payit

Moving the city of St. Louis
into the GovCloud

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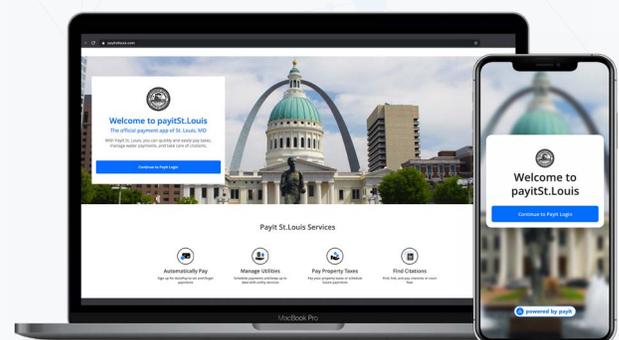into the GovCloud

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Establishing a true partnership

Gregory F.X. Daly, St. Louis Collector of Revenue, was facing a major challenge. The city's payment system did not have any integration capabilities, which required the Collector of Revenue's office to manually enter each payment, an incredibly time consuming process. In addition, this payment system was only available on desktop, with no mobile-responsive or native app channel available.

Mr. Daly was also looking to consolidate property tax payments and water/refuse payments into one experience for his residents. This presented another challenge, the solution had to be scalable across several other government services, without a large customization effort. Traditionally, this vision would take multiple, custom-coded solutions that cost tens of millions of dollars, something Mr. Daly's budgets wouldn't allow for.

In November 2016, Mr. Daly's office partnered with GovTech leader PayIt on a digital reimagining of the citizen experience. Through this partnership, the Collector of Revenue's office was able to launch payitSt.Louis at no cost to the city, with the flexibility for rapid deployment of new services and features.

With payitSt.Louis, the St. Louis Collector of Revenue's office is able to provide a citizen-centric, all-in-one digital experience. payitSt. Louis allows residents to easily pay property taxes, earnings taxes, utility bills and court violations/tickets. All of this can be done by the citizen's preferred device — with web, mobile-web and native Apple and Android apps available.

What sets payitSt.Louis apart from other digital government offerings is that it's not just a payment platform. payitSt.Louis provides a full, end-to-end experience for every user. Citizens are able to create a single, secure wallet that combines and stores all of their payment, property and transaction information in one place. Residents of St. Louis can also set up alerts, set up recurring payments and keep track of upcoming due dates.

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Built for the future

The scalability and security of payitSt.Louis is what makes it truly transformative. Since inception, the city of St. Louis has launched new services and features to continue executing their vision of a unified citizen experience. In February 2018, payitSt.Louis expanded to include municipal court payments. Through an additional API integration with the municipal court's back-office systems, citizens can now search for and pay their court citations with payitSt.Louis. This is all verified in real time, ensuring citizen's cases reflect payment immediately.

PayIt's nimble and flexible technology allows the city of St. Louis to be responsive to the ever-changing landscape of today's society. During the early months of COVID-19, Mr. Daly's office saw the urgency of shifting traditionally in-person services online. With 2019 tax deadlines approaching, PayIt allowed the city to launch an online payment collection page in a matter of days. This allowed tax payers to safely make their earnings tax payments at home. With over $1,000,000 in online tax payments collected for the 2019 tax season, the city plans to continue offering this safe and effective method of collecting tax payments for their citizens.

Scalability is only one part of the equation, the security of constituent and agency data is mission critical to the city. payitSt.Louis is built on a microservices architecture and runs securely on AWS GovCloud (US). AWS GovCloud (US) gives government customers and their partners the flexibility to architect secure cloud solutions that comply with the FedRAMP High baseline and other compliance requirements. This allows the PayIt platform to securely process billions of dollars in transactions on behalf of government agencies.

Traditional server architectures are stacked, meaning that a single server failure results in loss of the entire stack.

Microservices architecture distributes data across server stacks, or clusters. If a single cluster fails, other clusters take up the data capacity without downtime.

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Improving operational efficiency

By providing a citizen-centered experience, St. Louis has increased online revenue and improved operational efficiency. In the fall of 2019, payitSt.Louis made electronic check (or ACH) payments available across all channels. This enabled the city to collect money sooner, while simultaneously decreasing delinquent payments. ACH also allows citizens to forego credit card fees on their tax bills.

Having one vendor for all payments has streamlined the reconciliation process for the city. With payitSt.Louis, the Collector of Revenue's office can easily reconcile all payments and ensure the same process no matter the service line.

Meeting citizens where they are is a motivating factor for the Collector of Revenue's office. The city knew many residents preferred to pay their water bills over the phone, but the technology in place was antiquated. In May 2020, payitSt.Louis launched an interactive voice response (IVR) phone payment system. The IVR solution adheres to all of the same business rules and workflows as the website and app. In the seven months since launch, there have been over 5,550 phone payments and $966,000 in revenue collected. With even more services and features on the horizon, St. Louis has established themselves as a leader in the GovTech space.

As technology continually shapes the way citizens interact with local government, we needed an innovative partner who could meet that challenge. Through web and mobile applications, IVR payments and expanded services, payitSt.Louis has kept us in the forefront of an ever-changing landscape; keeping our customers' payments and information safe while providing a quick and easy way to pay.

Gregory F.X. Daly
Collector of Revenue, St. Louis

$88 million in total online revenue collected since launch

98% increase in online revenue collected year-over-year (2018–2019)

140,000+ total citizen accounts created – over half of the adult population of St. Louis