

Ministry of Interior, Thailand

Connecting the Government to Citizens: Sun Makes the Net Work for Thailand's eGovernment Infrastructure



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Thailand's Ministry of Interior (MOI) adopts Sun solutions as a foundation to develop one of the country's most advanced e-government infrastructures. Project Central Population Registration (CPR) is a nationwide e-infrastructure project that strives to bring together Thailand's central and district administrations, providing quicker information sharing, more accurate updates and automated services to the people.

Database of an entire nation

With a population of over 62 million, the Kingdom of Thailand is one of the largest countries in the South East Asia region. The country is divided into 76 provinces, 2057 municipality districts and 7000 sub-districts. The MOI's responsibility is to oversee the administration of the entire population through services such as registration of birth, death, marriage and voting.

It would have been impossible at one time to create a centralized database of such a huge country and to keep it updated accurately over time. With the advent of information technology, however, it is now possible to leverage on a centralized e-information infrastructure to bring differing databases together into one centralized repository and make it available to multiple agencies and departments in their daily operations.

The CPR project was initiated for just such a purpose. It was to bring together the government's databases on residential records, ID cards, election, marriage and divorce records, etc., and consolidate them into one centralized database that is available to all levels of the government. The objective of the project is to establish dynamic and real-time links between administrative centers across the country, thus enabling information sharing that ultimately contributes to the better administration of the country.

Keeping the network connected

Sun's track record in network computing and its commitment to distributed computing infrastructure make it a prime candidate for consideration when MOI began searching for a solution.

A number of solutions vendors and vendor partners, including IBM, Unisys, Silicon Graphics and DEC, responded to the call of the MOI for a solutions platform. Their technologies were vigorously tested for reliability, flexibility and scalability. Selection criteria were based on the objectives of the project and the ability to carry the project to a successful completion while other factors such as organization, track records and support services were also considered. Control Data Pte Ltd., a Sun Microsystems local partner, passed the benchmark tests and was selected as an implementation partner for the project.

“Network infrastructure is one of the technology that we wanted to employ. The client/server infrastructure reduces investment costs compared to deploying on PC systems and is easier to maintain as well as more reliable. Right now, on the nationwide level, the system remains on a server-to-server architecture. But in the future, when a super highway information system is deployed, we can reduce server dependency and employ a network configuration on a regional, and, may be even central government basis as it is easier to maintain and manage,” said Surachai Srisaracam, Director of Registration Administration Bureau, Local Administration Department, Ministry of Interior, Thailand.

Ultimately, Sun solutions were selected for the following reasons:

- Superior network architecture and advance technology. Sun is the original network company since its founding in 1982. The network is the computer is our calling.
- The flexibility of Java™ technology that allows easy programming and cross-platform usability.
- The availability of local resources for full technological support.
- Proven technological platform for reliability, scalability and compatibility.

Company

The Registration Administration Bureau,
Ministry of Interior

Industry

Government

Products/Solutions

- Sun Solaris™ Operating Environment
- Sun Enterprise™ 6000
- Sun Enterprise™ 5000
- Sun Enterprise™ 4800
- Sun Enterprise™ 450
- Sun Enterprise™ 250

Key Business Challenges

- Provide an integrated framework to better manage information across provinces and districts
- Improve operational efficiency to provide better services to the public
- Reduce redundancy and ultimately to reduce costs
- Leveraging technology to provide effective administration

Key Business Solutions

- Installation of a nation-wide network that links the ministry's 1077 local registration offices and central offices
- Creation of a centralized database to integrate the ministry's residential records database, ID card database, election database, marriage and divorce database, etc
- Provides agencies and ministries with easy and real-time access to the central database
- Launch of the www.khonthai.com Website to offer ministry services to the public and provide online access to databases
- Consolidation and expansion of services through a planned smart ID card program

Key Alliance

- Control Data (Thailand) Ltd

Write once, run anywhere

Sun's open and standards-based platform creates an extremely flexible environment for software engineers to write, design and customize applications. Sun's Java technology allows a program to be written on a platform and be interoperable with any other platforms. This gave software writers tremendous latitude in developing and coordinating their applications program.

The Java technology is an object-oriented, platform-independent, multithreaded programming environment. It is a cornerstone of Sun Open Net Environment (Sun ONE) – Sun's vision, platform, architecture and expertise for delivering Services-on-Demand today and tomorrow.

The level of services provided to the public has improved drastically. ID card applications that at one time required a 3-month waiting period and a trip back to the applicants hometown are now processed and issued within 15 minutes.

In fact, most of CPR's applications are developed in-house. Over 300 software developers from Registration Administration Bureau and Control Data work full time at the organization to develop, install and maintain software applications for the system.

The massive population database project included the implementation of the following Sun products:

- 2 x Sun Enterprise™6000
- 18 x Sun Enterprise™5000
- 1 x Sun Enterprise™4800
- 1 x Sun Enterprise™450
- 3 x Sun Enterprise™250

Delivering value, now and beyond

Today, MOI's population database system covers all of Thailand's provinces and districts. The network connects all of the ministry's 1077 local registration centers with 9 regional computer centers across the country. Agencies from within the ministry and other departments are allowed easy access into the database by simply entering the system.

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Furthermore, core MOI services have also been made available to the public from a Website, www.khonthai.com. Inquiry for people registration information, IDcard information, Passport information, Voting list, Public key Infrastructure, and e-mail boxes, for instance, are now available to the Thai people online. In the future Thai citizens living overseas can even vote in an election through the khonthai Website.

For future plans, the MOI is preparing to introduce smart chips into its new ID cards that make them truly multi-functional cards. The new cards may be used for taxation, health care, and social insurance purposes, and may serve as credit, debit, and ATM cards.

The MOI project is based on the concept of sharing one resource throughout one network but with many points of access, allowing MOI agencies and other government agencies to share information across departmental barriers. It improves operational efficiency and reduces tasks duplication. It is a system that enables the government on all levels to utilize resources more fully, and, ultimately, to deliver better and more efficient services to the Thai people.

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