Chapter 4
Adoption of a New Online Travel Management System for FED–AK

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case describes the implementation of an online travel management system at FED–AK, the Alaska office of a U.S. government agency. The previous system was intended to accomplish the same functionality, but due to employee resistance, it was used only as a forms generator in conjunction with a paper- and mail-based process. The new system is integrated, which compels employees to use all the functionality provided. It also incorporates many lessons learned from the old system—in particular, extensive training and online help functions. The system is expected to significantly reduce the cost of travel by minimizing errors, enforcing policies, and reducing transaction costs. The system will also lead to faster reimbursement of employee travel expenses.
ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The organization discussed in this case is Federal Environment Department - Alaska (FED-AK), the Alaska office of a United States federal government agency, Federal Environment Department - USA (FED-USA), which is part of the Department of the Interior (DOI). In addition to the references indicated, much of the information in the case is from personal interviews and from internal agency documents.

With the widespread use of the Internet for business and personal interactions, many national and local governments are offering citizens access to government resources via electronic channels (Evans & Yen, 2005). A well-established model (Laine & Lee, 2001) organizes Electronic Government (e-Government) offerings along four stages: cataloging, simple transactions, vertical integration within one functional area and full vertical and horizontal integration in a truly one-stop shopping experience. According to the most recent report on e-Government around the world (West, 2008), the level of e-Government service varies tremendously, from simply a web presence with limited or no catalog access, to full transactional capability (available in at least one service area in 50% of the government websites worldwide). A comprehensive survey of services offered by city governments in Europe tracks 67 different types of e-Government services available to citizens (Torres, Pina & Acerete, 2005).

A number of studies have evaluated the readiness, the usability, the usage levels and the effectiveness of e-Government, using empirical surveys theoretical models, or a combination of the two (Wang, Bretschneider & Gant, 2005). Srivastava and Teo (2007) go even one step further, showing a link between e-Government adoption and two metrics for national performance: reduction of social divide and increase of business competitiveness. Titah and Barki (2005) provide a good review of both theoretical and experimental e-Government research results published up to 2005.

At the same time, e-Government initiatives are facing several roadblocks, including privacy and confidentiality, usability, ease of navigation and ingrained habits of citizens. These roadblocks are significant even in the most technologically advanced countries, such as the United Kingdom (Kolsaker & Lee-Kelley, 2007). As one might expect, more e-Government functionality is available in developed countries, but variability in the level of service is also higher in developed countries (Siau & Long, 2006). For example, a United Nations survey (UN, 2008) ranks the United States as fourth in the world in e-readiness, and first in e-participation.

In February 2002, President George W. Bush presented a series of measures intended to streamline the government and to increase transparency and accountability through widespread use of Electronic Government (e-Gov). Internet-based technologies have the ability to improve citizens’ access to government resources, to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the government, and to improve the
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