

Delivering Electronic Government to Citizens and Business Users in Ireland

The Reach Agency collaborates with Capgemini to exploit the principles of Service-Oriented Architecture

The Situation

The Irish Government recognized that if it was to successfully deliver e-Government it needed to provide a common access point with the necessary infrastructure in order to make access to e-Government services as straightforward and secure as possible.

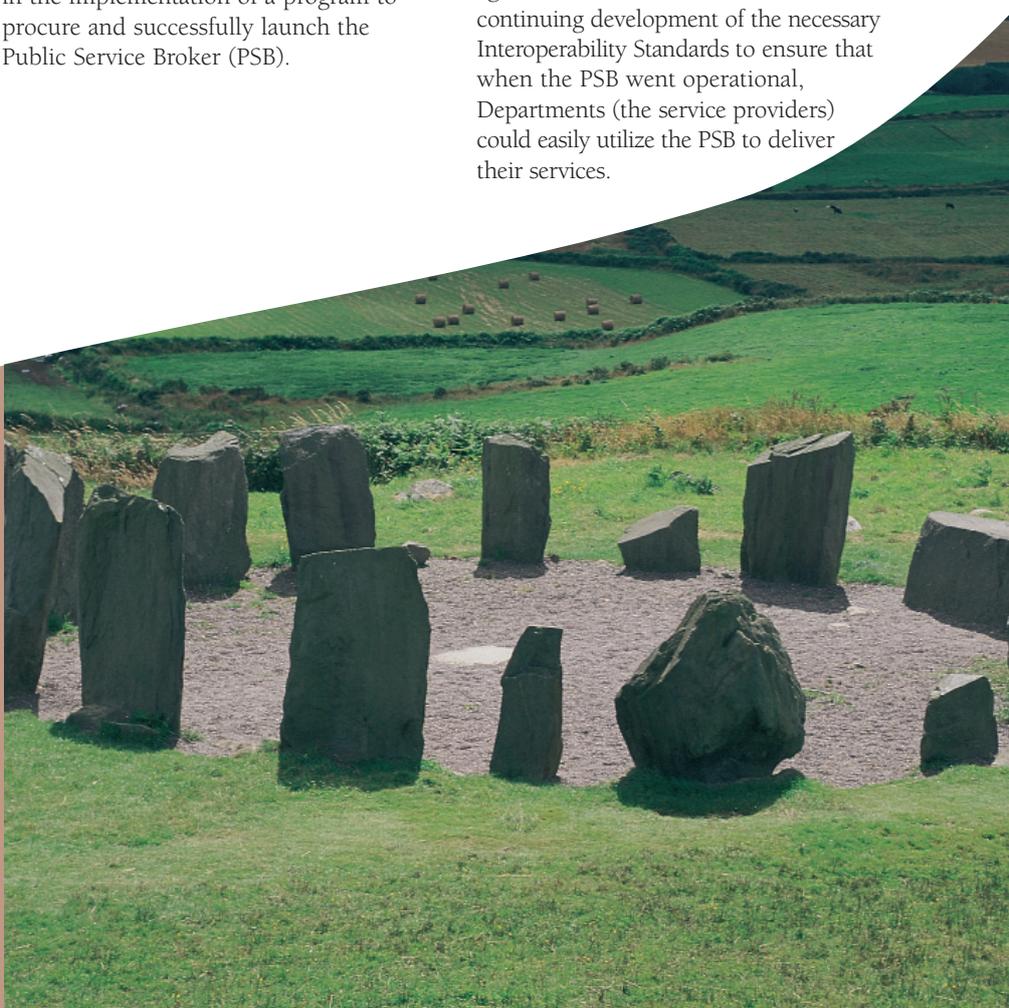
The Solution

To achieve this, The Reach Agency was established and to help fulfill its objectives contracted Capgemini to work in partnership with them to provide a wide range of consulting and technology services to manage and assist in the implementation of a program to procure and successfully launch the Public Service Broker (PSB).

