Case Studies on
e-Governance
in India

MPOnline Portal

Leveraging ICT for improving public service delivery

Manju Khurana, *OneWorld Foundation India*

MPOnline Portal

Leveraging ICT for improving public service delivery

Manju Khurana, *OneWorld Foundation India*

About the Initiative

This publication is a part of the Capacity Building initiative under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) by NeGD with an aim to draw out learnings from various projects implemented in various States/ UTs and sharing this knowledge, in the form of case studies, with the decision makers and implementers to benefit them, by way of knowledge creation and skill building, from these experiences during planning and implementation of various projects under NeGP.

Conceptualised and overseen by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) of Media lab Asia/DeitY these case studies are submitted by e-Governance Practitioners from Government and Industry/Research Institutions. The cases submitted by the authors are vetted by experts from outside and within the Government for learning and reference value, relevance to future project implementers, planners and to those involved in e-governance capacity Building programs before they are recommended for publication. National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), working on behalf of this NeGD provided program management support and interacted with the authors and subject matter experts in bringing out these published case studies. It is hoped that these case studies drawn from successful and failed e-Governance projects would help practitioners to understand the real-time issues involved, typical dilemmas faced by e-Governance project implementers, and possible solutions to resolve them.

Acknowledgment

NISG sincerely thanks all the authors for documenting and sharing their rich experiences in terms of challenges and lessons learned and allowing us to publish and use these case studies in various training programs of NeGD and NISG. NISG also thanks all the external and internal experts who helped review the submitted cases, providing critical observations and for helping in articulating and presenting the case studies, both for class room use as well as a reference article.

Copyright License

Disclaimer

This publication is a work product produced by external authors with information sourced from their own sources as provided under reference in respective articles and is based on experiences with Projects undertaken directly or as research initiatives closely working with the project owners or with their consent to publish the findings. The authors have provided a plagiarism declaration as per project guidelines and National Institute for Smart Governance (NISG) has put in best efforts to validate the authenticity and learning value of the article submitted. NISG has acted mainly as a content reviewer with support from identified expert resources. NISG is not responsible for any plagiarism violations or copyright infringements and respective authors are fully responsible for the same as per respective declarations provided by them. The case study should not be used as a definite source of data.

The case studies are meant for use as a background and quick reference on the topic(s) by e-Governance practitioners, and should not be treated as a guideline and/or instructions for undertaking the activities covered under any e-Governance project/s. It may also be used in a classroom for discussion by the participants undergoing e-Governance related training programs. The document by no means has any commercial intention and is solely developed for the purpose of knowledge sharing.

Table of Contents

1.   Abstract

State governments all across the country are leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled strategies for ensuring efficiency, transparency and accountability in the process of service delivery. A key ICT model being used is the development of online portals for rendering web based services to citizens. The MPOnline portal of the Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP) represents the successful usage of this model for delivering public services to citizens at their door steps. MPOnline stands for 'MPOnline Information for Citizen Empowerment' and is a public-private intervention between the GoMP and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).

The portal offers a dynamic mode of service delivery through a network of franchises registered as kiosks/Common Service Centres (CSCs) run by small entrepreneurs and a direct login facility on the portal. Keeping the digital divide in mind, the Government of MP has designed the mechanism of 'Assisted Access' to effectively deliver services to the population that does not have IT literacy.

The combination of these two methods helps the portal extend its reach to all citizens in the urban as well as rural areas of the state. MPOnline runs on a revenue generating model and hence a payment mechanism has been integrated with the operations of the portal. A revenue generating approach combined with the BOOT (Build-Own-Operate-Transfer) model ensures the financial sustainability of the initiative. Strength of the BOOT model is that it facilitates a convenient division of labour with technical management being handled by TCS and strategic direction being provided by the Government of MP.

MPOnline is a one stop window for the provision of more than 275 educational, recruitments and business related citizen-centric public services. Through this portal, citizens can access public services from anywhere and at any time. Currently MPOnline services are delivered through more than 10,000 kiosks/CSCs. The portal has expanded its geographical coverage to all the 50 districts of the state, covering its 300 tehsils and 280 blocks. The acceptance of MPOnline amongst public officials was not instant and it was gradually accepted through persistent communication by MPOnline officials. Strong political and high level bureaucratic support was essential to its acceptance and ensuing success. MPOnline also uses the strategy of involving all stakeholders in key decision making processes. While this does lead to its own difficulties, specifically in the case of price-fixing, it is nevertheless a way to ensure that all stakeholders feel part of the project.

