

New Zealand

Companies Register transformation with Foster Moore

Customer

In 2004, the New Zealand Companies Office pioneered the world's first fully electronic Companies Register in collaboration with Foster Moore. This innovation contributed significantly to New Zealand's impressive standings in The World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" rankings for six years. The Register was designed to facilitate registering and maintaining various company, society, and trust documents. Despite the success, the partners recognized the need for improvement and evolution in response to rapidly changing technology and user demands.

Challenges

As internet usage and acceptance of online self-service facilities surged, the user base of the Register began to shift from professionals, such as lawyers and accountants, to business owners. These infrequent users required an instinctive, user-friendly system with no formal training necessary. Foster Moore and the New Zealand Ministry of Economic Development (NZMED) embarked on a mission to develop a replacement for the original online Register in 2008, aiming to enhance user interface, usability, and back-office efficiency.

The revamp is intended to minimize support calls from the public and increase the range of functions available to external users. The Companies Office aimed to streamline its operations and cut costs by transferring more responsibilities to users. NZMED targeted an annual saving of over \$2 million through these efficiencies.

Solution

In collaboration with NZMED, Foster Moore completed the 24-month project, launching the updated New Zealand Companies Register in May 2010. With the application of Foster Moore's registry platform, the system was built around legal forms that mimic their paper counterparts. This forms-based definition allows for specific activities to be automatically triggered upon changes to specific fields.

The key features of the updated New Zealand Companies Register include company incorporation and maintenance, director searching, online annual return filing, compliance assessment, payment and refund processing, and role-based security. An integrated workflow between the public users and registry staff enables a seamless flow of activities.

Results

Another ambitious goal of the new project was to create 17 additional electronic registers. This meant the new system required a flexible data model, user interface, and processing logic to support the

registers from a single software base. Furthermore, the increased demand for real-time communication between government departments (G2G) and between government and businesses (G2B) had to be addressed.

The New Zealand Government's steps towards increasing online and self-service engagement necessitated the integration of the new Companies Register with New Zealand's national online authentication and identification system (iGovt). Technical objectives focused on scalability, performance, resilience, availability, security, and implementing modern best practices in infrastructure design.

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT (MBIE)

This case study exemplifies the profound impact of evolving technology and user requirements on service delivery. The New Zealand Companies Office's and Foster Moore's proactive response to these changes has resulted in a world-leading, cost-effective, and efficient system that fulfils the present needs and lays the groundwork for future expansion. Their ongoing commitment to improvement continues to uphold New Zealand's reputation for ease of doing business.

\$22 million+

ANNUAL SAVINGS IN NZD

40,000

NEW USERS IN FIRST TWO MONTHS

17

ELECTRONIC REGISTERS ADDED

24 months

TIME TO PROJECT COMPLETION

New Zealand

Companies Register

Visit the live register: companies.govt.nz

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Ireland

Companies Registration Office (CRO) - An Oifig um Chlárú Cuideachtaí

Bermuda Registrar of Companies Platform

Ministry of Finance, Registrar of Companies (ROC), Bermuda

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