



Objective

Drive new value from a long-term mainframe outsource agreement

Approach

Incorporate hardware upgrades and improved DR technology into a renewed contract, ensuring ongoing capacity and performance improvements while keeping IT budgets stable and predictable

IT Matters

- Application response times cut by 97%, improving employee productivity and quality of service
- DR restoration times reduced from over 24 hours to around 2, an improvement of over 90%, reducing risk of disruption of government services

Business Matters

- State able to avoid a \$3.1 million capital expense by funding mainframe upgrade via services contract
- Because hardware upgrades are folded into operational budget, IT costs are more stable and predictable
- Strategic management enables the State to adopt change without exposure to unacceptable levels of risk

Outsourcing still pays for Government of South Australia

Over twenty years after turning over its mainframe to DXC, the State continues to benefit from its outsourcing strategy

Some two decades ago, the Government of South Australia made a strategic decision to outsource the management of its mainframe computing platform. Today, that outsourcing arrangement continues to drive value and cost-savings, helping ensure that the critical applications hosted in the State’s mainframe environment meet its exacting standards for performance and reliability.

“We are happy to evolve, but we do so in very judicious and prudent ways and Hewlett Packard Enterprise (now DXC) understands that. When we work together to plan technical improvements, they’re careful to avoid exposing us to unacceptable levels of risk.”

– Rob Giacomini, Hosting Service Manager, Government of South Australia

As one of six state governments in Australia, the Government of South Australia serves around 1.6 million Australian citizens. The responsibilities of its 84,000 staff members include running basic legislative, executive, and judicial functions, and establishing policies and procedures that allow State employees to respond to citizens’ needs and requests. While the Government’s services must be effective, they must also be cost-efficient—which is why the State partners with DXC Technology to manage its Compute environments.

applications, as are applications for administering social services.

“Our mainframe platform is well-established and we use it extensively,” notes Rob Giacomini, Hosting Service Manager, Government of South Australia. “Should anything disrupt it, we could face widespread interruption of government services. Some elements of our supplier network and wider community would be impacted fairly quickly.”

Outsourcing to reduce complexity, gain economies of scale

The South Australian Government first outsourced its mainframe environment to DXC in 1994 as part of a broader government strategy to drive IT efficiency and cost-savings.

“We chose to outsource because it doesn’t make sense to divert internal resources into keeping up with the hardware side of the IT business,” Giacomini explains. “We also benefit from economies of scale that a larger supplier can provide.”

Mainframe environment: well-established and business-critical

Many of the business-critical applications that run on the Government of South Australia’s mainframe handle “back office” processes: applications that the State’s departments and agencies use to maintain their ledgers and pay suppliers. Other applications are essential to the State’s frontline employees’ ability to effectively serve the public. The State’s firearms licensing system is a mainframe application, for example, and law enforcement officials must be able to access the application’s data in a timely fashion to do their jobs. A number of the State’s education sector systems are also mainframe

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One of the primary benefits the State realised in the early years of its DXC partnership was a reduction in infrastructure complexity. Before the outsourcing contract, various State department and agencies owned their own mainframe computers. DXC consolidated these onto a single, central mainframe environment. The central platform made better use of the South Australian Government’s resources in the aggregate, by providing a central pool of mainframe capacity that departments and agencies can use as needed.

DXC also worked with the State’s 16 departments and 84 agencies to rationalise their software portfolios, identifying opportunities to migrate processes onto common tools and utilities wherever possible.

Finally, the outsourcing contract included provisions to ensure that should the State’s needs grow, DXC will increase the mainframe’s capacity. “We have performance- and capacity-driven triggers built into the arrangement,” Giacomini notes. “It helps us manage our growth in a more disciplined and predictable way.”

The original outsourcing agreement worked so well, in fact, that when it approached the conclusion of its term, the State happily renewed it—a confirmation of the agreement’s value and of the mutual trust that has evolved between the Government of South Australia and DXC.

Hardware upgrade reduces application response times by 97%

As with the original agreement, the new outsourcing arrangement follows a platform- as-a-service approach. The Government of South Australia manages the application layer, while DXC handles the infrastructure and operating system licences and provides centralised Computing Services. The renewed contract also marked the start of a number of initiatives that further enhanced the value provided by DXC.

First, DXC upgraded the Government of South Australia’s mainframe system. The upgrade added capacity to accommodate the State’s growing need for IT-based services (its transaction volumes have increased tenfold since it first outsourced its mainframe to DXC). It also enhanced the mainframe hardware’s performance, cutting application response times by up to 97%. This, in turn, enhances employee productivity and the quality of service employees provide to the public.

Because the upgrade’s cost is covered by the services contract, the State was able to avoid a \$3.1 million capital expense. This helps keep the State’s costs more constant and predictable—a critical consideration for any public sector organisation.

Customer at a glance

DXC services

- Managed Mainframe Services
- Storage Management Services
- Continuity Services

“With HPE (now DXC), the critical services supported by our mainframe are protected by a partner that is consistent, reliable, and stable.”

– Rob Giacomini, Hosting Service Manager, Government of South Australia

Disk-based DR cuts restoration time to two hours

DXC also implemented a new disaster recovery (DR) programme. Previously, the State’s DR was managed by backing up its mainframe to tape. In the event that a restoration was required, data was retrieved from the tapes at an off-site storage location, a process that generally took over 24 hours.

DXC replaced the old approach by implementing a modern DXC disk array solution that replicates the Government’s production environment to a remote DXC data centre.

With this new solution, the DR system can be made available for production workloads in about two hours.

Speeding up recovery times has an obvious advantage: it helps protect the State from the risk that hardware outages will disrupt government services. Faster restoration times provide other benefits as well, however. “The reduced lag time gives us more flexibility,” says Giacomini. “Before, we were more hesitant to switch production over to our DR environment. Now, we’re more comfortable with it. As a result, we can take advantage of that environment any time we need to take our primary environment off-line.”

Gaining this kind of flexibility is important to the Government of South Australia, particularly given the State’s culture: as a public sector organisation, it places a high value on stability. “We are happy to evolve,” Giacomini notes, “but we do so in very judicious and prudent ways and HPE (now DXC) understands that. When we work together to plan technical improvements, they’re careful to avoid exposing us to unacceptable levels of risk.

“We have a great degree of confidence in DXC’s technical capabilities,” Giacomini concludes. “But we also value DXC as a strategic partner, because they’ve proven to be so consistent and reliable. Their stewardship of our mainframe service is rock solid, and we’re very pleased that we’ll be partnering with DXC into the foreseeable future.”

Learn more at
www.dxc.technology/cloud

About DXC

DXC Technology (NYSE: DXC) is the world’s leading independent, end-to-end IT services company, helping clients harness the power of innovation to thrive on change. Created by the merger of CSC and the Enterprise Services business of Hewlett Packard Enterprise, DXC Technology serves nearly 6,000 private and public sector clients across 70 countries. The company’s technology independence, global talent and extensive partner alliance combine to deliver powerful next-generation IT services and solutions. DXC Technology is recognized among the best corporate citizens globally. For more information, visit www.dxc.technology