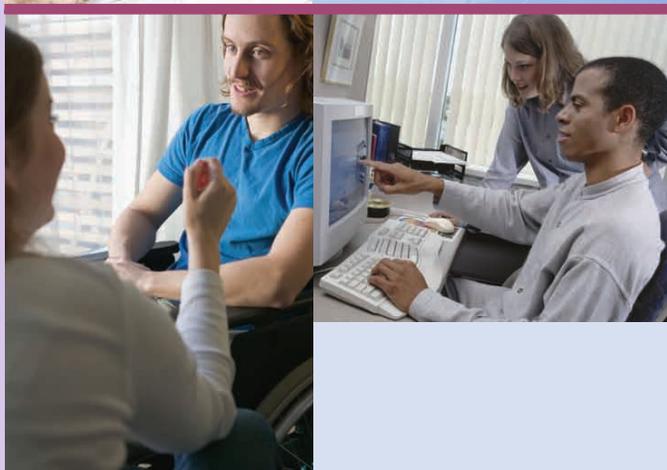




Business Technology Strategic Plan

2008-2012



*Technology
planning for better
human services*



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Executive summary

The first DHS Strategic Plan for Information Technology was created in 2004. That plan identified strategies related to outcomes in the areas of:

Alignment – with business objectives, and with relevant county, state and federal initiatives

Maturity – of processes, with clear governance and priority-setting policies and procedures.

Customer Focus – to enable improved outcomes for clients, users, partners, etc.

Work force Management – to support skilled staff and users in a coordinated manner.

This new strategic plan for business technology covers the period 2008 through 2012. The plan presents the business technology mission, vision and goals for DHS information technology and outlines proposed strategies and action programs to accomplish the goals.

Goal 1 Service delivery: *Make it easier to deliver quality human services.*

Strategies for Goal 1:

- Provide access to services anytime from anywhere.
- Simplify and integrate service delivery and operational processes and legacy systems for all workers to make them:
 - Easier to use
 - More integrated
 - More person-centered.
- Provide tools and data required to improve client outcomes, ensure equity of access and manage performance as part of a quality management system.
- Promote innovation to provide appropriate technology tools.
- Protect systems and data, while maintaining confidentiality, data integrity, and appropriate access.
- Plan to avoid, and quickly and effectively respond to, business interruptions.

Goal 2 Governance: *Ensure that technology resources are applied to those projects that will meet business goals.*

Strategies for Goal 2:

- Establish and maintain effective, data-driven IT decision processes.

- Align funding with business goals.
- Develop, monitor and report on project performance metrics.

Goal 3 **Work force:** *Develop and support a work force to maximize technology benefits.*

Strategies for Goal 3:

- Recruit, develop and retain technology-competent and innovative staff.
- Provide effective and timely training to developers and users of technology.
- Encourage and support a mobile work force.

Goal 4 **Operations:** *Make it easier to manage processes and support people.*

Strategies for Goal 4:

- Improve communications regarding business processes and the technologies that support them.
- Use technology to improve business efficiencies.

Action steps will be undertaken to:

1. Maintain strategic momentum by identifying and building on strategic projects already under way that align with the strategies.
2. Determine if current projects meet the strategic goals and help achieve DHS priorities.
3. Identify and prioritize projects needed to fill in strategic gaps not addressed by strategic projects already under way.
4. Identify outcome measures for the prioritized proposed projects so that progress toward strategic goals can be assessed.

Staying on course

This plan will be reviewed at least annually.

A message from the DHS CIO

I am pleased to present the updated strategic plan for DHS technology for the period 2008 – 2012.

This plan is the product of a collaborative effort that includes input from many of our partners and stakeholders. In addition, DHS staff provided their perspectives and guidance on technology needs and issues. Using this input, representatives from each DHS administration worked together to develop the plan. They will continue working together, under the guidance of the Information Technology Leadership Council, to implement, monitor and refine the plan going forward. I want to express my thanks to everyone who participated in creating this critical document that will serve the department well into the future.

