Re-Procurement of WIC EBT Services
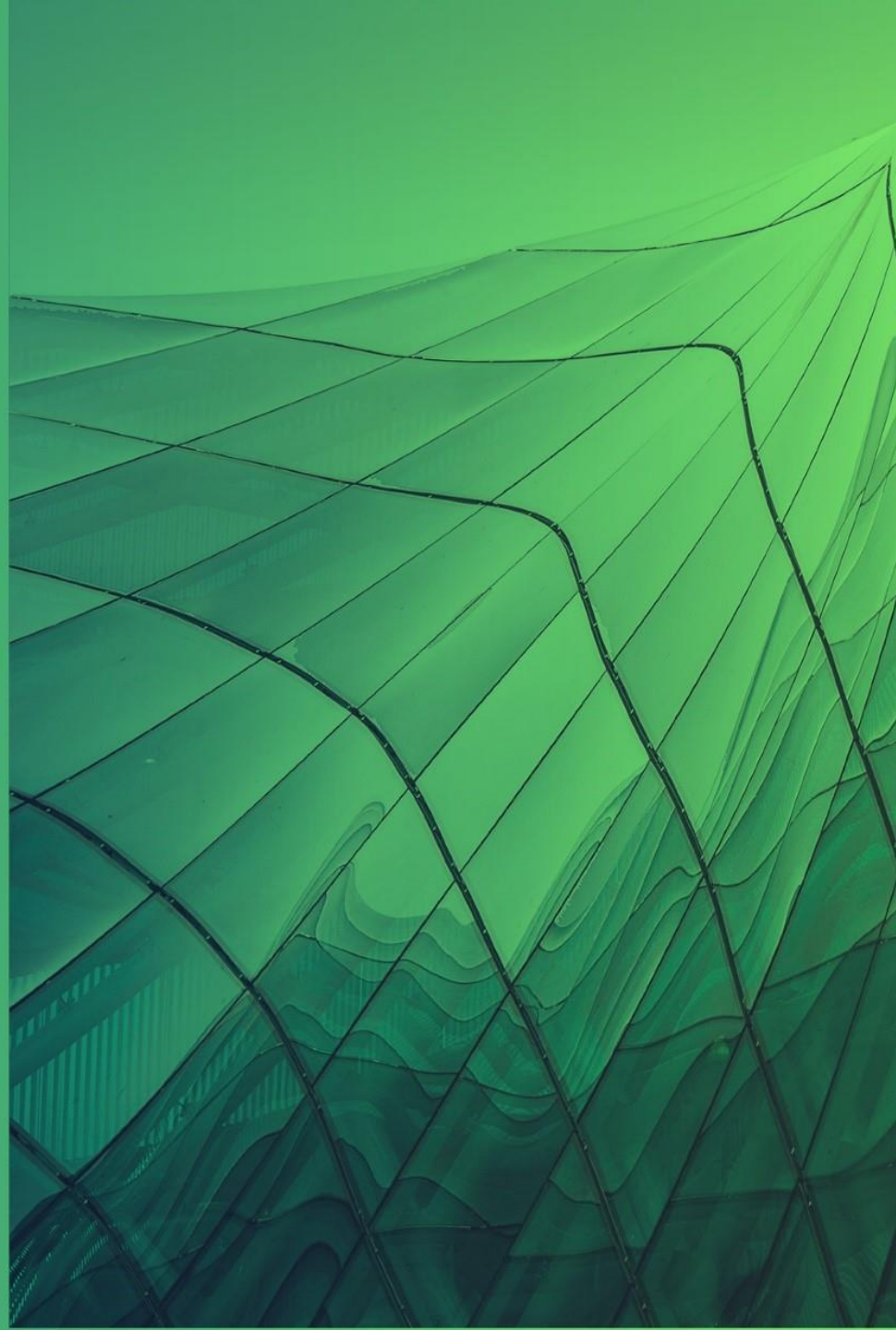
FNS/CDP/Chickasaw Nation
PR Consulting/FIS

NWA Technology Conference 2019
9/17/19

Session Objective

Assist State Agencies with ideas and direction when planning for the re-procurement of WIC EBT Services from a technical perspective.

