



Cecil County Government
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Information Technology Five Year Plan FY2008 – FY2012



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Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to provide a template for sustained support and prepare for the growth of Cecil County IT departmental responsibilities over the next five years. This plan is not an “all or nothing” proposition, or a step-by-step blueprint, but is a series of recommendations that can be adopted in their entirety or piecemeal and still achieve the desired benefits. Recognizing that priorities change and budgets shift, the plan is designed with as much flexibility as possible, and as much independence between the objectives as possible.

Mission

The Cecil County Government Information Technology Department plans and manages applicable and functional technology within our budget constraints. We professionally deliver accurate, timely, reliable and secure information and services. Information Technology functions improve the quality of service, increase productivity and provide solutions that aid in the efficient delivery of County services.

Vision

The Cecil County Government Information Technology Department seeks opportunities to promote collaborations and partnerships to overcome barriers of cost and time. The following practices help achieve this vision:

- Provide public access to government information by making frequently requested government information available online at all times
- Use technology that is adaptable and interoperable
- Foster citizen, business and other government partnerships
- Use open architecture solutions that are designed for long-term growth
- Share information through network infrastructure
- Integrate systems with flexibility allowing for a multitude of development solutions
- Provide reduced transaction time for citizens using government services
- Leverage investments to benefit all County departments, municipalities and citizens
- Utilize current information technology to get the maximum benefits and improve opportunities for enterprise growth and development throughout the County.

Goals

- **Data Integrity** – The department strives to provide 100% integrity of data on the network level from any loss or corruption.
- **Customer Care** - The objective of the department is to provide excellent customer care. We have established and are constantly evaluating and enhancing customer relationship procedures.
- **Excellence** - The department commits to perform all tasks with diligence and excellence.
- **Professionalism** - The ambition of the department is that all staff will relate to customers with the highest standards of professionalism. This includes treating other people with courtesy, respect and honesty, as well as doing our work in a timely and proficient manner.
- **Technology** - The department strives to provide customers with efficient technical resources that will advance the delivery of cost-effective and reliable public services.

Success Factors

As with any plan, there are critical success factors in implementing these goals:

- **Executive Support** – The endorsement and ongoing support of the plan by the Cecil County Board of County Commissioners and the senior executives from all of the agencies and departments is crucial to the plan's success.
- **Cooperation** – The cooperation of the departments and agencies with IT, and with each other, is a critical success factor.
- **Strong Leadership** – Information Technology solutions have become an integral part of our County government. Strong leadership in the IT department, as well as a clear vision for the future, are essential components in making this plan come to fruition.

Action Items

Broadband Solutions - As the expansion of broadband services infiltrate the county, the IT department will negotiate blanket contracts with providers to allow for high-speed remote access from remote County offices. Consistent communication with all broadband providers is imperative to monitor the progress of the divergence and current availability to county businesses, business parks and residents. The IT department will maintain up-to-date records of this progress and make it available to the public upon request.

Centralize Development and Support – Cecil County will pool its systems development and support resources into a more centralized organization to better coordinate development and support standards across all departments. This measure will ensure that all systems development and support conforms to County IT standards.

Charge Backs – Precise records are maintained to ensure accurate “time spent” charge-back to the departments. All work performed by the IT department staff must be initiated with a helpdesk ticket. Support time provided to agencies that are outside of the direct county departments are recorded and maintained for the purpose of charging back.

Community Relationships – Establishment and nurturing of relationships between the County, other government agencies, businesses and citizens is essential to better understand all technical needs. IT leadership will establish and maintain these relationships.

Data Sharing - Excluding sensitive information that has unique security and privacy issues, Cecil County departments and agencies should integrate their data collection and storage efforts wherever possible. Currently information is often collected and stored multiple times and in multiple formats by multiple departments; this is not only inefficient and wastes resources but can lead to inconsistent and incorrect information in key County systems

Disaster Recovery and Emergency Preparedness – The IT department will continue rigorous efforts to provide the ability to recover information in the event of a physical disaster or accident. An emergency response team will be established and tasks and coverage hours assigned. Systems will be architected with redundancy wherever possible with offsite backup.

Document Imaging – All County documents will be stored in electronic format when possible. In special cases both paper and electronic documents will be stored. The imaging system will provide the County with a robust and reliable method to store past, current and future documents. Redundant backups to provide intact data assurance will be consistently monitored. A paperless FAX solution is being considered.

Document Retention – Policies and procedures will be developed, implemented and enforced, pertaining to electronic and paper document retention. All departments will be asked to participate in establishing these procedures to gain compliance with legislative standards. Electronic retention will be automated.

Focus on Energy Consumption – The IT department will continue to make energy saving recommendations that reduce the power cost to Cecil County Government. All IT architecture will be designed and installed with low energy considerations.

Security – The IT department will increasingly provide integrated security in all infrastructures, computers and devices. Continued attention will be focused on security goals leading to refined security policies.

Strong web presence – Citizens and commercial organizations have embraced the Internet as a standard vehicle for electronic commerce. The public depends on the Internet for access to key information and to conduct normal business at its convenience. Government at all levels will be expected to conform to the same standards and practices as commercial sites. Cecil County currently has a strong presence on the Internet and that objective will remain a consistent and high priority. In the near future, more ecommerce will be implemented and utilized. In many cases, ecommerce will alleviate the necessity travel to county facilities. These measures will improve accuracy and save travel cost and time for Cecil County citizens.

Standardize Acquisition - Cecil County purchases numerous technology devices, components and contracts. Acquisition standardization allows the IT department to provide better service, attain better prices and maintain consistent inventory procedures. All departments should order hardware, software and IT services through the IT department.

Technology Standards – The IT department will strive to stay consistent with current IT standards and exhibit caution when approaching technology that is very new. All advancement decisions will be weighed and considered prior to implementation. We will maintain compatibility with the public, companies and other government agencies.

Telephony – The IT department will design and provide the infrastructure and support necessary to provide the county offices with secure and reliable telephone systems.

Training and Education – Technological advancement and changes dictates that it is imperative that the IT staff continues training and education. The IT staff will establish and offer technical education to all County agencies.

Video Broadcasting and Conferencing - The IT department will establish priorities and standards for video broadcasting and video conferencing. All pertinent infrastructure architecture will be designed and built with these objectives considered.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the implementation of this plan will be the responsibility of the Cecil County Government Administration and the IT department. The IT department will do self reviews on a regular basis to ensure compliance. Deviations from this plan will be handled in consultation with all affected parties.

