

## EXECUTIVE UPDATE

At CGI, we partner with government organizations every day, working side-by-side to understand their operational, tactical and strategic challenges. Using this experience, we continue to enhance our built-for-government AMS Advantage ERP solution to better address these challenges. consistent and long-term partnerships.

In order for us to evolve our product to satisfy the business needs of our existing clients and those considering our built-for-government software and services, we must continue to confirm our message to the marketplace and grow new software and services to meet today's top priorities. Here are just some of the ways we are working together to do just that, and how you can get involved today!

- Your Steering Committee Chair, Lori McClanahan highlights the [large number of ways you can get involved and contribute to the future of the products](#), including the upcoming Steering Committee Elections [More »](#)

## PROGRAM UPDATE

### Greater Efficiency and More Actionable Intelligence with AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting

The iterative nature of public sector budgeting, often decentralized, requires input and analysis from stakeholders throughout the organization. Coupled with increased pressure to prioritize funding and demonstrate measurable results, requires evolving traditional budgeting processes from manual, labor-intensive data gathering to automated activities that free analysts to focus on clear funding options based on organizational goals and objectives. [More »](#)

### Maximize Visibility into Spending Practices with SpendInsight for AMS Advantage

According to the Aberdeen Group, U.S. organizations are losing \$260 billion a year in missed savings opportunities, savings that can have a profound effect on financial performance. During these tough times, many organizations are under mandates from senior leadership to identify ways to control and reduce costs, consolidate common functions and operate in a more effective, leaner, more optimized fashion. The challenge facing businesses and government agencies alike is understanding their spending

## CLIENT SUCCESS

### Performance Budgeting Improves Efficiency, Information Access and Decision Making at Wake County, NC

A client since 1985, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts upgraded to AMS Advantage 3 Financial Management in May 2004. An early adopter of the web-based release, their strategy included leveraging out-of-the-box, or baseline, functionality to reduce customizations.

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### Oakland Schools, MI Controls Costs with Shared Services

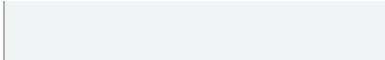
An AMS Advantage client since 1989, the City upgraded to the web-based release for Financial Management and Procurement in January 2005. An early adopter, they also enhanced their capabilities by implementing Vendor Self Service.

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practices in sufficient detail to identify those opportunities.

**More »**



## Letter from Pat Colacicco, Vice President, AMS Advantage Program



At CGI, we partner with government organizations every day, working side-by-side to understand their operational, tactical and strategic challenges. Using this experience, we continue to enhance our built-for-government AMS Advantage ERP solution to better address these challenges. consistent and long-term partnerships.

In order for us to evolve our product to satisfy the business needs of our existing clients and those considering our built-for-government software and services, we must continue to confirm our message to the marketplace and grow new software and services to meet today's top priorities.

Here are just some of the ways we are working together to do just that, and how you can get involved today!

- Your Steering Committee Chair, Lori McClanahan highlights the [large number of ways you can get involved and contribute to the future of the products](#), including the upcoming Steering Committee Elections
- Strong presence at industry [tradeshows](#), adding GFOA, NGMA, AGA and IPMA-HR events, and meeting with potential clients and the analysts that represent them.
- Targeted [webcasts](#) to share how new solutions like AMS [Advantage Performance Budgeting](#) are addressing the needs of today's government budgeting analysts.
- Understanding, first-hand, how AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting is creating efficiencies at [Wake County, NC](#).
- Integrating new solutions, for example CGI's [SpendInsight](#) for analyzing spend patterns and identifying savings opportunities.
- Learning and sharing more about how our clients are using our solutions, for example how [Oakland Schools, MI has controlled costs by deploying a Shared Services model using AMS Advantage ERP](#).
- Clients keep moving forward, congratulations to his season's [go-live projects](#).

I am also pleased to announce that for the third year in a row, CGI and AMS Advantage ERP was honored with not one, but two [Best Fit Integrator awards](#) from the Center for Digital Government. Thank you to our partners at Monterey County, CA and the City and County of Honolulu, HI for their hard work and nominations.

Enjoy the fall weather!

## Greater Efficiency and More Actionable Intelligence with AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting

The iterative nature of public sector budgeting, often decentralized, requires input and analysis from stakeholders throughout the organization. Coupled with increased pressure to prioritize funding and demonstrate measurable results, requires evolving traditional budgeting processes from manual, labor-intensive data gathering to automated activities that free analysts to focus on clear funding options based on organizational goals and objectives.

Where traditional budgeting solutions miss this critical link, between budgets and performance, forcing organizations to rely on disparate data assimilation and guesswork, AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting mirrors the business of government, providing comprehensive budget formulation while serving as a management information system to manage for results during budget execution.

