

CIO Report

"Providing exceptional information services committed to fulfilling the DHS mission."

Message from Rick Howard, CIO



"Lack of sound financial reporting, absence of reliable performance metrics and confusion about cost contribute to the overall sense that OIS services are too expensive and poorly delivered."

- Case for Change document, January 2008

Alexsys brings consistency and accountability to OIS

One of the primary objectives of last year's Office of Information Services reorganization (Vision 2008) was to establish greater accountability among our managers and staff in a way that our business partners could evaluate.

A 2009 customer service survey of DHS division administrators and program staff indicates that over the past year we have made gains in establishing credibility among our business partners. While things are far from perfect, overall they're steadily improving and we're heading in the right direction.

As we continue to evolve and mature as an IT service organization, we can demonstrate accountability by showing the customers who pay for our services exactly what they're paying for.

It's difficult to discuss the "value" of something when its cost is unknown. Even worse, without cost information it's easy to view something as "free" and, potentially, valueless. And when the true cost of something is hidden, it's even easier to demand more of it. That's a recipe for disappointment.

I know your time as IT professionals is valuable and I believe the work we do to support health and human services is vital for the well-being of Oregonians. OIS can objectively and routinely establish the value of our services by accurately accounting for our time and reporting what we are spending it on.

By recording this information in an enterprise-wide time and task tracking system, our organization can produce the reports needed to ensure our skills and services are properly aligned with the changing needs of DHS.

Achieving this level of accountability requires a change in how we do things.

OIS expands the use of Alexsys

Alexsys is a time-keeping tool already performing this role in some parts of OIS.

Beginning Sept. 1, an updated version of Alexsys will be available to all OIS staff. With the exception of Customer Service and Support, all OIS sections will be expected to begin or expand their use of Alexsys to track the work we do at that time.

After just the first month of using Alexsys across the agency, OIS will be able produce standard, consistent reports that will benefit our DHS customers and partners, OIS managers and you.

“Our business partners will be able to use the information (from) Alexsys to estimate budget requests, prioritize work and make decisions on how best to spend IT resources.”

“(Implementing Alexsys) is critical to continue building on the credibility that OIS has established with our business partners.”

How Alexsys benefits our DHS partners

By using Alexsys consistently across OIS, we can show each division details of the work we’re doing for them. Not only is this a tangible way to demonstrate the value of our work to the rest of DHS, it provides transparency into our operations and promotes accountability as well.

Our business partners will be able to use the information reported through Alexsys to estimate budget requests, prioritize work and make decisions on how best to spend IT resources.

How Alexsys benefits OIS managers

Alexsys will give managers the information they need to determine and justify budget requests, manage staff time, and more accurately set priorities and expectations with our customers. When we meet expectations, it helps build our accountability.

How Alexsys benefits you

We value your time and the work you do. Alexsys will track the time you’ve spent on various systems and projects and the type of work you’re doing for different customers.

By seeing exactly where your time is spent, you’ll be able to work with your manager to set realistic expectations and prioritize work assignments, maximizing the use of your time and skills.

Alexsys supports the OIS Way, as well, by helping us to *meet our commitments* and *use our resources wisely*.

We need your help to make this work

It’s absolutely critical that we begin using the same tool to gather information on the type of work we do. Alexsys will help us show our customers that OIS is fully committed to operating in a transparent and efficient manner.

More Alexsys communication coming

Between now and September, you’ll receive regular emails and other information from the Alexsys project team on implementation, training and other topics. Information will be posted to a project wiki page for access as well. Please take the time to read and review information distributed, and ask questions when you have them.

Training, guidelines will be available

Using Alexsys may be new to some of you. Training, guidelines and other information will be provided to help you begin using this system. The consistent and accurate information you enter into Alexsys will be used as the basis for decisions made at all levels of the organization.

Implementation critical, backed by OIS executive managers

This implementation is critical to continue building on the credibility that OIS has established with our business partners. Consequently, I and the OIS executive team fully support this important change in the way we provide IT services.

Thank you for supporting this initiative to demonstrate our commitment to improving the quality of the services we provide by adopting this new process.