MINNESOTA IT SERVICES

Q1 2022
Quarterly Report

Information Technology for Minnesota Government

Note from the Commissioner

For the beginning of 2022, our experiences at Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) mirror the constant demand for innovation, value, and security that we have felt over the past two years. We continue to uncover ways that technology can improve outcomes for Minnesotans – and it is our job to relentlessly advocate for that change.

We have had to dig deep to think about our connection to the people that we serve, and how our work can positively impact their lives. We have framed our work to answer this question: What are we going to do together? And how are we going to challenge the norm and break down silos to get there?

Using a security mindset and incorporating human-centered design into systems, applications, and technology tools has helped us further improve Minnesotan's digital experience with government, and our new Modernization Playbook will drive collaborative work on agency projects.

MNIT's Office of Transformation is leading this effort – lifting up examples of successful modernization and applying those best practices across state government. Project to product transformation at the Department of Human Services (DHS) led to a 2022 tactic to apply this work elsewhere in state government, and journeys like that will become more frequent.

As we think about the evolution of work and how we change our personal patterns, we must also think about how the services that we provide can accommodate change. We are embracing a workplace evolution at MNIT and across the executive branch. It will enable us to provide a flexible, secure, and focused environment, one where we can empower the state's workforce to meet the needs of Minnesotans where they are at, for years to come.

Contents

Planning

Tactical Plan

Teams across MNIT got to work implementing the 2022 Tactical Plan. A few updates:

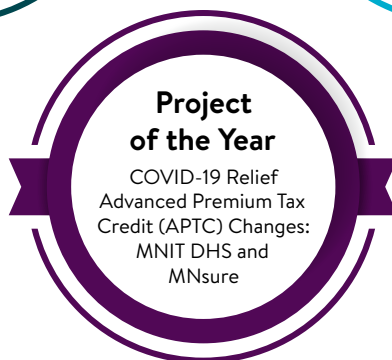| Tactic	Update
Design and implement a customer feedback loop for the enterprise service desk.	MNIT launched customer satisfaction surveys through the Minnesota Service Hub on January 13, 2022, to measure real-time performance and capture issues, successes, and suggestions. The Minnesota Service Hub is MNIT's help portal serving 45,000 executive branch customers.
Roll out Modernization Playbook with an awareness campaign, training, and change management plan for MNIT and agency partners.	Using Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology (BRC-IT) recommendations, modernization maturity survey gaps, and input from a cross-agency change network, MNIT is building knowledge and training for stakeholder management and sponsor education.
Improve agency portfolio executive reporting through communications planning and use of dashboards.	MNIT created a dashboard and presentation template that technology leaders use across 22 executive branch agencies to report on their IT project portfolio. MNIT also introduces a key initiatives dashboard to understand top technology projects across the executive branch.

Notable achievements, awards, and events

MNIT Week

In January, MNIT held its annual MNIT Week – a time for professional development opportunities, and for staff to connect with each other and with MNIT leadership. This was the second virtual MNIT Week, and over 1,400 people participated in virtual training opportunities and over 500 attended expo presentations.

Annual Awards

As part of MNIT Week, MNIT employees joined together to celebrate their work delivering outstanding IT service to Minnesota and its executive government with the Annual Awards ceremony. The agency's Employee Recognition Committee (ERC) recognized honorees and finalists for the Annual Awards.

This year's honorees:

Employee of the Year

Peny Nguyen
MNIT Finance

Manager of the Year

Neal Dawson
MNIT Enterprise Security

Team of the Year

Enterprise Workstation Deployment

Project of the Year

COVID-19 Relief Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) Changes: MNIT DHS and MNsure

Partner of the Year

The Minnesota Department of Health

Doers, Dreamers, and Drivers

The State of Minnesota's Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the Commissioner of MNIT, Tarek Tomes, was named a [2022 Top 25 Doers, Dreamers, and Drivers by Government Technology magazine (GovTech)](). Read more about Commissioner Tomes' work in a [profile from GovTech]().

Some projects may provide value for more than one category while others' value may fall outside of these categories.

