

GO Publisher for Local Government

Drivers for Change

Local authorities are facing unprecedented pressure to modernise the way they deliver services. The demand for improved quality of service, however, comes at the same time as increased demand for greater efficiency. In effect, the strings are being tightened at both ends.

It is clear that improvement in service delivery can only be achieved if it is underpinned by improved management and use of information. In fact, the Gershon review, which sets out specific targets for improvements in efficiency in the public sector, identifies three key contributing components among the tools which will enable the public sector to adhere to these demands:

- The streamlining of service delivery through the use of ICT
- The use of e-enabled channels for the provision of information
- The delivery of services to the public

The need to take a joined-up approach to service delivery means that different departments within an authority must plan their activities using shared information - otherwise they risk behaving in an unsynchronised way. Working in partnerships with other bodies, such as health and emergency services, and local enterprise companies creates the need to efficiently exchange information with those bodies on a day to day basis.

“It is expected that organisations will not be able to participate effectively and a minimum cost in future data interchange processes unless they comply with the e-GIF specifications.”

e-Government Interoperability Framework Version 6
30 April, 2004
Office of the e-Envoy

These factors, along with a wide range of other statutory, regulatory and policy initiatives are creating an environment in which the ability to share and exchange information with outside organisations is a fundamental requirement for local government. Local authorities need to develop procedures, policies and an IT infrastructure so that the management and dissemination of information becomes a routine process which supports all activities.

Cost Effective Compliance with e-GIF

In the govTalk schema library, the e-GIF programme has built up a substantial set of XML schemas to be used in the exchange of government information. In Scotland, the OSIAF framework builds on this further to create an even more extensive framework. Throughout the UK, local authorities need to comply with these frameworks but they must do so in a cost effective way - the replacement of applications and database infrastructure is not an option. Neither should local authorities turn into software development companies in order to integrate their existing systems into new frameworks.

Attaining Compliance with Limited Resources

GO Publisher can help local authorities to comply by translating data from existing databases to those output schemas required by these frameworks. The point and click interface provides a high productivity environment for matching columns in the database directly to elements in the output schema without the need to use any complex scripting languages such as SQL or XSLT, freeing up valuable skills for other tasks.

Because GO Publisher translates from existing databases, compliance with framework schemas can be implemented without disruption to existing systems, thereby protecting current investments.

Future Proofing

GO Publisher's unique translation capabilities allow organisations to publish data to multiple output schema from a single database. This means that the organisation can participate in a number of frameworks without the burden of further investment each time a new framework is joined. This is critical to local authorities who need to work in a wide range of partnerships with organisations in many sectors such as emergency services, health, planning, development etc.

The demands on local government are not fixed and new policy initiatives, regulations and legislations will increasingly require local authorities to exchange more information with new partners. Authorities with the ability to add new output schema to the existing database infrastructure are positioned to respond quickly and efficiently to new demands.

"Adherence to electronic-Government interoperability Framework (e-GIF) specifications and policies is mandatory for legacy systems involved with electronic service delivery targets and for new systems for the exchange of information between government systems and the interactions between:

- UK Government and citizens
- UK Government and businesses (world wide)
- UK Government organisations
- UK Government and other governments (K/EC, UK/US etc.)"

e-GIF Accreditation Authority
<http://www.eqifcompliance.org>
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Staged Deployment

The structure of the GO Publisher product suite is ideally suited to taking a staged approach to deployment. Since configuration files are fully portable between all the products in the suite once a translation to an output schema has been set up, that translation can be used across the product line. For example, if GO Publisher Desktop is used to output XML files for data exchange by single file transfer, that configuration can be re-used later if the need to move to publishing the same data in batch file format (GO Publisher Agent) or across the web (GO Publisher WFS) arises.

From Database to XML to Open Business

For local authorities, making data available to multiple users is no longer an option and many authorities are already seeing efficiency benefits to having this capability. As it becomes increasingly common for new policy initiatives and legislation to mandate the electronic exchange of information, the challenge for local government is finding a cost effective, reliable and repeatable process of implementation.

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