

iContact[®]

Case Study

iContact Forms Solution

How iContact Australia streamlined the processing of grant application forms to **reduce campaign costs and time-lines** plus deliver **improved service**

Customer Business Situation

The customer is a large government department, which required the capability to establish and operate a grant campaign in an extremely short timeframe.

It was expected that some 5,000 community organisations would apply and that \$5M would be distributed to approximately 2,000 applicants.

Application forms were required to be distributed, completed and returned within 3-weeks, with a further week for data extraction. The funding agreement phase was required to be completed within a 6-week period, to allow for funds commitment by the end of the financial year.

Because the application is like a tendering process, a high level of data integrity, traceability and auditability of application management processes is required.

Application data packs were to be available via download and telephone help desk support was required.

Key Problem Areas Identified with Current Processes

In previous campaigns, the Department had experienced the following difficulties:

- Staff and accommodation resources were not available to handle the peak loads;
- Development of an in-house solution required time-consuming integration and coordination of external and cross-department resources;
- Providing long-term access to application data relied on on-site storage of paper forms;
- Issues around identification and traceability of application form papers created significant reverse work-flows in past campaigns;
- Systems support for the processes of distribution and collection of application forms, data extraction and long term data access was not available; and
- Accurately gauging the demand for application documents, to minimise printing costs and wastage while maintaining ready availability.

Further, the operational timeframe for this campaign was reduced to about one-third of previous campaigns.

Application/Solution

iContact was originally approached to provide Help Desk and application distribution services.

Through consultancy, iContact identified process improvements across a wide range of operations.

The final solution incorporated:

- Re-engineered processes for application distribution, receipt, validation and data extraction;
- An outsourced response centre that could scale quickly to manage short-term peaks;
- Pre-registration of intending applicants;
- Distribution of personalised application forms by download and laser-print-on-demand;
- Application form validation with applicant contact where critical business rules are not satisfied;
- Data extraction using a process of dual-keying with independent arbitration;
- Applications scanned to PDF documents to avoid keying of lengthy text responses and provide for long-term on-line access; and
- Extracted data provided to the Department's IT systems via a secure communication channel.

Customer Benefits

The Department gained substantial benefits from the tailored Hosted Services solution including:

- Department staff were able to focus on their core business of assessing applicants and making recommendations for grants;
- Overall costs were less than for an in-house solution;
- Ministerial deadlines for the campaign were met;
- The error rate on critical extracted data was reduced by a focus on QA and centralisation of processing resources;
- The application form image was accessible to assessors in real-time to support assessment processes;
- The archival data was delivered as 13 CD-ROMs rather than 53 archive boxes of paper forms;
- Dealing with a single-source supplier minimised campaign management overheads; and
- Minimising the number of applications rejected on technicalities increased applicant satisfaction.

The iContact Forms Solution comprises:

The iContact Form, which allows you to deliver the latest form functionality, with low user overheads and built-in data validation, to provide superior user experience that ensures the highest quality client data; and

iContact Hosting Services, which allows you to simply establish a professional, hosted client interface website, with the security and capacity problems outsourced and collect your high integrity data as it is returned. iContact Hosting Services also provides full integrated support for legacy forms technologies.

For more information about iContact Form Solutions, please contact us on 02 6271 0111 or visit our website www.icontact.com.au