

Report of the GOVIS 2003 Buzzy Awards Judges Panel

The judges panel for the GOVIS Buzzy Awards found they'd been set a difficult task this year. Here are their comments on the stories nominated.

Parliamentary Library – Infocus

The Infocus system provides MPs and parliamentary staff with 24 hour, 7 day a week, tailored and filtered electronic access to news and articles of interest. In our view, this is smart use of technology, showing strong customer focus, using system and business rules to increase value and reduce information overload.

Looking ahead, we believe that Parliamentary Library's ownership of Infocus means that they can provide it as a key resource to an all-of-government intranet

MoRST – E-consultation wizard

The E-consultation wizard backs up the Ministry's commitment to dialogue by making it easier to communicate with citizens and for citizens to talk to the Ministry in an efficient and streamlined way.

The system features an iterative, feedback informed development process. The use of wizards allows consultation pages to be created quickly. The system enables staff to quickly build a tailored consultation process without technical assistance

We see in this an innovative approach to dealing with a major issue coming at all agencies - the electronic interface to the public

Maritime Safety Authority – Cell Phone Vessel Detail System

MSA serves a diverse and dispersed community. They support 15 Maritime safety inspectors in all major ports and inspect around 5,000 vessels annually, supported by a database called Mainstay.

It worked well, with one major gap. It only worked when they were in their office, and you don't inspect vessels in an office. But MSA's budget didn't stretch to fancy laptops with wireless connections.

The solution uses Short Message Service (SMS) to request information on the vessel being inspected, converts it to HTTP to communicate with the web server, and translates it back to SMS for the inspector. It lets the inspector check the status of any vessel, anywhere, at any time.

FRST – The MyFRST portal

MyFRST combines proposal submission, contract profiling, peer review, contracting, reporting and user management for public good investment proposals.

It replaces a huge paper based process with a wizard based online process that speeds up processing, reduces cost and effort, and improves outcomes for all parties.

FRST has again demonstrated their leadership in using Internet technologies to re-engineer the way they work, for their own benefit and the benefit of their stakeholders.

Ministry of Justice – Justice Data Warehouse Project

This initiative has enabled 25 years of statistical information to be transferred from LES to a new platform that supports statistical workers across the justice sector. This work is key to legislation review, programme evaluation and sector policymaking.

A feature of the project was the challenging stakeholder and change management requirements across a number of organisations. Collaboration is hard to do.

Justice has demonstrated that real cross-agency collaboration is achievable, and that value paybacks for all participating agencies are real. The warehouse serves as a model for what will become a common trend over the next few years, combining and sharing statistical information to support improved public sector management and outcomes.

LINZ – Customer Service for Landonline

In March LINZ introduced a new integrated national call centre for Landonline. The interesting thing is that by using Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) they didn't all have to sit together. People across the country could virtually integrate behind a single management process. This allows load balancing, call routing by skill set not location, and avoids duplication of effort. It also assists with business continuity planning.

VOIP also enables flexibility for future growth planning.

LINZ has once again demonstrated that off-the-shelf technologies can be implemented to make geographical location irrelevant to client-service. Good "out-of-the-box" thinking from the people for whom it really is about "location, location, location"!

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise – Marketing New Zealand Online

NZTE have also shown that you can use out of the box technology very smartly to re-engineer the way you do things to support clients. Their MarketNewZeland.com portal offers a range of services to New Zealand exporters and international buyers. The system automatically matches buyers to sellers and tracks progress of the interaction. Expert staff manages the entire process.

The focus on the client is clear, and the assistance provided is significant, but notice the ongoing involvement of the expert staff. The system has taken away a lot of routine work and left staff free to focus on high value interactions with clients

Ministry of Justice – Justice Sector Change Notification System

While the concept here is simple, getting the hard yards right and dealing with the un-sexy infrastructure level stuff that's critical to working together effectively is very hard in practice. The justice sector organisations have agreed to use web and email processes to fully automate the process of managing and notifying changes to common code table data – simply effectively and sustainably.

