EMM makes a positive difference
in the community and citizens' daily lives

City of Ekurhuleni

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Customer
The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is one of eight South African metropolitan municipalities and located in the Gauteng province. Although the smallest in land area, Gauteng is South Africa's most populous province and the most economically powerful region in sub-Saharan Africa. EMM serves more than 3 million residents, operates 20 Customer Care Areas (CCAs) and employs more than 18,000 people.

Industry
Government

Opportunity
· Eliminate information silos and promote collaboration

· Capture and leverage business knowledge and intellectual property

· Increase productivity and effectiveness through standardization and automation

· Reduce approval times and improve customer services

Solution Set
· webMethods Business Process Management Platform

· ARIS

· CentraSite

· Adabas-Natural

· Global Consulting Services

Key Benefits
· Process view of metro enables management to identify deficiencies and target improvements

· Enterprise-wide transparency and visibility enables collaboration

· Release cycles for new, complex systems reduced from one year to two weeks

· Time-saving reports provide accurate, up-to-date information and enable enhanced planning

· Opportunity to leverage intellectual property to assist other municipalities and generate revenue

APPROVAL TIMES REDUCED
from **3 MONTHS** to less than **21 DAYS**

6 TIMES INCREASE
IN DEVELOPER PRODUCTIVITY

SERVICE RE-USE GREATER
than **90**%

Ekurhuleni: a place of peace

Named by its citizens, the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) unified 20 cities, townships and local councils in the East Rand region of Gauteng into a single municipality. The choice of a Tsonga word for its name, Ekurhuleni, symbolizes also the diversity the municipality represents. EMM's vision to be the smart, creative and developmental city embraces the metropolitan area's progressiveness.

EMM's mission is to provide people-centered services that are high quality, sustainable and affordable. Yet services were not unified across the municipality—each of the 20 Customer Care Areas (CCAs) and various departments had their own processes and procedures. The lack of transparency and standardization led to duplications, information silos, uncoordinated efforts, months-long approval times and hampered city planning.

"Software AG has been our valued partner from the beginning. They understood our vision, what we wanted to achieve and that it was not just about the technology. They have played an integral role helping us achieve our vision."

— **Vuyani Zwane** | Requirements Management and Solutions Delivery Manager, EMM

" Working with Software AG consulting is really fantastic—they are always there and willing to assist and resources are of a high standard. They provide a great deal of input, helped us build the structure we needed and enabled us to embrace BPM much better and faster. And they're always willing to go the extra mile. That's one thing I find very refreshing about Software AG."

— **Vuyani Zwane** | Requirements Management and Solutions Delivery Manager, EMM

From silos to seamless

Goal: improve service delivery

To increase service quality and reduce processing times, EMM needed to eliminate service variations and automate processes that were largely undocumented. "We all understood the services and how they functioned," explained Vuyani Zwane, requirements management and solutions delivery manager at EMM. "But there was no standardization across Ekurhuleni—people effectively worked in silos. Just one example, our health department has over 100 clinics and each had its own process for a given service. We needed everyone to execute the same service process for a particular business policy."

Part of EMM's challenge to solve was that service processes were mostly manual and paper-based, handwritten forms were physically sent from one department to another. Manual entry of the same information in multiple systems cost time, effort and increased errors. Forms could be lost and it was difficult to determine where a particular application was in the process flow.

Too long to wait

One result was that applicants for indigent status had to wait three months for approvals, on average. But this was not the only consequence. By South African law, indigent residents are entitled to receive certain essential services for free that they otherwise could not afford, including water and electricity. Those unemployed are further protected under the law and cannot have their electricity turned off.

However, because EMM's back-end systems lacked integration of key information, specifically pending application status, it often happened that those awaiting qualification had their electricity services unfairly disconnected. The lack of coordination and integration across the municipality had a high cost in organizational efficiency and business flexibility:

- Customer service had to individually search through nine unique data sources in order to validate the properties an applicant owned, a time-consuming and cumbersome process
- Applicants had to make multiple visits to the CCAs, even to simply inquire on their application status, costing everyone time and energy
- Silo IT solutions built for specific business areas did not fit in the enterprise architecture and made integration increasingly unmanageable; because of integration issues, development projects were taking longer, sometimes even failed and had too much risk attached
- Management planning was difficult, as information was incomplete or not reliable, and the manual reports were delayed if a contributor was out of the office—in addition, no one could accurately answer questions such as: Which steps are taking longer? How many new people did we register this week?

It takes a vision

Plus planning and buy-in

Key project stakeholders in IT and business not only secured the proper buy-in but also helped the organization see the value of the project early on—people believed in the vision. The planning phase was one year, long by some standards. "However, we knew," said Zwane, "in the planning is where we were going to get it right." Seven customer-facing processes were commissioned for the initial project with the key focus on integrating and standardizing the processes across EMM.

Get There Faster

For the technology to support its transformation, EMM selected Software AG, its webMethods and ARIS platforms and CentraSite. Key factors in the decision included EMM's financial management system VENUS built on Software AG's Adabas-Natural, as well as the high analyst rankings for Software AG's solutions. IT also employed Software AG's Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) solution as the basis for the agility layer and loosely coupled architecture it needed to increase flexibility and respond to business needs.