The result is greater efficiency, accountability and transparency throughout the process and more actionable intelligence.

### Budget Formulation – Greater Efficiency

The development of a budget is a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up process. Senior planners and policy officials must articulate program goals and objectives and outline the levels of resources that they anticipate allocating to support those goals and objectives. Additionally, the goals, objectives and resource levels must be developed with and validated by direct line managers.



Managing this flow of financial, performance and narrative information through the various stages of review, analysis, and approval creates a drain on limited resources tasked with creating the budget document.

AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting responds with a single platform for budget plans, formulation, performance targets and publishing that automate the process. Web-based budget forms serve as a single point of entry to consolidate all inputs. Workflow functionality allows budget requests to be managed as they progress through the various stages of review and approval, all while maintaining complete audit trails of any changes.

**Performance Management:**

- Pre-built and flexible hierarchy allows organizations to embed their Performance Management Plan to align their strategic goals, objectives, and measures
- Budget requests are associated with Performance Plans for reporting contributions by goal, objective, and measure

**Salary and Benefits Forecasting:**

- Flexibility in calculating part-time, seasonal and date-effective position costs using table-driven logic for greater accuracy
- Unlimited "what-if" scenarios to analyze the budgetary impacts of specific decisions

**Budget Formulation:**

- Single point of entry for budget values, positions, performance targets/measures, justifications, narratives or other required data
- Forms are configured to support various types of budgeting, i.e. performance based, zero-based, line-item or incremental
- Accommodate multiple year budget process needs and itemization detail (i.e. capital project, bi-annual budgeting)

**Budget Execution:**

- Forms used for adjustments to budgeted values such as projections, forecasts, transfers and mid-year adjustments
- Leverage forms to collect actual performance data in addition to explanations, descriptions, project milestones and justifications

With this kind of automation, transparency and resulting efficiency, AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting shifts budget analyst focus away from data compilation to interpretation and insightful funding guidance.

## **Actionable Intelligence**

In theory, performance budgeting is an ongoing process, including a feedback cycle that provides management at all levels with accurate, timely information to better manage their responsible activities. So once the budget is approved, and is in budget execution, management turns to the gathered information to manage performance.

Yet traditional budgeting solutions omit this critical link, between budgets and performance, forcing organizations to manually manipulate information and rely on guesswork to know how well they are achieving their goals and, more importantly, just how much to invest in future strategy. AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting takes a comprehensive view of public sector budgeting, providing comprehensive budget formulation capabilities while also serving as a management information system to manage for results during budget execution and beyond.

**Decision packages:**

- Unlimited number of adjustments with audit history
- Efficiently evaluate spending options and document decisions

**Performance Management Repository and Dashboard:**

- Visualize planned and actual performance, providing actionable intelligence to management

throughout the year

- Designed to meet diverse user groups (strategic, budget, operational)
- Quickly visualize results aligned with the performance plan



Information captured from across the organization for the budgeting formulation and execution process is available online, in the same system, up to date and ready for analysis.

### Bottom Line

AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting is a single enterprise application that provides organizations an opportunity to consolidate disparate systems and processes currently used to facilitate the budgeting process and publication of related budget documents. Leveraging common workflow, security, audit and reporting enables budget personnel to shift their time from managing the process to analyzing the information.

One button document publishing functionality that references real-time data in Performance Budgeting ensures any last minute adjustments are accurately reflected in the published budget documents. When the budget process is completed and budget execution begins, Performance Budgeting serves as a repository for consolidating actual performance information, providing management at all levels of the organization access to actionable intelligence through dashboards.

Ready to learn more? Hear what [Johnna Rogers, Budget Director for Wake County, North Carolina](#) has to say about how AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting is improving efficiency and transparency at the County.

Check out Built-for-government Performance Budgeting for more information.

Contact Michael Donofrio at [michael.donofrio@cgi.com](mailto:michael.donofrio@cgi.com) with questions or to schedule a demonstration.

## Maximize Visibility into Spending Practices with SpendInsight for AMS Advantage

According to the Aberdeen Group, U.S. organizations are losing \$260 billion a year in missed savings opportunities, savings that can have a profound effect on financial performance. During these tough times, many organizations are under mandates from senior leadership to identify ways to control and reduce costs, consolidate common functions and operate in a more effective, leaner, more optimized fashion. The challenge facing businesses and government agencies alike is understanding their spending practices in sufficient detail to identify those opportunities.

- Where are we spending the most money for goods and services?
- What are our current spending patterns?
- Are our spending patterns changing and how?
- Where can we increase savings across major categories of spending?
- Where are we experiencing contract non-compliance / maverick buying?
- How successful are the cost savings initiatives we choose to undertake?
- How can we improve business relationships with our suppliers to increase the effectiveness of our spend management initiatives?