Emerging technology: robotics process automation

In 2020, MNIT introduced robotics process automation (RPA) at the state's service desk and has since worked at the enterprise and agency level to incorporate it where it fits across the executive branch. RPA improves repeatable processes that are time-intensive, need to be accurate, and don't require critical thinking. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) identified processes that could be improved using RPA and launched a proof of value in February 2021, and into full production in May 2022. MDH used RPA to process wage notices for new hires. A process that took MDH's human resources (HR) department 2-3 hours to complete took only 2 minutes with RPA. MDH's HR staff had not been able to keep up with the demand for this task before RPA. The technology helped HR staff work more consistently and improved accuracy, enabling them to spend more time on other critical work.
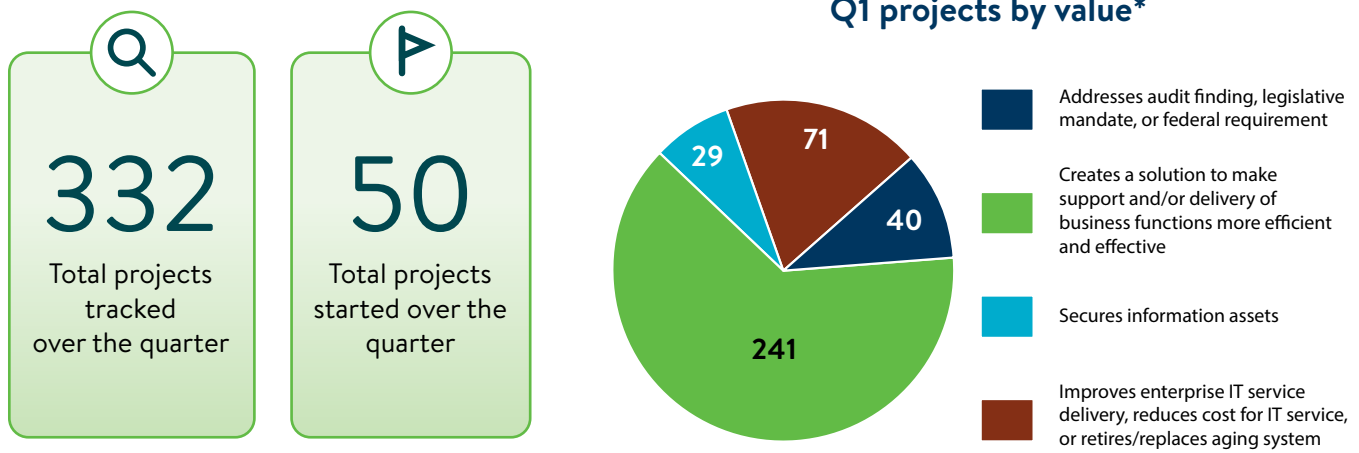
At the enterprise level, MNIT is introducing RPA to supplement portions of the onboarding/offboarding process. When a new state employee is hired, RPA works behind the scenes to automatically create an account and email address for their main system. When an employee leaves the state, RPA automatically disables and removes access to their email account on their last day/time of employment. After an agency's retention period passes, the RPA process deletes the account and mailbox.

Transformation and Strategy Delivery

Over the quarter, MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery tracked the completion of 37 projects across Minnesota's executive branch agencies, boards, commissions, and councils. These projects range from public-facing applications to internal-facing IT infrastructure endeavors.

332

Total projects
tracked
over the quarter

50

Total projects
started over the
quarter

Q1 projects by value*

29

71

40

241

- **Addresses audit finding, legislative mandate, or federal requirement**
- **Creates a solution to make support and/or delivery of business functions more efficient and effective**
- **Secures information assets**
- **Improves enterprise IT service delivery, reduces cost for IT service, or retires/replaces aging system**

*Some projects may provide value for more than one category while others' value may fall outside of these categories.

NOTABLE PROJECTS

Protecting emails from the state to the people we serve

Before you get an email from the State of Minnesota, there is a system behind the scenes that makes sure your device recognizes that email as legitimate, and not spam, fraud, or phishing emails. MNIT recently added a series of security checks to that system, DMARC, for all emails that appear to be from the State of Minnesota or our registered web domains. Any email that claims to be from the State is now checked against these security measures to ensure that it originated from the State, and the recipient can trust that the message is legitimate. This new DMARC policy will ensure that Minnesotans can trust the messages that they receive – protecting both the people we serve and the reputation of the State of Minnesota.

