Pitney Bowes
Software

PUBLIC SECTOR CASE STUDY

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

"THE PITNEY BOWES SOFTWARE SOLUTION ENABLES A MUCH MORE STREAMLINED AND EFFICIENT APPROACH."

Terry Grosvenor-Jones, Broadband Systems and Support Manager, Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

THE SOLUTION FROM PITNEY BOWES SOFTWARE IMPROVED THE DEPARTMENT'S ABILITY TO MANAGE REGIONAL BROADBAND DEMAND.

Challenge

The Department needed a reliable and efficient system capable of managing information flows relevant to customers and service providers participating in the Australian Broadband Guarantee program.

Solution

The Department commissioned Pitney Bowes Software to provide an automated web self-service system capable of providing 24-hour access for individuals wanting to learn about providers in their area and to determine their eligibility for subsidised satellite broadband access.

SUMMARY

The Australia Government Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy has enhanced the management of the Australian Broadband Guarantee program for Australians who are unable to access a metro-comparable broadband service with a location intelligence solution based on Pitney Bowes Software (PBS) technology.

Not only does the custom-designed PBS solution enable customers to identify broadband providers in their area, but if no access is available, they can register online to request subsidised access to broadband.

The solution has significantly improved the Department's ability to administer this carefully targeted program.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Department administers the $270million Australian Broadband Guarantee initiative aimed at supporting equitable access to high quality, sustainable broadband services across Australia. The program provides registered Internet service providers with incentive payments to supply higher bandwidth services at prices comparable to those broadly available in metropolitan areas.

THE SITUATION

The challenge facing the Department is to target payments to those premises without metro-comparable broadband access. To assist these customers and the service providers participating in the Australian Broadband Guarantee, the Department needed a reliable and efficient system capable of managing information flows relevant to both audiences.

In addition to a telephone-based call centre, the Department sought an automated web self-service system capable of providing 24-hour access for individuals wanting to learn about providers in their area and to determine their eligibility for subsidised broadband access.

The online solution had to be capable of:

- tracking requests for broadband access across the community

- connecting customers with potential suppliers

- verifying the geographic allocation, associated technical issues and eligibility of each case for subsidised access

- managing each case to a successful outcome, and;

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

- providing a validation process to probe the integrity of each claim to ensure the department could accurately report on the outcome of each case and account for the allocation of millions of dollars in taxpayer funds.

"Because of the need to map the location of each customer as well as the network coverage of existing service providers, a spatial solution was necessary. The Department has used Pitney Bowes Software software and data products since 2001 and was well aware of its capabilities, so it was a natural extension when we starting exploring ways to augment our existing technology," the Department's Broadband Systems and Support Manager, Terry Grosvenor-Jones, said.
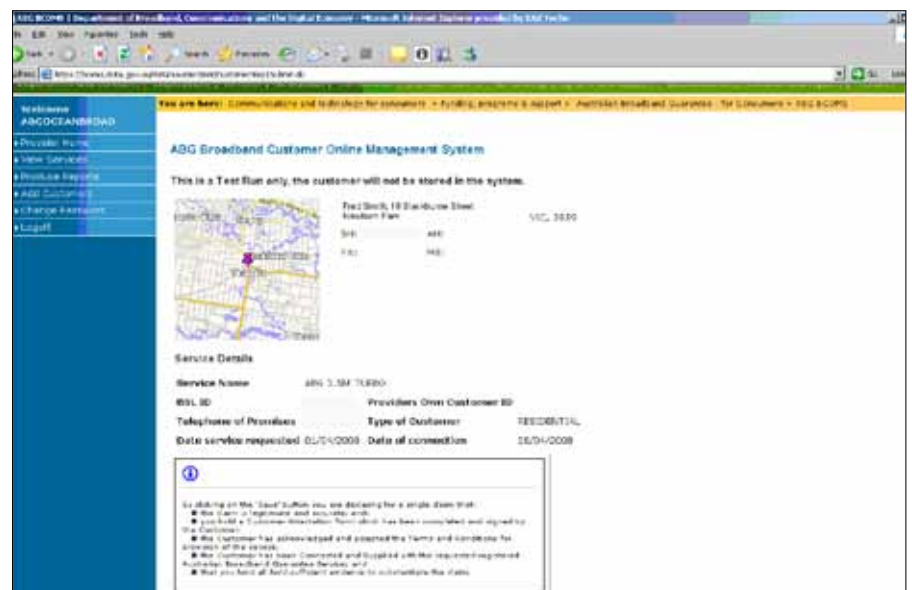
The Department commissioned Pitney Bowes Software to develop a tailored solution consisting of MapInfo Professional, GNAF (Geocoded National Address File) and Pitney Bowes Software's location intelligence platform – Envinsa.

