



# **Putting Information to Work**

**Center for Technology in Government  
University at Albany, SUNY**

**2000 Annual Report**

The Center for Technology in Government works with government to develop well-informed information strategies that foster innovation and enhance the quality and coordination of public services.

We carry out this mission through applied research and partnership projects that address the policy, management, and technology dimensions of information use in the public sector.

# From the Director

July 2000

Dear Friends,

When the State of New York and the University at Albany created the Center for Technology in Government in 1993, they envisioned a resource to help meet the changing information technology needs of state agencies. As so often happens in New York, state government serves as a gateway to both local and national public affairs. By 1995, we had achieved a national reputation for innovation in government. By 1997, international interest in CTG began to emerge as we hosted visitors from Europe, South America, and the Far East. At the same time, our focus at home began to include the needs of local governments, with a first project that included counties, cities, and towns as equal partners. Our formal research program debuted in 1997 as well, with a workshop that drew information and social scientists from the US and abroad to discuss the emerging questions of electronic government.



In the past year, these early forays beyond New York have become new lines of work that both rest on our state government foundation and return benefits to the State in the form of broader knowledge, new partnerships, and external funding.

We completed the first project in which a local government, the City of New York, was the principal public partner—and learned first hand the unique challenges of the governments that lie closest to the people.

Our first national project, sponsored by the US Department of Justice, engaged justice agencies from every level of government and region of the country in their quest for information integration to support public safety.

We earned our stripes in the research world with our first seven-figure grant from the National Science Foundation to study knowledge networking in the public sector—a three-year investigation that rests squarely on the New York projects that remain at the core of our mission.

International work included another NSF grant to plan a multi-national project to describe and understand new models of public, private, and nonprofit collaboration for delivering government services. We also had our first engagement with a global organization in which we worked with staff of the United Nations on electronic records needs.

These “firsts” made this an especially notable year, but they are by no means the entire story. Thanks to four new state and local projects, our Using Information in Government Program made great strides in capturing the policy, management, and technology dimensions of information use in government. We have nearly concluded work on a project sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and will soon deliver results in the form of practical guidelines for electronic records access programs. The staff at CTG continue to write, teach, speak, and disseminate all that we learn.

In this increasingly networked world, no organization stands alone or can take total credit for its accomplishments. We know this better than most. Excellent corporate and academic partners continue to add talent and breadth to all of our work. Top-notch government managers advise and guide us. The University’s leaders support every new venture. Together, we look forward to what lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Sharon S. Dawes

# Using Information in Government to...

Governments rely on information to make decisions, design programs, and deliver services. CTG is wrapping up a two-year project to help public managers make better use of information to carry out their missions.

The *Using Information in Government Program* involves initiatives by seven New York state and local agencies. Although the projects vary in scope and subject, all show how government agencies are putting information to work.

## Evaluate programs...

The Bureau of Shelter Services, in the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, needed an integrated information resource to help assess the impact of the services provided to the state's homeless population. CTG worked with the Bureau to develop a business case and prototype to secure funding and other support for the Homeless Information Management System, a Web-based resource that will integrate information from a variety of sources. The system is expected to be fully operational by the summer of 2001.

## Share knowledge...

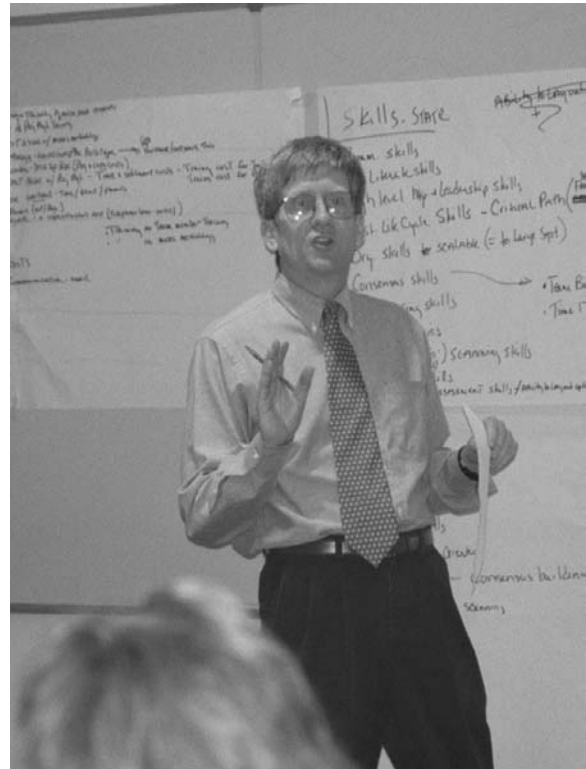
The Office of the State Comptroller's Division of Municipal Affairs wanted to create a way for its decentralized offices to share records and customer contact information. CTG helped the agency develop a business case for the Municipal Affairs Contact Repository Operating System, which will provide employees with remote and desktop access to vital information about the municipalities they support. The system is currently under development at the agency.

