



City Uses CRM Solution to Process Citizen Requests

"In addition to making it easier for citizens to submit requests for services, we can track service incident progress more efficiently."

Ryan Harris, CRM Practice Manager for City of Grand Rapids

The City of Grand Rapids, Michigan, located on the Grand River 25 miles east of Lake Michigan, provides services to approximately 188,040 citizens.

Goals:

- Consolidate management of citizen requests.
- Enhance collaboration among all city departments.
- Improve transparency by allowing citizens to easily view how well the city handles service requests.
- Streamline process for citizen inquiries and service request tracking.

Industry:

Government

Country or Region:

United States

Population:

180,040 citizens

Number of Users:

125 employees

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<http://grcity.us>



The current political environment requires that local governments strive for greater transparency while reducing operational costs. Citizens want proof that elected officials are running a lean operation, while demanding a high level of service with little, or no, bureaucratic red tape. To address these challenges, the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan, created a 311 citizen services and information department. The department provides citizens with a single number to call for a variety of requests or issues, as well as a web portal where they can submit requests and monitor the City's performance.

To facilitate the cross-functional processes required by this new service paradigm, the city needed a technology platform that could connect numerous departments to the citizens they serve. "In addition to allowing citizens to submit requests through just one phone number or online, we needed a system that could manage service activity and citizen requests across 30 departments," explains Ryan Harris, CRM Practice Manager for the City of Grand Rapids. "In the past, each department had managed requests, citizen information, and billing with its own system, and there was no way to share information among departments."

Automated Routing and Tracking of Citizen Service Requests

Harris and the City's IT team researched several solutions, including Microsoft Dynamics CRM and solutions from Motorola and Salesforce.com. They selected Microsoft Dynamics CRM, deploying the core technology as well as the Microsoft 311 Service Center accelerator, which offers a pre-built framework to help local governments quickly deploy citizen service centers. The solution uses workflows to automate the routing of requests to the appropriate department. Detailed reporting allows city managers to track the resolution of a single request, or to report on performance of one or more departments.

Lower Pricing Model and a Common Technology Framework

"The Microsoft Dynamics solution set itself apart from the other solutions with its lower pricing model, as well as the flexibility to deploy the solution on-premises for now and then migrate to the cloud in the future," Harris says. "We also benefit from Microsoft's common technology framework—which many IT solution providers have expertise in."

"The Microsoft 311 Service Center accelerator and Microsoft Dynamics CRM combination gives us a wide range automated capabilities, including service-request tracking, call scripts, a citizen Web portal, mobile access, and interactive mapping."

Ryan Harris
CRM Practice Manager
City of Grand Rapids

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:
www.microsoft.com/dynamics

The solution allows Grand Rapids to more easily respond to citizen requests, provide information, manage back-office processing, and utilize resources more efficiently. Because the solution integrates closely with the city's Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Exchange solutions, the city gains further efficiency improvements by being able to quickly access all files and documents related to a specific request from a single interface.

Solution Accelerator Streamlines Development and Deployment

Grand Rapids launched a pilot program in two city departments, rolling out the solution in just five days. "The availability of the Microsoft 311 Service Center accelerator for Microsoft Dynamics CRM allowed us to deploy the solution very quickly," Harris says. "We expected to have to build CRM capabilities into the solution, but the solution accelerator takes care of this right out of the box, so we can focus on integrating with the back-end systems in use by each department."

"Moreover, the Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution provides the City with a tool that hasn't required us to purchase any add-ons. Most 311 solutions that we evaluated required expensive third party add-ons, but Microsoft Dynamics CRM does not."

After the solution is deployed across all 30 departments, Grand Rapids citizens will be able to submit more than 250 types of requests and inquiries through a web portal or by calling a single phone number—without being transferred from one department to the next. Citizens can then return to the portal to track the progress of their requests.

Improved Collaboration and Enhanced Transparency

"The Microsoft 311 Service Center accelerator and Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution help the city in our effort to lower administration costs by consolidating back-office government functions," Harris adds, "The new system also encourages collaboration among departments, which typically leads to even greater efficiencies in keeping costs down."

Grand Rapids city personnel can generate reports or view dashboards with performance indicators that show how well city departments perform in meeting citizen requests. Certain reports are also displayed on the public-facing web portal. "We can tailor the reports using Microsoft Dynamics CRM," says Harris. "Posting them for public view helps achieve our mission of being as transparent as possible so citizens can see exactly how well the city handles service requests."