The project currently faces certain challenges such as lack of motivation by franchisees when it comes to delivering certain services, inadequate technical connectivity and issues involving project continuity in the face of changes in departmental leadership. However these issues are being addressed at various levels. As a recognition of the portal's contribution towards improving public service delivery, the initiative has been awarded with

a number of national and state level awards in field of e-governance like the CSI Nihilent e-Governance Award for Excellence (2009-10), Editor's Choice Best Website India e-Governance 2.0 (2010), NASSCOM/CNBC-TV 18th IT Users Award (2009), the Best IT for Masses Project of Madhya Pradesh (2009-10), Golden Peacock Award (2010) for Citizen Centric Services and SKOCH Digital Inclusion for technology in Service Delivery (2011. Recently, it has received SKOCH Digital Inclusion Award and Manthan Awards 2012 for conducting the online assessment for Patwari recruitments in the state of MP.

Key words: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), web-based portal, Common Service Centres, kiosks, Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) model, payment gateway, process reengineering, public-private partnership, public service delivery, transparency, accountability, Madhya Pradesh.

2. Note to Practitioners

The MPOnline portal reflects a successful example of using a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for applying an ICT based approach towards improving public service delivery. MPOnline has been built by taking into account the concerns of digital divide and long term financial sustainability. This document seeks to capture the basic design, functioning and innovative features of the MPOnline portal initiative and serve as a guide to government practitioners all across the country in their efforts to leverage ICTs, specifically an online portal, for bringing the government closer to citizens. .

3. Project Context

In India, the past couple of decades have seen a paradigm shift in the government's attitude towards building a good governance environment. It has been increasingly recognized that responsiveness, transparency and accountability are the three non-negotiable ingredients for a government to be considered as capable of delivering good governance. The 1997 conference of Chief Ministers of States focused on rebuilding the credibility of the government by developing strategies to make the delivery of public services efficient and responsive. One of the major decisions taken at the conference was to develop Citizen Charters which define the quality, standard of public services and provide for the creation of adequate grievance redressal mechanisms[1]. In the years that followed, many Central Government Ministries/Departments/Organizations, State Governments and Administrations of Union Territories have issued their respective Citizen Charters.

These Citizen Charters aimed at making public service delivery citizen- centric. One of the key mechanisms that states have been utilizing to meet the commitments made under these Citizen Charter's is the use of technological solutions and innovative managerial tools. Taking cognizance of the many hurdles that citizens face in their day to day interaction with

---

[1] The Citizen's Charter: Indian Experience Web: 21 February 2013 <http://goicharters.nic.in/ccinitiative.htm>

government departments and the pressing need to formulate efficient and quick delivery systems, state governments have been working towards automating processes and bringing service provision to the door steps of citizens.

One such key e-governance effort is the MPOnline Portal also known as ' MPOnline Information for Citizen Empowerment' of the Government of Madhya Pradesh. The GoMP in collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) designed and developed the MPOnline portal to enable citizens to access government services more effectively. TCS was already running APOnline, a citizen interface e-governance intiative for the state of Andhra Pradesh. Based on their experience a proposal was submitted for establishing MPOnline in the state of MP. This proposal was approved in the Cabinet and MPOnline was established as a joint venture. The duration of the partnership is 10 years extendable with mutual consent and agreement of the partners.

Prior to implementation of MPOnline, interaction with government was a cumbersome process for the citizens to have access to public services due to manual procedure of service delivery. There were delays in delivery accompanied by poor quality of service and lack of responsiveness of officials towards public. The process was time consuming, tiring with enough opportunities for corruption leading towards dissatisfaction and frustration among the citizens in the end.

With the launch of MPOnline portal citizens have access to a one stop shop for more than 275+ educational, recruitment and business related citizen services like filling and submitting application forms for admissions, examinations, death and birth certificates, driving license, online payment of bookings, rent collection, insurance premium, online counseling and conducting online assessment recruitment examinations and so on. 'Citizens can avail this range of services by paying a nominal fee by directly logging into the portal or by approaching a nearby kiosk/CSC for assistance.'[2]

The MPOnline portal integrates key government departments such as the Municipality, Forest, District Collectorate, Urban Administration Department, Commercial Tax, Agriculture, Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Education, Health, Electricity and Police Departments to bring in transparency and accountability into their functioning and deliver services to citizens on time.