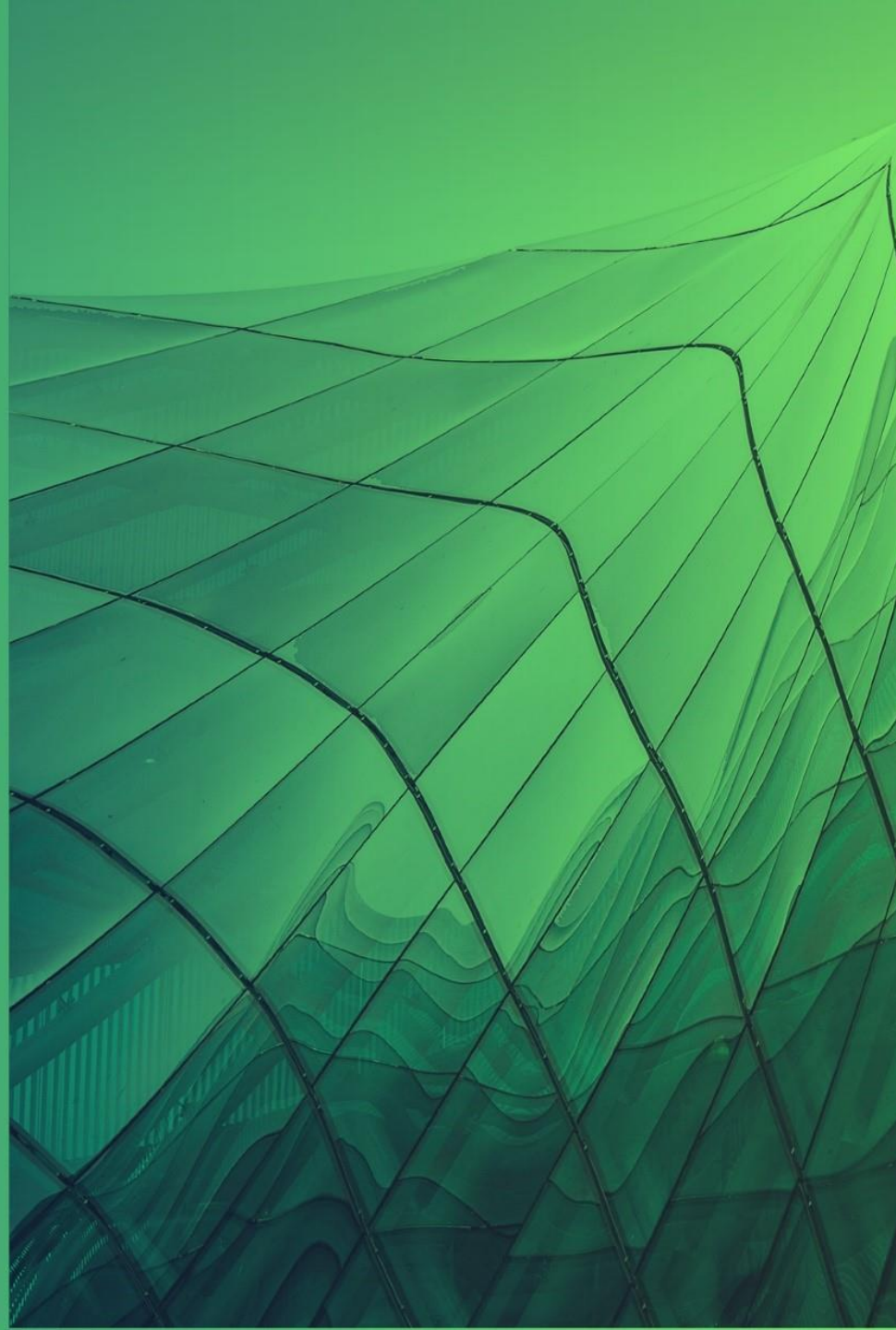# Intro's

Melinda Newport
Chickasaw Nation

Julie Alyea
CDP

Peter Relich
PR Consulting
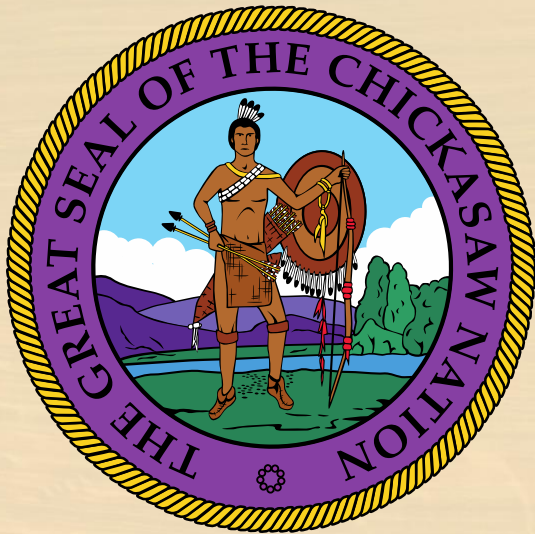
Victor Ho
FNS

Louise Meyer
FIS

Lessons Learned

Planning Ahead

Melinda Newport, Director
Chickasaw Nation

Chickasaw Nation WIC Program

- **Originally implemented online EBT technology in 2010 with JP Morgan**

- **Re-procured 5 years later in 2015**

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Reprocurement Challenges

- **Identification of Project Management resources**

- **Expertise to Prepare IAPD/RFP**

- **No Example Reprocurement Documents**

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Additional Considerations

- **Drafting Language for Contract & SLAs**

- **Contract Negotiations**

- **Needs for Data Conversion**

- **Revising Timelines**

Small State Agency Considerations

- **<u>82%</u> of WIC State Agencies are under 100,000 in participation**

- **Ongoing CPCM costs must be affordable within NSA grant**

- **There is a need for a Small State Agency Model for EBT**

Unique Challenges

- **Coordinating Multiple Funding Sources and Time Frames**

- **User Group Collaborations**

- **Competing Project Schedules**

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Outcome of Bid Process

- **In RFP - All costs were included in CPCM**

- **As a result, CPCM was not affordable**

- **CDP came to the table with Chickasaw Nation and began to identify cost drivers**

  - **Project Management Costs vs. Implementation Costs vs. Ongoing Costs**

Options for Reducing Cost

- **Joint Procurement with Other States**

- **Include Language in RFP to Facilitate Inclusion of Other States**

- **Take EBT System 'As Is'**

LIFE

more color flavor life

the Chickasaw Nation WIC

Options for Reducing Cost

