

Accenture Engagement with NISH



High performance. Delivered.

Client overview

Established in 1974, NISH supports more than 1,300 nonprofit organizations across the United States in providing employment opportunities to more than 50,000 severely disabled individuals. NISH provides the legislative and regulatory assistance, communications and public relations materials, information technology support, engineering and technical assistance, as well as extensive professional training needed for the successful delivery of products and services to commercial and Federal customers.

NISH is designated by the US AbilityOne Commission, a federal government agency, as one of the two nonprofit agencies supporting the AbilityOne program and facilitates more than \$2 billion annually in Federal contracts to community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) employing people with moderate to severe physical and mental disabilities. AbilityOne employees logged over 43 million hours of labor in 2011, and in total, \$500 million in wages was paid with an average hourly wage of \$11.57. According to a 2003 study, the AbilityOne program saves both Federal and State governments over \$47 million a year through increased income tax and the reduced use of entitlements.

Business challenge

Since 2009, Accenture has collaborated closely with NISH across several lines of business and internal support functions. In 2009, NISH was awarded a secure mail and digital document services contract opportunity from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under the AbilityOne Program. As part of an agreement with DHS, NISH agreed to assist the Department's strategic planning by sponsoring development of a lessons learned and leading practices report to serve as guidelines to help facilitate DHS's and NISH's combined efforts as new service locations are brought on-line. In order to grow and develop a broader line of business in secure mail, NISH needed to gather customer satisfaction information to determine how best to focus and grow the program.

In 2010, NISH set an ambitious growth target: doubling the number of jobs for people with disabilities by 2015. Reaching this target not only doubles the current service level, it also exceeds NISH's historic growth rate. Reaching such an ambitious target, coupled with a declining economy and stagnating job creation rates, would require NISH to take bold and innovative measures. NISH again turned to Accenture to help explore appropriate growth opportunities. Accenture could leverage its demonstrated experience in management consulting, its research organization, and its industry experience to help NISH define where they should go with their business planning.

How Accenture helped

After supporting NISH in developing emerging themes and lessons learned for DHS around secure mail, in 2010, expanding on NISH's success with DHS, Accenture helped NISH develop a full Secure Mail/Digital Document Services (SMDDS) business plan. Accenture helped develop a comprehensive plan and solution definition, including component service lines, market and relationship analysis, business case, and implementation strategy.

In 2011, responding to NISH's growth target, Accenture developed a growth strategy that examined three distinct markets—Federal, State and Local, and Commercial—and identified collaboration strategies to guide NISH in its expansion. The Accenture team provided recommendations on organizational structure, governance, individual skillsets, leadership, technology, business processes, and stakeholder partnerships across a spectrum of options from low to high effort and impact. In particular, the strategy detailed objectives of market expansion, internal capacity growth, and stakeholder development. As a key component of the growth strategy, Accenture helped NISH establish a competitive job-creating grant program that leverages the creativity of the NISH member network to help the organization achieve its growth target.

In 2012, supporting a growth strategy recommendation to expand into new markets and broaden its customer base, Accenture supported NISH as it began to explore formalizing its offerings in the commercial market. While NISH's network of CRPs is very active in the private sector, most of NISH's resources were currently focused on fostering employment opportunities with Federal clients via AbilityOne. The commercial market represented a significant untapped opportunity for NISH to secure employment for people with disabilities.

High performance delivered

In the area of secure mail, the DHS sponsors used Accenture's report to inform a new initiative to build similar capabilities in other metro areas, and are planning to act upon the results of the report to improve the current effort by engaging the Chief Administrative Officers and other executives. In fiscal year 2011, NISH CRPs secured mail and document services contracts worth more than \$40 million as well as employing approximately 400 people with disabilities.

Supporting NISH's forays into the commercial market, the Accenture team researched and prioritized more than 20 business line opportunities in the commercial market, underscored by market trends, NISH's strengths and objectives, and CRP capabilities. NISH selected the top three provocative opportunities for additional development, and Accenture supported the development of targeted entry plans, implementation priorities and roadmaps as well as financial projections and capability identification. Accenture also provided targeted recommendations and supported NISH leadership decision-making on key organizational changes required to support a new market focus.

As of mid-2012, NISH is working to explore and implement its commercial strategy with support from both internal and external partners. Accenture remains focused on supporting NISH and its mission to create jobs for people with disabilities.

About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 259,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$27.9 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2012.