

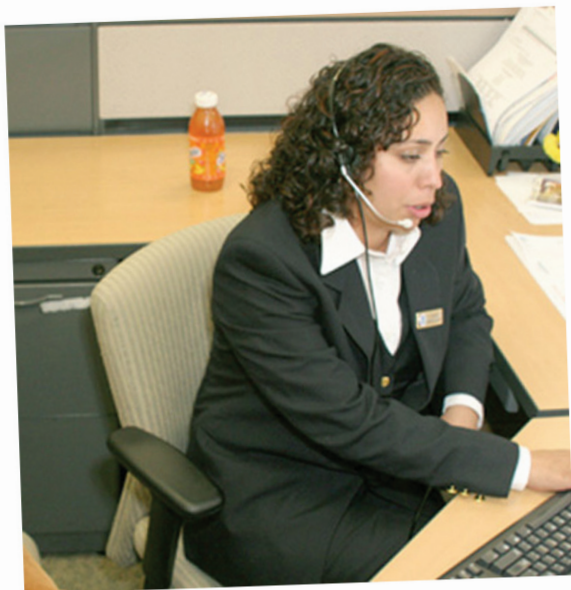
TRANSFORMATION: REFINING PROCESSES WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

In 2006, USCIS launched an agency-wide transformation that will position the organization to meet the escalating immigration challenges of the 21st century. These challenges include managing the increasing number of immigrants seeking U.S. benefits or citizenship; ensuring that deserving immigrants receive U.S. benefits or citizenship in a timely manner; and working across the immigration enterprise to identify, track, and apprehend individuals that pose threats to national security.

The objective of the Transformation Program is to build a new business model. All components of USCIS will be engaged in developing the new model and tools to ensure they will have positive impact on agency operations. Employees will participate as subject matter experts in the development and review of business requirements, as testers in user acceptance testing, and as participants in focus groups. The new business model will allow USCIS to better manage the immense demands on employees due to the surge in workloads; to ensure enterprise-level services meet requirements at a departmental level; and to address the existing gaps in business process and supporting technologies that impair USCIS in achieving its national security, customer service and operational excellence goals.

Since 2006, USCIS has implemented several pilots and a proof of concept in an effort to learn lessons for full scale transformation of the USCIS business. The pilots included digitization of A-files, electronic case management, customer identity verification, and other pieces of the adjudication process. For each pilot and proof of concept, business units and field office personnel served as an integral part of the integrated product teams (IPT) to determine direction and monitor progress on these initiatives.

USCIS and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) have made considerable progress with regards to the Enterprise Service Bus (ESB). Since its deployment in 2007, ESB has provided a service-oriented architecture framework for connecting USCIS, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department Of State (DOS), and US-VISIT systems across a single National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) supported messaging bus. ESB currently connects 11 systems from USCIS, ICE, DOS, and US-VISIT. Another seven systems will be added to ESB by the end of the calendar year 2008.



The most notable end-user component of ESB is the Person-Centric Query Service (PCQS). The PCQS is a composite service, which allows a user or system to submit a single query for all transactions involving a foreign national across a number of Department of Homeland Security and DOS systems. It returns a consolidated and correlated view of a foreign national's past interactions with the government. The PCQS currently has more than 600 registered users and provides single-login, read-only access to seven systems. OIT added four more systems to the PCQS in November 2008. Users will be able to access 11 systems for simultaneous query under a single login.

TRANSFORMATION

Looking to the future, USCIS requested contract proposals from private contractors to work with USCIS in developing a solution to support USCIS' business transformation goals and to build the integrated operating environment for electronic adjudication. USCIS anticipates the transformed business process will deliver the following benefits:

- Enhanced national security and fraud detection
- Improved identity management
- Improved accuracy and consistency agencywide
- Decreased duplication of records
- Enhanced data sharing
- Increased customer accessibility
- Standardized business processes
- Improved workload and caseload management
- Greater accountability
- Elimination of manual reporting

USCIS prepared for the far-reaching effects of transformation by standing up a new Office of Transformation Coordination (OTC). The OTC will lead, manage, and facilitate a comprehensive transformation of people, processes and technologies with quantifiable business outcomes. The OTC will coordinate all initiatives that impact or are impacted by transformation of the agency's core business processes.