The plan provides a strategic roadmap. It will drive the continued development of DHS technology to support and enhance business objectives. While having a plan is valuable, ongoing coordination and collaboration within information technology, and between business and technology, is essential to achieving our objectives. We can take pride in a number of accomplishments to date, but we all know there are current and future challenges. Working together, we will transform those challenges into success stories.

Johanna M. Berg

DHS CIO

Mission

DHS business technology exists to support and enhance the successful delivery of human services.

Vision

High-quality, innovative technology will be appropriately utilized to accommodate and enhance the holistic and integrated delivery of effective services, in partnership with others.



To accomplish our mission, we will enable all of our customers and partners to seamlessly conduct business with DHS, and we will ensure that our employees will have easy-to-use and up-to-date tools.

Secure and efficient electronic systems will allow for:

- Conducting business from remote locations at any time of the day
- Access to timely, accurate, and protected information and data
- Collaboration across business areas
- Customer feedback to enhance our responsiveness
- Information to shape our decisions and promote fiscally responsible planning.

Business drivers

The DHS Executive Team has identified the following business drivers:

Driver 1

Make it easier to deliver quality human services.

DHS is committed to working with our public and private partners to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery across business areas.

Among the initiatives and tools currently being employed to accomplish this are joint public and private ventures such as value and information exchanges.

This will require modification of internal DHS structures and processes, including standardization across systems, more efficient business methods, infrastructure changes, integration of applications and quality tracking procedures.

Driver 2

Make it easier to do business internally.

Making it easier to deliver quality human services, as outlined in Driver 1, requires a proficient and harmonized support infrastructure. Internal communications, collaborations and management will need to keep pace with quality service delivery needs. This can be accomplished with technology such as desktop collaboration tools, and data and information archiving and retrieval abilities.

Corresponding procedural changes will be needed that allow for integrated business management and more efficient business processes.

Driver 3

Resource constraints (e.g., financial, skill sets).

Drivers 1 and 2 need to be accomplished within the familiar constraint of limited resources. Strict budgetary diets are likely into the foreseeable future. At the same time, aging and generational differences are creating a changing work force. The pending retirement of many “baby boomers” complicates this change. In this environment, we will need to have in place processes that allow for the allocation of resources to areas that deliver maximum value.

Among the considerations and choices are whether to create the technology we need or purchase an off-the-shelf version, and whether we should perform all work in-house or by contracting. Some choices can be further broken down — for example, if we contract, should it be for discrete skills only?

DHS priorities: 2008-2009

In August 2007, Senior Management Team established six biennial agency priorities. The priorities help guide agencywide strategic planning efforts, including legislative proposal development, fiscal resources, project support and information technology development support. The six priorities are to:

- Provide integrated services to at-risk adults who are without children and struggling to meet their basic needs.

At-risk adults who are without children and struggling to meet their basic needs will receive a seamless continuum of financial, employment, health care, housing, social service and other supports from the department and its partners. With these integrated services, a growing proportion of these at-risk adults will live in stable housing, access health care and needed social services, work and achieve the greatest level of independence possible.



- Improve outcomes for the most at-risk children.

Working with others, the department will provide early and targeted services to the children in Minnesota who are at the greatest risk for poor outcomes, including those who are homeless, disabled, teenage parents, in child protection or in deep or persistent poverty. By identifying these at-risk children, building partnerships and service networks, and implementing targeted, coordinated and integrated services, children's lives will improve. They will also be better prepared for a healthy and productive adulthood.

- Reduce disparities in service access and outcomes for racial and ethnic populations.

The department will identify disparities in service access and outcomes, set goals, and implement targeted and coordinated strategies. Consequently, disparities among the state's racial and ethnic groups will decline. Across all department programs, recipients from all racial and ethnic groups should have an equal opportunity to achieve successful outcomes.

- Use the state's participation in the health care market to improve health care quality, access, outcomes and affordability for all Minnesotans.

For the health care and nursing home services that it purchases, the department will improve price and quality transparency, encourage the use of evidence-based care and use the payment system to encourage quality and efficiency. In addition, providers and consumers will have the incentives and knowledge to respectively provide and receive the right type of care, in the right setting, at the right time and at the right price. Quality, access, outcomes and affordability will improve across the health care system.