Enhanced spend visibility provides the answers to these questions and serves as a crucial first step towards enabling savings realization and maximizing effectiveness of spend management initiatives.

### CGI can help

CGI's existing spend visibility offering, SpendInsight, was recently integrated with AMS Advantage<sup>®</sup> to help organizations address the challenges presented by today's economy. CGI's new offering holds the key to unlocking savings potential, and improving the ability to understand, track, and control spending. With SpendInsight, senior decision makers will acquire strategic information regarding the organization's current and historical spending patterns, enabling them to immediately identify improvement opportunities and make critical decisions more effectively.

For example, the State of Oregon launched an initiative called "SmartBuy" to streamline purchasing and build best in class pricing and service quality. On the client's behalf, CGI analyzed over \$2 billion of annual spending across multiple goods and services categories. Using the results of the analysis, "SmartBuy" implemented a spend management program, addressing \$84 million in annual spend and identifying and capturing more than \$50 million in contract savings. This is not a unique experience. Results of this magnitude are typical for spend management programs with clients of similar size.

### SpendInsight for AMS Advantage

AMS Advantage Accounts Payable contains a wealth of data. By using CGI's patented analytical tool, PRISM<sup>®</sup>, procurement experience and SpendInsight Reporting, data is transformed into easy to understand, actionable information, enabling clients to fully comprehend existing spending practices and maximize savings potential.



SpendInsight reports provide visibility into organization-wide spending and fuel the ability to actively monitor program or contract compliance. Working with CGI spend experts, organizations identify saving opportunities and performance efficiency improvements to quickly discover, realize and sustain maximum savings during these challenging economic times.

### **SpendInsight is simple to implement**

Spend data is seamlessly extracted out of AMS Advantage on a quarterly basis, cleansed, and thoroughly validated to confirm quality and minimize the risk of misleading results. Expenditures are analyzed and sorted into categories, using a patented procurement-specific schema design, and provided back to the client as SpendInsight Reports. These comprehensive reports provide detailed spend statistics for the top purchasing categories in a variety of views, including high-level summary, category "at a glance" with breakdowns by vendors, user agencies and departments.

Following the initial analysis, CGI delivers quarterly "refresh" reports to provide an updated view of spending. Embedded in the SpendInsight process is the Opportunity Evaluation analysis done by a spend management expert, which encompasses a periodic review of the spend analysis results. The review is designed to provide a summary of observed trends and opportunities for spend reduction, savings generation, and adoption of best practices.

### **Benefits of SpendInsight reporting**

#### **Cheryl do we have a Public Sector quote we can use instead of this one?**

A senior director of corporate purchasing shared the following insight: "I believe strongly that starting with a spending analysis initiative [using PRISM® technology and SpendInsight reporting] has been key to the global procurement organization's early success... Leveraging the spending analysis solution, we have been able to aggregate spend, consolidate vendors and negotiate savings from five percent to 45 percent in a number of categories, saving millions of dollars to date... It has been the key tool the group has used to understand its suppliers and commitments and put optimum contracts in place. We had to understand where we were spending our funds first. If you start anywhere else, you are starting in the wrong place."

The detailed SpendInsight Reports can be used to address current spend practices and implement new spend management strategies that create substantial, real savings.

Ongoing visibility is the key to effective Spend Management:

1. Measure: What gets measured, gets done
2. Monitor: Ongoing spend monitoring identifies new contract savings, as well as savings lost due to off-contract rogue spending
3. Maintain: Organizations that treat sourcing as one-time events typically give back most of the savings within three years

Quarterly "refresh" reports are invaluable for identifying time-dependent changes in spending, monitoring and tracking compliance with new and existing policies, and identifying additional opportunities to generate cost savings through procurement changes.

Most organizations do not leverage their purchasing power in vendor negotiations, winding up with as many as 100 discrete vendor records per supplier within a single financial system (for example, "Dell", "Dell Computer", "Dell Computer Corp"). SpendInsight aggregates these disparate vendor records, making duplication visible in order to combine and leverage purchasing power in contract negotiations. In fact, SpendInsight typically compresses vendor master files by 25% or higher. Furthermore, SpendInsight Reports highlight vendor fragmentation, identify high cost categories and evaluate opportunities for consolidating spend and implementing strategic sourcing improvements.

In as little as six weeks, SpendInsight with AMS Advantage can drastically cut the time for a traditional spend visibility engagement and deliver meaningful information. The increased effectiveness of cost savings initiatives through spend visibility offered by SpendInsight allows



clients to achieve significant returns on investment, often in excess of 30:1.