4. Project Overview

MPOnline portal was developed by MP Online Limited as a joint venture between TCS and Government of Madhya Pradesh through MP State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC) in 2006 and its first service was delivered in 2007[3] . As a one stop shop it provides

---

[2] Annie Vincent. 'Public Private Intervention in Improving Public Service Delivery: MPOnline Portal in Madhya Pradesh'. Governance Knowledge Centre, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, 2012 .
[3]MP Online Home Page Web: 20 February 2013 <https://www.mponline.gov.in/Portal/index.aspx>

a number of Government to Citizen (G2C), Government to Government (G2G) and Government to Business (G2B) services with a convenient mode of payment. As of February 2013, the portal is catering to more than 50 departments[4].

The portal assists citizens by providing them with a time and cost effective mechanism to seek public services in real time through the advanced use of technology. Citizens can access a range of services by paying a nominal fee either by directly logging into the portal or approaching a nearby Kiosk[5] or CSC integrated with MP Online. These Kiosks and CSC's are distributed across the entire state of MP both in rural and urban areas. The portal employs an 'Assisted Access' model to deliver services effectively to those sections of population that do not have adequate computer literacy through these kiosks and CSCs. Over 10,000+ such Kiosk and CSCs are currently functional in MP. The initiative is making a significant impact on people irrespective of technological connectivity and computer literacy with its presence in 50 districts, over 300 tehsils and more than 280 blocks of Madhya Pradesh.

5. Project Objective

MPOnline is a realization of the overall objective of the Government of Madhya Pradesh to provide a wide spectrum of its services to citizens at their door steps. The initiative aims to make public services citizen-centric by leveraging ICT tools to bring in accountability and transparency in delivery system. It also aims to re-engineer administrative processes and make them time and cost saving and enhance the efficiency of service providers.

6. Implementation Strategy

Services Offered

MPOnline hosts a number of Government to Citizens (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), and Government to Government (G2G) services. *(For examples of services, see Annexure I).*

The spectrum of services vary from application for a birth/death certificate through Municipal corporations, applying for X and XII MP Board of Secondary Education Exam, applying for professional examinations through Professional Examination Boards, payment of insurance/electricity/phone bills , ticket reservation through MP Tourism Department and so on. Additionally the portal provides the facility for online counseling for students of B.Ed/ ITI/DME/DTE. An online registration of contractors has also been initiated for the first time in the country through the portal in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Public Works Department (MPPWD).

The portal also delivers a number of services meant specifically for rural citizens namely registration of farmers for wheat procurement, application for a temporary agriculture

---

[4] Ibid.

[5] Kiosk is an authorized agent of MPOnline who can make payment on citizen's behalf and citizen has to pay cash to the Kiosk.

connection for farmers, and private X and XII board exams through MP Board of Secondary Education and MP State of open School. The portal also provides citizens an access to the Human Rights Commission for grievance redressal.

Key stakeholders

The provision of the aforementioned services through a web portal has been made possible because of interaction of the following stakeholders:

- **Implementing agencies:** MPOnline Limited, MP State Electronic Development Corporation, and Government of Madhya Pradesh are responsible for developing and up scaling the MPOnline portal through the entire state of MP.

- **Technology Partners**: Tata Consultancy Services is responsible for developing, designing and maintaining the technological infrastructure required to run the MPOnline portal.

- **Financial institutions**: State Bank of India, Union Bank of India, HDFC, AXIS Bank and 52 other banks through BILL Desk[6] have provided a channel for the financial transactions resulting out of delivering services through the portal.

- Government departments, educational institutions and commercial organizations that have agreed to integrate their services with the portal.

- **Citizens** who use the portal for accessing various services

Project Features

The key features of the MPOnline initiative are as under:

    i.   Service delivery through a network of kiosks and CSCs

    ii.   Service delivery through direct log-in on the MPOnline portal < http://www.mponline.gov.in/portal/index.aspx?langid=en-US#>

    iii.   Revenue generating financial model

    iv.   Project management and evaluation team

Service Delivery via Kiosks /CSCs

MPOnline operates on a dynamic delivery network model depending upon the location of citizens and their access to technology. It delivers services through kiosks, the authorized agents of MPOnline and CSCs run by Service Centre Agencies (SCA) like AISECT, Reliance, Network for Information and Communication Technology (NICT) and CMS. SCAs are private sector entities, chosen by the state government through a transparent tender mechanism.

---

[6] BILL Desk is a single entry point of contact for your recurring payment needs. It provides facility to pay the bills and other payments online in a secure and convenient manner (http://www.billdesk.com/helpcenter.htm#BillDesk)

Their role is investing, establishing and supporting Common Service Centres in a group of districts.