- **Limit Customized Reports**

- **Operate Participant Help Desk**

- **Explore In-House IVR**

- **Limit Hours of Help Desk Operation**

- **Limit Amount of Data Converted**

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Options for State Agencies

- **Shared BIN**

- **Shared IVR/Participant Help Desk/Participant Portal**

- **Joint implementation efforts**

  ➤ **Vendor integration efforts**
  ➤ **Planning and Project Management**
  ➤ **Training**

And yet . . . .

- **Still Had to Request Additional Funding**
  - ➤ **Project Management**
  - ➤ **Prepayment of Ongoing Costs to reduce CPCM**
- **Used Multiple Sources to Further Reduce Ongoing Costs**

Small State Agencies

- **Explore all the options**
- **Reach out to partners**
- **Identify multiple resources**
- **Remain open to new ways of doing business**

RFP Development

What to consider for your RFP prep and content

Peter Relich
Consultant

PR Consulting

PR Consulting

- RFP Development
  - Determine objectives for re-procurement
  - Have a strategy for obtaining objectives
  - Use procurement to resolve pain points in current contract

- Do you need a consultant for re-procurement?
  - It depends
  - If you do, experience counts
  - Develop your RFP with an eye towards evaluating responses

- Evaluation of technology offerings and their value proposition
  - Core eWIC services uses standard technology and is required to follow FNS standards (WUMEI, Operating rules, TIG)
  - Differential for core services should be on uptime, fail-over capabilities during processing issues
  - New emphasis on data analytics
    - Better serving participants
    - Increasing participation
    - Understanding participant behavior

Data Transfer
What to consider for your eWIC data conversion

Julie Alyea
Senior Product Analyst

CDP Inc.