### **Consider SpendInsight**

Any organization focused on controlling costs will derive extensive benefits from SpendInsight reporting. The solution's reduced time to value and significant return on investment (through increased effectiveness of cost savings initiatives) help clients leverage their investment in AMS Advantage technology for greater financial and operational benefits.

This is especially appropriate for organizations that have turned to innovative approaches for cost control and efficiency improvement - for example, Shared Services. With centralized management for finance and procurement functions, organizations implementing Shared Services can take full advantage of the benefits offered by the SpendInsight solution through contract consolidation, leveraging of organization-wide spending, and compliance monitoring.

With limited upfront investment, organizations can join the list of CGI clients who have achieved considerable savings.

### **Real Results, Real Savings**

"CGI has a comprehensive strategic sourcing offering," said Gloria Wernicki Homer, former Secretary of Administrative Services, State of Delaware. "PRISM initially helped us understand what we purchased, and ... [provided] critical visibility to monitor our contract compliance. Also, CGI's 'hands-on' approach in providing reverse auctions and sourcing services has been instrumental to ensure the State of Delaware's expense reduction project is successful within our unique culture."

For over 15 years, CGI has provided spend management consulting to the private and public sector. By implementing comprehensive spend analysis for more than 120 organizations we have analyzed over \$430 billion in spending, spanning over 130 million transactions involving more than 6.1 million suppliers. Our clients have historically achieved savings in the range of 10 to 20 percent across their addressable expenditure base.

So how much in total, have we saved our government clients with this tool? Would be a nice factoid..!!

Ready to learn more? Check out our quarterly [Procurement Insight](#) newsletter for program updates and client success.

Ready for the visibility necessary to unlock your savings potential? Contact Gary Lambert at [gary.lambert@cgi.com](mailto:gary.lambert@cgi.com) to learn about SpendInsight Reporting and other Spend Management Solutions offered by CGI.

## CGI at State & Local Conferences

You can visit CGI and learn more about our state and local offerings and partnerships at any of our upcoming events. We hope to see you there!

### **NASCIO Midyear Conference**

April 28 – May 1, 2009  
Baltimore, Maryland

### **AASHTO ISIS**

May 3 – 6, 2009  
Seattle, Washington

### **AGA Conference**

June 21 – June 24, 2009  
New Orleans, Louisiana

### **GFOA Annual Conference**

June 28 – July 1, 2009  
Seattle, Washington

### **NASPE Annual Meeting**

July 2009  
Park City, Utah

### **NASBO Annual Conference**

August 2 – 5, 2009  
Norfolk, Virginia

### **NASACT Annual Conference**

August 15 – 19, 2009  
Dearborn, Michigan

### **IPMA-HR Conference**

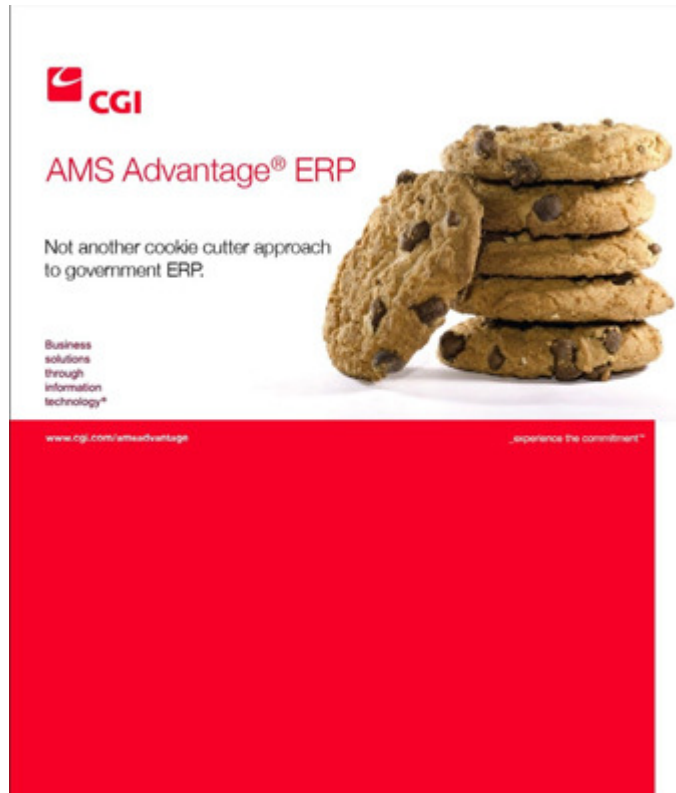
September 12 – 16, 2009  
Nashville, Tennessee

### **Virtual CGI Forum 2009**

Coming in early 2010

### **ASCIO Annual Conference**

October 25 – 29, 2009  
Austin, Texas



That was the theme of AMS Advantage booth at the 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual GFOA Conference in Seattle, complete with fresh-baked cookies. With AMS Advantage, you'll find integrated, comprehensive functionality that is built specifically for the way government works:

- **Financial Management**
- **Performance Budgeting**
- **Grant Lifecycle Management**
- **Managed Advantage**

Our product and industry experts partner with government organizations every day to understand their operational, tactical and strategic challenges and leverage AMS Advantage to achieve their goals. The result is greater efficiency, accountability and information access.