No more manual

The municipality's business processes are now modeled and centrally stored using ARIS and the ARIS dashboards facilitate management's decision-making. With SOA principles and CentraSite, IT can easily promote and govern re-usable services and components. webMethods Business Process Management Suite (BPMS) enables automation of processes and seamless interconnection of EMM's disparate architecture spanning Adabas-Natural, Oracle®, Microsoft® SharePoint® and ArcGIS® (GIS). A clear advantage for EMM was the close fit and flexibility of the Software AG platforms and solutions as this enabled IT to standardize integrations—and eliminate significant business risk.

Indigent management registration, one process standardized in the first project, is now an automated "live" process, and applicants receive immediate confirmation of their registration via a mobile text message. The system proactively informs applicants as their application proceeds through EMM's verification, assessment and ap-proval steps—all via their mobile phone.

No more unnecessary trips to a CCA to inquire saves everyone time. The process also prevents duplications of registrations and has enabled significantly more effective customer services overall.

Significant results

A process that used to take three months is now done in less than 21 days. For the first time, EMM can measure how long a process takes, as well as individual steps, can see where errors occur and why—and take steps to mitigate. Employees are more efficient and can focus on service delivery. With additional process alignments and integration with other government departments, including SARS, Home Affairs and Human Settlement, IT will further reduce process approval times in phases, to seven days in the very near term, then three—and the ultimate goal is a one-day turnaround.

Tedious manual searches through multiple sources for information have been replaced by a single search query. Pending application status in key systems helps prevent unfair disconnects, and customer service can now quickly tell management which date someone was registered and where their application is in the process. Process visibility for stakeholders also pinpoints delays and enables escalations when needed. There are far fewer errors and no need to track a piece of paper anymore.

Open door to the future
About to be released, EMM's process-driven call center solution will provide self-service capabilities for customers to check their account status and current bill and answer many other account-related questions. This will reduce the volume of calls to call center agents by more than 50 percent and—most importantly—will enable agents to focus on their highest-priority task—answering emergency calls for the municipality. Customers won't have to wait in long phone queues and will have the information needed to pay their bills on time.

EMM's development team: productive and efficient

- webMethods helped EMM fast-track re-use and fully support SOA principles adoption

- Better utilization of small team—six projects can be managed instead of just one

- New complex system development time reduced from up to one year to about two weeks

- Roll outs are far faster—five processes automated in less than six months

- Standard technical language also streamlined process of understanding

- Analysis and development able to work in far closer cooperation

- Single integration platform eliminates point-to-point integrations

Collaboration for success

Work in tandem

"Now our registration process is linked to an organizational policy, so EMM's strategies and policies are aligned and can work in tandem," explained Jackie Seritsane, indigent business process owner at EMM. "This is very important and where you start as a stakeholder. Using webMethods BPMS we can now easily collaborate with other departments."

The workflow management facilitates collaboration and alignment, enabling stakeholders across EMM to share information and make decisions quicker, instead of waiting for a committee. This allows business to easily align policies and departments as well as reduce approval timeframes for the many services the municipality provides.

Seritsane further noted key reasons for the project's outstanding success. "The right people in the organization were involved on the project and in the meetings together," Seritsane said. "This helped increase our collaboration and decisions were easier and faster as a result. It was not easy, but what we achieved here is a direct result of the effort we have all put in, how we have grown as a team and our level of collaboration and commitment."

Far-reaching effects

Similar gains in standardization, automation and efficiency have been achieved throughout EMM, including processes for electricity, waste management, building plans, rezoning and property alienation. Furthermore, project successes have fostered a very positive perception of EMM, generated wide community support, sponsorship and promotion by EMM's mayor and strong internal interest to leverage the solutions. Now other municipalities are looking to EMM for its leadership and innovativeness.

"We are the first South African municipality to have implemented a process-driven indigent management program," said Zwane. "Others looking to solve similar municipal challenges have typically sought an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) approach to BPM but our strategy was an integration approach. Many others started earlier than us, spent more money and still have yet to see results. We think with our processes, approach and intellectual property, we can do something completely different—leverage these to assist other municipalities and generate revenue opportunities for EMM."

Inspiring and visible

A daily difference

Another positive effect: Both customer satisfaction and employee morale have increased greatly. "We have 40 CCA representatives and each can help an average of 50 people now, in the time it used to take to serve two or three," said Seritsane. "What used to take about five hours is now easily done in just a few minutes. Our time spent with customers is shorter but far more efficient and higher quality. We have all been inspired by what we are doing here—how we can make a positive difference in our daily work and in the daily lives of our citizens."

Added Zwane: "Absolutely—and this difference is visible both inside and outside the organization. With this project EMM has achieved tremendous success on many fronts: from IT's perspective through process standardization and a unified enterprise IT architecture; from the business side by unifying services and getting everybody to understand better the business of what they do on a day-to-day basis—really a key to our success; and on a social level because it touched the lives of the people in a positive way. Our role as local government is to provide services to our citizens—and we can do that far better now. We're proud that we have changed the way the city works."

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Get There Faster