- Develop effective and accountable mental and chemical health systems.

The department will encourage and support research-informed practices and treatments, systematically monitor outcomes and expand the use of successful treatment models. As a result, Minnesota adults and children with a mental health or chemical dependency diagnosis will experience improving outcomes. A growing proportion of adults will function in the community, live independently and work. A growing proportion of children will function at their best in school and at home, stay out of the juvenile justice system and graduate from high school.

- Improve home and community-based services for the elderly and people with disabilities by establishing and using performance measures and standards.

The department will improve the performance data it collects for home and community-based services so that consumers and government can make more informed purchasing decisions. As a result, services will be more efficient, effective and appropriate in meeting the needs of consumers.



Goals

Information technology is key to successful performance for DHS processes, people and partners. In the past, a wide array of technical tools and methods has been developed and implemented to support delivery of human services across Minnesota. Today, the demands for cost-effectiveness, accountability, quality and reliability are growing. To understand the current situation and requirements for change, the planning team and its various stakeholders considered the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of current business technology. That data, along with the identified business directions, informed the definition of goals, strategies and projects for this plan.

Goal 1 Service delivery:

Make it easier to deliver quality human services.

Today, DHS business drivers and department priorities focus on ease of delivery, improvement in access and affordability and equity of outcomes. The goal across business areas is to improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, working with our public and private partners.



Goal 2 Governance:

Ensure that technology resources are applied to those projects that will meet business goals.

Up-to-date and reliable information about performance, return on investment and innovative options can inform decision making to leverage investments in technology. Progress on the business priorities will be tracked using detailed outcome measures. Technology can help collect, store and report key measurement data to support this tracking.



Goal 3 Work force:

Develop and support a work force to maximize technology benefits.



Aging and generational differences are creating a changing work force.

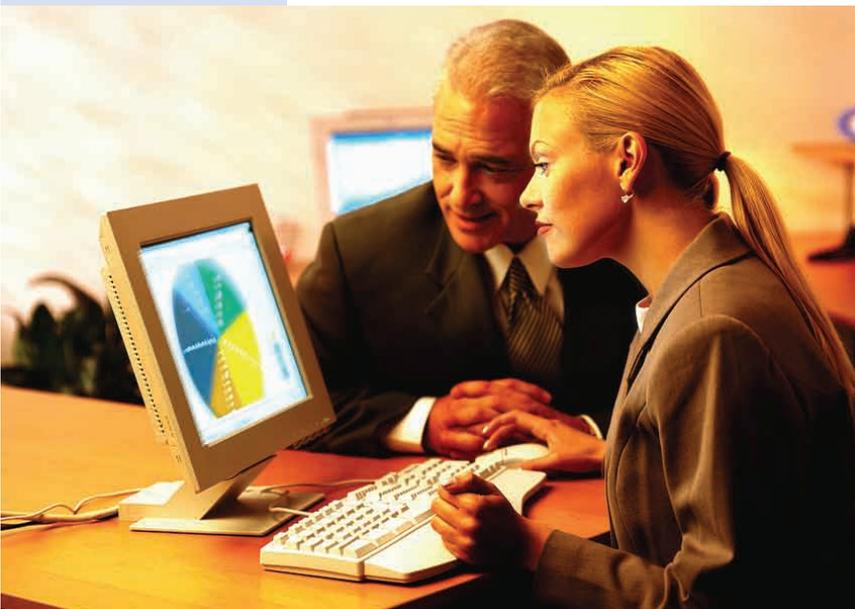
This goal and its associated strategies focus on developing and maintaining the technology capacity of the DHS work force into the future.

Goal 4 Operations:

Make it easier to manage processes and support people.

Quality, integrated and effective service delivery depends on an efficient and coordinated support infrastructure.

This goal and its associated strategies demonstrate how technology will improve internal communications, collaborations and management



Strategies

Strategies will be pursued to meet the four goals to address the department's business drivers and implement its priorities within the reasonable scope of DHS and its information technologies.