But you already knew that, right?

Now, thanks to a strong presence and record booth traffic, so do hundreds of new potential clients.

Attending one or more of these conferences? Want to set up a meeting onsite with the CGI team? Please contact CGI at [amsadvantage@cgi.com](mailto:amsadvantage@cgi.com).

## An Update from the AMS Advantage Steering Committee Chair

WOW! It is hard to believe that summer is almost over and fall is just around the corner. It has been a busy summer with lots of activity on the Steering Committee. However, you do not have to be a member of the Steering Committee to be actively involved in the future of AMS Advantage. I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone of opportunities available to be involved with, help drive the direction of AMS Advantage software, and learn valuable pointers from the client community along the way. Here are some of the ways you can participate:



- **3.8 Client-to-Client Upgrade meetings.** The purpose of this group for clients is to share information related to 3.8 upgrades. Whether you are in the process of upgrading, thinking about upgrading or just interested in hearing about the process of other clients, you are welcome to attend the bi-monthly conference calls. Client sites that are in the process of upgrading share their insight as others sites work through the process.
  - **When** Third Thursday of the month at 1:00p.m. EST and last one hour.
  - **Details:** Minutes to these meetings are posted on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category.
  - **Join In:** If you are interested in joining in on the discussion, please contact Kathie Still from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at [kathie.still@state.ma.us](mailto:kathie.still@state.ma.us).
- **Procurement Discussion Group.** The purpose of this group is for clients to share ideas for enhancing procurement functionality as CGI moves forward with Release 4.0 and beyond.
  - **When:** Third Tuesday at 2:30p.m. EST and last 1 ½ hours.
  - **Details:** Meeting minutes are posted on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category.
  - **Join In:** If you are interested in joining in on the discussion, please contact me at [lori.mcclannahan@iowa.gov](mailto:lori.mcclannahan@iowa.gov).
- **Archiving Discussion Group.** The purpose of this group is for clients to discuss practices, issues and concerns related to archiving functionality in AMS Advantage.
  - **When:** The group met periodically over the past 1 ½ years but is no longer currently meeting.
  - **Details:** As client sites work on are analyzing their archiving options and developing processes, there has been no new topics to discuss.
  - **Join In:** As more sites become involved in archiving, this group could become active again.
- **HRM User Group.** This purpose of this group is for clients and CGI experts to share topics and seek input.
  - **When:** Second Tuesday of each month at 3:00p.m. EST
  - **Details:** This group meets to discuss common areas of concern regarding HRM issues.
  - **Join In:** If you are interested in joining in on the discussion, please contact Jackie Donaldson at [Jacqueline.donaldson@cgi.com](mailto:Jacqueline.donaldson@cgi.com).
- **Budget User Group.** This purpose of this group is for clients and CGI experts to share topics and seek input.

- **When:** These meetings are temporarily suspended.
- **Details:** Details of future meetings will be posted on the Discussion Gateway and sent via e-mail.
- **Join In:** Details on how to join in will be included in the information on the Discussion Gateway and in the e-mails.
- **Electronic Content Management (ECM) Focus Group.** The purpose of this Focus Group is for clients to collaborate with CGI experts to determine the direction of ECM functionality in Release 3.9 and beyond.
  - **When:** The following client sites have volunteered their time to meet on a regular basis: City of Los Angeles, CA; Southwest Florida Water Management District, FL; Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Los Angeles County, CA; State of Utah; New York City, NY and Wake County, NC.
  - **Details:** This is a newly formed group. Look for more information related to it on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category.
  - **Join In:** Please check the Discussion Gateway to review the meeting materials and provide your comments and ideas to this Focus Group. The more input, the better the end product should be!
- **VSS and Solicitations Focus Group.** The purpose of this group is for clients to work with CGI experts to determine enhancements to Solicitation processing in Release 3.9.
  - **When:** Meeting as needed so final decisions can be made about Release 3.9.
  - **Details:** This group discussed VSS and solicitation functionality in detail. The group has concluded its analysis and decided on their top priorities for enhancements. This input will now be analyzed so that CGI can determine how many of these changes can be included in the scope of release 3.9.
  - **Join In:** Meeting minutes are posted on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category.
- **Easier Upgrade Focus Group.** The purpose of this Focus Group was for clients to provide CGI experts with guidance on how to make upgrades from Release 3x to 3y more efficient and effective.
  - **When:** Eleven different client sites participated in this Focus Group, meeting on a regular basis.
  - **Details:** The final report will be completed soon.
  - **Join In:** Meeting minutes are posted on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category.
- **infoAdvantage User Group.** The purpose of this group is for clients and CGI experts to share topics of interest, highlight new functionality, demonstrate features and methods for creating reports and seek input.
  - **When:** 3rd Thursday of each month at 3:00pm Eastern time.
  - **Details:** This group meets to discuss common areas of interest regarding infoAdvantage.
  - **Join In:** If you are interested in joining in on the discussion, please contact William Blaustein at [William.Blaustein@cgi.com](mailto:William.Blaustein@cgi.com).
- **CAFR Input Group.** The purpose of this Input Group is for clients to collaborate with CGI experts to determine the direction of CAFR functionality planned for infoAdvantage Release 3.9 and beyond.
  - **When:** A monthly scheduled meeting is planned, the group will determine exact day and time.
  - **Who:** We are currently looking for participants. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact William Blaustein at [William.Blaustein@cgi.com](mailto:William.Blaustein@cgi.com).
  - **Details:** This is a newly formed group. Look for more information related to it on the Discussion Gateway in the 'Focus Groups and Special Interest topics' category. The infoAdvantage CAFR module plans to support the development of the following nine financial statements and optionally may support the building of a 10th financial statement:

