



Ohio Department of Development

2007 National Low Income Energy Conference

**Electronic Solutions to Administrative Nightmares
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Agenda

- Administrative Nightmare
- History
- Getting Started
- Electronic Transfer Procedures
- Accomplishments
- OCEAN
- Questions

Administrative Nightmare

- Community Action Agencies would fax information to utility companies. This data was sometimes delayed or never received. This resulted in customers being disconnected and the delay of benefit.
- Inconsistent Data among programs
- Business rules that were not followed or were applied incorrectly
- Delay of benefit due to incomplete or inaccurate information

History

- In Ohio, the Regular HEAP Program is administered by the State Office. The Emergency HEAP component is operated through a network of 52 Community Action Agencies (CAAs).
- Ohio's electronic data exchange between CAAs and the State HEAP office grew from a local collaboration between a CAA (CAP of the Greater Dayton Area) and its electric utility - Dayton Power & Light.

Getting Started

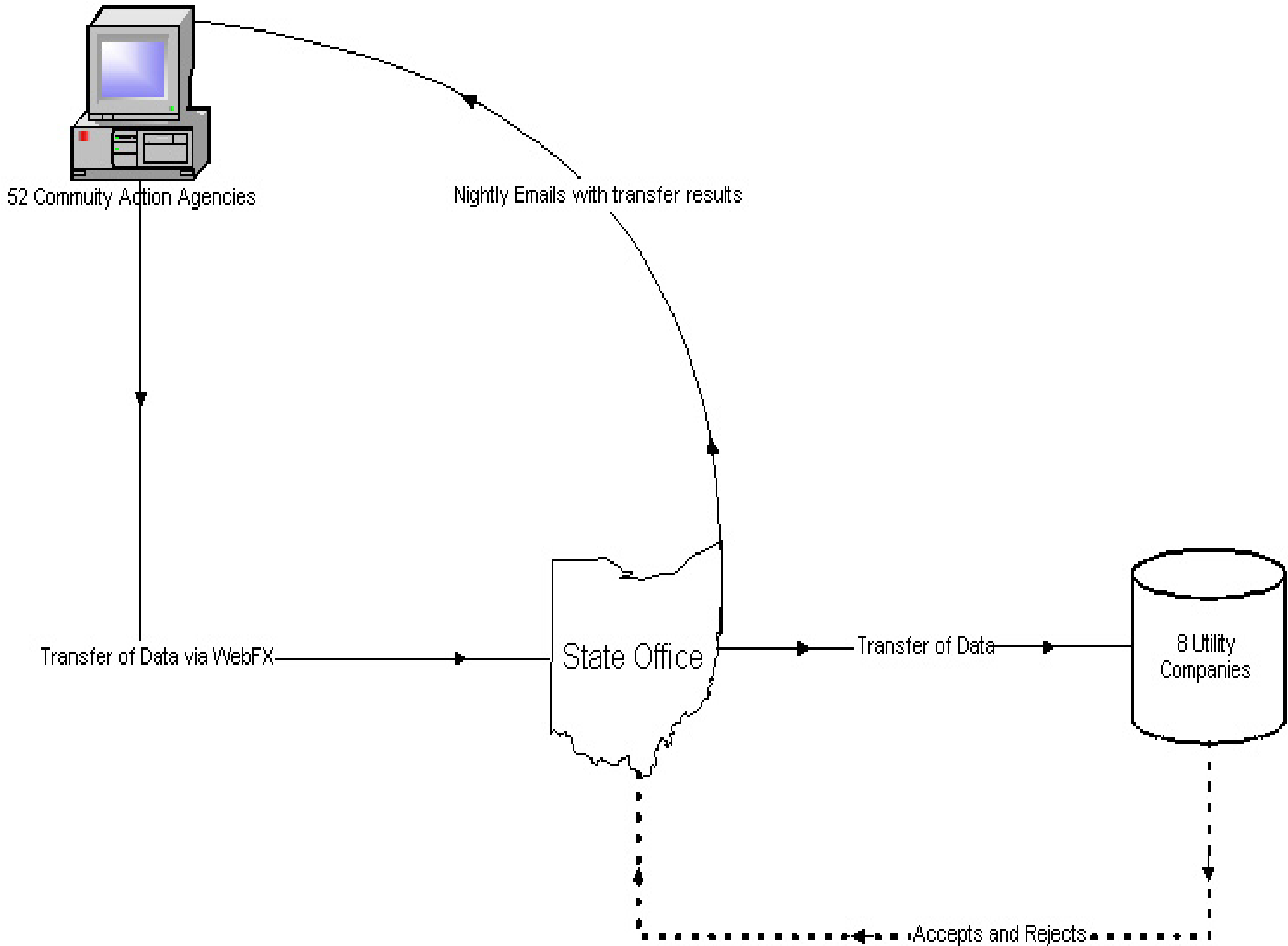
- The Office of Community Services (OCS) took a central role of packaging the information from numerous agencies into a single database for processing of Regular HEAP applications. This centralization of data made the Statewide transfer process possible.
- Ohio combined the HEAP, E-HEAP, Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP), and Weatherization applications into one Energy Assistance Application.
- Worked with seven different software vendors to incorporate all the Energy Assistance Application Data Elements. The Vendors enhanced their software to export the client files to be processed.