Improving benefits renewal processes

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and MNIT improved how Minnesotans renew services in public health programs by integrating existing data into systems that determine eligibility and eliminating an existing blackout period. The project launched in 2021 and closed all final pieces in Q1 2022. Both Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare have varying renewal periods, and the previous system didn't allow DHS staff to update cases while they were processed for renewals. By removing this blackout period, DHS and county staff can enter changes about a benefit recipient.

The teams also utilized wage income data from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to meet a federal requirement and ensure they were using outside sources to confirm eligibility for these public health programs. This improved eligibility accuracy and made it easier for counties, DHS staff, and Minnesotans to understand what programs for which they may be eligible.

Modernizing correction systems

The Department of Corrections (DOC) uses a system – Correctional Operations Management System (COMS) – to understand the background, needs, health services, educational programs, and more of incarcerated persons. COMS is made up of over 80 modules for each of these pieces of information. As part of a larger effort to modernize the system, DOC and MNIT recently upgraded two of these modules: Risk Assessment/ Community Notification and Work Assignment. The upgrades improve the interface that DOS staff and the public may see when accessing information from COMS and reduces the risk for DOC by replacing aging technology. The larger modernization effort for COMS started in 2015 when MNIT and DOC teams focused on creating a template to modernize each module. All modules are expected to be upgraded by August 2023.

Data-driven seed inspections

All seed that is sold in Minnesota must be properly labeled to meet state and federal requirements. The Plant Protection Program at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) inspects seeds every year to make sure that Minnesota's seeds are labeled with the right quality (e.g., percent germination) and type of seed, helping farmers and plant-loving Minnesotans make the best decisions. To provide the best service to seed labelers and retailers, MDA, MNIT, and two vendor partners recently modernized the seed inspection to support the strategic goal of building service-driven infrastructure. The new application is built to make sure that all the information that inspectors collect in the field automatically flows through the MDA lab and back to the teams that issue violations and reports on seed inspections. The new process drastically reduced the time for MDA to issue reports after inspections from more than 20 days to less than 7 days. This improved timeliness enables labelers and retailers to comply with the Minnesota Seed Law promptly and protects Minnesota farmers and gardeners purchasing seed. It also increased efficiency at the agency by removing paper and manual processes for staff, who can now spend more time working with labelers and retailers to bring them into compliance and improve the impact of the regulatory process to benefit Minnesota's farmers.
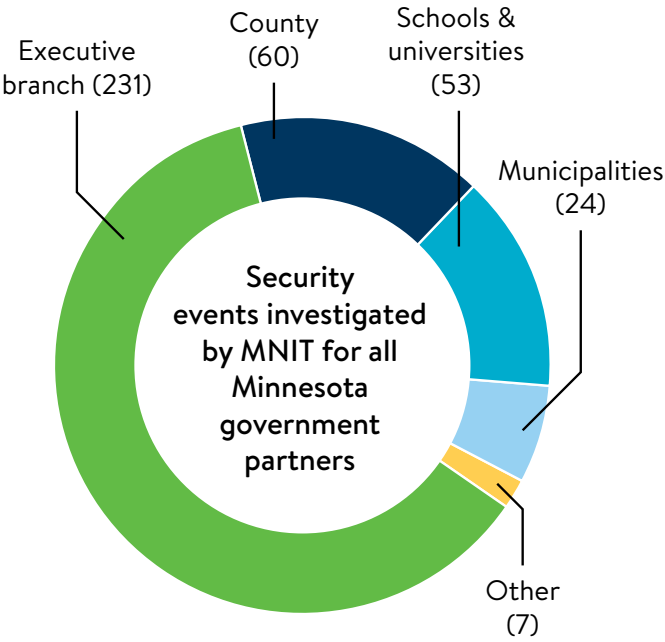
Improving workforce equity at MnDOT