- Statement of Net Assets
  - Statement of Activities
  - Balance Sheet-Governmental Funds
  - Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances
  - Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances - Budget and Actual
  - Statement of Net Assets - Proprietary Funds
  - Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Net Assets - Proprietary Funds
  - Statement of Fiduciary Net Assets
  - Statement of Changes in Fiduciary Net Assets
  - Statement of Cash Flows - Proprietary Funds (analysis is ongoing to determine if the development of this report will be supported).
- **Join In:** Please check the Discussion Gateway to review the meeting materials and provide your comments and ideas for this Input Group. The more input, the better the product should be!
- **Steering Committee Elections.** Each year, one third of the seats on the Steering Committee are up for vote. To run for a Steering Committee seat, your site must own a license for the product represented by the seat (i.e. to run for the HR Technical seat, your site must own a license for AMS Advantage 3 HRM).
    - **When:** A call for nominations will be sent later this fall.
    - **Details:** Serving on the Steering Committee is a unique opportunity the AMS Advantage 3 community has to collaborate with CGI in areas such as Forum planning, reviewing and prioritizing enhancement requests for future releases and reviewing concept papers for current development. This is a rewarding experience and I encourage you to consider running. Here are the seats up for election this year:
      - Financial Management/Functional
      - HR/Technical
      - Application Administration
      - infoAdvantage
    - **Join In:** Each site may submit nominations for those seats that correspond with the product(s) it licenses and more than one nomination is permitted. However, only employees are eligible for nominations, contractors and consultants are not eligible. Votes are cast by each site's Primary Contact – stay tuned for more information!
  - **Discussion Gateway.** The Discussion Gateway provides an opportunity for clients to communicate and share with other clients; secure answers to questions, best practices, and problem resolutions.
    - **When:** 24/7
    - **Details:** The more client participation, the more valuable the Discussion Gateway becomes!
    - **Join In:** If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to sign up for the Discussion Gateway today by logging on to the Advantage Support Center web site at <https://support.cgi-ams.com/advantage/>.

Thanks to everyone who has participated and brought their great ideas and input into these processes. I know that Iowa has picked up many helpful hints, tips, and tricks for other clients, and, hopefully we've provided a few along the way as well. If you have not been participating, please consider joining the discussions, signing up for the Discussion Gateway and/or running for a seat on the Steering Committee.

If you have ideas for additional discussion or user groups, please contact me at [lori.mcclannahan@iowa.gov](mailto:lori.mcclannahan@iowa.gov) or 515.281.3206.

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## **Performance Budgeting Improves Efficiency, Information Access and Decision Making at Wake County, NC**

Why is it so important for ERP software to mirror the way government does business? When it comes to budgeting, it is about using out-of-the-box functionality to eliminate manual spreadsheets and disparate environments to streamline activities and improve efficiency so analysts can focus on interpreting data, not just compiling it.

Built for state and local governments, AMS Advantage Performance Budgeting is a single system with a central repository of budget plans, performance targets, publishing and interactive dashboards that automate the process so analysts can focus on interpreting data, not just compiling it, and easily provide insightful strategy guidance.

Here, Johnna Rogers, Budget Director for Wake County, North Carolina talks about how the built-for-government Performance Budgeting solution improves efficiency, decision making and information access while remaining flexible enough to adapt to change.

