

Organization

The City of Brampton, Canada, is the third-largest city in the Greater Toronto Area and Canada's second-fastest-growing city. Brampton is home to more than 600,000 people and 8,000 businesses, offering residents a high-quality lifestyle that combines big city conveniences with a traditional quality of life.

The City of Brampton, Canada

The Challenge

Provide better service to citizens by improving the efficiency of the city's IT processes; resolve data management issues by streamlining access to accurate, reliable, and timely information.

The Strategy

Create an integrated system that can combine data from 100 disconnected applications and establish data quality to ensure accuracy. Establish a single view into all the IT activities undertaken by each agency.

The Results

Managers and staff have immediate access to the information they need and are assured that the data is accurate, up-to-date, and in sync with all other data throughout the system. The City is able to provide more accurate information and more responsive service to citizens.

Information Builders Solution

iWay Service Manager, iWay Master Data Center, iWay Data Quality Center, iWay Issue Tracker, and Information Builders Professional Services.

Information Builders provides the industry's most scalable software solutions for data management and analytics. With one smart platform for integration, data quality, and analytics, we help companies manage their data, generate insights, take action, and deliver impact.



Information Builders Boosts Operational Efficiency for the City of Brampton

Canadian City Responds to Rapid Growth and Legislative Mandates With Master Data Management

Commonly known as the Flower City, the City of Brampton is the third-largest city in the Greater Toronto Area and Canada's second-fastest-growing city, with the population leaping from 150,000 to 600,000 over two decades. Positioning itself as a global economic contender, Brampton is home to more than 8,000 businesses concentrated in the manufacturing, retail, and wholesale sectors.

While population and economic growth have created a stimulating living environment, Brampton city officials have scrambled to manage assets to meet increasing demands from this growing population of citizens. These management headaches reached crisis mode when the Public Service Accounting Board (PSAB) issued a Tangible Capital Assets (TCA) request for accurate reporting of all City assets, from trees to vehicles to public buildings. Brampton officials realized that creating consolidated reports would be extremely difficult and time-consuming since information about City assets was maintained in more than a dozen different asset-management applications.

"When we asked to report on the value and condition of all the City's tangible assets – such as roads, sewers, facilities, vehicles, and equipment – we found that we couldn't do it effectively," admits Gustavo Espinosa, solution integration team leader for the City of Brampton. "Our hands were tied by our outdated IT platform."

Espinosa and his team worked with Information Builders to establish a flexible software integration environment that combines data from many different applications to create a consistent and accurate source of master data. Espinosa's team partnered with

Information Builders' Professional Services team to implement this new IT environment, which is based on iWay Service Manager, iWay Master Data Center (MDC), and iWay Data Quality Center (DQC).

Today, this project is well underway and is already simplifying activities in the Planning Department. The City's managers and staff have fast access to consistent data that is shared by several different information systems. As the City continues to work with Information Builders to improve data quality and expand the data integration environment, employees are able to provide more accurate and responsive service to citizens.

Establishing a Cohesive Integration Strategy

As with many city governments, Brampton's IT department must support the information management needs of multiple projects among many departments, including fire and emergency services, law enforcement, transit, parks and recreation, economic development, courts, and animal services. Developing and integrating information systems from these various agencies led to a disparate set of applications and data sources, which made it difficult to easily exchange information.

For example, the City's IT professionals had to manage dozens of point-to-point connections to create interfaces and share data among its software applications. They had no overarching integration strategy, no cohesive master data management (MDM) solution, and no trained staff available to remedy the situation.

IT leaders solicited a request for proposal (RFP) for a general-purpose integration environment. Information Builders, Software AG, Oracle, IBM, and several other technology vendors responded. Information Builders demonstrated how each of the City's applications, databases, and development platforms could work in concert based on a modern service-oriented architecture (SOA); extract, transform, and load (ETL) layer; and data quality tools for real-time connectivity, integration, and data integrity.

"What I found very interesting during the RFP process was that all the integration companies that responded were themselves using iWay for integration via the iWay Adapter Framework," says Espinosa. "We took a good, hard look at iWay because it was obvious that Information Builders was an integration company for integration companies."

Espinosa and his colleagues asked Information Builders and two other vendors to create a proof-of-concept based on a real-world example that involved consolidating and cleansing property data. The vendors had to combine disparate information on property ownership, size, taxes, location, and permits from three different information systems. Only Information Builders was able to complete this use case in a compelling way.

According to Espinosa, compared to the other vendors that Brampton considered, the iWay tools were easier to use and had a very attractive pricing model. "Information Builders put forward a very financially competitive bid, and we were pleased with the local support from the Toronto office," he says. "We concluded that Information Builders could implement our new compliance deliverables much faster than the other technology vendors."

Creating New Interfaces for Greater Accuracy and Consistency

Within three months, iWay Service Manager had become the backbone of the City's integration infrastructure. Working with Information Builders Professional Services team, Espinosa and his

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Gustavo Espinosa
Solution Integration Team
Leader
City of Brampton

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team began by integrating a FleetFocus Fleet Management Software package with a PeopleSoft HR application and a Hansen call accounting package. They went on to create iWay interfaces to custom and packaged information systems-handling taxation, recreational programs, permits, transit activities, and a GIS mapping system.

Brampton’s initial focus was to build a centralized master database for all properties in the city. Previously, City employees in the planning department had to collect data from three different sources when searching for information about individual properties: permit information, GIS information, and ownership information. Logging into these information systems and then manually combining the information was difficult and time-consuming, especially since information was stored in slightly different ways. Often the information was duplicated in the same system, creating a significant data quality challenge.

Now, the iWay environment enables a single view into all the IT activities surrounding a property while creating a consistent set of “golden” records. Each system captures its own information, and then iWay Service Manager moves it to a centralized repository, created with iWay Master Data Center.

Building on iWay as the Integration Standard

Today, this new data integration and data quality system is in full production mode. Unified and validated master data is instantly available to a wide range of internal systems. A copy of all master data records is published to an MDM hub, where data is cleansed and reconciled. iWay monitors the influx of data and delivers it into a central master repository while correcting data quality issues among the City’s information systems. Data is updated in the individual systems of entry and can be sent downstream for reporting and analysis.

Thanks to business rules defined in the iWay environment, each application retrieves and updates the data in the same way so that users obtain consistent data for each property. City employees can access this data with the assurance that it is accurate, up-to-date, and in sync across systems – with common definitions for ownership, spatial references, address, permits, street type, property code, tax data, and other variables related to each property.

“We can provide better service to our citizens now that we are maintaining more accurate data,” Espinosa says. “Data processing activities that used to take up to a week are now accomplished immediately.”

Future integration projects include combining employee data from PeopleSoft Human Capital Management and Microsoft Active Directory to create a master set of HR records. The City also plans to use iWay to distribute property data to other internal and external organizations, as well as to create data governance procedures for several city agencies.

iWay has become the corporate standard for integration within the City of Brampton. According to Espinosa, it touches all of the city’s major systems and impacts many facets of the organization. “The utilization of iWay is quite large, with dozens of interfaces and many agencies and employees impacted,” he says. “iWay helps the city government do its job. All our integration needs begin and end with iWay Service Manager.

“We have a very close relationship with Information Builders’ Professional Services, and we have relied on their support for many projects. We will continue to utilize their help as we build on the iWay foundation to ensure consistency in our data sources and applications.”

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