

Brazil awes citizens with fast, efficient services

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Minas Gerais, Brazil, is home to 20 million people and several centuries of tradition. You might expect that its conservative culture, steeped in history, would result in a general resistance to change. But Minas Gerais embraces a progressive mindset to drive government transformation in Brazil.

The key is a well-defined governance model that uses KPIs (key performance indicators) and modern IT management tools as the basis for decision-making. This allows authorities, government officials, and public sector workers in Minas Gerais to change not only how government works but also how citizens experience service delivery. The state is viewed as responsive, innovative—the opposite of a slow-moving government where services move at a snail's pace.

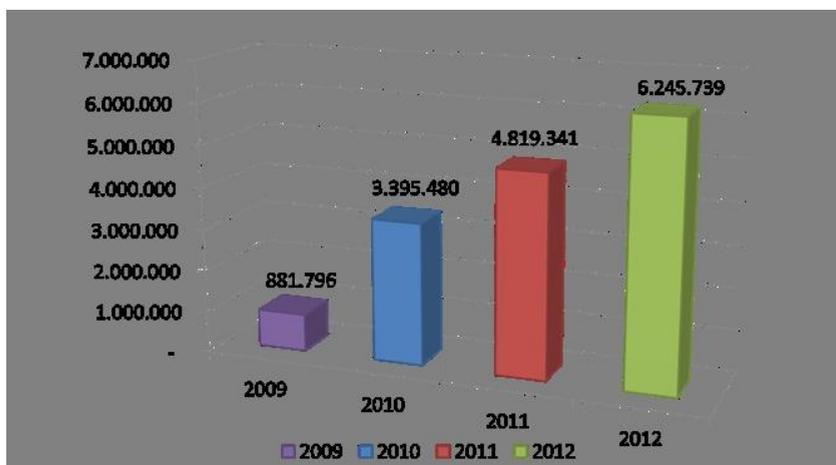
The transformation process—nicknamed Choque de Gestão (Shock Management)—has been so successful that it's being studied by scholars and academics to further the science of public management.

Keeping personal service personal

I recently had the opportunity to observe how Microsoft technology is contributing to the changes in Minas Gerais. As it happens in every country, citizens need to interact with government offices to request services, get permits, and pay taxes. Many interactions can be accomplished online, but government offices still play a vital, ongoing role in delivering services to citizens.

As Brazil's second most-populous state, Minas Gerais has 20 million reasons to fine-tune its in-person services, so it deployed several UAIs—Unidade de Atendimento Integrado (Integrated Attention Units). Twenty-eight UAIs are now open across the state, providing citizens with a one-stop shop for government services. The one-stop concept proved so convenient that demand for the UAIs has skyrocketed. From 2009 to 2013, the number of visits grew from nearly 900 thousand to 6.2 million per year.

This high demand required that Minas Gerais understand utilization statistics so it could optimize operations and planning, as well as ensure citizen satisfaction with the services being delivered. A ticketing system was introduced, giving each citizen a number when they arrive at an office, and an IT system monitors UAI performance in real time. Citizen satisfaction surveys complete the picture.



Rapid response team keeps services flowing

In a situation room built for the purpose, state officials use a Windows 8 video wall application to monitor real-time KPIs. The video wall also provides live feeds from hundreds of cameras showing traffic in the offices. Any unexpected change in wait times, traffic volume, or citizen behaviors in the UAIs can be spotted and addressed immediately.

Government officials can get real-time data whether they're in the situation room or on the go. Mobile and smart devices allow them to check KPIs, see images, and spot trends or issues from nearly anywhere.

In conversations with Fernanda Girão and Andrey Morais Labanca (pictured at top), members of the Minas Gerais Secretary of Planning Office, I learned that Microsoft products such Hyper-V 2008, SQL Server 2012, SharePoint 2010 and Windows 8 allowed great improvements in the way KPIs are managed. Strategic information from legacy systems can now be easily obtained, allowing Minas Gerais to better manage service delivery so it's fast, convenient, and pleasant for citizens. That's the kind of shock value every government agency can use.

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