- Improves efficiency
- Improves decision-making
- Improves information access
- Flexible

Public Sector ERP Insights is your newsletter, for sharing your ideas, success and best practices with the AMS Advantage client community.

Please contact [cheryl.smith@cgi.com](mailto:cheryl.smith@cgi.com) to share your thoughts.

## Oakland Schools, MI Controls Costs with Shared Services

A client since 1988, Oakland Schools is one of Michigan's 57 intermediate school districts that serve the public school districts, public school academies and private schools that, in turn, have over 25,000 employees serving over 230,000 students. Oakland Schools is a regional service agency that offers support services to school personnel that are best delivered regionally, as measured by cost, size and quality advantages. Using a shared services model, the Oakland Schools Technology Services department provides a full suite of software and service alternatives in support of student information management, human resource management, financial systems management, academic systems support, technology planning and implementation, network and telecommunication services, technical support for the Oakland Network for Education (ONE) fiber network and desktop support.

In the early 1990's Oakland Schools implemented the LEAFS and GHRS solution, the original AMS Advantage ERP software, as a shared solution. In the Release 2 mainframe environment, each local school district was its own application and with its own data files within one region. Oakland Schools managed the hardware, system software, application software, application support and help desk.

In 2004, Oakland Schools began the task of upgrading their technical infrastructure in support of the web-based Financial Management and HRM systems, expanding the solution to include Performance Budgeting and AMS infoAdvantage for Business Intelligence and reporting, to further their Shared Services model. In July 2005, Oakland Schools was live with Release 3.5 Financial Management and Performance Budgeting. In May 2006, Oakland Schools went live with Release 3.6.0.2 Financial Management, HRM, and Performance Budgeting. This winter Oakland Schools hopes to begin implementation planning and acceptance testing of Release 3.8.

Karlin Rossi, Applications Services Manager for Oakland Schools, recently talked to us about their upgrade, and more importantly, how the Web-based technology and comprehensive AMS Advantage ERP functionality is supporting their goals for a cost controlling shared services model.



### What are some of the benefits of upgrading to the web-based solution?

District users were ready for the new technology, moving from the old "green screen" to the point and click they use at home. For our shared services model, it meant eliminating our mainframe use and still maintaining centralized control over the technical world without changing the functionality users expect. For example, the Web-based AMS Advantage ERP solution centralizes maintenance, since nothing sits on the client desktop, making it easier and less expensive to manage long-term. The software is securely accessible anywhere you have internet access. No special connection is required.

### Why Shared Services?

Staffing at many of our districts is lean especially in today's current economic conditions. Our

district technology offices are run with minimal staffing, mainly concentrating on their computer networks and workstations in support of day-to-day classrooms and educational applications for teachers and students. Our district business offices are run with minimal staffing, mainly concentrating on their own A/P, A/R, G/L and payroll processing. By centralizing common business software, we take care of the hardware and software with a centralized team. We also can easily support the districts when functional support or temporary personnel support may be needed.

### **What are the common features?**

Although we maintain separate Financial Management, HRM, and Performance Budgeting Versata Logic Servers (VLS) for each local school district, features and functionality are common across the local school districts.

We are all using basic procurement and contract management with each local school district producing their own purchase orders. Our Office of Procurement and Contracting works with the state and county to offer many statewide and countywide bids from which our local school districts may purchase. Each local school district runs their own accounts payable, producing their own checks that are routed to their own laser printers.

We have also consolidated interfaces. Instead of paying to maintain all these separate district interfaces, the central Financial Management and HRM systems feed automatically into state-mandated systems, for example: retirement reporting, reporting for educational professionals and end of year financial reporting.

Each district runs their own payroll, produces their own checks and does their own printing, routed to their own laser printer on a bi-weekly basis. We use a common printer configuration to simplify the Adobe Forms development.

### **How do you handle reporting?**

When it comes to designing reports, we take the same approach CGI does when considering a customization – how can we develop it in such a way that it serves the needs of the community as well as the needs of the people requesting it? Although there are always a handful of unique reports, such as benefits statements, at least 90 percent of the reports we develop are in use by all of the local school districts thanks to common parameters.

When users log in, they use the shared reports and universes, but their unique user ID and password points them to the appropriate database and universe.

We are also using the AMS infoAdvantage report scheduling, powered by Business Objects, to deliver scheduled reports right to a users email.

### **What are some of the benefits?**

With everything centralized, we serve as backup sites for each other – if a printer goes down, we can easily route it to another local school district so there are no delays in printing payroll. If staff is on leave, or out unexpectedly, someone from another local school district or Oakland Schools can step in and help – the processes are the same. Anyone can do each other's time entry and the payrolls are identical, as are accounts payable and purchasing.

