



Celebrating new ideas

2008 New Zealand Post Group
Local Government Excellence Awards

Project Submission Template

Name of Project

Implementation of the Government Logon Service

Name of entering council/s

Auckland City Council

Category

Joined Up Local Government

1. The Rationale for the Project and Expected Benefits

The Government Logon Service ("GLS") is an all-of-government service to manage the logon process for people and businesses using government services over the Internet. The GLS provides enhanced security and enables people to have a single logon to access government services without their identity being shared.

It is the first phase in the 'joined up government' programme of work. This seeks to provide a secure platform that allows government agencies to share information with each other and their customers.

Auckland City Council (the council) was asked by the State Services Commission (SSC) to be a partner in the development and deployment of the first GLS service. This project required extensive design and collaboration between the council, SSC and external developers. It has been designed to provide a platform for additional secure online services and to reduce entry barriers for other councils.

The main benefits to such an approach include:

- Providing support for the 'joined up government' programme of work
- Councils and agencies are freed from the burden of developing their own authentication services.
- Centralisation of the service ensures standardisation is adhered to.
- Economies of scale can be realised given the potentially large user base.
- One GLS account can be used to access many services.

GLS and online rates accounts

In November 2007 the council became the first agency to launch a service protected by the GLS. The service enables ratepayers to access their personal, private rates account details online. The council is now looking at other opportunities to leverage this strategic work.

The design and implementation, of the project will facilitate the addition of other services, aid the further development of 'joined up government' and lower entry barrier for other councils.

The council participation allowed local government issues and concerns to be represented and considered in the overall design work of the SSC. The council worked with the Auckland Regional Council working party to develop this input.

Following on from this success, the council have also been invited to participate in the Government Online Attribute Assertion Meta System (GOAAMS) project by the SSC.

GLS overview

The following section provides an overview of the customer experience currently provided on the Auckland City Council website for the online rates service.

The GLS is an authentication mechanism that ensures that a persons identity is verified. The council then manages access to specific services. In this way, the council can be confident when releasing private or personal information to the customer. The following diagram shows how a customer registers for the GLS service



Within Auckland City council:

Customers start the registration process by visiting the council website. In addition to the standard set up, the council also send out a validation letter to the customer. In this way, the council can be confident that the customer has been correctly identified.

Ongoing Access

The diagram below outlines the process that users undertake once they have registered for GLS and the appropriate council service.



2. Linkage to Council’s Strategic Direction

The Auckland City strategy is shown in the diagram below:



The development and implementation of the GLS infrastructure at Auckland City Council directly supports the councils strategic direction in the following manners:

Lifestyle Choice

The project provides a platform to deliver more online services. This will provide the customer with additional choices to engage with the council. 'Free yourself to do it online'

Efficient and Capable council

The project supports this keystone strategy in a number of ways. It helps the council:

- **Reduce costs:** Online services provide a lower cost per transaction than other channels.
- **Be more informed:** A granular set of Management information allows the council to monitor and understand their customers' interaction with the council. This will help to develop and refine service offerings that are directly related to the customers needs.
- **Realign Skills:** Resources that would normally be consumed with support of customer requests can be realigned to activities that provide a higher level of value to the council and customers.

'The Project Leader was also the business owner with a specific business driver to direct call centre traffic to online self-service mechanisms. The project enabled their organisation's capability on being able to deliver on this driver.'

Strong Healthy Communities

A key deliverable for the strategy is to provide 'safe communities and places'. With the prevalence of cyber-crime and the general public knowledge of such matters, it is easy to see how the project provides much needed protection and delivers a safer environment for the councils online community.

Other broader strategies that have been supported include:

- **Enhancing our reputation:** The first council to deliver a GLS service
- **Acting Collaboratively:** Working in conjunction with SCC to develop and deliver the service
- **Taking Accountability:** Committing resources and expertise to develop the service in a timely manner

3. Project Planning

Scope

As the project was being undertaken to implement and support a strategic all of government initiative, it was recognised that a large amount of scope and definition work was required. This was to ensure the deliverables of the project would provide a tangible outcomes, while supporting the wider strategic goal to create a service that could be utilised across multiple agencies.

Resources

It was recognised that resource planning and management would be a key factor in the success of the project. Resources was sourced from multiple:

- Government agencies and departments
- Geographic locations
- Vendors
- Skill sets

Co-ordination of the interested parties would be complex and strong communication and governance structure would be required to ensure a successful implementation.

Timeframes

Timeframes would be dictated by the ability of SCC to deliver the GLS infrastructure, and the councils ability to understand, advise upon and integrate the service solution into the wider strategic programme

Governance

Governance was undertaken by the project steering committee, made up of members from Auckland City Council and SCC. Strong and decisive management would be required to ensure that all the disparate development streams and business drivers were brought together in a cohesive manner.

