CGI Government ERP Customers Recognized For Peak Effectiveness In Finance Operations

By Sean Wdowiak, Consultant, AMS Advantage ERP Program

CGI congratulates Colorado, Massachusetts and Mississippi, three government organizations using CGI's Government ERP solutions, for receiving the first-ever Performance Achievement Awards during the National Association of State Comptrollers (NASC) Annual Conference.

The three states received this prestigious award for achieving top-quartile effectiveness in finance operations as measured through NASACT's Benchmarking Program. A total of 19 benchmarks in 9 states have been performed or are underway since the program was launched in 2005 by NASACT in conjunction with The Hackett Group and Accenture.

Colorado, Massachusetts and Mississippi achieved levels of finance effectiveness that place them in the top 25 percent of Hackett's database of performance metrics. Hackett's benchmarks in finance and other back-office areas are designed to measure both efficiency and effectiveness and look at performance in key areas such as: overall quality, information access and strategic alignment.

Colorado has been using CGI's government financial solution since 1993. According to Colorado State Controller Leslie M. Shenefelt, "This award makes us feel great about our organization. We thought we were doing well, and had good processes and people in place. But this benchmark has confirmed it, and will also help us focus on areas that need improvement. We're just beginning the process of considering how to move our legacy accounting system to the latest technology, and with these results we better understand what our needs are, and are in a position to build a stronger business case."

Massachusetts is a current CGI client that has been using AMS Advantage 3 since 2004. Comptroller Martin Benison said, "We consider ourselves a very forward-thinking government agency, and it's great to see that the initiatives we've focused on, including CGI's web-based finance system, put us in the peak effectiveness bracket by Hackett's standards. There's a lot more we feel we can learn. In our partnership with CGI we're now taking a deeper dive into our practices for both payables and receivables, to identify strategies to improve both effectiveness and efficiency."

Mississippi has been using CGI's government financial solution since 1989. The state plans to use the benchmark results for the continued refinement of the State's business processes. The Hackett benchmarks have provided Mississippi with valuable baseline data on their operational efficiency and effectiveness. The benchmarks were also performed on IT, HR and Procurement practices and the results have given Mississippi insight into their entire organization wide performance; they are now able to confirm what they need to work on, identify new issues, and quantify their success. The award ultimately supports Mississippi's efforts to increase the value of their services to the citizens of the State of Mississippi.

"We applaud the accomplishments of these three states and are honored to have them as our customers," said Heidi Green, vice president CGI Government ERP Group. "These awards demonstrate the commitment to excellence and dedication to finance best practices of our public sector partners. The systems in Colorado, Massachusetts and Mississippi are delivering organizational efficiency, streamlining processes, improving workforce productivity and enabling access to information at all levels of government for strategic decision making.

From cities, counties, and states to schools and universities, AMS Advantage® ERP works for

government at all levels and is currently used by more than 190 public sector clients, 55 of which have committed to upgrading to our new web-based solution AMS Advantage 3. Designed specifically for government, the solution incorporates CGI's 30 years of government expertise and experience in the public sector market, and the integrated functionality, workflow and configurable processes government requires for significantly increasing efficiency, improving access to information and reducing total cost of ownership to help clients achieve the highest level of accountability and enhance services to their constituents.

For more information:

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A Round-up of Conference, Media and Analyst Perspectives on Government and Technology

Conferences and Tradeshows

Below is a list of public sector-focused events where you can meet with the CGI team and network with peers to discuss the latest successes, challenges and trends in government and technology.

CGI Training Symposium

Join us for the CGI Training Symposium, May 14-25, in Fairfax, Virginia, featuring both virtual and onsite training opportunities. Committed to evolving this program into an innovative, cost-effective and in-depth product knowledge event for the AMS Advantage® community, this training offers more reasons to attend in 2007. Learn more at www.cgi.com/trainingsymposium.