The Result

The procurement of the PSB was achieved on the basis of a clear and concise set of requirements that were well documented. It enabled an effective procurement process to be executed based on transparent criteria-based evaluations. This required considerable Cross-Departmental facilitation to achieve the necessary support, buy-in and understanding in order to allow the procurement to occur.

Following this, it enabled Reach to deploy a Technical Authority Group (TAG), to ensure that development was aligned to the principles that the Departments had agreed to. The TAG was also tasked with continuing development of the necessary Interoperability Standards to ensure that when the PSB went operational, Departments (the service providers) could easily utilize the PSB to deliver their services.



“ Capgemini consultants have supported Reach in ensuring the Public Service Broker is built in line with the principles we expected by working in close co-operation with our own staff, not only giving us assurance, but helping our own staff to develop. **”**

Oliver Ryan, Director
The Reach Agency

How Reach and Capgemini Worked Together

Reach is an Agency established by the Government of Ireland to develop a strategy for the integration of public services and to develop and implement the framework for electronic government. In particular, Reach is mandated to procure and build the Public Services Broker (PSB), which is an integrated set of processes, systems and procedures designed to provide a standard means of access to public services.

In order to meet its objectives, Reach recognized that it required the services of an external partner who could work in partnership with them to procure and over-see the development of the PSB. Reach selected Capgemini as the company to work with them based on the expertise and thought leadership that its business and technical consultants demonstrated and its approach to how it engaged with its clients in true partnership, through its collaborative business experience approach.

Throughout the engagement the success of the relationship has been based on the approach that Capgemini brings to how it engages with its clients, one of collaboration - working alongside, supporting and developing the client's staff to enable them to make informed decisions and obtain the knowledge necessary to take the solution forward.

This was achieved through the use of workshops and the establishment of 'buddy' relationships between Reach and Capgemini staff to ensure that individuals were aligned in order to ensure Reach's capabilities were optimized. The mitigation of risk was a key consideration which was addressed by Capgemini ensuring it deployed staff that had the relevant skills and experience, with external peer reviews being undertaken at regular intervals to provide the relevant challenge and quality assurance. This resulted in the deployment of a senior group of individuals. Given the complexity and ground-breaking nature of the PSB, it was essential that such a team was engaged in order to provide assurance to the stakeholders that the PSB could be delivered. Expertise included Enterprise Architecture, Identity Management, Infrastructure and Security Specialists.

The result has been the development of an integration framework (the PSB) that enables Agencies and Organizations to make business functionality available to all members of the Reach community by publishing discrete 'services' or re-using existing ones. It exploits the principles of a Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA). This in turn is supported by the Reach Interoperability Guidelines that define a common set of standards to enable these services to be invoked via the exchange of business documents, defined as XML messages, irrespective of how the services themselves are implemented.

The public face of the PSB is www.reachservices.ie, which is the common access point for citizens and business users to government services. This covers elements such as the provision of information, electronic forms, electronic payment, case management and address validation. The portal has been internationally recognized by the European Union for what it has done in enabling the Irish Government to accelerate the deployment of e-services in a consistent and cost effective manner.

This has led to a significant number of other Governments engaging with Reach and Capgemini to understand how they can achieve what Ireland has done and deploy their own Public Services Broker.

"Reach engaged Capgemini to support them throughout the procurement of the Public Services Broker. Capgemini consultants were invaluable in providing input, facilitation and expertise to ensure that we ran a thorough and rigorous procurement process which enabled transparent criteria-based evaluations to be made. This was under-pinned by their Technical consultants who reviewed and amalgamated a wide range of business and technical architecture requirements from diverse sources to create clear and concise requirements documents that enabled an effective procurement process to be executed. Capgemini consultants have subsequently supported Reach in ensuring the Public Service Broker is built in line with the principles we expected by working in close co-operation with our own staff, not only giving us assurance, but helping our own staff to develop."

Oliver Ryan, Director, The Reach Agency



About Capgemini and the Collaborative Business Experience

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