Evaluation

Evaluation would be determined on the basis of the councils and SCC ability to implement a service that had direct benefits to the councils customers, yet still provided a platform for the wider joined up government strategy.

4. Project Management

The project posed a number of new and untested assumptions, deliverables and constraint. A number of business partners and technical development houses were required to be co-ordinated and managed to bring the service to fruition.

Scope

Care was taken to ensure that the scope of the project was very clearly defined and identified as a strategic platform. The fruition of this in-depth scoping and analysis phase ensured that the project remained tightly focused on deliverable while maintaining the core competence that it should provide a platform for wider services and be appropriate for other agencies and councils.

Due to the detailed nature of the scoping exercise, little change control was required within the project

Resources

A great deal of engagement across agencies and technical resource was required to ensure that the strategic direction and technical implementation delivered the full potential of the system. The development of the service was complex, yet still had to deliver an easy to use service to the customer. As none of the developers had undertaken this type implementation before the scoping exercise was invaluable in keeping technical parties focussed on the needs of the business.

Cross party working relationships were utilised. Expertise and knowledge sharing was a key factor in the success of the project. This can be evidenced in the fact that the council were able to provide expertise and knowledge that significantly reduced the cost of implementation and ownership for SCC, the council and other agencies that have, and will, utilise GLS.

Resource management also proved challenging, but ultimately successful. The project was delivered through a major period of change in the senior management structure of the council. The project also negotiated changes surrounding elected body. This resulted in the project operating with a relatively low level of senior management engagement. Resources and buy-in also had to be negotiated, and cost kept to a minimum while delivering a complex and cutting edge project.

'AkICC early on identified and maintained the links of the project's strategic objectives to their organisation's strategic objectives and business deliverables. This ensured the continuing support of the project within the senior management team (SMT) even when there was a significant turnover within the SMT.'

Timeframes

'...when software development commenced in early 2007, the project was able to be delivered in early September 2007'

Governance

Due to the complex nature of the project strong relationship management and risk mitigation techniques were required to be employed.

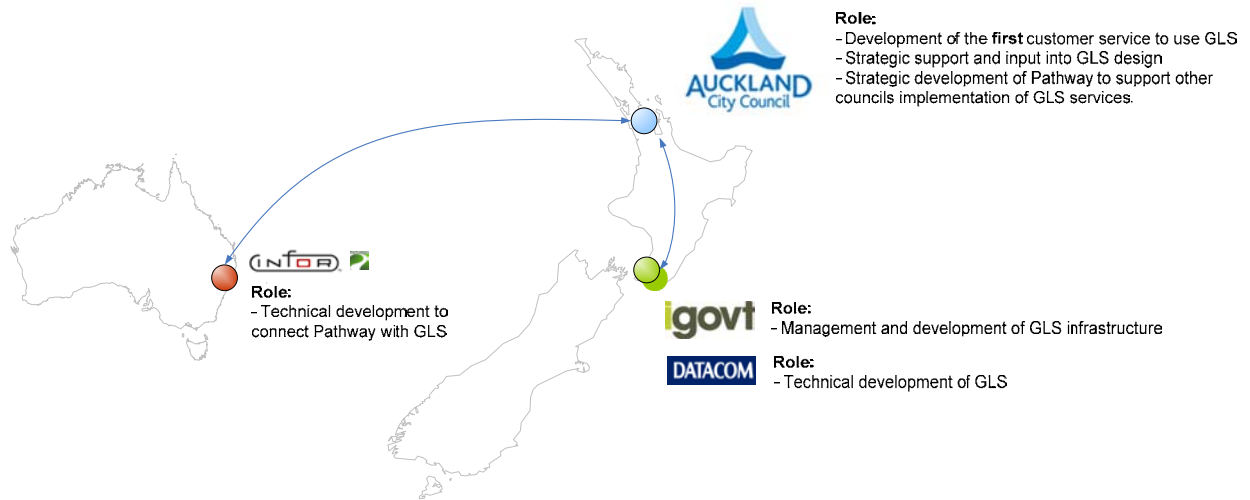
Regular project meetings were a key success factor for the project.

'The Project leader and Online Channel Business Development Manager (Sandra Newton) and Business Analyst (Megan Hall) were fully committed to the project's strategic objectives and remained throughout the life of the project. This ensured ongoing continuity and championing of the project's objectives.'

5. Relationship Management and Communication with Stakeholders

For the project to be successful, it was essential that strong relationship management and communications channels were put in place.

The diagram shown below, given a sense of the relationships and communication channels that were managed through the project.

