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Faster help for citizens in crisis

Customer success story

משרד העבודה הרווחה
והשירותים החברתיים



“We needed all of the municipalities to participate in the process to make it faster, so we took the whole application and built a ‘cloud’ web service around it. We exposed it to the world!”

– Yehuda Zeve | Mainframe Development Manager, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services



Customer profile

The Israeli Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services helps citizens that are in crisis due to disability, financial hardship, unemployment, discrimination and exploitation. The Ministry processes more than 80,000 cases per year, serving citizens via ministry departments and local authorities, associations and organizations.

New challenges

- Expose a 20+ year-old mainframe application to the web
- Speed up handling of 80,000+ cases per year
- Make system available to 257+ municipalities via the Internet

Software AG solutions

- Leveraged development tools such as NaturalONE
- webMethods EntireX deployed to open up mainframe application to the web
- webMethods ApplinX used to convert green screen to a web-based user interface

Key benefits

- Increased applications processed by 570% in one year
- Reduced time to process applications from 3 – 6 months to a few hours
- Exposed mainframe application to 97% of municipalities with around 5,700 users

Improving welfare support process from months to hours

The Israeli Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services assists people in crisis. Whether it is a disabled citizen seeking urgent housing, or a person who is being discriminated against, the Ministry is there to help.

With a population of more than 9 million that is ethnically and spiritually diverse, Israel's standard of living is significantly higher than many other countries in the region. Nevertheless, the country still has issues with employment and social welfare which must be dealt with expeditiously.

This falls to the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services. The Ministry receives tens of thousands of requests from citizens for assistance each year. Departments from Developmental Mental Disability to Social Services and Youth at Risk are served by the Ministry. And often, there are situations that have to be dealt with urgently.

In the past, the department was frustrated with the time it took to process each request—particularly for cases that needed to be addressed quickly. The hundreds of municipalities that handled the cases had to file them with the Ministry through a mostly manual process. This slowed the processing down and sometimes left people at risk.

Paper forms were being passed from the municipalities to the Ministry and back again, often requiring five different signatures for approval each time. Some individual cases took up to six months to process and, sometimes, cases would get completely lost in the shuffle.

EntireX makes the old new again

The Ministry was using 20+ year-old, green-screen application technology and there was no way to open it up to the municipalities using the internet.

The legacy system was developed 20 years ago using Natural, Natural Construct and Adabas. ApplinX was used to create a graphical user interface that can be used via the web. To improve performance, the Ministry had upgraded its **IBM® Z platform** from z/VM to **z/OS**. This new operating system provided increased accessibility and openness to its systems, giving the Ministry the ability it needed to open it up to its users.

Yehuda Zev, Mainframe Development Manager at the Ministry, said: “We needed to make it possible to connect the municipalities to the mainframe system, through the Internet.”

He said the Ministry chose EntireX to successfully turn the older program into a web service.

Major improvements, faster processing

By exposing the mainframe system to the web, the Ministry's welfare process execution time has dropped from months to hours. There has been a 570% increase in one year in the number of assignments approved.

During the modernization project, the application was changed, to support new functions and regulations. It was done, as usual, using the Natural Construct processing capability. Therefore all new parameters were added as "optional" in order to reduce unnecessary interference.

The Ministry's goal was to build an efficient and simple infrastructure for today's web service, and also for any future web services it might require.

Yehuda Zev said that it was a very big challenge updating the system, and was not an easy task. But now: "It is very stable, it works and it lets us do exactly what we want."

New features improve flow of forms

The new functionality made it possible to not only perform the existing roles of the application, but also to apply new features. One of these features is handling the forms processing. Historically, if a form had an error in it, it would be sent back to the user as soon as the error had been detected—ignoring the remainder of the form. As a result users had to re-send the form many times. Now, the entire form is checked before returning to the user and allows the user to re-send the corrected form only once.

The Ministries current goal is to develop new web services using EntireX, including:

- Reports on vulnerable members of the society that are currently at an institution (by date received).
- Reports and/or updates of a specific procedure performed on any of the above persons.
- Reports and/or updates of institutions' specifications.

Today Israel's Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services can now help vulnerable citizens when they need it the most. "The feedback has been unbelievable. Everyone is very happy with the result," said Yehuda Zev.



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customer_marketing@softwareag.com

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