

Penny Tisdale
Etegrity LLC

“Plug & Play” for WIC EBT

Are we there yet?

How has FNS' technology neutral stance and investment in the development of policy, business and technical standards furthered the cooperation between government and industry to identify, take on and resolve WIC EBT challenges?

Background

- **Online WIC EBT**
 - State-specific MIS-EBT interface
 - MIS and EBT system roles and responsibilities driven by customer (state) needs
 - Administrative terminals fill the “gap” between current MIS capability and future, EBT readiness
- **Offline WIC EBT**
 - First WIC EBT system, in WY, was proprietary, a full service offering by Stored Value Systems
 - All smartcard states today conform to a single set of standards for cards, system design, EBT-vendor interface, etc., with allowance for policy differences in system operations.

Vision: “Plug & Play”

- State Agency Model (SAM) MIS
 - Technology neutral, online or offline capable
 - Plug & Play EBT interface, online or offline
 - Streamlined transfer approval, priority funding
- State or Contractor Hosted/Managed EBT
 - Online or offline
 - Plug & Play MIS interface, online/online; offline/offline
- MIS and EBT Systems comply with FNS & industry standards and guidelines
 - WIC EBT Operating Rules
 - WIC Universal MIS-EBT Interface (WUMEI)
 - X9.93: 2013, Parts 1 and 2

Progress to Date

- State Agency Model (SAM) MIS
 - Streamlined transfer approval, priority funding
 - Recent SAMs are WUMEI (guideline) compliant
- State or Contractor Hosted/Managed EBT
 - Online and offline
 - Recent EBT hosts are WUMEI (guideline) compliant

So, from each system perspective, MIS and EBT, if the supported MIS-EBT interface design is WUMEI compliant, are we “Plug & Play”?

WUMEI Compliance \neq "Plug & Play"



- The WUMEI is a guideline, not a standard
- The "gap"
 - Current interfaces reflect the past, not the future
 - Common implementation differences
 - Multiple , varied XML file schema
 - Varied file data type, data structure, field lengths
 - Unique filenames, file structure/layouts

In the interim...

- Know the Ultimate Goal: Standard Interfaces, “Plug & Play”
 - 1 - Offline
 - 1 - Online
- Mitigate, don't propagate risks
 - Contract issues
 - Project delays
 - Unnecessary costs
- When you can't yet “standardize”, “normalize”
 - SAM: The “M” stands for “MODEL”
 - Objective: Reduce the # of interfaces from ‘many’ to ‘few’
- Adopt **only** those strategies likely to achieve the objective:
 - #1 - Select, announce your WUMEI compliant SAM, non-SAM
 - #2 - Require the MIS-defined MIS-EBT interface

For assistance, contact:

Penny Tisdale

Etegrity L.L.C.

12028 Tulare Drive

Austin, Texas 78738

Office/Cell: (512) 415-2227

ptisdale@etegrityllc.com