Sustaining common code tables over time is critical to effective Information Management (IM) across the sector, and effective IM is critical to the sector carrying out its business. The success of the justice sector approach is a lesson for us all as we start to think seriously about working together electronically.

Inland Revenue – 360 degree feedback system

All too often when we think about “e” we only think about our external customers. Remember that “e” will have as big an impact internally as it will externally. IRD recognised this by developing a forms based application for their intranet, which made manageable a feedback process that was threatening to overwhelm manager's capacity. By cleverly using automated validation and e-mail to support the process, a lot of the work has been taken out and the time-cost of the process significantly reduced.

Ministry of Health - Web Enabled Appointments to Statutory Bodies

Running a data intensive process with external people, needing to involve several stakeholders, struggling with data completeness and processing backlogs. These are the problems that the Ministry of Health faced while using a paper-based process for preparation of appointments to statutory boards and committees. And it was hard to find the right people to approach.

Implementation of a web application on the Ministry's web site has reduced processing time and effort and increased the pool of people available for consideration for appointment.

The system serves as a timely reminder that an application doesn't have to be big and flashy for it to achieve significantly improved outcomes, both for the service provider and their clients.

Faced with 10 excellent finalists, we then had the hard task of picking 4 who we felt exemplified the qualities of the award categories.

And the winners are:

Tools and hardware (great use of hardware)

Maritime Safety Authority for the cell phone vessel detail systems

Technology and society (people focused systems)

MoRST for the web enabled consultation wizard

On the frontier (leading edge stuff)

This was the hardest one, as there were 3 strong contenders in this area. They were the LINZ call centre, Parliamentary Services' Infocus system and NZTE's MarketNewZealand

Our choice in the end was NZTE for the MarketNewZealand system

Highly Commended. What Moira Frazer and her people have done up at Parliament is outstanding. We believe that when they have achieved their full plans (hopefully within the next year) that they may be unbeatable

Rough sailing (delivery despite adversity)

The judge's choice in this category went to an agency that showed superb navigation skills in the very tricky waters of a complex multi-agency project with some pretty severe time constraints.

We give this award to the Ministry of Justice for the Justice Sector Data Warehouse project.

E-government Award

When we last counted there were over 170 people working directly with the E-government Unit, in addition to many working in their own agencies on e-government initiatives.

However there was clearly one agency that over the last year has contributed more across the sector than any other, and not in one area but two.

That agency is the **Department of Labour**.

We are awarding the E-government Buzzy to DoL for their contribution in developing the worksite portal that leverages the government portal infrastructure to achieve a focused subject portal serving people interested in employment.

DoL then made the Worksite code and expertise available to assist with the building of 3 other subject portals in Education and Trade and Industry.

On top of this DoL has been working with groups of people known to be most at risk from the digital divide – that is, those who have less exposure and access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) because they might be:

- outside the major centres,
- not as wealthy,
- Maori, Pacific Island people, women, unemployed people and people who work in the unpaid 'voluntary sector'.

In a short time, the Connecting Communities project has created, nation wide, momentum that is really working. Communities can decide for themselves how to get connected and stay connected.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. DoL have used surveys, research and strategy workshops to find out what works for communities and how to best help them. The results were shown by case studies and workshops presented at the Connecting Communities conference held in Wellington last week. The conference had twice the attendance of GOVIS and was organised by the dedicated team at Community Employment Group

A message from their conference to our's is this - we (government) can do a lot to get communities using ICT, but we are too fragmented, which makes it very hard for those groups to find out what we can do for them. We must do our bit to close the digital divide through seamless front-end services and working with communities to get connected.

Panel members

The Buzzy Awards Judges Panel for 2003 was:

Brendan Kelly (EGU)

Ros Coote (EGU and GOVIS Management Committee)

Keith McLean (EGU, recently GCSB)

Nick Miller (NZDF and GOVIS Conference Committee)