Data for Conversion

Required	Optional
Cards	Transaction History
PINs	It is typical for the EBT processor to provide a daily "redemption" file to the WIC MIS – so the WIC MIS already has the data
Demographics	
Account balances and any future benefits already issued	

Implementation Considerations

- **For small states, data can be transferred in a "big bang"**

- **Consideration must be made for downtime which must include time for:**
  - Extracting data from outgoing processor
  - Transferring data (via SFTP)
  - Incoming processor to load data

- **Recommend dry runs to include timing tests for production load so that you know how long the process will take**

- **Alternative to big bang:**
  - Transfer cards and PINs ahead of time, on night of cutover only transfer changes
  - Transfer future benefits ahead of time

Implementation Considerations
(*Continued*)

- **Need a process to handle cards reported lost/stolen during the cutover/downtime period**
    - This is usually just a handful of cards and can be handled manually (e.g. after the data is loaded, then customer support can log into new system and manually status the cards before turning on the system for redemptions)

- **Cat/subcat, UPC, and Vendor files can begin transferring in advance**

- **For file formats – recommend using a format based on the WUMEI – it has the data elements needed for transfer**

Processing Cutover

- **TPPs need to be involved to handle "pointing" to new processor**

- **WIC MIS will need to be configured to "point" to new processor**

- **Third party mobile apps (if applicable) need to be configured to "point" to new processor**

- **Note that the process is largely transparent to individual retailers (except for the middle of the night downtime)**

IVR/Customer Service

- **Typically, the phone number (which is printed on the card) will transfer**

- **This is handled in coordination with the phone company**

- **This should be on of the last steps as it is a "point of no return" (i.e. it cannot be rolled back quickly)**

Web Portal

Ideally states use an "alias" for the web address that is not specific to the processor.

In this way, the owner of the alias can change
where the address "points" to point
to the processors new portal

Cards

Ideally cards do not need to change – this is something to consider with initial card design (e.g., do put any processor specific items on the card such as web addresses or phone numbers)

Stand Beside POS

- **Typically these are owned and managed by the processor – so they have to be swapped**

- **Devices must be sent in advance**

- **Requires good communication with vendors on when to start using new device**

EBT Card

Finalize Settlement

- **Outgoing processor must run final settlement and send end of day files – the WIC MIS may need to handle two "partial" day files of redemptions**
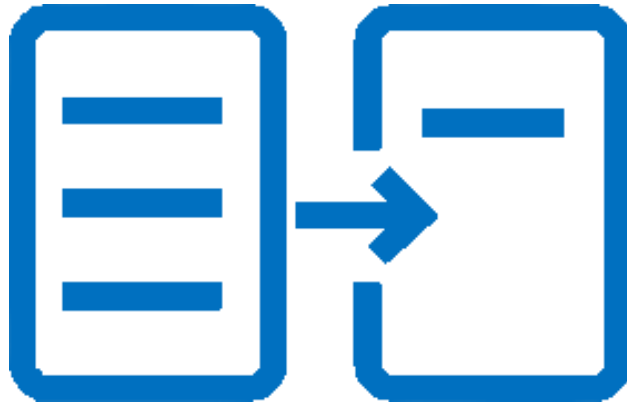
FNS Speaks...

Victor Ho
Program Specialist

Technologies for the Future

Louise Meyer
Business Development

FiS

Technologies to consider now and in the future…

Enhance the Participants Journey with WIC EBT

- Mobile Application
  - Access to program/benefit information
    - Push notifications – benefit availability
    - Send/receive appointment messages
  - Broadcast emergency information
    - ✓ Epidemics/Pandemics
    - ✓ Product Recalls
    - ✓ Weather/shelter
    - ✓ Food Pantries
  - Phone camera - scan UPC's, validate match in prescription
  - Digital Coupons/Incentives, two for one…
  - Access to financial tools

- On-Line Shopping – "Shop and go"
  - FNS approval to eliminate card being present at POS required

- Chip Card Technology
  - Migrate from magstripe to chip card
  - Ability to tap'n pay with card
  - eWallets
  - Reduce loss of card

Questions?

Thank you for joining our session.

Want to talk more?
Stop by
Booth 315

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