A new application at the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) replaces how construction contractors record Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) data about their employees who work on MnDOT State Aid construction projects. Projects in the State Aid program assist counties and cities with the construction and maintenance of community interest highways and streets. The new application was built in partnership with MNIT and Minnesota's Salesforce Center of Excellence at DEED. It simplifies the process of collecting contractor employment information and significantly improves the preparation and delivery of required state and federal contractor reports. Replacing the system also improves the security of MnDOT systems and modernizes manual processes

Security

To keep state government running, and to protect Minnesotans' private data, we must continually work to better secure Minnesota's IT systems. Cybersecurity is one of the most critical functions that Minnesota IT Services is tasked with, and it functions best when we are all working together, from the individual citizen to our state agencies, and even to our legislators; that is how we can help protect the 35,000 users of our systems and 5.7 million Minnesotans who have private data secured by the state.

We serve Minnesotans by connecting all 87 counties, 300 cities, and 200 public higher education campuses across the state through MNET – Minnesotan's dedicated public sector network. This network provides broad visibility into cyber activity occurring across the state. From January to March, our Security Operations Center (SOC) detected or received reports of 375 cyber incidents.

Type of security incident	Number reported
Malware	150
Forensic investigation	65
Compromised password	53
Network attack/scan	29
Denial of service	13
Policy violation	13
Social engineering	9
Copyright violation	5
Unauthorized access attempt	3
Lost/stolen devices	2
Unauthorized disclosure	2
Other	31

Executive branch (231)
County (60)
Schools & universities (53)
Municipalities (24)
Other (7)

Security events investigated by MNIT for all Minnesota government partners

Security incidents detected by or reported to MNIT SOC.

Expanded monitoring to counties

Minnesota continues to mature the Statewide Security Monitoring Initiative (SSMI), a program devoted to protecting the data of all Minnesotans by partnering with participating county governments, port cities, and tribal nations.

MNIT introduced new features, including vulnerability management, incident response, log collection and monitoring, and risk and compliance to SSMI participating counties. The advanced vulnerability management features have directly led to an increased number of entities participating in SSMI. So far, over 60 counties, port cities, and tribal nations have signed up for the new services. They can now take advantage of Endpoint Detection and Response, which enables MNIT's Security Operations Center to help monitor and respond to incidents.

In addition to these resources, MNIT has developed deeper relationships with local government teams statewide through its new Security Operations Center Cyber Navigator program, which aims to help coordinate response to emerging cyber threats and active incidents wherever they occur.

