

State of Illinois, Department of Human Services

Illinois' largest government agency saves millions of dollars annually by using Adobe® LiveCycle® solutions to automate the completion and processing of critical service forms

State of Illinois, Department of Human Services

www.dhs.state.il.us



Industry

Government

Challenges

- Transition from paper to electronic forms processing
- Lay foundation for a fully automated form workflow

Solution

- Business transformation
- Accessible forms

The largest public agency in Illinois is saving millions of dollars annually and paving the way for agencies statewide to improve services by centralizing forms management, deployment, and workflow using Adobe LiveCycle solutions.

Results

- Reduced administrative costs by \$6 million annually
- Reduced printing and distribution costs by \$1.2 million annually
- Saved 1.5 hours of staff time for every service application
- Reduced forms distribution time from weeks to minutes
- Increased data accuracy and service processing

Systems At A Glance

- Adobe Acrobat Professional
- Adobe LiveCycle Designer
- Adobe LiveCycle Reader Extensions
- Platform:
 - PCs with Intel® Pentium® Processors running Microsoft® Windows® 2000 and Microsoft Windows XP
 - Microsoft Windows Server 2003

Embracing forms automation

As governments work to meet constituent demands, adopting well-designed, automated forms processes is key to better engaging citizens and improving services. At the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)—the state's largest government agency—case managers, administrators, and citizens alike are working smarter and faster by shifting from paper to automated forms processes with Adobe LiveCycle solutions.

DHS helps nearly 20% of Illinois citizens achieve self-sufficiency, independence, and health through programs that include substance abuse treatment and prevention services, services for people with developmental disabilities, family health services, prevention services for domestic violence and at-risk youth, and other vital services. DHS delivers these services through nearly 211 local offices and in partnership with a network of providers in every region of the state.

As it looked to engage more effectively with citizens and streamline forms processes, DHS set out to accomplish several goals. Like most government agencies, DHS faced budget limitations and needed to find the most cost-effective solution possible. In addition, the solution had to be simple to deploy and manage, integrate seamlessly with legacy systems, and it could not place any financial burden on constituents wanting to use online processes. Also essential was addressing the needs of people with impaired vision and ensuring the solution was easy for everyone to use.

Improving service delivery

After evaluating its options, DHS selected Adobe Acrobat® Professional software and Adobe LiveCycle Reader Extensions server software; the State's procurement and IT agency, the Department of Central Management Services, later negotiated to an enterprise license for LiveCycle Reader Extensions that encompasses all state, county, and city agencies, as well as public schools and universities in Illinois.

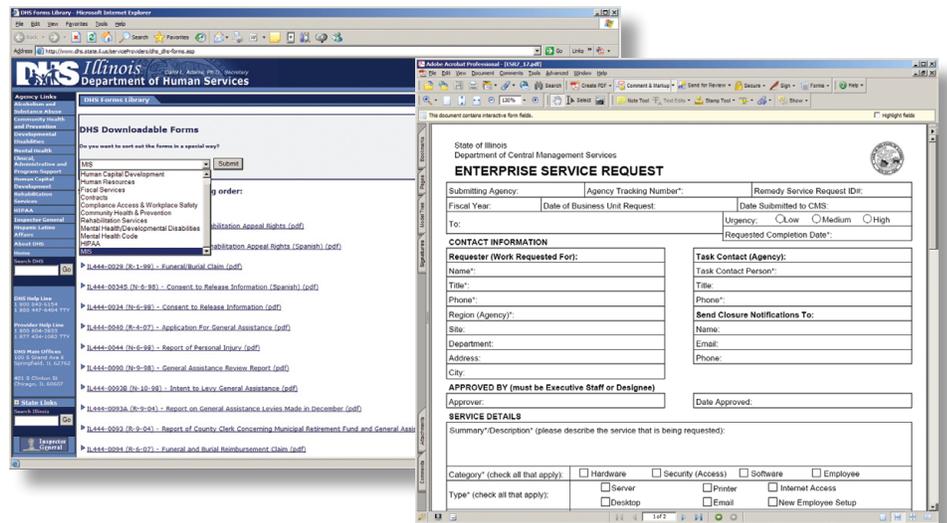
"In the few years we've been using Adobe products, we've moved from posting static forms in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) online to building auto-populated interactive PDF forms," says John Rigg, manager of forms management for the agency.

Using Acrobat, LiveCycle Designer, and LiveCycle Reader Extensions, DHS converted more than 1,000 paper forms to interactive, Adobe PDF forms that people can fill out easily online or offline using free Adobe Reader® software. The forms are available to DHS case managers via the agency's intranet, and many are available to citizens on DHS's public-facing websites.

Saving time, money, and distribution headaches

With dozens of essential services—mental health, food stamps, Medicaid, and others—managed through DHS, the agency relies on more than 1,000 different forms to capture information from people in need, plus another 1,000 internal administrative forms such as vacation requests and personnel applications.

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John Rigg,
Forms management manager,
Illinois Department of Human Services

Previously, distributing paper forms to case managers and to the public caused ongoing delays and inflated the agency's operating costs. It was time consuming and expensive to ensure that outlying DHS offices and partner agencies had access to the latest versions of documents—or if they did, that staff accurately completed the forms. Continued reliance on paper also meant that citizens had to travel to agency offices to pick up the required application materials.

DHS estimates that more than \$1.2 million was spent annually simply copying and distributing current versions of forms to dispersed case managers and citizens. Equally problematic were the time and costs needed for case workers to complete forms, which the agency estimated at millions of dollars each year. “Adobe LiveCycle solutions eliminate many redundant processes and enable us to better serve citizens,” explains Rigg. “We’ve also seen staff productivity go up and administrative costs drop by as much as \$6 million annually.”

The variety of forms in use at DHS is extensive, ranging from food stamp applications to forms that determine medical benefits eligibility. Now, PDF forms are integrated with DHS's back-end systems using JavaScript programs that auto-populate forms based on case numbers and Social Security numbers. This simple step not only reduces the margin of error, it can save as much as 1.5 hours in administrative time per service request that case managers previously devoted to filling out forms by hand, duplicating them, and routing them.

Future efficiencies

In the short term, DHS is looking to adopt Adobe LiveCycle Forms software to directly capture data to and from its mainframe systems. At the same time, digital signature capabilities (using digital certificates supported in PDF forms) are being tested to enable staff to submit completed materials electronically. The result is faster, more efficient processing for DHS and better services for companies that bid annual state contracts for construction, transportation services, materials, and more.

As leader of the forms automation process statewide, Rigg works closely with government agencies statewide to help them further automate processes using Adobe LiveCycle solutions. Already, additional LiveCycle solutions, including LiveCycle Policy Server and LiveCycle Workflow Server, have been adopted by Illinois agencies looking to improve constituent services and reduce their costs.

“Our aim is to implement a comprehensive electronic forms management system integrated with enterprise systems statewide,” says Rigg. “This enables all participants—government staff and constituents—to submit and process information consistently and easily at anytime and anyplace.”



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