## Manage operations...

The Central New York Psychiatric Center needed a way to facilitate data sharing and decision making throughout the more than 20 units it oversees. CTG worked with the forensic psychiatric center to create a business case to secure support for an Intranet database. The Center is implementing the system, which should be fully operational this fall.

## Design responsive systems...

The Office of the State Comptroller is in the early stages of an effort to develop a next generation central accounting system, an 18-year-old mainframe legacy system that's the backbone of New York's financial and budgetary operations. CTG worked with the Office on an important first step of this initiative: determining the needs of agencies that use the system. The findings from a series of user needs workshops are guiding the Office's planning for the next phase of analysis.



## Implement new policies...

The NYS Office of Real Property Services is working to ensure fairness and equity in the real property tax system by providing increased state aid to municipalities that conduct annual property reassessments. CTG aided this effort by conducting a series of workshops with local assessors and county real property directors to determine the resources they need to successfully implement annual reassessments in their communities. The Office is incorporating their suggestions into its program to make it easier for municipalities to conduct annual reassessments.

## Make strategic investments...

The NYS Department of Transportation is developing an IT investment process that links strategic, line management, and budget processes. CTG taught several assessment and analysis tools to agency representatives, which are helping them refine their entire program. The three cycles of the IT investment process (selection, tracking, and evaluation) are now undergoing a phased implementation.

## Get best value from existing programs...

The New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications is creating a new information management model that supports sound IT investments as called for in the city's IT strategic plan. CTG assisted in this effort by conducting a series of facilitated workshops to elicit the barriers and enablers city operating agencies encounter when using current processes. Work groups are now focusing on priority issues including procurement, IT staffing, and sharing best practices.



The culmination of all the learning that took place in these projects is a Web-based resource to help government managers become more savvy information users. It will cover the full range of topics from policies to data issues to the skills, costs, and technologies of effective information use. To be released in fall 2000, the resource will be accessible from [www.ctg.albany.edu](http://www.ctg.albany.edu).

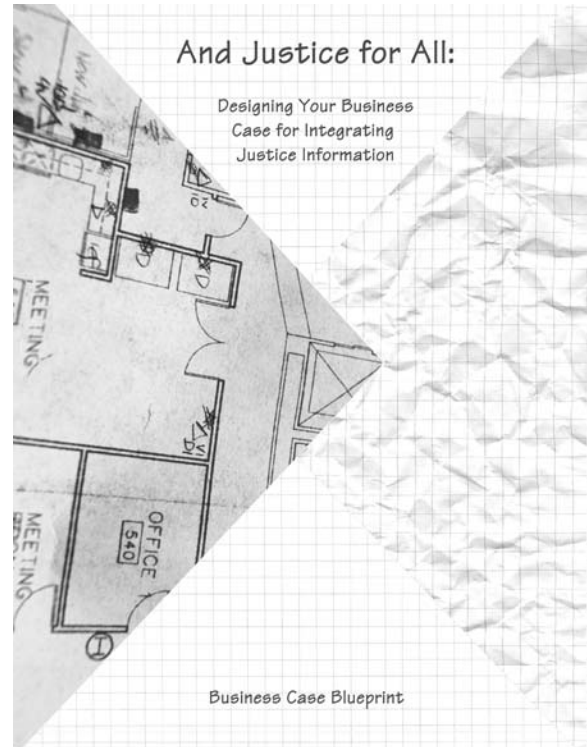
### *Partners*

*Central New York Psychiatric Center  
New York City Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications  
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance  
NYS Department of Transportation  
NYS Office of Real Property Services  
Office of the State Comptroller*

# Integrating Justice Information

Working to improve public safety by integrating justice information systems was the goal of our first project with a federal government agency—the US Department of Justice. The project resulted in “And Justice for All: Designing Your Business Case for Integrating Justice Information,” a practical guide that helps justice agencies devise business cases to gain support for information system integration projects.

