

myAccount

Published On: 29 August 2016

Organisation: Revenue (Irish Tax and Customs)

Country: Ireland

Level of government: Central government

Sector: General public services

Type: Digital

Launched in: 2015

Overall development time: 9 month(s)

Link to the innovation's website

Like this innovation

0 persons like this innovation

Description

myAccount is a single, secure access point to Revenue's digital services for mainly Pay As You Earn (PAYE) customers. This user-friendly portal significantly improves the registration process for our online services and provides instant retrieval of forgotten passwords.

A key strategic priority for Revenue is to make it easier and less costly for customers to voluntarily comply. Our Statement of Strategy states that self-service and electronic channels will be the primary service provision channels and investment will be prioritised in these channels.

The myAccount project delivered a single secure access point for our enhanced online services for 2.4 million PAYE and Local Property Tax (LPT) customers, using new technologies accessible on all mobile devices. We also provided a quicker, innovative process for registering/retrieving forgotten passwords.

Prior to the development of myAccount customers had a separate unique ID and password for each online service. Passwords could not be changed online and had to be received by post. Forgotten passwords were a significant frustration and deterrent to the use of our online services.

With the development of myAccount, customers can now access all our online services using one login and password which can be quickly, easily and securely retrieved and changed if forgotten. As myAccount customers will have access to all existing and new online services, this will encourage uptake of our online services generally making it easier for customers to voluntarily comply and claim their entitlements.

Why the innovation was developed

- Increase the level of usage of our online services through an intuitive, user-friendly access point.
 - Significantly improve the registration process for our online services with the provision of instant passwords via text or email where it is possible to validate a person's identity in real-time.
 - Provide real-time retrieval of a forgotten password.
 - Deliver a responsive service that is accessible on all devices so that customers can interact with Revenue on the device of their choice, at a time that is convenient for them.
 - Enable customers to access all online services relevant to them from one portal.
 - Provide instant access to new online services via myAccount without the need to register for the new services.
 - Meeting the needs of our customers while providing a secure, reliable service is at the core of the myAccount service.
 - A key component of the myAccount security solution was to leverage other government data to verify the customer's identity online in real time. As a result, many customers can now retrieve their password immediately by text or email.
 - As additional data becomes available to Revenue, more customers will be able to register and access myAccount instantly.
-

Objectives

Improve efficiency, Improve service quality

Main beneficiaries

Other

- This new service has the potential to benefit Revenue's 2.4 million PAYE and LPT customers by providing a modern, intuitive, single access point to all relevant online services.
- Currently, over 1.2 million customers are myAccount registered and over 220,000 have availed of the instant password retrieval facility.
- This service has user experience (UX) at the heart of its design which means that it is accessible for people with varying IT capabilities and also people with disabilities.

Results

Efficiency

- Over 275,000 items of paper correspondence removed from the system since the launch of myAccount with the associated reduction in paper, postage and printing costs of approximately €190,000.
 - Reduction in the number of returned items of correspondence as customers can now quickly and easily update their contact details through myAccount.
-

Effectiveness

- 41% of new online customers requesting instant access to our online services were granted instant access. Prior to the introduction of myAccount, these customers had to wait a minimum of five working days receive a PIN and password in the post.
 - Over 220,000 forgotten passwords were instantly retrieved since myAccount was launched. Prior to myAccount, password retrieval could take up to five working days.
-

Service quality

Accessibility:

- Access to myAccount is available from all mobile devices and is accessible to individuals with a disability.
- This new service is UX tested which means users find it quick, easy and intuitive.

Responsiveness:

- myAccount is mobile device responsive.

Other:

- Revenue staff can now easily divert customers to our online services by directing them to a single access point to all relevant services.
-

User satisfaction

- Feedback from customer panels indicates a significant improvement in user satisfaction.
- myAccount won an Excellence in Customer Service Award at the inaugural Irish Civil Service Excellence in Innovation Awards.

Development

Design

The innovation was developed by business and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) stakeholders working in collaboration. There was strong leadership and collective ownership by all key stakeholders.