● Onboard
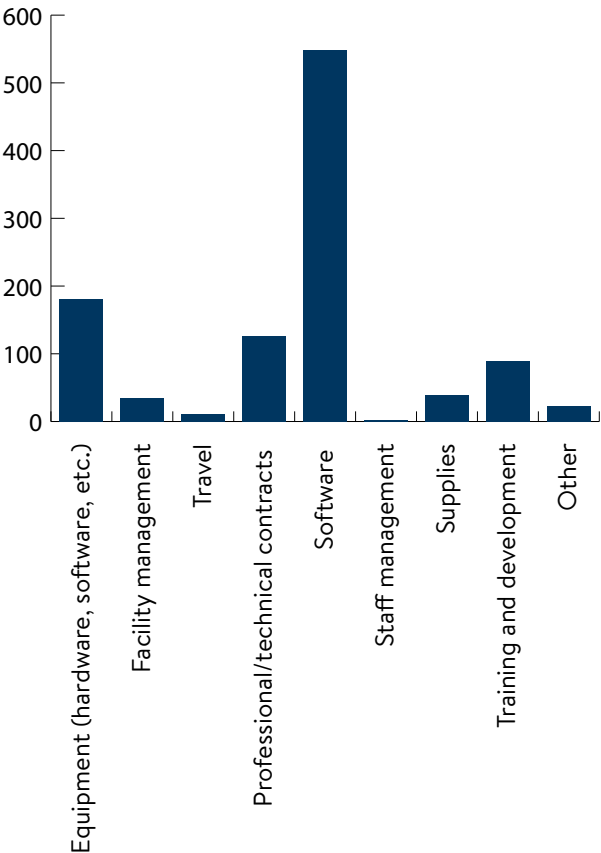● In process
● Not participating
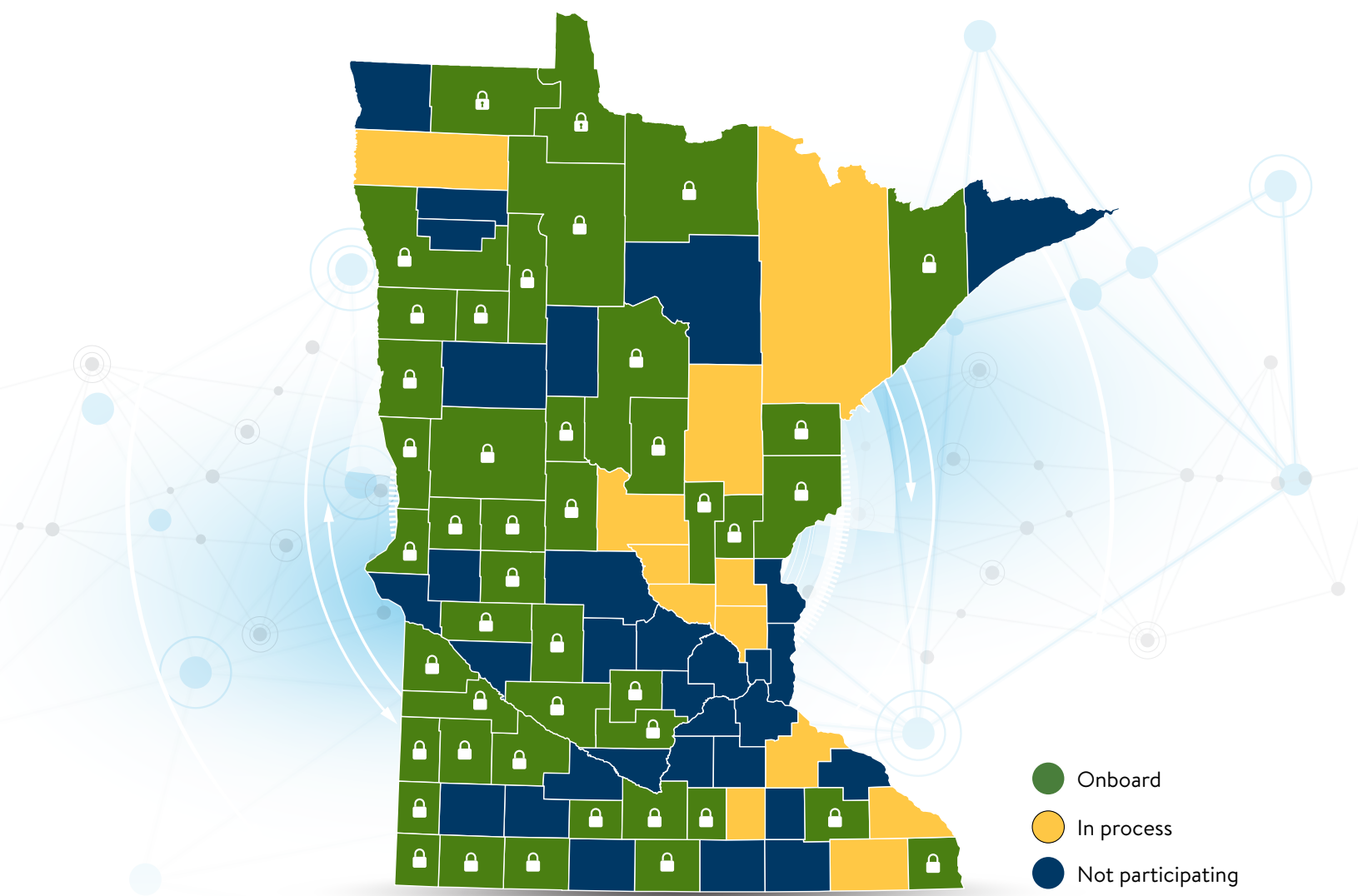
Procurement

The Procurement Division is responsible for processing all requests to purchase everything from IT hardware, software, and mobile devices to contractors brought in to assist on projects. Procurement follows a standardized purchasing process that can include administrative review, accessibility testing, vendor negotiation, open bidding, and competitive RFP processes, among others.