Extensive research involved dozens of justice officials—including police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, and corrections officials—from throughout the country. CTG conducted a workshop with more than 50 justice officials and political leaders to solicit advice and recommendations on the issues they face when trying to convince colleagues and decision makers that integrated information systems are crucial to public safety. Our researchers also conducted in-depth interviews with more than 20 justice officials whose municipalities were involved in integration activities. The knowledge gained through the workshop and interviews influenced the development of the final product, “And Justice for All,” which was well received by the justice community nationwide.



**Partner**

*US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs*

# Creating Knowledge Networks

CTG's *Knowledge Networking in the Public Sector* project was awarded a \$1 million grant by the National Science Foundation—our first seven-figure research grant. The three-year project will study seven knowledge networks created out of government initiatives in New York State.

Knowledge networks are created when organizations with common interests and goals use information technologies to share information, build knowledge, and develop ongoing relationships. Such collaborations are becoming more important as public organizations work on increasingly complex problems. Through a series of surveys, interviews, observations, and meetings, CTG researchers will examine seven initiatives led by New York state and local agencies that depend on sharing knowledge and information across multiple organizations. All of these are current or former CTG projects.



Among the topics to be studied are:

- ◆ legal constraints
- ◆ leadership
- ◆ problem solving
- ◆ use of expertise
- ◆ technology choices
- ◆ stakeholder interests
- ◆ trust

The study will result in a conceptual model of knowledge network formation and operation in the public sector. CTG will also develop practical recommendations to help government managers plan and implement their own successful knowledge networks.

## **Partners**

*National Science Foundation  
New York City Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications  
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance  
NYS Council on Children & Families  
NYS Office for Technology  
NYS Office of Real Property Services  
Office of the State Comptroller*



# Influencing Children's Well-being

The goal of CTG's *Kids Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse* (KWIC) project is to make up-to-date indicator data on the health and well-being of NYS children and families available to a wide audience through the Internet. We are working with the NYS Council on Children and Families to make the KWIC Web site a reality.

Childhood indicator information—such as statistical rates of infant mortality, teen pregnancy, high school dropouts, and juvenile violent crime arrests—are instrumental in developing programs that help children rise above a variety of hardships. The Council has focused its efforts on the development of the indicators and on making a compilation of the data available in printed form on an annual basis. This compilation of indicator data has become a critical resource for the State. The KWIC site will make the most current information quickly and easily available to a broader audience. The site is designed to be a well organized, data rich, electronic resource for people who need to know demographic, health, education, and economic information about New York's children in order to design and assess programs that help them. After evaluation and testing of the pilot, a full production site will be developed and posted on the Internet for public use.



This two year project is supported in part by a demonstration grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

## **Partners**

*NYS Council on Children & Families  
US Department of Health & Human Services  
Cornell University, College of Human Ecology  
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance  
NYS Office of Children & Family Services  
NYS Department of Health  
NYS Department of Labor  
NYS Office of Advocate for Persons with Disabilities  
NYS Office for the Aging  
NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services  
NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services  
NYS Education Department  
NYS Office of Mental Health  
NYS Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities  
NYS Division of Probation & Correctional Alternatives  
Commission on Quality of Care for the Mentally Disabled*



# Integrating Data for Program Evaluation: Assessing Homeless Services

2000 Annual Report

The NYS Bureau of Shelter Services (BSS), Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, participated as a project agency in the Using Information in Government Program conducted by the Center. BSS recognized that the wealth of data collected by homeless providers and State agencies represented a tremendous opportunity to assess the overall effort to reduce the incidence of homelessness in New York State. The project uncovered many of the issues agencies face when working to integrate data from across programs to evaluate the impact of services on target populations.