Getting Started

- The OCS first piloted an electronic transfer procedure in 1998. By 2001, all Ohio CAAs participated in the electronic transfer process. Also, by receiving and centralizing the electronic client records from CAAs, OCS was able to provide this information to the major utility companies in Ohio.
- OCS worked with eight different utilities to reach consensus on the file structure to transmit E-HEAP and PIPP customer data.

Electronic Transfer Procedures

- Daily upload of records was transmitted to the State by CAA's.
- The State collects all data, performs some validation checks, aggregates the data per company, and places the data on an FTP site for the utilities to download. Utilities process the data either in an automated or manual process.
- Utilities will produce exception reports. Some will be handled in-house and some may be sent back to the agency.



Accomplishments

Resulted in:

- The reduction of administrative costs
- The reduction of time it took for a customer to be enrolled on PIPP or process an Intent to Pay.
- The reduction of utility costs by reducing manual processing. (One large gas supplier reported a staff reduction of 26 positions after implementing the E-Transfer Procedures)
- Less confusion as to if the utility company received the data.
- Targeted high-usage customers for Weatherization.

OCEAN

- To go along with the central database, Ohio decided to create a central intake system for the CAAs to enter all applications.
- The Ohio Community and Energy Assistance Network (OCEAN) Project -- Through a web-based application, information can be collected and accessed in a convenient and customer friendly fashion. Integration of web technology's in the delivery of assistance programs vastly improved the systems which OCEAN partners do business.

OCEAN

OCEAN Project Goals

- To develop a web based application to improve the data capture, data reporting, and delivery of benefits to the customer.
- The use of web technologies will maximize the service delivery and minimize the response time for the many Ohioans who receive multiple services from the CAAs.
- OCEAN would centralize the data collected by the agencies and by ODOD into a single database which would be accessed across the state via the internet.

OCEAN

Multiple Phase Approach

- Phase I – Last fall (2006-2007), Ohio launched its web-based client intake system for HEAP, EHEAP, PIPP .
- Phase II – Results-Oriented Management for Accountability (ROMA), Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Electric Partnership Program (EPP), Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP), and other Agency Programs
- Phase III – IVR, ACD telephony integration, and integration with Utility Systems

OCEAN

System Benefits

- Cost savings on software & equipment - Leverage the State
- Innovative web technologies – real time processing
- Quicker and efficient processes with single point of entry
- Consistent data among CAAs, HEAP, CSBG, Weatherization
- Eliminate duplicate entry into numerous systems

Questions

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<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/cdd/ocs/public.htm>