1,055
Purchase request volume

10
Average purchase request processing time (days)
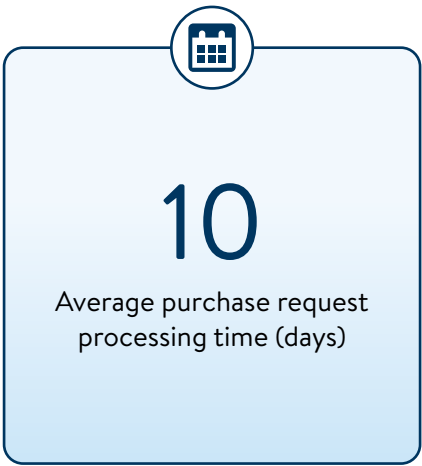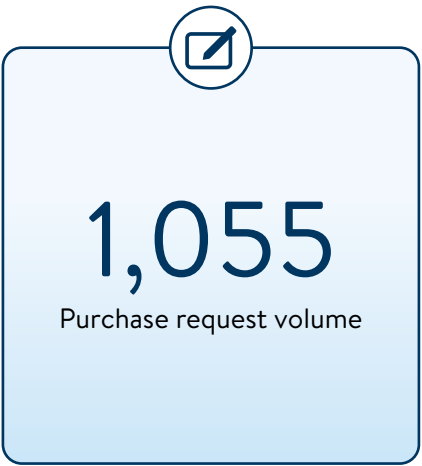
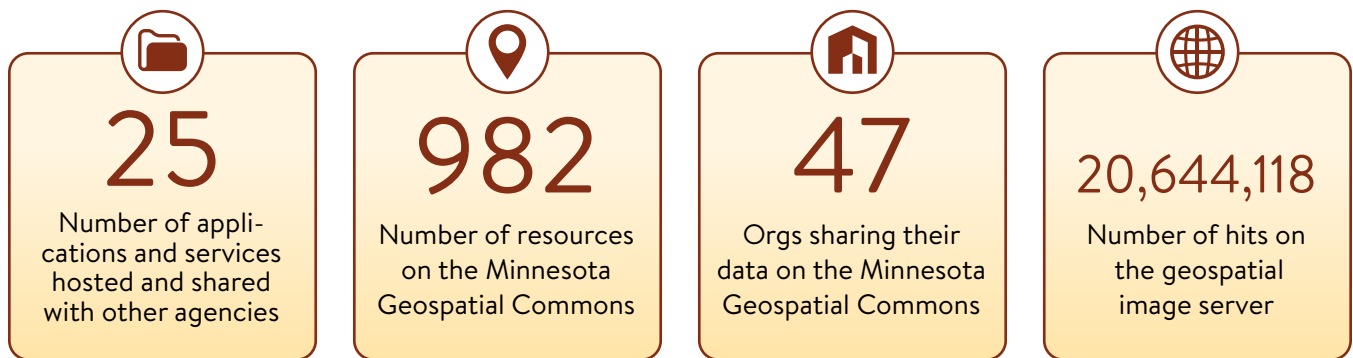## Number of purchase requests
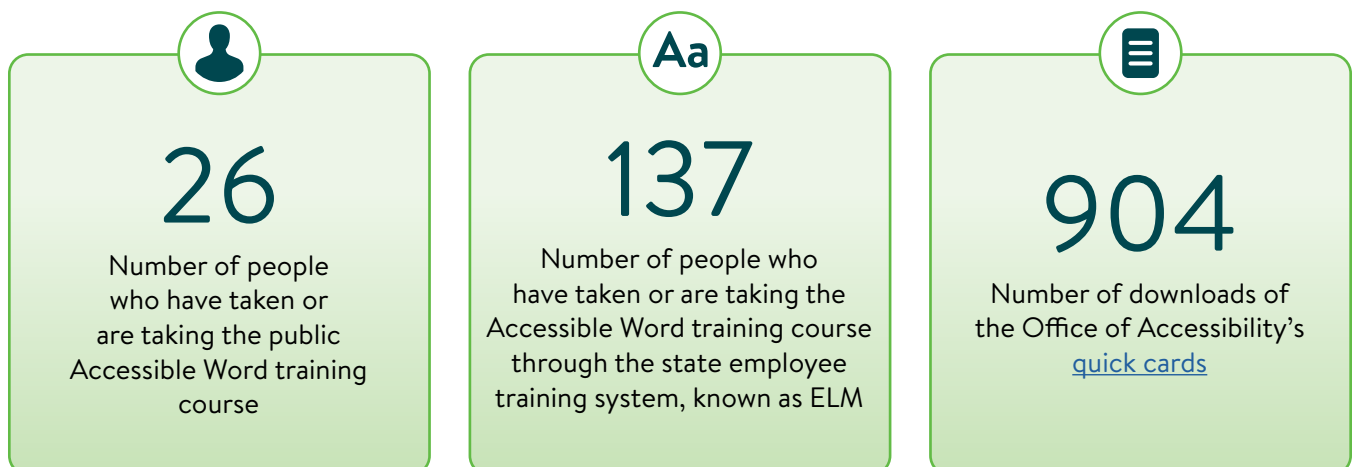

