

UI Cloud RFI Webinar Q&A

June 24, 2014

	Question	Answer
1	<p>What customer will place the order after the RFI / RFP process? Will it be the federal government...Dept of Labor or a State and Local entity? Is the end customer funding this RFI the States or the USDOL?</p>	<p>The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) provided funding to the Information Technology Support Center (ITSC) to do this overall study, of which the RFI is a key component. We also have identified DOL's funding source to hopefully take us to some proof of concept or proof of concepts once we complete the study and assess our options.</p> <p>The funding for the actual implementation of Cloud solutions is to be determined, but one of the things that the study and RFI will help with is to give us a good informational foundation.</p>
2	<p>Would like to know about flexibility of response approach ... seems very geared to commercial cloud service providers but there are other approaches that would meet ITSC's needs. There are approaches that can uniformly address multiple providers but are not themselves a provider. Can that fit?</p>	<p>Yes, we are open to suggestions. We have some models and suggestions in this RFI, but we are looking for industry to give us innovative solutions that they think can fit and satisfy the needs and the requirements that we've put forward in the RFI. Please don't be limited by what you're thinking the interpretation is, give us your creative solutions. Those examples that are given in the RFI are really to stimulate thought, and is not intended to restrict or limit. So if you feel it's appropriate, we will certainly welcome your suggestions.</p>
3	<p>How is this initiative being coordinated with existing consortium efforts?</p>	<p>The consortium vendors and state consortium representatives are aware of this effort and the idea is to complement and augment the work that is being done by the consortiums.</p> <p>The consortiums as described are leveraging Cloud services. So there's a two-way kind of information flow that is existing and will continue to exist. One of our goals here is to leverage our Cloud investment in the consortia, there might be multiple ways to do that.</p> <p>The consortium's cloud service pursuits are moving train already and we don't want to interfere with the existing investments that we have with the consortia; therefore, we want to be cautious regarding that, but also leverage the work that they're doing.</p> <p>For example, one of the ideas we have is that a Cloud Service model might offer the opportunity in the future for a consortium that reaches operations with their system to onboard additional states. That is also an objective of the consortiums. That's an important aspect of this project. But again, how that's accomplished, how it's done systematically, is what we are exploring with the broker concept, and that's all the broker is at this time, a concept. So we certainly welcome ideas regarding that as well.</p>

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4	<p>Would it be possible to get names of the states regarding the UI/IT Modernization status? Slide 10 accounts for 18 states, are the remaining states not involved at all in modernization?</p>	<p>Yes, that information is available on the ITSC's website http://itsc.org under UI IT Modernization section.</p> <p>You can see in the RFI and in this presentation the list of states that are involved in a modernization effort through a consortium. And then if you go to our website, http://itsc.org, on the public page there is a map of the United States which lists those states that are in development or that are already modernized. The map shows if they are building a UI benefits system, tax system or both. So that information is readily available. Of course, it changes regularly, so keep in mind it is point in time data.</p>
5	<p>Why 5 consortia? why not one consortium for all 53 states/jurisdictions?</p>	<p>First of all, this is a federal-state partnership. We have 53 different UI programs, essentially, in this country and the states have bottom-line authority on how they administer their programs, which is why they currently have all different IT infrastructures. As we began the consortia approach, we've learned at least in the initial development, to have more than four states in a consortia – and four may be a lot, actually; three might be a better number – is challenging because of governance issues, liability and getting to agreement. We want to leverage the consortia, once they are mature – obviously, we've learned a lot about governance and the like over time. We want to facilitate the onboarding of additional states. So these consortia will grow over time.</p> <p>The other thing is that we don't think there's a single solution for the whole country. The consortia that come together have chosen each other for a variety of reasons. – some of it is the similarity of the states, some has to do with geographic proximity, some of is cultural and in addition some has to do with law similarities. So all of those factors can contribute to the creation and expansion of a consortia including where their technology was coming from and what their goals were for their technology. All of those things kind of play together.</p> <p>So again, we may not fund many more consortia because, one of our goals is to leverage the products that are coming out of these first five. But that's kind of an open question moving forward, it may be shaped by what happens with our ability to leverage the Cloud.</p>

