

**BEFORE, DURING,
AND BEYOND
THE PANDEMIC**



Over 10 million Georgians have had their lives dramatically turned upside during the COVID-19 virus outbreak. The State of Georgia, with systems and support from Unisys, had the means and know-how to help citizens during the crisis in near real-time due to planning, foresight, and rapid deployment.

Some aid was highly visible, while other initiatives played out behind the scenes—but all were made possible by flexible, cost-effective cloud systems engineered and deployed by Unisys.

Here are the top five rapid response cloud computing initiatives from Unisys and the State of Georgia this year:

- Artificial Intelligence-driven chatbots quickly deployed on Georgia government websites, including the Departments of Labor and Public Health, delivering critical information to Georgia's citizens, with almost 5.6 million COVID-19 related inquiries answered.
- Quick deployment of computing resources for every government agency in need of computing power to process unemployment claims, answer health and safety questions, and rapidly compile health information collected from the field. Vital resources were deployed in four hours or less—as opposed to the previous 12-month process.
- Implementation of CloudForte® and the ability to utilize various provisioning options to meet specific agency demands, on premise virtual or physical.
- Mobile resources deployed to agents in the field using inexpensive tablet-based devices to complete case work for clients.
- Deployed OKTA, MFA and Geofencing to help secure the State's critical infrastructure.

COVID-19 Response: Health and Economy

At the beginning of the outbreak and the resulting 'stay at home' orders, State agencies were besieged with calls and emails. Workers at state and local government agencies are fielding an enormous number of inquiries, such as:

"Will warm weather stop the outbreak? How safe is it to take someone to the emergency room? What are the most common symptoms of COVID-19?"

The Department of Economic Development was flooded with questions about small business loans and economic impact. Meanwhile, the Department of Labor fielded urgent requests about applying for unemployment, tracking claims, and the guidelines for businesses that remained partially open—such as restaurants offering carryout or delivery meals, and restrictions and recommendations for their remaining employees.

Amid the turmoil, Unisys, working with the State of Georgia, used its CloudForte platform to host Artificial Intelligence-based Question and Answer chat windows on its Azure cloud on the State of Georgia's website for citizen use.

Unisys helped the State load all data into a cloud-based bot that uses Microsoft Azure's Cognitive Services intelligent repository and its Web App Bot as its front end. The chatbot was prominently placed on the State of Georgia website, giving citizens one-click answers to their most common COVID-19 questions.

To date, the on-line GTA service has answered almost 5.6 million questions from Georgians across the state.



By using the State of Georgia chatbot, residents can ask and receive immediate answers to COVID-19 and Georgia-specific questions without human intervention. This is freeing up valuable human resources, email, and telephone systems during the crisis to respond to more time intensive demands.

The cost is minimal for the State to provide compared to the human interaction that was required to field the many calls and reply to the avalanche of emails individually. Instead of spending time trying to answer thousands of calls or hiring additional staff, the Unisys chatbot solution provides real-time access to information on COVID-19 testing, unemployment claims, etc. rather than forcing Georgia residents to wait on hold for critical answers.

Other departments in Georgia government have also adopted the bot response system—with just a single line of code. Unisys worked with the State of Georgia to on-board these departments to provide state-specific COVID-19 responses to constituents:

Department of Labor dol.georgia.gov/

Department of Public Health dph.georgia.gov/

Georgia's Government contact page
georgia.gov/contact-georgiagov

Governor's constituent services page
gov.georgia.gov/COVID-19-faq

Mobile Worker Support in the Field—Where It Counts

Another pressing need during the crisis—and beyond—is the ability to gather reports from the field on infection rates, testing, and other health data. In a field trial, State of Georgia professionals are using inexpensive tablets, such as Chromebooks, to access data and file reports. This is possible due to the State's hybrid cloud computing capabilities deployed on Azure with Unisys CloudForte.

Quick Response Through Agility

Each of the innovative solutions the State has implemented rely on flexible and agile Unisys CloudForte systems that can respond in near real-time to support the citizens of Georgia. The hybrid cloud backbone at the State—and thereby a resource for over 102 executive agencies state-wide—consists of a highly elastic computing environment on secure Microsoft Azure cloud.

New computing resources are deployed in hours—not months.

Beyond COVID-19

With the use of virtual desktop infrastructure computing, hybrid cloud, and elastic, dynamic resource provisioning, the State can provide on-demand services wherever and whenever needed. Another proposal in the works is the use of Unisys Stealth® security software—an alternative to expensive hardware-based security firewalls and virtual private network software (VPN). With Stealth™, security policies can be centrally controlled, enforced, and monitored regardless of the platform.

Responsiveness Is Key

As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, responding to crisis and community needs in a timely manner is priceless to the citizens of Georgia—or any locale. The Unisys-Georgia partnership helps make certain government computing infrastructure resilient, agile, and secure, allowing the State to be best prepared to act in emergencies. Yet the partnership is also able to innovate and improve services for Georgians on a daily basis in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

For more information, please contact Michael.Kreager@unisys.com



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