Average processing time (days)
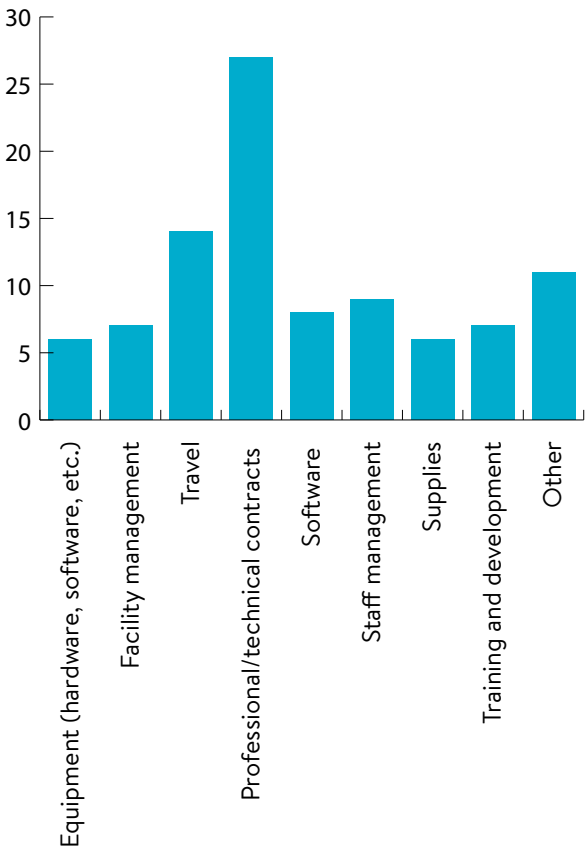
Geospatial Information Office

The Minnesota Geospatial Information Office coordinates geographic information systems (GIS) within the state, creating connections between state agencies and other stakeholders from government and non-government organizations. Using geography to inform decisions and influence outcomes, shapes public safety, transportation planning, access to health services, the preservations of our natural resources, and much more. The Geospatial team manages the Minnesota Geospatial Commons, a collaborative public website where publishers can share, and users can access geospatial resources – data, maps, services, and applications. The Minnesota Geospatial Commons is supported by an operational team that includes staff from MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, and MNIT staff partnering with DNR, MDE, MDA, and MPCA.

