

# IT Performance for Federal Agencies

## The right technology for the best outcomes

Federal agencies worry about the way IT challenges can prevent them from achieving their goals. They look to IT as a catalyst for change and an engine driving mission performance and service delivery.

Technology and information are now integral to the way agencies operate. Agencies understand that even small variances can dramatically affect their ability to effectively conduct their operations.

Agencies often cite IT mission alignment as one of their top strategic challenges. However, driving value and realizing ROI from IT usually encounter various roadblocks. Specifically, many agencies lack:

- A common platform for communicating requirements and documenting results
- A way to measure IT's value to the organization
- Trusted decision-making information for managing IT

It's easy to think of federal IT organizations as solution and service providers. But in their operational roles, they are also information consumers. In fact, the IT organization is

really a microcosm of the agency it serves. It needs visibility into its operations. It needs accurate, trustworthy information for making decisions. It should be able to use all the data it generates to monitor, measure and manage its efforts, such as:

- Help desk and other support operations
- IT hardware and software assets
- Performance of contractors and suppliers
- Compliance with security and performance requirements

IT is responsible for administering high performance technologies for an agency. To radiate these technologies throughout an agency, IT should first be a high-performing organization itself, specifically through:

- Vendor management
- Operational effectiveness
- Portfolio management
- Asset management

IBM Cognos performance management solutions for government IT organizations are complete. With reporting, analysis, scorecarding, consolidation and enterprise planning, we enable IT agencies to be sure

their IT resources, performance and partners are fully aligned with their needs and goals.

### IT vendor management

Federal IT organizations need a consolidated view of how much they are spending and with whom. IBM helps agencies identify what to consolidate and/or standardize in order to cut IT costs, reduce program risk and increase performance. IBM also helps agencies see where they can pool acquisitions and maximize their purchasing power.

When vendor data is fragmented across the enterprise, it's difficult to spot duplication of contracts, blanket purchase agreements and task orders. It's also hard to foster healthy competition with valid price and performance comparisons.

To provide visibility in this area, IBM lets agencies set goals and measure vendor performance through:

- Contract cost and hourly rates
- Program completion and on-time delivery
- Vendor quality and SLA compliance

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With IBM Cognos solutions, agencies can align their roster of suppliers with their strategic goals, weed out poor performers and focus competition for additional business among those who consistently deliver best value.

### Operational effectiveness

IBM enables agencies to use value mapping and business intelligence to set their direction and then evaluate the results of their operations.

Value mapping shows IT organizations where they can have the most impact. It helps them answer the “when,” “where” and “what” questions of performance management:

- When must IT capabilities be available to support decision-makers?
- Where are better IT capabilities needed within the agency?
- What capabilities drive the most value for the agency?
- How do IT costs line up with the agency’s priorities?

Once they have set their goals and metrics, IBM Cognos business intelligence solutions help IT organizations to see how their efforts are paying off by:

- Capturing and consolidating security, help desk and other types of IT management data

- Sifting out critical information, then making it visible and comprehensible
- Letting decision-makers see the big picture and drill down to details
- Providing a range of tools for documenting and communicating results

IBM lets IT organizations set benchmarks, detect variances, understand those variances and take action while their decisions can still have an impact.

### Portfolio management

Federal IT organizations have many different programs that are interrelated, overlapping or at various stages of completion. IBM Cognos solutions enable these organizations to:

- Aggregate program data from multiple sources
- Monitor on-time, on-budget and on-quality indicators
- Manage scope and unplanned changes, and make necessary adjustments
- Improve alignment with priorities
- Flag duplication in purpose or scope

Agencies can set goals and scorecarding metrics for completion percentages, program costs and ROI, delivery schedules and other management elements. IBM Cognos

solutions allow agencies to analyze benchmarks in these areas by a number of dimensions, including:

- Investment levels and program costs
- Focus of support (inter- or intra-department)
- Scale (point, department, enterprise)
- Complexity and level of risk

These contextual dimensions give agencies a lifecycle perspective across their entire range of portfolios. They can compare lessons learned and best practices, even from different types of programs. IBM Cognos solutions make sure agencies can see which of their programs are on target, which are off track and which will never deliver a return.

### IT asset management

IBM helps IT organizations understand how well their IT assets are working to support specific areas of their missions. It also helps them identify opportunities to optimize their return on assets by determining:

- Where new investments should be prioritized
- Whether existing assets merit further investment
- Which obsolete or inefficient assets should be retired
- What controls should be implemented to reduce asset-related risk

Infrastructure, applications and information are the three core categories of IT assets. Within these areas, IBM lets agencies analyze their:

- Inventory of physical assets (such as hardware, software and data sources)
- Properties of those assets (such as vendor, age and direct cost)
- Capabilities (such as flexibility, scalability and reliability)

With this type of visibility, agencies can manage their assets as a supply chain that acquires, manages and delivers information access to users. That makes it far easier for agencies to assess whether asset performance is aligned with mission effectiveness.

### **About IBM Cognos BI and Performance Management:**

IBM Cognos business intelligence (BI) and performance management solutions deliver world-leading enterprise planning, consolidation and BI software, support and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance. IBM Cognos solutions bring together technology, analytical applications, best practices, and a broad network of partners to give customers an open, adaptive and complete performance solution. Over 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries around the world choose IBM Cognos solutions.

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