



CUSTOMER STORY

# A Digital Government Transformation with ARIS and Alfabet



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The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs - Dubai (GDRFAD) is the government agency responsible for citizenship, residency and port access services for the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The agency's 5,000+ employees—operating across 21 different locations—are on a mission to make Dubai the “Happiest City in The World.”



## New Challenges

- Impact of new digital strategy: Dubai 2021
- Business architecture hindering e-government plans
- Need to audit IT infrastructure
- Pressure to resolve manual compliance process
- Lack of reliable sources of information across 42 departments



## Key Benefits

- Created a “single source of truth” business layer
- Mapped out a new business architecture in just 8 months
- Implemented an API-based service portfolio management
- Digitalized and unified the compliance process



## Solution

- ARIS Rollout & Change Management
- ARIS Business Automation & Connectivity
- ARIS Risk & Compliance Management
- Alfabet Enterprise Architecture
- Alfabet IT Portfolio Management

“ Our aim was to provide state-of-art services to the public aligned to the Dubai 2021 Strategy. We wanted to do this by facilitating smarter services, offering a digital experience for happier citizens and providing sustainable and innovative government resources management. On our way, I needed to see our KPIs, and how we were moving towards our goals, in one dashboard. Software AG’s ARIS and Alfabet made this possible.”

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## A new-look government

Governments around the world face huge political, economic and social change. But in the middle of all this change are their citizens. And yet only the bold few are rolling out digital agendas that offer people all the advantages of a modern administration. The city of Dubai is one. Its 2021 strategy is spun out of the UAE 2071 vision: to be the world's leading nation. And a prime candidate for transformation is The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs – Dubai (GDRFAD).

One of the busiest agencies, GDRFAD offers 600 different services and operates with 10 other service providers. But in 2017 it was slow and unresponsive. The business architecture prevented it from reinventing itself. And three disparate units were managing risk and compliance in anything other than a unified way. “We wanted to be more agile in responding to demands received by 42 departments and to achieve our goal of improving our smart, intelligent and responsive services,” says Major Khalid Bin Mediah, Deputy Director of the Smart Services Department.

### A giant digital step for Dubai

That same year, a big stride forward was taken with local partner Palmira Software House LLC. The team knew exactly what needed to happen to see GDRFAD through its digital transformation. The agency needed to align IT to the new direction through a “business layer,” set up an agile enterprise architecture, create a process management flow to help the agency respond quicker, implement an API-based service portfolio management, digitalize and consolidate the compliance process and—perhaps most importantly for an ambitious leadership team—monitor and track their goal attainment in real time. Only one software house, with a regional presence as well, could get the job done: Palmira called in Software AG.

### A new architecture with ARIS and Alfabet

A major issue was the divide between IT and the business. Director of Applications Captain Amer bin Adhed Almehairi says; “Our IT department needed a clear view of the organization’s architecture to go from ‘as-is’ to ‘future’ and we needed one robust solution to do it.” Using Software AG's ARIS, GDRFAD started off by gathering raw data on everything relating to how the business worked. The turnaround was fast. GDRFAD was able to capture their current business architecture and roll out the new one in just eight months. From strategy, services, processes, organizational structure and customer journeys—they did it all. These could then be monitored using process governance workflows. And here a low hanging fruit was discovered.

### Exposing service updates on the web through ARIS API

During the implementation, GDRFAD discovered other features in ARIS, such as the potential to integrate with the multiple websites that GDRFAD operated. Brigadier Hussain Ibrahim came up with an innovative idea to save time and automate service updates. He explains: “Given that all services details were captured and maintained in ARIS, and governed through process governance, I figured we could directly link those services with our websites to automate and expose service updates to the public and guarantee a single repository for changes.” Palmira took on the challenge and implemented it using the ARIS API interface with no additional effort from the IT or business teams.

### A real-time picture of the IT landscape with Enterprise Architecture Management

While the business architecture was taking shape, Software AG's Alfabet was being put to use elsewhere. A team of 20 got to work reviewing current application and infrastructure architecture. Alfabet gave them a crystal clear view. Captain Amer Bin Adhed says of the experience: “During my career I've implemented multiple projects—but Alfabet was different. This project changed the culture in GDRFAD, and changing culture is not an easy task. With Alfabet we successfully identified most of our application portfolio, infrastructure and business layer. And we were able to retire some applications, servers and other artifacts.”

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### Risk management becomes “joyful”

Meanwhile, glowing reports were also coming out of the Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) division. Previously preoccupied with manually updating key risk indicators, identifying internal control measures, as well as capturing incidents and issues—a whole new world of synchronization had suddenly opened up to them. “With ARIS for risk & compliance management and process management, our compliance plans were all synched,” says Hanan Al Marzogi. Captain Mohamed Al Merri added: “Risk management became a joyful process.”

Across the three units, a demand management workflow was established using Alfabet. Not only were the team able to cut costs, they eliminated duplication by consolidating audit plans and synchronizing with other departments.

### Unleashing the value in digital transformation

Just two years in, GDRFAD is a lean, mean digital machine. And they can prove it: Alfabet allows IT management to see exactly how their applications, capabilities and business processes are all linked. It gives them a real-time picture of their IT landscape where they can identify lifecycles and understand the pipeline in terms of financials and strategy. And ARIS has literally unified IT and the business for a single source of truth. Ultimately, the agency’s mission has been accomplished. “At GDRFAD we are indeed using one platform to understand business and IT and manage our internal controls, governance and audit plans,” says Noora Ayoub from the GRC department. And as Dubai and the UAE push past imagination to build future governments, these achievements will not go unnoticed.

## Take the next step

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Software AG simplifies the connected world. Founded in 1969, it helps deliver the experiences that employees, partners and customers now expect. Its technology creates the digital backbone that integrates applications, devices, data and clouds; empowers streamlined processes; and connects “things” like sensors, devices and machines. It helps 10,000+ organizations to become a truly connected enterprise and make smarter decisions, faster. The company has more than 5,000 employees across more than 70 countries and annual revenue of over €830 million.

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