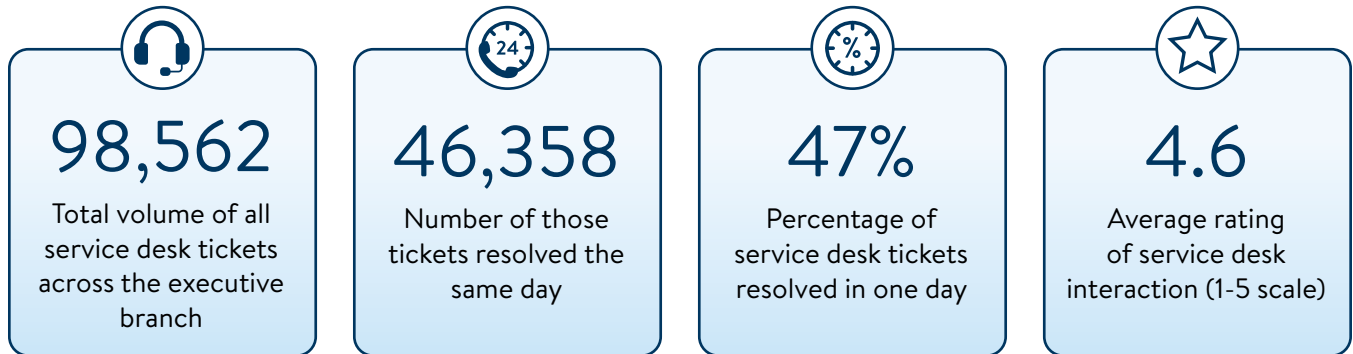|			
25	**982**	**47**	**20,644,118**
Number of applications and services hosted and shared with other agencies	Number of resources on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons	Orgs sharing their data on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons	Number of hits on the geospatial image server

Office of Accessibility

The Office of Accessibility is charged with overseeing the implementation of accessibility standards for all executive branch employees and state agencies.

26	**137**	**904**
Number of people who have taken or are taking the public Accessible Word training course	Number of people who have taken or are taking the Accessible Word training course through the state employee training system, known as ELM	Number of downloads of the Office of Accessibility's quick cards

Service desk

Our enterprise service desk provides 24/7 IT support and services for Minnesota state government: executive branch agencies, boards, councils, and commissions; non-executive branch customers, education, tribal governments, nonprofits; and MNIT staff.

98,562
Total volume of all service desk tickets across the executive branch

46,358
Number of those tickets resolved the same day

47%
Percentage of service desk tickets resolved in one day

4.6
Average rating of service desk interaction (1-5 scale)

IT optimization updates

CloudRAMP

This quarter, MNIT's CloudRAMP (Cloud Readiness and Modernization Project) created a landing zone that will enable applications across the executive branch to move to the cloud.

MNIT also created non-technical governance structures for the state's cloud journey with:

- Governance Charter that ensures leaders across MNIT are responsible for establishing an effective and efficient cloud governance model.

- Clear communication about leadership priorities through workshops and regular meetings.

- Roles and responsibility documentation so that staff understand who is responsible for different cloud applications and environments

Modernized applications: 5

Migrated servers*: 2

By Q2, this number increases weekly as we take lessons learned from Q1 to understand the criteria for future migrations.

Meet MNIT

Neal Dawson

Neal Dawson, who manages MNIT's Threat Vulnerability and Management Unit, was named the 2021 Manager of the Year during MNIT's Annual Awards ceremony. Dawson leads with kindness, conviction, integrity, and a passion to do what's right. His team ensures the security of state systems, scanning thousands of endpoints and applications for vulnerabilities – on average over 33,210 systems per day. The team is data-driven, allowing them to provide actionable information to state agencies which led to a significant decline in the number of vulnerabilities on state systems and applications.

Dawson began his career with the state in 2006 as an Information Security Architect, spent a few years at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, then returned to MNIT in this role in 2015.

About MNIT

Minnesota IT Services, led by the state's Chief Information Officer, is the Information Technology agency for Minnesota's executive branch, providing enterprise and local IT services to over 70 agencies, boards, and commissions. MNIT employs more than 2,000 people across 90 physical locations. Together, we build, maintain, and secure the State's IT infrastructure, applications, projects, and services. MNIT sets IT strategy, direction, policies, and standards for enterprise IT leadership and planning. We also serve Minnesotans by connecting all 87 counties, 300 cities, and 200 public higher education campuses across the state on the MNET network. Through public-private partnerships, our team proactively protects the state's information systems and the private data of 5.7 million Minnesotans.

Learn more

For questions, comments, and feedback on MNIT's quarterly reports, please reach out to MNIT_Comm@state.mn.us.

You can also find more stories about the agency across our social media accounts: