BangaloreOne*:
Integrated Citizen Service Centre

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ABSTRACT

The revolution in information and communication technology (ICT) enables the delivery of government-to-citizen (G2C) and business-to-citizen (B2C) services, since it caters to a large base of people across different segments and geographical locations. The effective use of ICT services in government administration can greatly enhance existing efficiencies, drive down communication costs, and increase transparency in the functioning of the government. It also gives citizens easy access to tangible benefits such as bill payments, submission of applications, etc.

To harness the benefits of ICT and to deliver the services in a more efficient manner, the Government of Karnataka (GoK) has launched a project called *BangaloreOne*. The project is aimed at delivering various G2C and B2C services to the citizens of Bangalore. It has received overwhelming response from the citizens and has experienced tremendous growth since its launch. The project is completely service oriented and aims at continuous enhancements to ensure efficient delivery of services.

Introduction

The GoK is keen to provide integrated services to its citizens, deploying the tools of ICT to enhance speed, convenience, certainty and accountability in providing these services through the concept of a 'one-stop-shop' facility. Accordingly, GoK has decided to implement an e-governance project called *BangaloreOne*, and the project was launched on 2 April 2005. BangaloreOne runs on the public–private partnership (PPP) model.

Stakeholders

Government-to-Citizen (G2C)

- Bangalore Electric Supply Company (BESCOM)
- Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB)

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* CSI Nihilent e-Governance Awards 2005–6, Best Project– Service Orientation.

- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL)
- CellOne
- Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP)
- Regional Transport Office (RTO)
- Bangalore Police Services (BPS)
- Regional Passport Office (RPO)
- Stamps and Registration Office (SRO)
- Department of Labour (DoL)
- Bangalore Mahangara Transport Corporation (BMTC)

Business–to–Citizen (B2C)

- Western Union Money Transfer
- Tata Teleservices Ltd.
- Reliance Infocomm
- Spice Telecom
- Airtel (Bharti Airtel Ltd.)

Objectives

The objective of the project is to deliver G2C and B2C services in a convenient and efficient manner through BangaloreOne integrated citizen service centres.

Technology

1. Leased-line connectivity between the citizen centres, data centre and the back-end participating departments, with dial-up connection as backup.
2. Robust network management system to monitor the performance of the network; the LAN/WAN links connected to the citizen service centres and the back-end departments to ensure uninterrupted service availability to the citizens.
3. In-built redundancy, load balancing, offline capability and disaster recovery to ensure 24×7 operations.
4. Participating departments to make the required data available at a central site for easy access and updation by BangaloreOne.
5. Internet portal has secure 128-bit SSL encryption with VeriSign for secure transactions.
6. Transactions are digitally signed by the respective operators to maintain data integrity and for non-repudiation.
7. Disaster recovery and business continuity sites in place to ensure continuity of services in the event of any disaster.

8. Ajax-based application.
9. The application is designed and implemented with a single interface for all services.
10. Citizens' feedback handling and processing module to handle feedback from citizen.
11. Electronic queue management system (EQMS) is adopted in all BangaloreOne centres to give service on first-come-first-serve basis, and also to minimise the waiting time for citizens.
12. Robust web-based online management information system (MIS) reports are in place. Reports are customised as per the requirements of different departments. Partner departments and their sub-division offices have access to their reports to monitor the transactions, amount collected, etc., in real-time basis. The management team has a comprehensive reporting system to monitor the entire project. Banking partners also use the MIS reports for financial management. A unique feature called *Payment Grid* is also in place to ensure timely and appropriate fund transfer to the departments.

Salient Features of BangaloreOne

- Non-stop services: Services on a 24 × 7 basis, including all holidays.
- One-stop shop: Multiple services of the government and private companies are available under one roof.
- No service charges: Citizens do not have to pay any service charge.
- Jurisdiction-free services: Services are available on any-time-any-where basis.
- Choice of payment modes: Can pay using cash/cheques/DDs/credit cards.
- No more standing in queues: Centres are equipped with well-designed chairs so that the citizen is more comfortable.
- Quality service: Waiting and transaction times for delivery of services are defined, within which the services will be delivered.
- Citizen-friendly ambience: Air-conditioned, elegant and comfortable centres, with citizen-friendly executives, television, drinking water, newspapers and magazines.
- EQMS: This is in place at all the centres to monitor the transaction and the waiting time for each transaction.
- Services through the Internet: Citizens can also avail the bill payment services for a few of the departments through the BangaloreOne web site.

Implementation

1. Fourteen centres were opened on a single day at various locations in Bangalore.
2. Each centre had 10–14 counters, with a total of 195 counters in the 16 centres.
3. Outsourcing on PPP model (BOOT).
4. Banking partner from the day one for financial management and to bear the salary of operators.
5. Minimal upfront investment from the government.
6. Started with 13 services of 10 departments, and within a span of just over a year, it has added 8 services in 5 departments, taking the total to 21 services.
7. It started with 39,000 transactions per month, and off late it serves nearly 3.5 lakh citizens of Bangalore every month.
8. EQMS is in place for optimal citizen queue management to ensure minimum waiting and transaction times for the citizens. EQMS system also acts as base for monitoring the quality of service of the PPP partner, as per the service-level agreement. The PPP partner is penalised for suboptimal performance.

Training

- Training is provided to the staff at all levels (manager, accountant, operators, etc.) before they are put on the job.
- A 24 × 7 help desk is provided for assistance by the staff.
- Training of a cadre of master trainers to train other operators.
- On-the-job training to operators.
- Training is given to the existing staff when a new service is launched.
- Training is given to the staff (manager, accountant, operators, etc.) whenever there are any changes in the application.
- Training manuals are prepared for all the services and are distributed to the operators.
- Training facilities are available at the BangaloreOne Directorate and at the premises of PPP partners.
- Each centre is provided with one manager and one system administrator to continuously train and build the capacity of the operators.
- Identified resource persons with domain knowledge of the participating departments are also involved in training of BangaloreOne staff.
- Efficient change management policy is in place, and the changes are done with the consent of the department.

- Participating departments have nominated a nodal officer exclusively for BangaloreOne.

Future Plans

- To add 35 BangaloreOne centres to reach other parts of Bangalore
- To integrate the following new services of government and private companies:
    1. Khata Certificate and Extract of BMP
    2. Flight ticketing
    3. Railway ticketing
    4. Cinema ticketing
    5. Bus ticketing
    6. Life insurance premium payments
    7. Enhancement of RTO services
    8. Enhancement of police services
    9. Enhancement of passport services
    10. Commercial tax payments
    11. Grievance registration and tracking for different departments
    12. Accepting requests for services on behalf of departments

Conclusion

It is quite apparent that ICT can be used to deliver citizen services in a more efficient and transparent way, and it is also clear that the citizens are ready for the change and will accept such initiatives very quickly. Technological advancement enables the scaling up or replication of such projects in different parts of the world without much effort. Such initiatives will certainly allow the citizens to avail the services in a more convenient manner. Added to this, the departments can focus better on their core functionalities and bank heavily on such projects to deliver their services.