The following pages describe each goal in greater depth, identify action-oriented strategies to reach these goals, identify current and proposed projects to implement the strategies and propose action steps to define metrics that will assess performance against the plan.

Goals

Strategies

Goal 1. Service Delivery:

Make it easier to deliver quality human services

- I. Provide access to services anytime from anywhere.
- II. Simplify and integrate service delivery and operational processes and legacy systems for all workers to make them:
 - Easier to use
 - More integrated
 - More person-centered.
- III. Provide tools and data required to improve client outcomes, ensure equity of access and manage performance as part of a quality management system.
- IV. Promote innovation to provide appropriate technology tools.
- V. Protect systems and data, while maintaining confidentiality, data integrity and appropriate access.
- VI. Plan to avoid, and quickly and effectively respond to, business interruptions.

Goal 2. Governance:

Ensure that technology resources are applied to those projects that will meet business goals

- I. Establish and maintain effective, data-driven IT decision processes.
- II. Align IT funding with business goals.
- III. Develop, monitor and report on project performance metrics.

Goal 3. Work force:

Develop and support a work force to maximize technology benefits.

- I. Recruit, develop and retain technology-competent and innovative staff.
- II. Provide effective and timely training to developers and users of technology.
- III. Encourage and support a mobile work force.

Goal 4. Operations:

Make it easier to manage processes and support people.

- I. Improve communications regarding business processes and the technologies that support them.
- II. Use technology to improve business efficiencies.

Action steps

The strategies will be implemented using the following action steps:

Action Step 1

Maintain strategic momentum by identifying and building on strategic projects already under way that align with the strategies.

Action Step 2

Determine if the current projects meet the strategic goals and help achieve DHS priorities.

Action Step 3

Identify and prioritize projects needed to fill in strategic gaps not addressed by strategic projects already under way.

Action Step 4

For the prioritized proposed projects, identify outcome measures so that progress toward strategic goals can be assessed.



Implementation principles

The following principles will guide implementation of strategic technology during the life of this plan:

Technology principles

Share knowledge, skills and approaches:

We emphasize integration, synergies and efficiencies through cooperation between our own staff, and collaboration with our partners and other entities. We encourage meeting objectives through the re-use or adaptation of proven, existing technologies in the department when possible.

Integrate technology into business planning:

Customer satisfaction is our primary measure of success. We also aim to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness while minimizing risk. To accomplish all of these objectives, we will plan our work so that technology capabilities are known and used to their fullest advantage.

Maintain appropriate resource knowledge and skills:

Our staff is our most important asset. We will provide staff with information and training so that they can perform their work well. We will also allow and encourage opportunities for professional and personal staff development.

DHS principles

Focus on clients:

Our focus is to provide core services to Minnesota's most vulnerable people. We will constantly update and improve our services in response to client and stakeholder input. This includes communicating clearly with clients, our partners and with our own staff. It also includes better managing our relationships with our partners — counties, tribes and nonprofits — with a focus on the people we serve.

Simplify services:

DHS administers some of the most complex programs in state government — public health care eligibility, child support collections, grants administration and long-term care financing. We will strive to minimize unnecessary red tape surrounding these complicated programs, operating them in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. We will absorb complex administrative tasks internally so that services are as intuitive and easy-to-understand for our clients and partners as possible.

Manage for results:

The most effective way to ensure that Minnesotans across the state receive health and social services when they need them is to manage for results. This requires that we identify our priorities, continuously monitor our performance and build strong program integrity features into each of our activities. All DHS programs will define challenging benchmarks, measure results and use outcomes to guide decisions and direct the agency's work.

This will allow us to determine our successes and failures, to assess the need to make changes in our programs, to better manage and target additional resources and to celebrate our successes.

Improvement by innovation:

The everyday circumstances of DHS' clients are constantly changing, as are the administrative tools available to DHS to provide services to them. E-mail, privacy laws and access to the Internet have revolutionized how we provide services. DHS will embrace technology, new ideas, e-government and privatization as tools that can improve how we do our work. We must look at how we serve our clients and identify how we can improve this service. Then we must make the systemic changes needed to implement innovations to better serve our clients.

