

People First News

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Governor Jeb Bush

The Human Resource Outsourcing Project Gets a New Name, and a Mission

After months of planning and preparation, the Human Resource Outsourcing Project officially launched on August 21st, 2002 with the signing of a contract between the State of Florida and Convergys, the leading global provider of employee care, integrated billing and customer care services. Just

a month later, the project adopted its permanent name, "People First," following a naming competition held at the annual Expo in Tampa. "We wanted State employees to put their stamp on this," said Cynthia Henderson, former Secretary of the Department of Management Services. "Of all the names submitted, we felt that People First embodies what this effort is all about – State employees."

People First, which is an integral part of Governor Bush's Service First initiative, remains one of the highest priorities for the State of Florida, in large part due to the

benefits it will bring to each State employee. "People First will touch every State employee," said Cynthia Henderson. "The idea is to take best practices from the private sector and apply them to the State of Florida. This really is a first. Many other U.S. states already have expressed interest in what Governor Bush has started."

The People First project team, which is comprised of key leaders from the Department of Management Services, subject matter

experts from State Agencies and external consultancies, and employee care specialists from Convergys, were quick to establish the People First mission, "Building world class people care and people development programs for excellence in public service." Fran Brooks, Project Director for the State, commented: "We have a unified mission, and our efforts are completely aligned."

"Building World Class People Care and People Development Programs for Excellence in Public Service"

People First is about giving State employees world class people care and people development programs. They deserve the best, and every member of the project team is committed to that outcome." ■



Good People, Bad Systems, and a Recipe for Change

Making the case for People First was no small challenge given the project's size and scope, but when key State leaders listened, one phrase consistently had their heads nodding – "We have good people trapped in bad systems." This phrase, unlike any other, seemed to tap into the growing frustration that State employees felt when discussing some of the State's outdated information technology

systems. A change, everyone agreed, was imminent.

Under the guidance of Governor Bush and his staff, the Department of Management Services analyzed whether the State should purchase new systems, or outsource certain "transactional tasks" to eliminate the need for periodic – and costly – system updates. For

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example, systems such as COPEs are nearly 20 years old and not integrated with other State systems, making it difficult for employees to complete simple tasks efficiently. The decision proved easy to make. "We wanted to get out of the cycle of having to update our systems every few years," said Fran Brooks. "By partnering with a world-class organization like Convergys,



Fran Brooks, Project Director for People First and Ed Rodriguez, Deputy Secretary, Department of Management Services and Program Manager for People First

"We already have the abilities and the passion, and People First delivers the means."

the State will save an estimated \$173 million over seven years, which Governor Bush can reallocate to important priorities such as education."

Perhaps most integral to People First is the way it will affect State employees. "The days of the paper trail are numbered," said Fran Brooks. "People First will

provide each State employee with real-time, electronic access to their own information. If employees need to change their home

address, they will be able to log on and do it in a matter of seconds. Finding the answers to benefits questions will be as simple as going online, any time of the day, any day of the week. And the best part is that dedicated Convergys employee care specialists will be on hand, just a phone call away, to provide assistance if employees need it."

In addition to making it easier for State employees to manage their human resource information, People First will transform the State's human resource organization (formerly known as personnel). By outsourcing the "transactional" – or least strategic – tasks in areas such as recruitment, payroll, human resource administration and benefits, the human resource organization will be able to focus on the "transformational" – or most strategic – processes such as performance management, policy development and change management. "People First will enable us to develop a high-performance human resource organization," said Ed Rodriguez, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Management Services and Program Manager for People First. "We already have the abilities and the passion, and People First delivers the means. The cultural shift will be very exciting to watch."

The Convergys Factor - World-Class Results in Real Time

When the State of Florida went looking for a partner to help design and implement People First, Convergys quickly emerged as the perfect fit. With over 40,000 employees and \$2.3 billion in revenue for 2001, Convergys' record as the leading global provider of employee care, integrated billing and customer care services seemed well suited for a project as challenging as People First. And Convergys' roster of Fortune 500 clients, which includes companies such as General Electric, AT&T, Pfizer, Marriott, and Ritz-Carlton, was even stronger evidence that the State of Florida would be in good hands. All that remained was the formation of a new relationship, and a contract signing, to launch what many in the United States and Europe see as a groundbreaking step for the public sector.

