



Ensuring Public Trust in eGovernment

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National Identity Management
Office.

Customer Profile

The Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications (MITC) is the champion of Malta's eGovernment strategy. Besides offering strategic direction, it enables line Ministries to focus on their competencies and roles in the attainment of the overall eGovernment vision.

Business Situation

Such vision forms part of the Government's efforts to modernise public administration by streamlining service delivery. By bringing all eGovernment Services under a single, safe and user-friendly portal – mygov.mt – the Government is repositioning its services from a silo-based sometimes fragmented structure into one that is based on service-clusters.

In smoothening transition to online services, the Government needs to ascertain the confidentiality, authenticity and integrity of information exchanged and transactions conducted electronically.

Solution

In 2004, MITC contracted the development of a central Electronic Identity (eID) Solution to allow citizens and businesses to access online services.

The eID is in fact the only official authentication mechanism for Government's web presence. Users need only access one internet portal – mygov.mt – and use the same credentials to manage their profile, pay fees or apply for grants.

Identities of intermediaries can be validated by empowering citizens to assign delegation rights to a trusted individual or organisation to act on his/her behalf.

"The success of a system that is to be trusted for signing in to sensitive eGovernment such as tax and health services needs to be perceived as secure and accompanied by rigorous processes. This thinking was a fundamental principle all along when we were designing the eID and setting up the Identity Management Office." says Derrick Pisani, then the Programme Manager responsible for National Identity Management. Derrick now heads Malta's eGovernment Department within MITA – the National ICT Agency.

Led and coordinated by MITC, the eID project was developed in partnership with the Malta Information Technology Agency and Exigy – a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and software solutions provider engaged mainly within the public sector market.

"Exigy has been a key player in the successful implementation of the eID and mygov.mt projects, which have been effectively delivered within very restricted timeframes", says Tonio Gauci, Senior Manager of the National Identity Management Office. "Today, the eID represents the cornerstone of our eGovernment that fits squarely within our technology vision for Malta and lays the groundwork for the next stage – an Electronic ID Card for all."

The exceptional progress registered in the delivery of eGovernment services has led Malta to achieve the leading position of the European Commission's Benchmarking Report on eGovernment (CapGemini, Rand Europe, IDC, Sogeti and DTI; 2009).

Benefits

Public Trust without Compromising Convenience

"We have looked into how citizens interact with the Government and adapted technology to serve the citizen better", says François Grech, Exigy's Executive Director.

Access to online public services has empowered citizens to correspond with the respective authorities – whether to apply for a particular social service, renew driving licence or submit Income Tax Return – from the comfort of their own home.

Registration and authentication needs only to be done once to access the range of available eGovernment services. The individual's privacy is ensured by separating the technological aspect of the eID and the actual issuing of passwords and digital certificates.

"With the opportunity for every citizen to have his/her own unique eID", adds Tonio Gauci, "we are now capable of delivering maximum public value, suiting every citizen's needs whilst accelerating the transformation towards a knowledge-based society."

Interoperability across Government Entities

Providing a unified authentication method for all eGovernment services means that Government Ministries and service providers can concentrate on deploying eServices without having to worry about security issues. By sharing information and technology through the use of common standards, the Government has facilitated the introduction of services into new public realms such as health and education.

Scalability and Extensiveness for the Future

"The solution was deployed in a modular and scalable architecture, utilising best practice to ensure high level of security and future technology adoption", adds Brian Spiteri, eGovernment Solutions Manager at Exigy.

Based on a PKI infrastructure that supports the publishing of digital certificates, the Government is, since 2007, also capable of issuing secure electronic tokens that establish an individual's identity when conducting online transactions.

Products

- Microsoft Visual Studio .NET
- Microsoft Internet Security and Acceleration Server
- Microsoft SQL Server
- Microsoft Windows Server Enterprise Edition
- Microsoft Certificate Server
- Microsoft Internet Information Services

Technologies

- Microsoft .NET Framework
- XML Web Services
- Active Directory

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