Project Startup Report

Project Name: Interactive Voice Response System (IVR)

Agency: Job Service North Dakota (JSND)

Business Unit/Program Area: Unemployment Insurance (UI)

Project Sponsor: Darren Brostrom

Project Manager: Brandi Fagerland

Project Description
The main objective of the project is to replace the obsolete Interactive Voice Response system currently in use at Job Service North Dakota (JSND). The current system is obsolete and unstable with frequent service interruptions directly affecting our claimant's ability to interact with the agency to file claims, certify weeks for payment, and conduct other inquiries via telephone. The infrastructure of the current IVR system is being phased out by the Information Technology Department.

Business Needs and Problems	
The problem of	Job Service North Dakota's Interactive Voice Response system will not be in compliance with State mandates that require agencies to utilize ITD's infrastructure if a waiver is not obtained.
This affects	Unemployment Insurance Claimants, UI Employees (UI Director, UI Associate Director, Benefits and Payment Control Manager, Claims Center Supervisor, Claims Center Specialist, and Claims Center Representatives); IT Staff (IT managers, LINC Programmers, and DBA staff); and state Information Technology Department staff (programmers, DBAs, and networking).
The impact of which is	Job Service North Dakota will eventually incur all costs associated with maintaining the current environment if all other agencies are utilizing the new environment. In addition, the infrastructure will continue to deteriorate overtime if it is not upgraded.
A successful solution would be	to rewrite the application utilizing the new technology infrastructure.

Key Metrics		
Project Start Date	Project End Date	Original Baseline Budget
05/02/2011	12/15/2011	$1,439,540.97

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Business Need/Problem: **Business Continuity** – The current interactive voice response infrastructure is being replaced by the hosting agency, ITD, with a more standardized, stable, and flexible infrastructure. In order to remain in a supported environment, JSND is required to move to this new infrastructure.

Objective 1: Provide an infrastructure that is maintainable.

Measurement: The interactive voice response system infrastructure meets all applicable State of North Dakota Enterprise Architecture (EA) standards in place at the time of project planning.

Objective 2: Reduce downtime by separating Test and Production environments

Measurement: Post-Implementation, JSND and ITD will schedule a test where the test environment will be taken off-line while the production system remains active.

Business Need/Problem: **Efficiency** - The obsolescence and stability issues of the current interactive voice response system limit JSND's ability to provide quality service to claimants who interact with the agency via the IVR product.

Objective 1: Provide ability to modify scripts and questions on demand

Measurement: Appropriate JSND staff will be able to access the system to modify scripts and questions.

Measurement: All JSND staff with access will receive training on the process prior to implementation and a step-by-step process sheet will be available. The process sheet will be maintained by Claims Center 'super user' staff.

Business Need/Problem: **Cost Avoidance** - Job Service North Dakota will eventually incur all costs associated with maintaining the current environment if all other agencies are utilizing the new environment.

Objective 1: Utilize the new enterprise Nortel environment.

Measurement: The legacy IVR system will be deactivated within 3 months of production go-live of the new system.

Anticipated Benefits:

Disaster Recovery - Only a minimal level of disaster recovery is available with the current IVR system. The IVR software runs on two separate hardware systems, however, the licensing resides on one system only. If that system fails, both hardware systems are offline and the IVR functionality is unavailable to claimants.

Due to technological necessity, the current system was configured to have the test environment located on the same servers as the production IVR. This has contributed to service interruptions.

The IVR replacement project will provide for a fully redundant system that will minimize outages and maximize system availability.

The technical component of Business Continuity - The existing system is obsolete. Lack of or unavailability of spare parts could result in a system that cannot be recovered in the event of an outage. Outages directly impact a claimant's ability to file a claim, certify weeks for payment, or access other functions available through the IVR.

System obsolescence also prevents enhancements from being implemented such as dynamic port allocation to handle more callers during periods of increased activity. The age of the technology also impedes JSND's ability to control costs associated with the IVR.

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Efficiency - The obsolescence and stability issues of the current interactive voice response system limit JSND's ability to provide quality service to claimants who interact with the agency via the IVR product. Replacing the current system will enable JSND to deliver a high quality, high availability IVR service to unemployment insurance claimants. It will also allow JSND to implement additional enhancements such as:

- Dynamic port allocation to minimize communication costs while providing a high level of access to the IVR system as call volume fluctuates
- Added flexibility to modify scripts and questions as needed
- Separate test and production environments

Key Constraints or Risks		
Risk	**Risk Impact**	**Risk Mitigation Strategy**
There will not be enough UI and IT staff resources to work on the project.	High	Backfill staff will be hired to accommodate the increased workload during the project.
The amount of SBR funds available will not be enough to cover the cost of the project.	High	Obtain a fixed price contract for the application rewrite. Ensure there is a reserve budget of 20% of the contract costs to cover unforeseen expenses.
SBR obligation and expenditure dates will not be adhered to.	High	Begin vendor procurement in the 2nd quarter of 2010 to allow lag time to be in the project schedule. Compare the IVR Rewrite project schedule against the schedules of other projects to identify dependencies, risks, and issues.