MPOnline kiosk	3215
AISECT CSC	3130
Reliance	1733
NICT	694
CMS	890
University kiosks	973
Total	11574

Note: Figures as on 10-03-13

Table 1: Breakdown of MPOnline Kiosk Network in Madhya Pradesh state

Source: As taken from MPOnline Ltd., March 2013

The kiosks are an extensive network of franchisees that are integrated with MPOnline to deliver services in urban areas. A Common Service Centre (CSC), an ICT based access point under the National e-Governance initiative of the Government of India, also enables the citizens to access MPOnline Services. Kiosk and CSCs are connected to the MPOnline portal via the internet and enable the rendition of the hosted services. Each kiosk and CSC is equipped with manpower to assist the citizens to apply for any service on MPOnline, digitize supporting documentation and provide a convenient option for making payment for services. Applicants are provided with an acknowledgment receipt which consists of information like a unique transaction ID, applicants' details and the fee paid by the applicant. The kiosk and CSC operate on a pre-paid model where they are required to top up their account with a certain amount of money to provide services to citizens. Once the credit balance is over, they may again top up their account. Kiosk owners are required to pay a one-time registration fee of INR 6742/-after MPOnline's survey of geographical area of the kiosk. Payments are accepted in the form of Demand Drafts favouring MPOnline Limited payable at Bhopal. There is an annual renewal fee based on the commission earned yearly and the renewal fees can be between INR 500-1500.
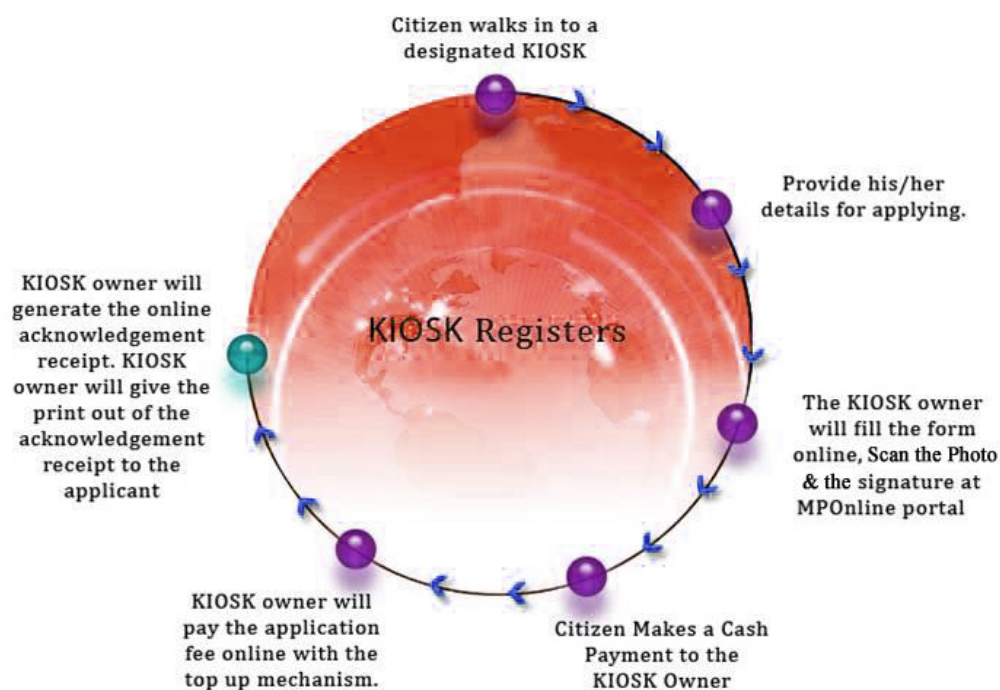
Figure 1: Process flow of service delivery through kiosks

Source: A Revolutionary Approach to Delivering Citizen-Centric Services. MPOnline Ltd. May 2012.

Service Delivery via Direct Login for Citizens

Figure 2: Process flow of service delivery through direct log-in facility

Source: A Revolutionary Approach to Delivering Citizen-Centric Services. MPOnline Ltd. May 2012.

For citizens who are computer literate and have access to either internet banking or a credit/ debit card, MPOnline services may be accessed directly via the portal, with an optional and simple registration process. A user can make payment through any Visa or Master credit/debit card to pay for the services availed. Payment for services availed can also be made online through e-transfer of funds if the user has an account with listed banks. Cash payments can also be made for availing services. The applicant will be issued an acknowledgement receipt with a unique transaction ID along with the applicant details and the fee paid by the applicant.