Now known as the Broadband Customer Online Management System (BCOMS), it uses Envinsa to extend MapInfo Professional's spatial intelligence capabilities to the web and enable customers to interrogate the data via a standard browser through a facility called the Broadband Service Locator.

By entering their address details, visitors to the site can confirm their location on a map, identify service providers in their area or, if no service is available, they can apply for subsidised access.

The integrated solution relies on GNAF as the authoritative source of spatial address data for Australia's 11.5 million addresses. This product combines information from local, state and Commonwealth agencies, validating against spatial data from public sector mapping agencies, which complements the street level

ABG website showing validated address and address location for customers   .

address data provided through Envinsa. Envinsa is an SOA-compliant platform of location capabilities delivered through Web Services.

The other side of the equation is the spatial data layers representing coverage areas for individual service providers. The Department uses this data to build a list of service providers who indicate via this coverage area data that service should be available to a given address.

BCOMS also processes claims data, taking XML-based data from registered service providers about customers for whom they are claiming subsidies, geocoding the addressing information to validate eligibility and then either accepting, rejecting or querying the claim.

The Pitney Bowes Software-based BCOM system gives the Department a powerful platform to manage and automate its allocation of incentive payments to deliver metro-comparable broadband to users in the bush. The integrated solution ensures a high level of rigour and integrity in both the data and the process, which is essential for a Government department responsible for handing out millions in payments each year.

"This system validates the eligibility of anyone who cannot access a defined standard of broadband service under existing commercial arrangements for a subsidised government service," said Mr Grosvenor-Jones.

"The Pitney Bowes Software solution enables a much more streamlined and efficient approach, with most claims processed automatically at the time they are lodged, thanks to the use of real-time geocoding and spatial comparison to validate claims."

ABG page enabling customers to check program eligibility.

"BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO MAP THE LOCATION OF EACH CUSTOMER AS WELL AS THE NETWORK COVERAGE OF EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDERS, A SPATIAL SOLUTION WAS NECESSARY."

Terry Grosvenor-Jones, Broadband Systems and Support Manager, Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

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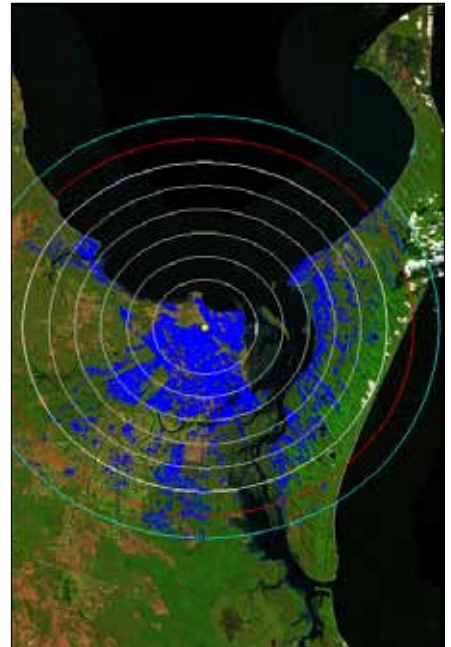United Kingdom

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Mr Grosvenor-Jones said address validation and location confirmation is a key feature of the process.

"Customers claimed by providers must be within their registered service area and must not already have access to a metro-comparable broadband service. Registered service providers supply the Department with geospatial information about their claimed coverage areas and the Department has access to a range of commercial service provider coverage data. The address and location validation allows us to inform the customer of potential metro-comparable services in their area through the Broadband Service Locator and to validate the claim of a registered service provider through BCOMS."

NEXT STEPS

Mr Grosvenor-Jones said the Department is currently exploring other opportunities to apply the solution developed by Pitney Bowes Software and increase the return from its on-going investment in this technology.

"We are considering using the platform to deliver a web-based mapping facility to enable users to view information about broadband services available in their local area, albeit in a different form from that available on the boradband locator. We are also examining the possibilities of linking the system to other departmental systems to improve efficiency by avoiding having to manually develop and maintain spreadsheets," he said.

Map showing wireless broadband coverage generated using Pitney Bowes Software's Location Intelligence solutions.

THE PITNEY BOWES SOFTWARE ADVANTAGE

The Broadband Customer Online Management System (BCOMS), which uses Envinsa to extend MapInfo Professional's spatial intelligence capabilities to the web, has given the Department a powerful platform to manage and automate its allocation of incentives to deliver metro-comparable broadband to users across Australia.

Every connection is a new opportunity™