

Unisys Partners With AWS and Microsoft to Deliver Essential IT Services to Georgia

Helping the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) Provide Essential Services to State Agencies



In the state of Georgia, the GTA is the central IT agency responsible for providing infrastructure and management services for Georgia's many state agencies and the constituents they serve. But they were having problems with service delivery. In some instances, it was taking a year or more to stand up a server and get it turned over to the requesting agency. This created a major pain point for the agencies and their constituents.

In 2008, the GTA made the decision to outsource all of its infrastructure and managed network services in an effort to bring uniformity to its processes. As part of this ongoing effort, it hired Unisys in 2018 to improve service delivery and provide innovation to keep pace with industry standards and introduce changes efficiently and effectively.

This case study outlines how Unisys brought together solutions from AWS and Microsoft to help the GTA transform its state's infrastructure within two years. According to GTA's Chief Operating Officer Dean Johnson,

"We had heard a lot from our customers about the need to be timelier in the services we provide, and to continue to improve the quality of those services across the board. I'm happy to report that Unisys has done a great job in developing what we call the rampant server provisioning services and establishing cloud brokered services that address the demands that our agencies have today."

Building Solutions to Serve the GTA's Many Needs

In assessing the GTA's needs, Unisys learned that even within the same state, the various agencies had radically different requirements. Unisys opted to build a multi-cloud environment that gave the GTA and the agencies it serves the flexibility to operate in AWS, Azure, GovCloud, commercial cloud or on premises. This freed up each agency to run applications and store data in the most optimal, secure and cost-effective way for them.

For example, when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, the Georgia Departments of Labor and Public Health were able to set up a COVID chatbot built on Azure QnA Maker and Bot framework services, which enabled citizens to submit their COVID-19 inquiries and receive immediate responses.

Meanwhile, the Georgia Department of Revenue is in the process of moving its integrated tax solution into AWS cloud and leveraging components of the AWS Solution in order to provide connectivity, authentication and other services.

“Unisys has been great to work with,” says Johnson. “They are very customer-centric in the way they approach the individual agencies and the way they work with the Georgia Technology Authority.”

Standing Up to COVID-19

In early 2020, the GTA’s infrastructure platform was put to the test by the public health crisis created by COVID-19. As nearly every agency’s employees—including those from the GTA—transitioned to work from home, it created a huge demand for an infrastructure that could support a primarily remote user base. At the same time, a panicked public was taking to the Internet, desperate for COVID-19 information, generating an 11,000% increase in traffic on Georgia’s official web platform. Fortunately, because of the new infrastructure platform that was already put in place, the GTA was able to scale its services and add a new COVID-19 website to handle the enormous volume of traffic.

Beyond this, Unisys set up a Microsoft Azure Chatbot messaging platform and—working with the Department of Public Health— quickly stood up a Microsoft Dynamics solution, enabling the state to perform contact tracing and manage the results of COVID-19 tests statewide.

“The Chatbot was deployed by Unisys in a quick and efficient manner,” says Sunil Aluri, integration and services officer at Georgia Enterprise Technology Services. “This directly helped the citizens by pointing to centers where they could go for COVID-19 testing and also helped citizens answer questions regarding their unemployment checks. And it relieved the agencies, like Department of Labor and Department of Public Health, from the call volumes that they faced as a result of COVID-19.”



“This past year Unisys has brought leadership to the table. One of the best definitions of leadership that I’ve heard is ‘Leadership is translating vision into reality,’ and that’s exactly what Unisys has done this past year during the pandemic response. Through their partnerships with AWS and Microsoft, they have been able to deliver quality solutions in a timely manner that’s meeting the ever-changing business needs of the agencies we serve.”

—Dean Johnson
COO, Georgia Technology Authority

Unisys Helps Drive Value Back into State Agencies

Because of Unisys’ partnerships with both AWS and Microsoft, they were able to quickly stand up solutions that met the GTA’s needs, and it has driven value back into Georgia’s state agencies in a way that wouldn’t have been possible two years ago.

“In 2018, Unisys came on board to establish managed server provisioning capabilities within our North Atlanta Data Center and cloud brokered services,” says Johnson. “And since then, we’ve been able to be much more responsive to the business needs of the agencies.”

The GTA is continually finding new benefits from its flexible technology platform—and its relationship with Unisys—as it strives to increase the quality of its services, improve security and reduce IT expenditures. To reduce storage costs, for instance, the GTA is rolling out Amazon S3 Glacier storage options to get agencies off of higher-cost Tier 2 storage, reducing their cost from about \$0.07 per gigabyte to about \$0.004 per gigabyte.

The GTA is also looking to Unisys to help it significantly reduce its North American data center footprint. By the end of 2021, Unisys will complete a data center consolidation project slated to reduce the GTA footprint from 30,000 sq. ft. to 6,000 sq. ft., thanks to virtualization and cloud services.

About GTA

The Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) manages the delivery of IT infrastructure services to 85 executive branch agencies and provides managed network services for 1,300 state and local government entities. IT infrastructure services encompass mainframes, servers, service desk, end-user computing, disaster recovery and security. Managed network services include the state's wide and local area networks, voice, cable and wiring and conferencing services.

About Unisys

Unisys is a global IT company known for building highly secure, modern digital platforms and solutions that enhance people's lives through secure, reliable advanced technology.

Unisys is built on nearly a century-and-a-half of game-changing innovation focused on accelerating industry-leading digital workplace services, delivering next-generation cloud and infrastructure services and providing the world's most secure operating environment for high-intensity enterprise computing.

Learn how to maximize productivity in your digital workspace with Unisys.

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