The project focused on identifying the challenges that BSS would face in pulling together data from the multiple disparate systems to support the assessment of a broad ranging and highly diverse set of programs

and services. These challenges included building interest in and support for the project in the provider community and State agencies, identifying the varied service objectives of homeless programs, developing a standard set of definitions for the highly diverse services provided to the homeless, and dealing with the significant, but highly variable, concerns about privacy and confidentiality. Developing the Homeless Information Management System (HIMS) required extensive investment in knowledge sharing about the service models employed in the programs and about the current approaches to data collection and use in the providers and the State agencies. A single set of business rules was necessary to guide the selection of relevant data elements and the transformation of data including data cleansing and integration.

HIMS is a Web-based integrated data repository that includes service information from a variety of local governments, homeless program providers, and State agencies. HIMS allows providers and the Bureau to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of homeless services. Oracle Corporation developed the prototype following extensive data analysis by the project team which included BSS, provider agencies, UAlbany faculty, and CTG staff. The full HIMS system is now being developed by the Bureau.

## **Partners**

*NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, Bureau of Shelter Services  
Oracle Corporation  
New York City Homeless Providers Technology Committee  
Homes for the Homeless  
New York City Office of Domestic Violence & Emergency Intervention Services  
Housing & Employment Opportunities for the Less Privileged (HELP USA)  
University at Albany, School of Business  
Westchester County Department of Social Services  
Suffolk County Department of Social Services  
NYS Archives & Records Administration  
AlbanyNet  
Hewlett Packard*

# Encouraging Extended Uses of Electronic Records

The essential records of most government agencies are now created in electronic form. These records often have value far beyond their original use, making it more important than ever to preserve and maintain them for access by other users. CTG has been studying how public and private sector organizations do this in a two year project called *Gateways to the Past, Present, and Future: Practical Guidelines for Secondary Uses of Electronic Records*.



From compiling a 50-year agency history to forecasting business trends over the next decade, electronic records are required for a variety of activities beyond their original purpose. Under the guidance of a panel of expert advisors, we are developing practical guidelines to help government agencies ensure that electronic records of enduring value remain available and accessible over time. The guidelines will address the interplay among users, uses, content, organizational capacity, and technology.

*Gateways* is funded in part by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the funding arm of the National Archives and Records Administration.

## **Partners**

*National Historical Publications & Records Commission  
NYS Archives & Records Administration  
Cornell Institute for Digital Collections  
HELP USA  
University at Albany, Information Science and Policy  
MasterCard International  
National Archives & Records Administration  
NYS Department of Motor Vehicles  
NYS Division of the Budget  
NYS Forum for Information Resource Management  
NYS Office for Technology  
NYS Psychiatric Institute  
Rand Corporation  
School of Information Studies, Syracuse University  
University at Albany, School of Public Health  
State Farm Insurance Companies  
University at Albany  
US Patent & Trademark Office  
Westchester County  
Xerox Corporation*

# Collaborating to Deliver Services

An existing partnership with a Canadian research center influenced the creation of our first international research project—*Multi-national Investigation of New Models of Collaboration for Government Services to Citizens and Businesses*. CTG combined forces with Quebec-based Le Centre Francophone d'Informatisation des Organisations, also known as CEFRIO, to develop this multi-year project.

The goal is to document and explain how public-private partnerships are created and maintained in different nations around the world. CTG received a planning grant from the National Science Foundation to begin the first stages of the project, which will eventually involve researchers from at least five countries in North and South America and Europe. These field researchers will prepare case studies of successful partnerships in their countries. Researchers will examine cultural differences, as well as critical barriers and enablers encountered with the technologies, processes, and relationships in each case. Based on the project's results, the research teams will develop practical guidelines for government officials interested in creating their own new partnerships to deliver services.

## *Partners*

*National Science Foundation  
Le Centre Francophone d'Informatisation des Organisations*

# Contributing to a National Technology Infrastructure

For the past three years, CTG has been the lead government partner in the Education, Outreach, and Training Team of the Partnerships for Advanced Computational Infrastructure (PACI) program. The goal of this program is to build and promote the national technology infrastructure for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

CTG's role is to ensure that the research products developed in the program are put to productive use to meet the practical needs of government. We support communication and build research partnerships between PACI researchers and government partners. Our efforts include joint grant applications, presentations at research and professional associations, and advice to both researchers and practitioners engaged in work that demands high performance technologies.