Revenue generating financial model

MPOnline portal has adopted a revenue based Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) model wherein the cost of developing, designing and maintaining the portal is incurred by MPOnline Limited. The cost incurred is expected to be recovered via user pay model i.e. a mode of generating revenue where the users pay a fixed portal fee and a service charge for any service availed through the portal. The user charges are defined by MPOnline Limited and are revised over time. The portal fee is shared between MPOnline and the Kiosk and

CSC, while the service charge collected goes to the concerned department/institution responsible for providing the service. In the case of CSCs, the commission to be shared with them is fixed by the SCAs. The integration of the portal with other government departments for the provision of services is done free of cost.

Project management and evaluation

MPOnline has evolved a strategic partnership with TCS to develop and deploy the portal as envisaged; and to bridge the gap in capacity building at the government level. TCS was assigned the responsibility for planning, constructing, operating and maintaining the project. It also developed the full technological infrastructure required and provided trained manpower to cater to the design and implementation related issues and technical needs of the government.

A project management and evaluation team consisting of senior level technical and management staff from TCS; and other personnel in the IT domain is responsible for ensuring the smooth functioning of the project. These IT personnel are recruited locally by MPOnline Limited through a selection procedure established as per TCS guidelines. The project team relies on comprehensive technical and troubleshooting support from Microsoft Technology Centres of TCS and Microsoft Corporation. MPOnline has a total number of 70 dedicated staff at its headquarters. A number of capacity building exercises have also been undertaken for client departments and local franchises.

The portal also has an inbuilt feature 'MPOnline Survey" (https://www.mponline.gov.in/Portal/MPOnlineSurvey.aspx) to evaluate its performance through users' feedback. The information is analyzed and used to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of portal.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) of MPOnline has regular meetings with his government counterparts for prioritizing work, and facilitating interaction with government departments. A third party overall project audit has also been conducted to verify security basics such as infrastructure, admin and security, password encryption and methodology used, data posting between forms etc. This audit is carried out by SB Billimoria Co. (SBB) of the Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (DTT) group.[7]

MPOnline has also prepared a security policy document (Annexure IV) for follow-up and distributed it amongst all the concerned government and private sector service providers. Its association with HDFC and SBI payment gateway is also based upon security based pre-conditions.[8]

---

[7] Computer Society of India. Enablers of Change : Selected e-Governance Initiatives in India. CSI Nihilent E-Governance Award. 2010 Web: 5 March 2013 <http://www.csinihilent-egovernanceawards.org/e_governance_2010.php>

[8] Computer Society of India. Fostering e-Governance. Selected Compendium of Indian Initiatives..2009 Web: 5 March 2013 < http://www.csi-sigegov.org/ppt/CSI2009Book240909.pdf>

Technology infrastructure

The technological requirement for the portal consists of two Quad-Core servers, one deployed as the application server and other as the data base server. These are supported by multiple high-end Hex Core servers with 64 GB RAM for each of these servers[9]. It has an increased bandwidth of 45 MBPS linked with 16 MBPS back up link and two fully functional SAN storage network to avoid data loss or break up while transferring the data.

The MPOnline portal is currently hosted at the State Data Center (SDC) and MPOnline is the custodian of the data contained therein. The SDC can be accessed only by the IT Secretary of the state and by one authorised support personnel from MPOnline through a bio-metric access device. To ensure a higher degree of security, the data center deploys firewalls at the perimeter with potential for application level filtering and host based Intrusion Detection System (IDS). These measures prevent any kind of malicious activity from hackers on the firewall server. Secure data base servers at MPOnline data centre ensure confidentiality of clients' data. Access to this data is restricted and is role based. Access to server is also restricted through bio-metric devices.

Awareness Generation

- As per the Cabinet mandate of MPOnline, Government departments were informed and instructed to get their citizen services online through the portal.

- MPOnline executives visited the departments and educated them about the vision, mission and benefits of online services to make the lives of citizen convenient.

7. Project Outcomes

Operating on a sustainable financial model

MPOnline, an ICT based initiative is based upon a predefined sustainable financial model with no upfront burden on the state. As per the Cabinet mandate given to MPOnline Limited, it has adopted a user pay model to provide access to services via the MPOnline portal. The user fees generated through this model is distributed between MPOnline and the kiosks and CSCs. As a result, all involved stakeholders are able to make returns from the portal which makes it financially viable for their continued involvement.