Government Technology Conference (GTC) West 2007

See CGI at the largest technology conference for state and local government in Sacramento, California from May 14-18. Gain access to informative keynotes, learning sessions and the expo floor—all for FREE for government professionals! [Get more information and register now.](#)

GOVERNING Live! Managing Technology 2007

GOVERNING gathers the government leaders who are deploying technology successfully across the full range of state and local functions. Join us in Chicago, Illinois, from May 30-June 1 and learn about *Effective ERP Implementation*, *Consolidation Challenges* and the *Next Generation of E-Government* from CGI customers. [Get more information and register now.](#)

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Annual Conference

Join the thousands already registered for GFOA's 101st Annual Conference where the public finance profession meets, learns and networks in Anaheim, California, from June 10-13. Look for CGI on the exhibit floor. [Get more information and register now.](#)

National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference

Join over 3,000 officials from across the country at the 72nd NACo Annual Conference and Exposition in Richmond, Virginia, from July 13-17. The conference focuses on education and networking so members can learn and gather information on how to help improve the effectiveness of their counties. [Get more information and register now.](#)

2007 NASPE Annual Meeting

Join human resource professionals responsible for the planning, development and operations of government personnel systems in Williamsburg, Virginia, from July 21-25 to discuss how to Revolutionize Public Sector HR. [Get more information and register now.](#)

National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) Annual Conference

The annual conference for state budget officers, held in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico, from July 29-August 1, includes sessions on state innovation, revenue outlook, the federal budget, negotiation skills, an economic outlook by David Wyss and more. [Get more information and register now.](#)

National Institute of Government Purchasing Annual Forum and Products Exposition

NIGP's 2007 Annual Conference and Exposition in Hartford, Connecticut, from August 4-8, presents the largest exposition focused exclusively on public sector purchasing officials. Get your share of new ideas and network with your peers to better meet the demands of customers and constituencies. [Get more information and register now.](#)

National Association of State Auditors, Controllers and Treasurers (NASACT) Annual Conference

Join state controllers, auditors and treasurers for panel discussions and presentations on various topics and issues related to the financial management of state government in Nashville, Tennessee, from August 11-15. [Get more information and register now.](#)

Media

Here is a compilation of leading publications, research and press for the public sector focused on information technology and challenges and trends in government.

The Public CIO Survey

By Tod Newcombe, *Public CIO*, February 2007

More than 250 IT heads in federal, state, local and education responded to a recent *Public CIO* magazine survey. The data shows that the top five issues facing public CIOs today are funding IT projects, dealing with political and legislative changes, IT consolidation, shared services and intergovernmental collaboration. Learn more on the issues faced by CIOs and government at the [Inaugural Survey of CIOs](#).

Worldwide Survey Says CIOs Will Need to Replace "Do More with Less" with "Make a Difference with What They Have"

News Release, *Government Technology*, February 14, 2007

A worldwide survey of some 1,400 CIOs by Gartner Executive Programs revealed that while CIOs are aware of the business priorities in 2007—including the need to improve processes and workforce performance—near-term priorities remain internally focused on IT services. This disconnect, Gartner analysts warn, will place CIOs and IT at risk. [Learn more](#) about how to exploit new approaches to transform business operations and strategy.

Risky Business

By Merrill Douglas, *Public CIO*, February 2007

Today, just about every aspect of government relies on IT. So when a hurricane destroys a data center, a hacker launches a denial-of-service attack, or the vendor of a key software application goes out of business, it doesn't just mean headaches for the CIO. It could also mean public-health professionals can't access patient records or teachers can't get their paychecks. IT risk means risk to the entire government and CIOs play a key role in reducing danger not only to government IT systems, but to government as a whole. [Learn more](#) about how CIOs can help to overcome these risks.

The tools of the master forecaster

By Carlos A. Soto, *Government Computer News*, March 05, 2007

Business intelligence (BI) software can guide managers through difficult decisions, report anomalies or issues in an organization, and help managers check on the condition of their agency. If used effectively, the right BI tools can even predict the future. [Learn more](#) about BI applications and how they can help government managers make more strategic decisions.

ERP meets SOA: Enterprise resource planning vendors move toward a plug 'n' play compatibility

By Joab Jackson, *Government Computer News*, March 05, 2007

The worlds of enterprise resource planning and service-oriented architecture are coming together. Three of the major software vendors of ERP software are moving their own platforms to ones that support Web services. [Learn more](#) about how these vendors are positioned to deliver the advantages of an SOA solution to the public sector.

The Rising Importance of the Enterprise Architect

By Diann Daniel, *www.cio.com*, March 31, 2007

Enterprise architecture focuses on four crucial C's: connection, collaboration, communication and customers. Imagine needing to manually log onto five different systems to create and track an order, or putting in 20 hours researching a project because you didn't know the information already existed in another department. These situations result from fragmentation and siloed thinking; the goal of enterprise architecture, on the other hand, is to create unity. [Learn more](#) about how enterprise architecture and IT can enable business strategy.