

Benefits Administrations System Serves Federal Personnel

Cost-effective solutions for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Retirement Information Office



Solutions That Produce Results

MS Technologies designed, developed, implemented and currently maintains the Benefits Administration System/Interactive Response System for OPM's Retirement Information Office.

With *BAS/IVR*, benefits for approximately 2.3 million Federal personnel are processed each year and an additional 1.3 million telephone inquiries are addressed.

Situation

Prior to the introduction of Integrated *Benefits Administration System/Interactive Voice Response System*, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management had to process benefit packages for millions of Federal workers and address their questions with limited automation tools.

Challenge

Develop an easy-to-use benefits administration system for use by customer service representatives and provide a 24x7 solution for Federal workers to interactively access benefits via a touch-tone telephone. The new solution must interface with the existing automated infrastructure.

Response

BAS/IVR is the Benefits Administration System turnkey solution offered by MS Technologies Corporation that has been selected by Federal and State Government alike. The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit consists of 48 ports and enhances the previous system by routing calls to customer service representatives that utilize information obtained from the central database and presented on their local workstation as they take each call. This provides tremendous efficiency gains in processing benefits for over 2.3 million Federal personnel annually and addressing an additional 1.3 million telephone inquiries.

The initial applications within the fully integrated *BAS/IVR* solution included call routing, forms requests, verification of data available on OPM's database and MS Technologies' Microsoft SQLServer-based system. Changes to Federal Tax withholdings, verification of income changes for health benefits enrollment, simple surveys, death reporting and address changes are processed. The entire system complies with section 508 to provide access with individuals with disabilities including TDD compatibility.

In addition, MS Technologies provides hardware and software support for the Mail Server/Fax Server to store scripted dynamic letters that callers can request through a choice on the IVR.

Technology

- PBX Switch: NEC ACD (Automated Call Distributor)
- Network Server: Microsoft Windows 2003
- Mainframe: IBM Mainframe, ISAM
- Database: Microsoft SQL 2000 & Microsoft Access
- Communications: TCP/IP, FTP, TSO, CICS Transactions
- Workstations: Microsoft Windows 2000/XP

Getting Results

The Retirement Information Office of OPM staffs 80 customer service agents in Washington, D.C. and another 50 customer service representatives at a remote facility in Pittsburgh, PA. With MS Technologies' *BAS/IVR* solution, they are able to manage their workload with greater efficiency, provide superior customer service, and reduce overall operating costs.

Such systems are at the top of the President's agenda to provide "*a citizen-centered, results oriented, and market-based Government*".

The technology behind the solution is also readily applicable to any benefits management system. This permits application development time to be substantially reduced while customization can be performed quickly within a proven solution framework.

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