



City of Albuquerque Funds Small Businesses in Critical Time through Cloud Technology

BACKGROUND

Gaining department status in 1993, the City of Albuquerque Economic Development Department (CABQEDD) helps promote and facilitate business development, create and implement economic development strategy, and strengthen ties with the private sector.

Offering support, services, and programs to gain and aid in growth of businesses, the CABQEDD has created the infrastructure for Albuquerque to emerge as a market for businesses to thrive in.

Challenge

CHALLENGE

In October, the CABQEDD was tasked with managing and disbursing a \$10 million grant program that needed to support as many local businesses as possible by the end December 2020. The department realized that to meet these expedited goals, they would need to update their current manual system of receiving, processing, and funding grants to a more efficient process.

CHALLENGE

The manual systems in place required hours of extra effort across multiple employees in the department, reaching out to businesses, directing them on how and where to fill out an application, recording applicant information into spreadsheets, processing qualified applicants, and finally sending the funds to approved businesses. A more automated option was needed to help make the application process easier for small business applicants, providing reminders and status updates on applications, and enabling staff to review, process, monitor, and report on grant application, and funding metrics quickly and easily. Adding to the challenge was a two week deadline to publicly launch the grant program..

Key Technologies Used

- Salesforce Sales Cloud
- DocuSign Document e-Signature

Solution

After a preliminary discovery phase with the department, MST Solutions designed and implemented a grants management application on Salesforce Sales Cloud with a Community portal and DocuSign. Through this design the department could automate the application process, identify status of applicants quickly, and deliver grant agreement documents for electronic signature once approved. The sales path for the grant approval lifecycle provided grant officers with the guidance needed to efficiently process applications, as well as communicate with applicants on any errors or questions.

Additionally, the digitization of applications and processing automation allowed for comprehensive reporting, such as application status, performance of grant applications processing, funds disbursement tracking, auditing of applications, and funds disbursement.



Key Outcomes

- Streamlined Application Process
- Grants Data Insights via Reporting / Analytics
- Automated Workflows
- Mass eEmail Campaign Capabilities
- Improved Staff Efficiencies

Results

With Salesforce now acting as the foundation for grants management, the CABQEDD was able to streamline their process; over 1,600 applications were submitted and 1,000 small businesses were approved for grant funding. CABQEDD has disbursed all of the \$10 million to local small businesses through the grant program. This has allowed local businesses to secure the funding they needed to keep employees and stay in business during the nationwide pandemic.

Additionally, with the onboarding of the Salesforce platform and Community technology, the department is now capable of managing their customers and constituents through a 360 degree view. Through this view, staff can provide greater levels of service while citizens can interact with the department virtually—when and how they choose.