## *Partners*

*National Science Foundation  
National Center for Supercomputing Applications, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
San Diego Supercomputing Center, University of California at San Diego*

# Partnerships Bring Results

Partners—corporate, government, and academic—are integral to the success of our projects. Over the years, our collaborative work process has attracted the active participation of almost 200 organizations. From corporate giants like Oracle and Microsoft to small New York villages like Port Chester and Garden City to our own University at Albany, a wide variety of companies, governments, and universities have contributed to CTG projects. Our partners' knowledge, experience, and donations make it possible for us to conduct high quality investigations that help government managers do their jobs well.

In the past year, partners provided CTG with \$413,949 worth of in-kind contributions. Actual funding for 1999-2000 totaled \$1,274,422. This figure includes an annual budget allocation from New York State as well as several federal and state research grants. CTG's total resources for the year were \$1,688,371.



## Corporate

Our varied roster of close to 60 corporate partners contributes valuable hardware, software, and consulting services to CTG projects. These in-kind donations allow us to conduct research with state-of-the-art equipment and software and to benefit from the expertise of leading developers and consultants.

During the past year, CTG received contributions from these corporate partners:

CORPORATE PARTNER	PROJECT	CONTRIBUTION
Audio Visual Sales & Service	UIG Project & CTG Infrastructure	\$ 700
Compaq Computer	UIG Project	5,000
Oracle Corporation	HIMS Project	85,000
Randy Glasbergen	CTG Infrastructure	850
<b>Total Corporate Partner In-kind Contributions 99-00</b>		<b>\$91,550</b>



## Academic

Colleagues at close to a dozen colleges, universities, and other academic institutions have contributed valuable expertise to our projects. Faculty and students in public administration, as well as computer, information, and political science routinely conduct research and provide insightful contributions. Last year we worked with these academic institutions: University at Albany on the *Homeless Information Management System* and *Using Information in Government* projects; Cornell University on the *Kids Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse* project; and on the *PACI* project with the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; San Diego Supercomputing Center, University of California at San Diego; and the University of Pennsylvania.

## Government

CTG's government partners—which number more than 100—drive the substance of our projects. Our work is designed to help public sector agencies effectively deal with information use issues to fulfill their program goals. This year marked two milestones in our work with governments. For the first time, CTG directly engaged in projects with a municipal and a federal government agency—the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications and the US Department of Justice. Our collaborations with these two diverse agencies resulted in products that will help them fulfill their program goals.

# Sharing Information

Sharing the results of our work is an important part of all CTG projects. We accomplish this using a combination of current technology applications—the CTG Web site—and old-fashioned people skills—the Education Program, our regular publications, and numerous speaking engagements.

## Web Site

The CTG Web site is the primary vehicle for sharing our work within the government, academic, and corporate communities, as well as the general public. In this past year, more than 133,000 people visited [www.ctg.albany.edu](http://www.ctg.albany.edu). That's an average of 365 users each day. These Internet users are interested in a variety of our products, from project reports and practical handbooks to quarterly newsletters and research updates. More than 91,000 copies of CTG publications were downloaded last year, proving that our project results are valuable resources to a wide variety of users.



As we continue to expand the scope and dimension of our projects, we realize that the way users interact with the Web is evolving. So we are embarking on an ambitious plan to overhaul our Web site. The content and layout are being redesigned and reorganized to make it much easier for users to quickly find the information they need. We'll continue to implement these changes during the next year.

## Education Program

The CTG Education Program is another important venue for distributing project results that practitioners can apply to their own situations. Over the past year, CTG instructors have delivered just under a dozen programs to more than 300 government and corporate stakeholders.

Our signature course, "Making Smart IT Choices," teaches public sector managers the skills and tools they need to choose appropriate technology applications to achieve program goals. Another of our popular seminars, "Information, Technology, and Government," reaches out to corporate representatives and gives them a chance to experience the unique decision-making environment of their government clients. And our "Models for Action: Practical Approaches to Electronic Records Management and Preservation" class is frequently requested by public sector organizations looking for guidance on how to design and implement electronic records management programs.