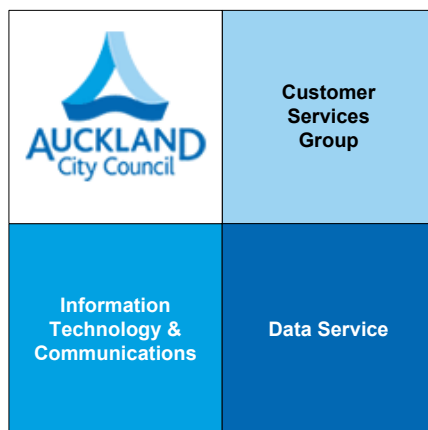


As can be seen, there were a number of challenges that had to be managed

- **Geographic Spread:** There were three development centres involved in the project
- **Development:** The development was complex. To compound the situation, both 3rd party developers were undergoing a learning curve to implement the project therefore robust communications needed to be maintained.
- **Co-ordination across agencies:** As new development was being undertaken at both SSC and the council, mechanism were put in place to ensure that the development and communication for the project were synchronised
- **Selling the benefits:** An important aspect of the project was the need to sell, and explain, the benefits to management. From 'This is a project that only geeks could love' to the realisation that this was the first step in journey to provide joined up government, with world class information sharing across agencies was an important aspect of the project.

In addition to the complexities of the wider project, the council needed to ensure that internal resources were well managed and communication channels kept open.

The diagram that follows provides an overview of the internal departments involved with the project.



The project was also showcased at the local government conference in Wellington

The following quotes are taken from the post implementation review paper. As can be seen communication was a key strength and influential factor in the successful delivery of the project:

Open Communication

'Open communication channels between all parties were fostered by everyone and communication was regular and inclusive. This enabled timely and shared problem solving and enhanced the collaborative approach even with all parties based in different locations i.e. AkICC in Auckland, Infor in Australia and SSC in Wellington.'

Regular Communication

'There were good clear communication channels across all parties. Weekly meetings worked well'

'...regular meetings assisted in keeping the project ongoing'

Collaboration

'All parties had a strong collaborative approach to achieving the project objectives and to enable learnings to be leveraged off for the future. AkICC acknowledge that their organisation's culture actively promotes collaboration.'

'Collaboration with business partners is part of AkICC's culture hence trouble shooting was also a collaborative effort.'

Quality Review

'The security code review (commissioned by SSC) of AkICC's solution provided, to AkICC, a high level of assurance on the security of their solution and the quality of the work they had commissioned from Infor. The review document enabled the information to be shared internally.'

Development of knowledge

Evidence of Identity (EOI) *AkICC commented that this standard was complex however they were fortunate to be part of a SSC working party in the standard's development. This helped them to understand the steps required and to apply it to their own organisation.*

6. Innovation and Originality

It's an Online age, more and more people have access to the web and are undertaking an ever increasing numbers of transactions. At a time where information is becoming easier to access, there is an increasing expectation that services and interaction with institutions should be available online. Tempering this need, is the fact that these services need to be secure and easy to use.

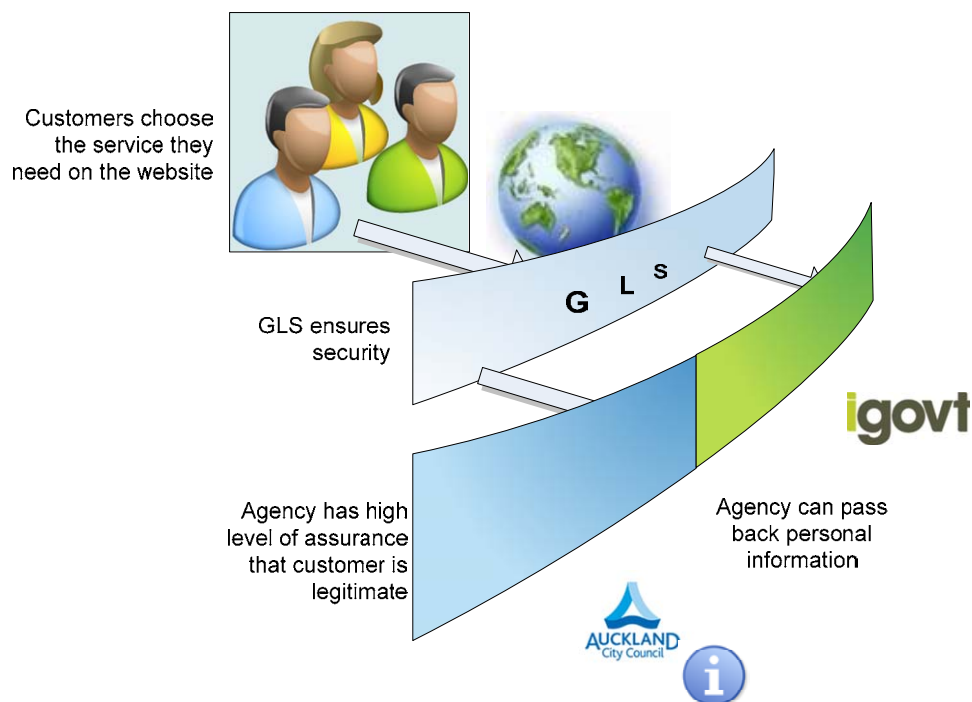
Imagine a time when all your councils information needs can be accessed safely, quickly and securely, from anywhere in the world. You are given the information that is directly applicable to You and it can be tailor to your specific tastes and requirements. Not only that, but government agencies are able to share information that makes any online interaction with the council quick and simple, with no need to hunt for that piece of paper you received in the dim distant past.