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6 Has there been an explicit endorsement of cloud technology use by state workforce agencies from federal or state sources? Many states seem to be hesitant because of perceived security problems and lack of state IT control.	<p>There are a few state workforce agencies who are plowing ground in the world of cloud technology. But we haven't provided a specific endorsement per se, but this exercise we're going through with this RFI and with this study and the proof of concept – all of that is designed to acknowledge that cloud technology clearly appears to have some things that would benefit the UI system, and we want to know what those are and what the models would look like and whether or not there is value of us shaping our funding to support cloud technology for the UI system moving forward. So it's not an endorsement per se, but it's clearly a recognition that cloud technology has a role to play and we're trying to figure out which role that is and how that fits.</p> <p>There are some sprinkle of states that are pursuing cloud services. In terms of state IT control and regarding the consortiums, there is a significant involvement at the highest levels of state IT, to the point of the state CIOs and the deputy CIOs are involved in nearly all the consortiums; and they have been espousing – or certainly advocating, the use of the cloud as appropriate. So that's something that is kind of evolving trend.</p>
7 Why is the Cloud Broker Non-Industry other agencies are looking at commercial vendors to play that role	<p>That's something that is not prohibitive. It was noted as well in a footnote. We would actually welcome some ideas regarding that. We'd be open to some of those models. As mentioned, we are seeking input on how, the broker could operate, and again, maybe there are different models.</p> <p>There is an aspect, that strongly suggests the need for a familiarity within the UI domain. In addition there is a kind of a trusted partnership which would have to be established, built, and maintained. Finally the cost of operating the Broker may be another consideration.</p>
8 Is brokering an ongoing functional role? One-time set up role?	<p>We envision this as ongoing; this is not a one-time thing. But again, we're looking for innovative suggestions and solutions.</p> <p>There's an upfront kind of non-recurring aspect, of which this may be the genesis of, but it would be a ongoing activity. It could be multiple types of solutions, and it may turn out that some evolve more successfully than others. So that's something that we're just going to watch and monitor and see how it plays out.</p>
9 Is there a way we can share our innovative models with you without sharing with our competitors, other than the RFI response itself?	<p>These RFI responses are confidential. We're not publishing them, we're not putting the responses out anywhere for public consumption.</p> <p>You may see a reference in the RFI that states we reserve the right to actually invite vendors in for clarification at our request and those discussions are confidential.</p>

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10	The cloud broker seems to be a neutral party that can recommend a different cloud provider for each state/consortia's requirements correct?	<p>That is a correct interpretation, and as mentioned, there could be an UI domain and technical expertise within this broker entity. We don't want to overemphasize the label "broker" and the its connotations in terms of assuming responsibility and liability of delivery of services. That may not be the case at all. It could be just an administrative aspect.</p> <p>It should be noted there is kind of that neutral party aspect to this "broker" where there isn't a bias or there aren't some third party relationships or other company relationships; this neutrality is really important. Working with the states and consortia over time there's a significant emphasis on delivery and trust that needs to be an important component of any solution whatever it is labeled.</p>
11	What is the view on integrating mobile components for this modernization effort?	<p>We're very interested, and there's a question set, regarding mobile components, or at least some questions regarding it. So within the UI functionality set, we believe there's absolutely an application for mobile technologies. We're not sure as to its extent, and that would be something worthy of exploration. There are states and consortia that are pursuing mobile for some functions. As mentioned, there are a lot of functions and subfunctions in UI. Some are amenable, to mobile interaction, as opposed to some others, so for example, processing – doing a monetary determination – that's something that you really wouldn't deliver over mobile technology. You may deliver the result of that function but not the process. So yes we think that there is a role for mobile.</p> <p>We would be concerned that people not get too sidetracked on that particular issue. The use of mobile technology for some functions are things that states are picking up, but that's sort of a side thing and not the primary focus of where we want to go with this RFI. It's kind of ancillary. It's a nice to have, but the mainline focus of this RFI we think is really just to engage cloud services in an orderly fashion. If that's something that could be offered and in some way tied in, sure we are interested.</p>
12	Will there be a recorded version of this presentation made available?	Yes. We will be posting that presentation on our website http://www.itsc.org .
13	Are you marching towards "Single Pane of Glass" for entire cloud consumption?	<p>There is potential for multiple broker type entities or models. So if that's the intent of the question, then no. In terms of all states having to participate in our consortium, to engage cloud services, going through whatever model or models exist, that would not be the case as well. The states are autonomous in terms of how they actually implement UI. This is an attempt to be more comprehensive in terms of leveraging across the nation, but it wouldn't be restrictive of a state or consortia.</p> <p>We anticipate multiple kinds of solutions. If you see the variety of where states are coming from, it is likely we will continue over time to still have states doing their own thing. Some of them may not join consortia ultimately. But we want to be sure that we're presenting options that make sense and we think there are different options that make sense for different states. We think we are looking toward not a single solution, but multiple solutions.</p>