



Q&A: LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR SMART CITY INNOVATION

With Mark Wong, CIO and Director, Department of Information Technology, City and County of Honolulu

As they plan their smart city initiatives, many local governments are focused on how to ensure a successful user experience. In this *Government Technology* Q&A, Mark Wong, CIO and director for the city and county of Honolulu, discusses how Honolulu is achieving dramatic results with a centralized platform and user-centric dashboard that leverages real-time data and pervasive geographic information system (GIS) mapping to improve city operations.

Can you describe what Honolulu's new platform does and explain why you developed it?

Our platform is called Lokahi, a Hawaiian word that means unity, harmony and agreement. We created Lokahi because we had too many siloed applications with different technical implementations, user interfaces and administrative requirements. Lokahi serves as a single, unified operations platform that merges all city agency applications into a single dashboard so that real-time and historical data, business functions and workflows are integrated and standardized across the enterprise. Using Lokahi, we'll be able to eliminate nearly 200 legacy applications, and we've already saved millions of dollars working toward that goal.

Can you give us some examples of how the platform is being used?

One of Lokahi's most powerful features is its single-pane-of-glass access to over 14,000 GIS layers. We can visualize static and real-time maps, projects, events, infrastructure and sensor data in any combination. This allows us to plan for events and projects several years ahead and mash up city information with data from the state and federal government, and the community.





We initially developed Lokahi for emergency management. The basic map view shows events as they unfold. This includes live weather radar; hurricane tracks; earthquakes and tsunamis; traffic; public transit; and police, fire, and EMS dispatch and asset locations. It also integrates with Lokahi's public-facing component, HNL.info, to communicate with citizens.

Our soon-to-be-launched Parks and Recreation implementation, named PROS, offers an experience similar to popular e-commerce sites. Residents can create a single account and profile to interact with the city through our HNL.info portal. When they search for an activity, facility or park, PROS makes recommendations based on what it has learned about them. They can also pay for fee-based services through HNL Pay, Lokahi's centralized payment facility for the entire city.

What role does network connectivity play in delivering this important new resource?

Lokahi's interface is completely Web based, so it works anywhere you can get an Internet connection. Because of the large amount of data being ingested and retrieved, we've had to upgrade network speeds to our remote connections, between data centers and in the data centers themselves. We're also planning to expand our public and external WiFi throughout Waikiki, downtown and the transit corridor.

How is the platform improving the effectiveness of city and county employees?

At a recent emergency managers' conference, I presented after a FEMA administrator, who explained that government agencies could expedite grant requests by providing building plans, permits and tax map data; aerial views; zoning and land use maps; locations of historical and cultural sites; street views and more. When I did my Lokahi demonstration, I showed how it provides everything the administrator mentioned — simultaneously on a single screen. The single dashboard allows employees to access information quickly and see things from multiple viewpoints, which can greatly improve employee insight, efficiency and responsiveness.

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