

Indiana Department of Natural Resources Saves \$100,000 with Caspio Web Apps



Agency Size

About 1,500 Employees

Industry

State Government

Challenge

Plans to make state data publicly available on the web were being hampered by tight budgets, combined with the cost of hiring programmers and hosting applications in an outsourced data center. As a result, many web application development projects were held due to lack of resources.

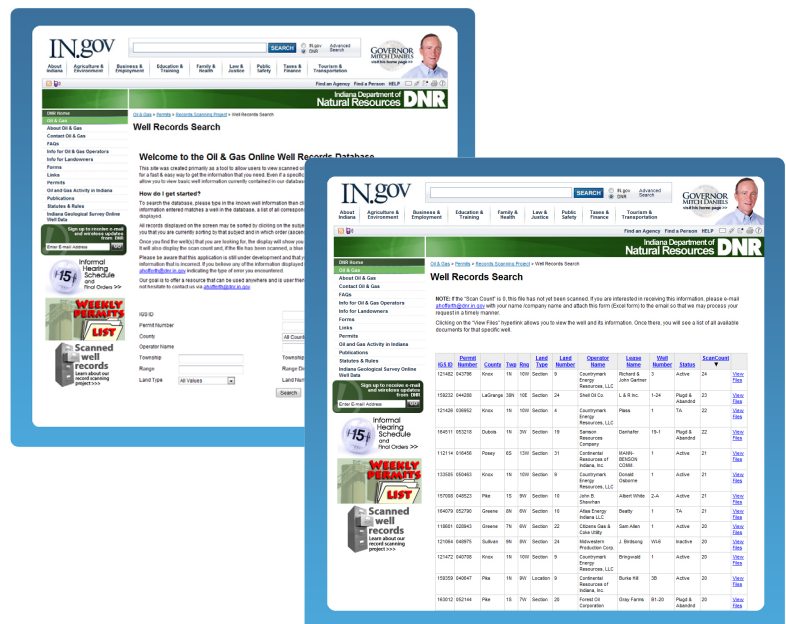
Solution

Caspio enabled the Department of Natural Resources to offer public access to its databases simply and inexpensively. Because Caspio provides visual tools for designing databases, forms, and reports, there was no need to hire programmers. In addition, most hosting fees were eliminated because Caspio's cloud computing service includes hosting for a low monthly fee. DNR estimates hosting costs savings at \$96,000 annually, not to mention savings in development labor.

With a tight budget that left little room to hire contractors, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources discovered it could affordably create their online database applications using Caspio. Caspio's simplified approach to database design, packaged as a cloud computing service, helped the DNR avoid hiring programmers and save an estimated \$96,000 annually compared to hosting similar applications with the state's data center.

A Familiar Problem

A few months after Scott N. Davis joined the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as Senior Webmaster, he found himself in a familiar situation – wanting to create new web applications, but with little money or time to devote to them. “As with any government agency these days, money, time, and resources are tight. So we really have to think carefully about the best use of taxpayer dollars,” he says.



Oil & Gas Well Records Database for Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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That's when he suggested that the state agency could save thousands of dollars by creating web apps the same way he did at his previous job at The Star Press newspaper in Muncie, Indiana. With Caspio's cloud computing service, DNR could take advantage of an online database without programming or complex database integration. Caspio provides a visual, web-based tool for designing databases, forms, and reports. Caspio also makes deploying applications as easy as a copy-and-paste – just by embedding a snippet of JavaScript code in any web page.

Radical Cost Savings

Using Caspio Bridge has really paid off, according to colleague Scott Munoz, Business Systems Consultant Manager for DNR's IT Department. He estimates the department is annually saving roughly \$96,000 in data center storage and web hosting fees alone by using Caspio. That's not counting the savings in programming and testing. In comparison, the monthly subscription fee the department pays for Caspio is insignificant. "Caspio represents a humongous cost savings for us," Munoz says.

"Without the right price point, it's not cost efficient for us to build these applications," Davis says. "There's not really a good return on investment in doing it, since we're not getting anything back – we're not charging for information, and we're not even going to sell advertising to stick around it like many newspapers do."

Using Caspio radically changes that equation, because the department has been able to create and deploy multiple applications for an affordable monthly fee, and do it with existing staff resources, Davis says. "Many projects just would not have gotten done if it wasn't for Caspio."

Caspio applications deployed to date include a searchable database of oil and gas drilling records, a listing of proposed rule changes, several searchable databases for the Fish and Wildlife division, and a form for reporting sightings of invasive plants and animals. Most of the public reports actually are indexes to state document repositories, where the search results include a link to

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Scott Davis, Senior Webmaster,
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

a PDF or image file on a state web server. The department already had the capability to publish the documents themselves – but without a good search capability, no one could find them.

Davis says Caspio has empowered him create applications even though he does not consider himself a programmer.

"What I like about Caspio is it really helped me make computer programming accessible. Because it focuses more on database design, you spend your time figuring out what you want to do, rather than staring at lines of code," Davis says. "Caspio makes creating simple databases – and even some complicated ones – accessible to non-programmers."

Munoz is also a Caspio fan. As a certified Project Management Professional, he is often responsible for organizing teams of programmers to produce applications. With Caspio, he found it was often simpler for him to do the job himself.

"The thing I like about Caspio is it's just a lot faster, and the skill set required is a lot lower bar to hit," Munoz says. "It means we have a wider group of people who are able to develop our apps."

To learn more about the Caspio's solutions for local, state and federal government agencies, visit www.caspio.com/gov.

About Caspio, Inc.

Caspio, Inc. (www.caspio.com) is the world's leading do-it-yourself online database and web application creation platform. The company's philosophy is to empower business users to create and deploy web databases, forms, reports and applications easily and without programming. Caspio's platform-as-a-service replaces coding with intuitive point-and-click wizards, enabling users to rapidly produce web database apps for capturing, publishing, and managing data online. Caspio shrinks development time from weeks to hours, and from thousands of dollars to a small monthly fee. Caspio's customers range from one-person entrepreneurs to Fortune-500 corporations, digital media giants, government agencies, and educational institutions.

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www.caspio.com/gov | gov@caspio.com | (650) 691-0900 ext. 741