Auckland City Council, in conjunction with the SSC have started on this journey. Through collaboration and partnership, the two agencies implemented the first GLS service in New Zealand. In addition to this success, the project was structured and implemented to allow other councils to leverage off the work already undertaken and to support the wider joined up government strategy.

The project represented a 'never done before' scenario. The GLS infrastructure was completely new, with new development work being undertaken in tandem by the council to support and extend the capabilities of the GLS.

In addition to the support provided to SSC strategy, the project also has the following benefits:

- **Protection personal information:** Identifying customers, and ensuring their information is safe and secure. The project effectively brings private industry security standards into the public sector arena.
- **Improving customer perceptions:** Raising public sector offering in line with service standards offered by private sector firms
- **Best practice standards:** Leading the way in local government and implementing industry best practice and standards
- **Value to the rate payers:** Implementing a system that can be shared across the wider government sector



7. Evaluation Framework

The project delivered to all the success metrics set in place:

- Deliver a secure service to council customers
- Put in place a system that could be utilised by other council and lower their entry barriers for the use of GLS
- Develop and deliver the first phase of the joined up government strategy
- Work as a model for inter-agency collaboration and knowledge sharing

Detailed management information is being collected on an ongoing basis. The detailed metrics will allow the council to understand where improvements to the service can be made in the future, and what other services will lend themselves to access mediated by the GLS.

8. Category Specific Criteria – Joined Up Local Government

The rationale for the collaboration between Auckland City Council (council) and the SSC was to develop and implement the Government Logon Service (GLS) within local government environment in a way that set the foundation for ongoing utilisation and expansion of the service to other local government bodies. Care was taken to ensure the project was designed and implanted in such manner that the intellectual property and knowledge generated could be utilised in the widest manner possible.

The vision of the project was to:

- Simplify and centralise service provision for council customers – ‘One logon for all services’
- Implement an infrastructure that could be utilised across multiple local government authorities.
- Lead the way in designing a flexible and robust infrastructure and methodology that other councils could follow.
- Build the foundations for a secure, customisable and tailored online experience.
- Bring private sector security standards to the public sector.
- Facilitate customer self service through online channels
- Provide economies of scale for local and central government

The project was a cutting-edge implementation between councils and central government. All the implementation and business rules had to be defined and created from scratch.

The council and SCC succeeded to such a great extent due to the partnership that was developed and maintained. Initially SSC found the GLS concept hard to sell, they needed someone to believe in their product. The council was approached because they had the expertise to interpret the vision and understand the great potential.

The implementation of the service also helped to support the web strategy for the council and retain a leading position in the implementation of web services in New Zealand local government.

Close relationships have been maintained between the council and SCC, to ensure the ongoing success of the GLS and to utilise the experiences and skills gained through the project.

SSC quotes and feedback:

‘Over the past 2-3 years, AkICC has worked closely with the Authentication Programme during the initial implementation phase of the GLS and development of the Authentication Standards. Subsequently they were the first external agency to go into production utilising the GLS.’

‘AkICC emphasise that their involvement with the Programme is driven from a strategic delivery view of developing capability and knowledge within online authentication and to leverage off savings through the use of a shared infrastructure.’

‘AkICC early on identified and maintained the links of the project’s strategic objectives to their organisation’s strategic objectives and business deliverables. This ensured the continuing support of the project within the senior management team (SMT) even when there was a significant turnover within the SMT.’

‘The scope and size of the project ensured that the project could be delivered through a ‘business as usual’ mechanism and did not require additional project overheads and management.’

The final word:

When all is said and done, Auckland City Council and the State Services Commission worked effectively and collaboratively to provide a world class service that can be extended and utilised by others. They have also laid the foundations for extending online collaboration and information sharing between other government agencies.