



Case Study: myaccount

mygovscot 'myaccount' is the simple and secure sign-in service to access online public services provided by eligible public bodies in Scotland. It is the agreed national approach for individuals to sign-in to online public services within Scotland. It provides people living in Scotland with the ability to set up an online account, and use it to access a growing range of online public services.

Scottish Government-funded, myaccount is operated and managed by the Improvement Service, a body established in 2005 to work with Scottish councils and their partners to improve the efficiency, quality and accountability of local public services.

The challenge... in delivering digital public services

We know that, in the digital and internet age, consumers increasingly expect services to be delivered online. And, yet, identity management remains a major challenge for the smooth delivery of digital public services.

Across the public sector, people routinely prove identity; however, proving identity is not the same as being allowed to access something. So while public bodies frequently establish identity, they don't always do it in a consistent or reusable way, leading to organisations holding multiple identities in their systems. As well as causing duplication in user administration, it can pose serious threats to information security.

myaccount helps eligible public bodies address these challenges and, for the public, it provides secure, trusted and easy access to online public services, more conveniently and at lower cost.

“Among the key drivers identified when looking to refresh the service were cost, reliability and accessibility. We’ve been able to deliver on all fronts...”

Cameron Walker
Head of Operations,
myaccount
Improvement Service

The new myaccount service was launched in May 2014, on time, on budget. The Improvement Service appointed Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as its technology partner to deliver a radical overhaul and technology refresh of the Citizen’s Account, myaccount’s predecessor.

High operational costs plus integration challenges had impacted on uptake and adoption levels of the Citizen’s Account’s. Additionally, the service had been increasingly reliant on ageing hardware and software.

The challenge... facing the Improvement Service

In 2013, the Improvement Service initiated a high profile project to refresh the Citizen’s Account with some core ambitions in mind:

“To be a high-performing provider of value-for-money services to enable secure, trusted and easy access to online public services to Scotland’s citizens through a radical transformation of the Service’s technology and operational management”.

Prior to that point, the Citizen’s Account’s service - myaccount’s predecessor - had:

- Operated for five years
- Usability and integration challenges, affecting adoption and uptake
- High operational cost
- Best-endeavours delivery model

As technology partner, TCS worked closely on the application development with the Improvement Service to refresh and evolve the Service, principally to:

- Maintain the delivery of flagship, Scotland-wide national programmes
- Improve the service’s attractiveness
- Lay foundations for its evolution as part of a wider Scottish Identity Assurance Strategy

The Solution

The Improvement Service required a bespoke, cost effective solution – hosted on a dedicated cloud environment – capable of meeting customer and end-user requirements while complying with information security.

The new service was launched in May 2014, simultaneously re-branded as myaccount. The service successfully delivers ID management to eligible public bodies in Scotland and comprises:

- Hardware and software assets
- Verified dataset of citizen identities
- Established identity assurance processes

The service comprises:

Sign-In: Secure single sign-in capability for eligible public bodies' web-facing applications

Data: Data management service giving service providers tools to improve local data quality and accuracy

Verify: Set of tools and business processes to validate and verify individuals and register service users for the Service

Notify: Secure notification and messaging service to share change of circumstance intelligence

TCS led on the application development, including design, build and testing.

With cost, reliability and security central concerns of the Improvement Service, TCS partnered with brightsolid to deliver a cloud-hosted environment with a robust Service Level Agreement. It guaranteed 99.99% accessibility, plus the capability to host data in an N3-accredited environment.

brightsolid delivered this by successfully managing and migrating the solution from co-location facilities to a dedicated private cloud in brightsolid's Tier III facilities.

The overall solution deployed open-source technologies and adopted a standards-based approach, using an agile approach to the design, build, test and roll-out.

Among the notable features which shaped the solution's design included:

Number Crunching...



annual savings on operating costs



the number of councils adopted/intending to adopt myaccount



citizens signed up for online access to myaccount



offline accounts

- Extensive stakeholder engagement to elicit customer requirements and to demonstrate information assurance and security compliance. This included: service providers e.g. Scottish local authorities and NHS health boards; other Scottish public bodies; Scottish Government
- User-testing and eye-tracking for the user interface design to ensure that the online portal – used by members of the public when registering for a myaccount or signing in to access online public services – conformed to the accepted norms for those with any form of disability.

Results/Impact

“The Improvement Service recently looked at the options for renewing a number of their aged services that were delivered through multiple suppliers with individual contracts which were complex to manage. The technology stack and hardware was hosted in co-location facility. The solution is now hosted in a private cloud for less than half the price that IS were previously paying”

p8, Scotland’s Digital Future: Data Hosting and Data Centre Strategy for the Scottish Public Sector, The Scottish Government

The new myaccount service – involving a radical refresh and overhaul of the service’s technology – successfully launched on time, on budget in May 2014. By October 2015, the service had:

- Created a single sign-on service with improved citizen convenience
- Reduced substantially the service’s operational footprint and cost, delivering 28% annual financial savings
- Introduced improvements to usability and integration capability, improving the service’s attractiveness to service providers and backed by Service Level Agreements
- 100% service accessibility
- Over half (18) of Scotland’s 32 councils adopting myaccount, or signalling intention to do so
- 10 live customers, and rising
- Almost 70,000 citizen sign-ups (online accounts) and rising, plus over 2.1 million offline accounts (mainly comprising Young Scot cardholders and around 1.4 million National Entitlement Cardholders (which covers free bus travel for people over 60) and who can use it to get a myaccount)
- Over 12,000 monthly authentication requests
- Established a credible ID Assurance platform aligned to Scottish, UK and EU standards, leading to interim accreditation being awarded

“...even more people and eligible Scottish public bodies can have the convenience, choice and flexibility myaccount offers.”

Martin Brown
Head of Business
Development
Improvement Service

- migrated further Improvement Service-managed assets to brightsolid facilities
- Received Scottish Government-recognition as a leader in technology efficiency

Martin Brown, Head of Business Development, the Improvement Service says: *“The Service’s refresh means even more people and eligible Scottish public bodies can have the convenience, choice and flexibility myaccount offers. Not only is it helping the Improvement Service expand myaccount’s reach, it’s another step towards the Scottish Government’s aim of a common national approach for people signing-in to online public services, a key objective in Scotland’s Digital Future Strategy.”*

Next Steps

Keen not to rest on its laurels, the Improvement Service has:

- Developed bespoke support and guidance for service providers – including online tools - for seamless and easy integration to myaccount
- Established a dedicated, 24/7/365 online support desk for the public and service providers using myaccount
- Established a myaccount Users’ Forum to capture customer feedback, elicit new requirements, plus shape the product roadmap
- Created dedicated mechanisms for members of the public to provide feedback on usability and content, plus make other suggestions for improvement

Cameron Walker, Head of Operations, the Improvement Service adds: *“Among the key drivers identified by the Improvement Service when looking to refresh the service were cost, reliability and accessibility. We’ve been able to deliver on all fronts through our partnership with TCS – and, in turn, theirs with brightsolid – helping improve significantly the proposition and the appeal of the myaccount service in the process.”*

Find out more...

For more information about myaccount, visit:
www.improvementservice.org.uk/myaccount.html

or contact the Improvement Service at:
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