

Case Study

Deriving Significant Improvement with Automating Vendor Registration



The Customer

Strategic Procurement is a division within the Internal Services Department of Miami Dade County. It is a combination of the former General Services Administration, the Department of Procurement Management and the Construction and Special Project functions of the Office of Capital Improvements.

The Procurement department at Miami-Dade County handles all the vendor registration, processing, advertisements, requisitions and awarding of bids to the registered vendors.

The Challenge

- Client was initially looking to automate their manual vendor registration process, further sync the vendor information with their finance and procurement mainframe systems and integrate with their in-house procurement management processes
- Future vision was to scale up the automation to include the Technical Certification and Pre-Qualification Certification that the vendors needed to renew every 2 and 1 year, respectively
- One of the challenge was designing a workflow that would integrate the physical bi-weekly technical certification meetings where the recorded decision making of the technical and pre-qualification certifications were taken
- Saving time and effort was one of the important goals, along with data security

About Cogent Infotech

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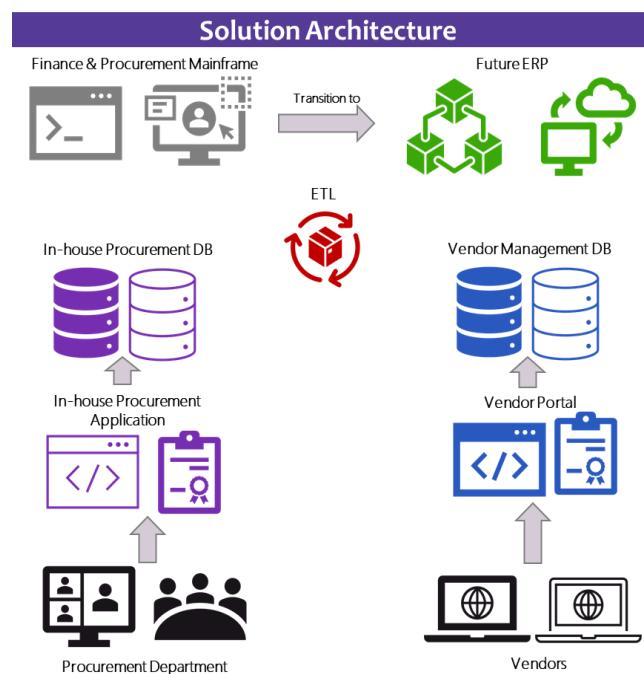
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The Process & Solution

- The solution was designed to provide a public facing vendor portal using responsive design targeting a range of devices
- An intuitive UI/UX for the vendor registration was designed keeping the process simple enough for the vendors to transition
- A Message Center was built within the portal for an effective communication between the vendor and procurement department at Miami-Dade County
- The portal would become a single point of reference for the vendors to view advertisements for their selected commodities, awarded contracts and maintained vendor information and certifications
- ETL processes were designed using SQL Server Integration Services to effectively sync data between multiple data sources across systems
- A robust and configurable workflow was designed to handle the bi-weekly technical certification meetings capturing every data element modification to facilitate enough information for audit purposes
- Notification processes were implemented to send out regular reminders to vendors regarding new advertisements, contract and certification renewals
- Modifications were made to the in-house procurement process to include processing of vendor registrations and other modules

Tech Stack

- ASP.NET C# MVC 5 & 6, Bootstrap 3, Telerik, Kendo UI, JQuery, WCF, TFS
- SQL Server 2014 and Oracle 11g
- SQL Server Integration Services (SSIS) and SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS)



The Impact

The project was delivered in 3 phases:

- Vendor Registration
- Technical Certification
- Pre-Qualification Certification

Outcome

- Turnaround time for a new vendor from creating a profile, providing required information to successfully register was reduced on an average from 3 weeks to just 3 business days.
- The bi-weekly certification meetings shortened from 2 days to just 2-3 hours, along with a significant saving on usage of paper
- The simple registration process and effective communication allowed more vendors to register, in turn improving competitive bidding for advertisements and generating huge savings for the county
- Miami-Dade County Vendor Portal has won prestigious awards at National Association of Counties (NACo) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) 3 years in a row
- Observing the amazing success and stability of the project, a major decision was taken during ERP planning to utilize the vendor portal as it stands. This decision was a significant cost saving for the county avoiding the customization expenses for the associated module in the ERP
- The scalable and configurable ETL processes to sync data between systems provided a smooth transition from mainframe to ERP



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