That is so helpful when you are running a small business, as the local school districts truly are; there are no back-ups that can bring business to a stand still, nor available budget for a temporary service. With this model, business keeps moving.

### **How do you keep the districts rallied around the common model?**

It is all about communication; sharing updates, sharing ideas, sharing support and soliciting feedback. Typically we hold quarterly user meetings to talk about new ways of doing things. For example, one local school district wants to implement electronic fund transfer(s). They lead the way, analyzing the challenges and the benefits, how job streams will change, etc. Usually there is one local school district eager to do something new, we adapt, and the rest follow along.

Of course, when an upgrade is in process or just in the planning, we meet more often. For

example, when we went live on Release 3.6.0.2, we were able to bring all the districts live on Financial Management at the same time, very smoothly due to the planning and constant communication.

### **How did the web-based technology improve upon the model?**

Since we were already a shared service model under the Release 2 environment, our local school districts were use to the model. The web interface, functionality and business processes were improved.

Decentralized workflow was a big business process improvement – most of our local school districts decentralized entry of purchase orders to the buildings, then routed them to the central business office for approval and processing. Same goes for invoices and budget transfers – instead of waiting for paper to move from one office to the next, it all happens online.

We are also using three-way-match, both two-way and three-way, which works in AMS Advantage 3. Automatically producing payment vouchers has improved business process efficiency. We have Accounts Payable Electronic Fund Transfers rolled out to our first local school district. More districts are planned for this fall.

We have employee self service (ESS) rolled out to one local school district, who is paving the way – with a couple more who want it this fall. We are hoping to eliminate printed payroll remittances this fall for the first district.

Since Release 3.6.0.2 we are using workspaces, along with a lot of accounting templates and document templates to save time.

Similar to the Release 2 mainframe environment, we have scripted and bundled all of our nightly and on demand batch jobs. All the nightly jobs are scheduled tasks that run automatically.

### **What is the next step for the Schools?**

We do a tremendous amount of work tracking grants in Excel spreadsheets, so we are looking at the new Grant Lifecycle Management available with Release 3.8. Not only should it eliminate the manual labor, but it will improve the connection with accounting, automate approvals and improve reporting – what we apply for, what we are awarded.

We are also looking at Release 3.8 for the user interface changes and the return of zooming and leafing. Our local school districts are looking forward to learning more and setting up of test environment.

We deliver many of our applications with this shared services model. We are currently expanding this shared services model with server hosting for our local school districts. With VMWare we are able to virtually host a server for our districts and allow them remote management. Our districts have been able to save budget dollars associated with server replacements and server maintenance.

### **Any suggestions for organizations considering a Shared Services model?**

Certainly, economics played a role, but it would not be possible without the backbone of our fiber network. Back in the late 1990's, we worked with Oakland County Government to run an extensive fiber network, giving each local school district a fiber "head-end" to their district. It laid the groundwork for hosting all our web-based solutions with centralized hardware and software, but provided enough bandwidth for the local school districts to reach us without negatively impacting run-time.

Have a question for Karlin on how Shared Services is working for Oakland Schools? Contact Karlin at [karlin.rossi@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:karlin.rossi@oakland.k12.mi.us).

Are you using a Shared Services model? Let us know at [amsadvantage@cgi.com](mailto:amsadvantage@cgi.com). We would love to share your story with the client community.

Ready to learn more? Contact Bill Geer at [william.geer@cgi.com](mailto:william.geer@cgi.com) to learn about Shared Services and Managed Services models that leverage AMS Advantage to control costs.

## AMS Advantage Client News

Whether it is streamlining business processes, taking advantage of new functionality or just staying current on maintenance, one thing is clear: the AMS Advantage client community continues to transform.

Congratulations to the following CGI clients that have recently gone live with AMS Advantage 3:

- City of Cleveland, Ohio implemented Sympro Debt Management and Archibus Work Orders in production, April 2009.
- Aldine Independent Schools, TX implemented AMS Advantage HRM, including Payroll in live production, May 2009.
- Monterey County, CA implemented AMS Advantage Financial Management and Performance Budgeting, in live production, July 2009.
- Orange County, CA implemented AMS Advantage Financial Management in live production, July 2009.
- Cobb County Schools, GA implemented with AMS Advantage Financial Management in live production, July 2009.

Congratulations to the following CGI clients that have recently upgraded:

- Maricopa County, AZ is live with the hosted solution for AMS Advantage 2 Financial Management, May 2009.
- City of Anaheim, CA upgraded AMS Advantage Financial Management and HRM from 3.4.1 to 3.7.0.2 in July 2009.

Do you have news to share? Contact Cheryl Smith at [cheryl.smith@cgi.com](mailto:cheryl.smith@cgi.com).