The *Using Information in Government Program Seminar Series* allowed us to publicly share the interim results of our two-year project with government colleagues. During this series of four half-day seminars, we detailed the management, policy, and technology issues public sector managers encounter when using information to fulfill program goals. We highlighted the lessons learned throughout the whole program and showcased our government partners' work on their projects. The sessions covered "Dealing with Data," "Information Use Tools and Skills," "Rules for Information Use," and "Building Integrated Data Repositories."



## Publications

Part of our mission is to share our innovations and practices with colleagues in the government, academic, and technology communities. One major vehicle for disseminating this information is CTG's quarterly newsletter, *Innovations*. In January, we redesigned the newsletter to make it more appealing to our readers. The new design and color scheme were created to present our work in a more interesting and easy-to-read format. We're also using some of the newsletter's design elements, like the blue and tan color scheme, in other CTG publications and on our Web site. The goal is to give our products a consistent look and feel that our readers easily recognize as belonging to CTG.

## Presentations

We also share our work and expertise with colleagues through many presentations at academic and professional conferences. The following are some of the connections we made during the past year.

"Partnerships for IT Innovation in the Public Sector" was the subject of a talk at the Best Practices in Outreach and Public Service conference at Pennsylvania State University.

We led a session on "Cyber-Policy: Regulating Computers and the Internet" at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management conference in Washington, DC.

Our *Some Assembly Required: Building the Digital Government for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* project was presented at Government Technology's New York Technology Forum.

We participated in a panel on the importance of IT strategic planning for county governments at the National Association of Counties Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

Participants in the American Society for Public Administration's annual meeting in California heard our presentation on "Practicing Public Administration in the Hollow State."

*Knowledge Networking in the Public Sector* was presented at the first National Science Foundation Digital Government Research Conference in Los Angeles.

**innovations**  
April 2000

**In this issue**

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To hundreds of officials across the state
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About integrated data repositories
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How to build a business case to gain support
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For a variety of current and future uses

**Integrating Justice Information**

The cop walking a downtown beat. The lawyer prosecuting a murder case. The attorney defending a robbery suspect. The judge presiding over a fraud case. The prison guard keeping order in a cell block. The officer monitoring a convicted felon on parole.

Based on input from justice officials from across the country, and lessons learned from more than 20 state and local integration initiatives, CTG created this guidebook. The business case blueprint features three chapters that lead readers through the analysis, design, and presentation of business cases tailored to their specific projects.

They all need information to keep us safe in our small towns and big cities. Information makes our country's justice system work.

But getting information is just the beginning. The information also has to be accurate and timely. It needs to be shared with the right agencies. It must be available to everyone working on a case. It has to be updated easily. And it must be maintained for future use.

The way to make this all possible is by creating integrated information systems in the justice community. A complex task, but it can be done.

CTG, through a grant from the United States Department of Justice (DoJ), developed a guide to help justice agencies make integrated information systems a reality.

"And Justice for All: Designing Your Business Case for Integrating Justice Information" is a practical handbook that provides guidelines, tools, and resources to justice officials who need to secure support and funding for information system integration initiatives at the state and local levels. The guide, or business case blueprint, shows users how to build business cases for these projects.

"The effective business case generates the support and participation needed to turn an idea into reality," CTG Director Sharon S. Dawes said. "The business case communicates the argument for integration to those whose commitment of resources is needed to execute a specific implementation strategy."

The analysis phase involves determining the situation in which the integration project is to take place, the market demand for such a project, and the risks involved in the initiative. Justice officials use a variety of tools to determine where they are, where they want to go, the market for their ideas, how to get from here to there, and how to organize their argument. After completing the analysis, users can clearly identify the objectives, opportunities, strengths, resources, and constraints of their project.

In the design phase, readers use the results of their analysis to develop the details of their approach and rationale, and to organize all the basic business case materials. The following are the essential elements necessary to construct any business case: problem statement; mission statement or vision of the future; specific objectives for the current initiative; preferred approach; alternatives considered; expected benefits; performance measures; risks and how they will be addressed; basic plan of work, timeline, and key milestones; project management and human resource implications; cost estimates and sources of funding; and opposing arguments and responses.

For the presentation phase, users produce the message, materials, and methods needed to customize their cases for different audiences. Justice

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Center for Technology in Government  
University at Albany, SUNY



# Center for Technology in Government

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Sharon Dawes

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