"We are extremely honored to have been selected," said Chris Emerick, Vice President of Convergys' Employee Care Operations and Program Manager for People First. "From the very beginning, it was clear to us that the State of Florida had a very ambitious yet sensible vision. To witness that kind of vision in the public sector was inspiring, and we knew that we could match the State's vision with our experience and results."

Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, Convergys Corporation boasts over 40 contact centers and 3 data centers worldwide – with some of those centers conveniently located in Florida (including their Employee Care Operations). For each of its current clients, Convergys dedicates a team of employees who are specially trained to understand their respective

client's policies and procedures. Indeed, Convergys even encourages its teams to adopt their particular client's cultural attributes, whether it be through the hanging of client posters or the use of client mouse pads. "Walking through a Convergys contact center is like taking a tour of different client cultures," said Chris Emerick. "The Ritz-Carlton HR service center, for example, looks the same as you would find inside Ritz-Carlton's own offices. We take pride in that fact. Our clients and their employees deserve uniquely tailored HR service, and we deliver it."

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But delivering high quality human resource services is not as easy as it may sound. Long before a project ever "goes live," Convergys must address a series of questions that will define what kind of services it will offer, and more importantly, how employees will access them. Will employees access information via the web, over telephone lines, through email – or perhaps through a combination of these channels? And when employees access their

information, what tools will be available to make navigation easy and effective? "The access points need to make the employee experience enjoyable," said Chris Emerick. "Accessibility to information is critical, and our teams are very passionate about providing the highest level of service and maximizing the employee experience on every interaction."

So where is all of this information stored? In Convergys' world class data centers, which are up and running twenty four hours a day, every day of the year. With customers as large as General

Electric and Pfizer, managing the mountains of employee data requires a lot of experience, not to mention a lot of hardware. "Our data centers make it all possible," said Chris Emerick. "The security measures we take – and the business continuity planning – are where we really excel. You can't have systems down when employees need to access their benefits information. Our track record in this area is second to none." ■

Implementing People First, One Step at a Time

The timeline for implementing People First, which is critical to the State's contract with Convergys (posted on MyFlorida.com), contains a number of "go live" dates indicating when certain outsourced services will be ready for use by State employees. In May 2003, for example, Convergys will activate the staffing services that the State has outsourced. In June 2003, Convergys will activate the outsourced payroll and human resource administration services. And in January 2004, the outsourced benefits services will go live. To access these services, State employees will need to log on to the State's new web-enabled portal, at which point they will be able to navigate to their desired information.

But for the People First project team, go live dates are only part of the equation. To make People First a success – and to ensure that go live dates go smoothly – People First must go through a number of developmental phases requiring thousands of hours of

interviews, complex process analyses, systems design and testing, and training. By any measure, the amount of work leading up to the State's go live dates is substantial. "We do look forward to go live dates," said Fran Brooks, "but not to the detriment of the work in front of us. Right now, we are digging in and taking the steps necessary to make People First a success."



Karen Bowman,
President,
Convergys Employee Care and
Chris Emerick,
Vice President,
Convergys Employee Care
Operations and
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for People First

At present, People First is transitioning from its "blueprint phase," which resulted in a comprehensive assessment of the State's current human resource environment, to its "realization phase," which will incorporate the blueprint phase learnings into a system design tailored to the State of Florida. "Once we finish designing the system," said Chris Emerick, "we can shift our focus to user

testing and training, followed by go live dates. We are getting there, but we are not there yet."

So why is there so much early buzz about People First, particularly when go live dates begin in May 2003? Ed Rodriguez explains that People First communications need to happen well before go live dates for People First to succeed. "Getting a jump on communications will help to ensure that State employees are well prepared. People First is not something you can explain in a single email. State employees have a right to know what is happening, when it is happening, and how it will impact their day-to-day lives. Doing this effectively will require multiple communications through a variety of channels. We are going at this from all angles." ■



*Lobby of
Convergys'
Jacksonville
Facility*

Congratulations!

The winner of the naming competition held at the 2002 Expo in Tampa was William McSparren, an employee of the Department of Health. Congratulations to William on choosing People First as the name for the project, and thanks to the many other employees who also submitted entries. The prize for winning the naming competition was a Convergys windbreaker and a M105 Palm Pilot. ■

People First Mission

"Building world class people care and people development programs for excellence in public service"



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