Equity in access and outcomes:

DHS provides services to people from many races, backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures and regions of the state and many disparities exist among groups. Those disparities are unacceptable. When these disparities are a result of administrative policies and practices it is our duty to correct those practices. When the disparities are the result of outside factors over which we have influence we must work with others to change those outside factors.

Governance

IT Governance is the process by which decisions are made around IT investments. How decisions are made and who makes the decisions, who is held accountable and how the results of decisions are monitored and measured are all parts of IT Governance.

Projects currently under way, along with those initiated by this plan and those initiated outside the plan, will be reviewed through DHS IT governance structures and processes.

DHS IT Governance structures include:

- **DHS business areas' governance groups**

These administration governance groups make decisions and recommend investment choices among portfolio candidates covering programs and data systems within the specific administration. Input into the governance group comes from internal DHS staff and external stakeholders, such as counties, tribes and formal advisory committees.

- **DHS Executive Team**

The commissioner authorizes this team as the governing body of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Its purpose is to guide the agency's strategic direction and the department's use of resources. The team's IT-related activities include:

- Set overall IT strategies and directions.
- Review and approve information technology budgets.
- Review and approve IT investments, projects and prioritization.

- **DHS IT Leadership Council (ITLC)**

This team provides IT oversight and direction for the Department of Human Service. Its purpose is to oversee the department's IT priorities, to provide high-level management of those priorities, and to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to DHS IT, in alignment with the agency's strategic direction. This team is an information-sharing body and serves in an advisory capacity to the CIO and to the Executive Team on IT-related issues.

- **DHS Senior Management Team**

The Executive Team authorizes this team to create and monitor the strategic plan for the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Its purpose is to provide senior managers with a global view of the agency's activities and to supervise projects linked to the department's priorities. The Senior Management Team delegates to the chief information officer the approval authority for chartering the ITLC.

- **Project Portfolio Management (PPM)**

PPM is a framework for looking at new projects and weighing them against business drivers and projects already in the portfolio. PPM will also provide the ability to determine return on investment when making technology decisions.

Business area governance groups will evaluate proposed projects against established selection criteria to determine if the projects should be included in the DHS project portfolio. Projects meeting the criteria will be forwarded to the ITLC for review and to the Executive Team for final approval.

Related materials

The following materials were generated during the development of this strategic plan:

- DHS technology strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges
As identified by DHS internal and external stakeholders.
- Current strategic projects and initiatives
Identified strategic projects already under way.
- Proposed projects
Potential strategic projects.
- Governance structure and processes: flowchart
A graphical view of DHS technology governance.
- County technology survey summary
The county survey was conducted in the spring of 2007.
- Internal stakeholders survey — Executive Summary
- Internal stakeholders survey — Report of findings
The internal survey was conducted in the fall of 2007.
- Other agency survey — Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Other agency survey — Minnesota Department of Public Safety (Driver and Vehicle Services)
- Other agency survey — Minnesota Department of Finance
- Other agency survey — Minnesota Department of Revenue
The other agency surveys were conducted in the fall of 2007.

The materials are available from the contact listed below.

Contact

For further information about this plan, please contact:

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Core strategizing team members

Technology strategic plan core strategizing team

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Glenda Eoyang	Facilitator

Glossary

Action step	An activity to be undertaken so that a strategy can be implemented.
Business drivers	The people, knowledge, and conditions needed or desired to initiate and support DHS services delivery activities.
Goal	A long-term organizational target.
Governance	The development and management of consistent, cohesive policies, processes and decision rights for a given area of responsibility.
Metric	A way of objectively assessing the results of programs, products, projects or services.
Mission	Organizational purpose (why IT exists).
Objective	A measurable target that must be met to attain a goal.
Principle	A basis of conduct or management for application in action.
Stakeholder	Any person, group or organization that can place a claim on an organization's attention, resources or output, or that is affected by that output.
Strategic planning	A disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what IT is, what it does and why it does it.
Strategy	The means by which a goal or objective is accomplished (how).
Vision	A brief description of what IT will look like.