The project team consisted of subject matter experts from the following fields:

- Revenue Legislation Services (legislation stakeholders),
- Planning Division (business stakeholders),
- ICT (responsible for Revenue's digital services),
- Customer service (experts from Revenue's tax districts).

All internal stakeholders were engaged and collaborated on delivery of the project from the initial inception through to the launch of the service which enabled refinement throughout the process to ensure success.

Testing

- The team developed different personas to understand our diverse customer base and how they would interact with the various services.
 - Data-driven design was used to gain educated insights into our customer base which informed the design of the final product. This resulted in a product which meets the varying needs of a diverse customer base.
 - User testing groups involving customers provided early insight into the effectiveness of the design and allowed the team to incorporate feedback before the final product was launched.
 - Normal business process, systems and development testing were also carried out internally.
-

Implementation

Tools used:

- Internally, agile delivery methodology was used to ensure early and predictable software delivery, reduced costs and maximum business value. This was achieved through a high degree of collaboration between Revenue's ICT and business stakeholders.
 - Cross-divisional project boards and steering groups were established to ensure robust governance procedures were in place.
 - The development of different personas, use of data driven design and user testing groups provided educated insights into our customer base and the effectiveness of the service design.
 - Comprehensive change management plans were developed to support the implementation phase.
-

Diffusion

- The Agile Methodology approach to project delivery was used in subsequent projects within Revenue where challenging timelines and high levels of business stakeholder engagement are a feature or requirement of the project
 - The project approach to user experience and data-driven design is also being replicated by other projects internally. Some are sharing the design and others are sharing the approach of engaging with specialist User Experience Designers in the project.
 - Revenue has shared the User Experience approach taken with other government departments via customer service networks and public sector innovation conferences.
-

Challenges and solutions

- The key challenges included:
- Designing a service that is easy to use and intuitive for a customer base with varying skill sets and IT capability – the development of personas, data driven design and user experience testing helped with this challenge.
- Devising a process which would confirm a person's identity in real time thus allowing instant access to the myAccount service, which hosts all our secure online services – collaboration and exchange of data with other government departments assisted in resolving this issue.
- Developing complex back office systems to ensure that we automated all manual processes to maximise efficiencies – a project team consisting of a range of subject matter experts ensured that effective solutions were devised.
- Extensive change management and communications to 2.4 million customers and almost 6,000 staff to ensure a smooth transition for our existing online users and to encourage other customers to use our online offerings – a comprehensive change management and communications plan was devised to ensure that all available opportunities were used to ensure smooth transition.
- Highly challenging timeframes – agile delivery methodology was used to ensure that these challenging timeframes were met.

Partnerships

External contractors and Department of Transport, Sport and Tourism

Other Public Sector, Private sector

User Experience Designers were contracted to ensure that the service was intuitive and easy to use for our diverse range of customers. IT developers were also contract to assist in the development of the service.

Exchange of information agreements were entered into with relevant public sector organisations to facilitate the real-time validation of a person's identity.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Being mindful of challenges that can arise when designing a service that is easy to use and intuitive for a customer base with varying skill sets and IT capability. Various tools used in the development of the innovation helped overcome these challenges, i.e.: the development of personas, data driven design and user experience testing.
 - Collaborating and exchanging data with other government departments was instrumental in devising a process which would confirm a person's identity in real time thus allowing instant access to the myAccount service.
 - Ensuring the project team comprised a range of subject matter experts was valuable for developing complex automated back office processes to maximise efficiencies.
 - Having a comprehensive change management and communications in plan in place to ensure a smooth transition period for customers and staff was extremely important.
 - The value of innovative project methodology in facing challenges effectively – agile delivery methodology was used to ensure that challenging timeframes were met.
-

Conditions for success

- Strong internal leadership and effective collaboration between all relevant internal stakeholders;
 - Skills, expertise and commitment of those involved in the development (legislation, ICT and business teams);
 - Comprehensive change management and transition plan implemented involving all key stakeholders;
 - Willingness and ability of customer service staff to act as ambassadors for the new service;
 - Willingness and ability of the public to use online services;
 - Effective governance procedures at all stages of the development and implementation process.
-

Copyright OECD. All rights reserved.