As per MPOnline Ltd representatives, the highest amount of income distribution amongst Kiosks / CSC's was reported in a single month in 2011 -12, that is, INR. 4.7 crore. Overall commission distributed among KIOSK was in INR 12.53 crores during the year 2011–12. The statistics reflect a significant increase in number of transactions. There is also a substantial

---

[9] Review of MP Online by Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh Web: 21 February 2013
http://www.mapit.gov.in/PDF/MPOnline.pdf

increase in revenue generated by client departments. Starting with INR 50 lakh in 2007-08, it has increased to INR 379 crores in 2011-12.

Usage of an inclusive technological solution

In the wake of the existing digital divide in India, MPOnline has adopted a service delivery mechanism to cater to the computer literate as well as computer illiterate sections of state's population. It also takes into account whether citizens belong to rural or urban areas and accordingly provides a service delivery model. Service delivery through Kiosks and CSCs enables the citizens to seek assistance while applying for services and make payment by cash as preferred, specifically in case of those that are not familiar with technology and have no access to internet banking/debit/credit cards. After every transaction, citizens are provided with a printed acknowledgement slip with applicant details, a unique transaction ID and the amount of fee paid. This information enables them to lodge their grievances if there are any gaps in the services provided. In this manner MPOnline is leveraging a technological solution in an inclusive manner.

Creation of employment opportunities

MPOnline portal is one of the most significant e-governance initiatives of the state. This innovative system of service delivery adopted by Government of Madhya Pradesh has facilitated IT literacy among both rural and urban citizens. The portal has expanded its presence all over the state with more than 10000+ kiosks, registered as franchises. Rendering services under MPOnline has become one of the primary sources of income for these franchises which are run by small entrepreneurs. The MPOnline portal has generated employment for more than 10,000 citizens[10].

Provision of a single point of access for a large spectrum of services

MPOnline portal enables citizens to have access to a wide spectrum of services through a single entry point. There are more than 275+ G2C, B2C, and G2G services related to academics, business, and employment opportunities that are accessible in real time through the portal. There has been a significant rise in the number of service transactions carried out through the portal since 2008-09 as reflected in Figure 3.

---

[10] CSI Nihilent-E-Governance Award Web: 21 February 2013 <http://www.csinihilent-governanceawards.org/publications/Sec2-Chapter6.pdf>
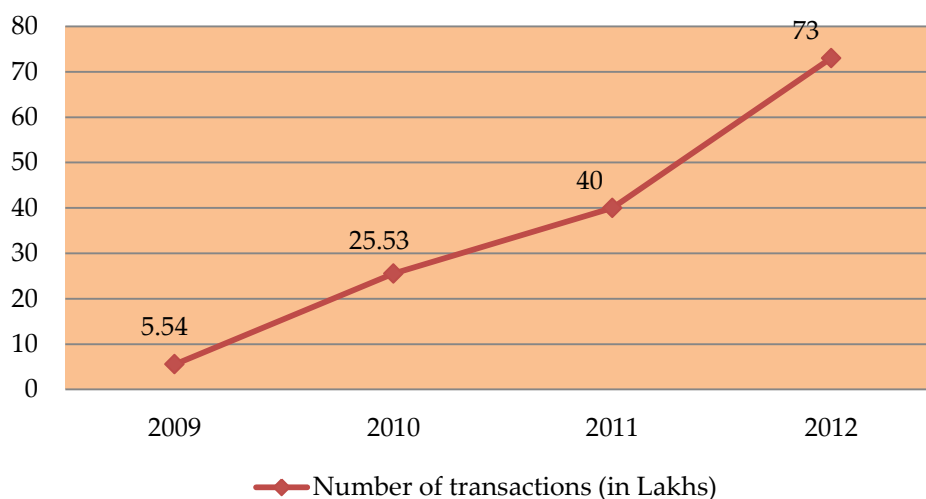
Figure 3: Yearly increase in usage of MPOnline in terms of transactions

Source: A Revolutionary Approach to Delivering Citizen-Centric Services. MPOnline Ltd. May 2012.

Creation of an efficient service delivery environment

The initiative has brought a substantial improvement in service delivery channels across the state. As far as academic services are concerned, there are multiple options for submission of fees and it is possible to fill up the form at any time of the day without queuing up for hours. The portal has also reduced the chances of application rejection due to postal delays and is creating transparency by making monitoring related information available. Similarly, the payment of insurance premiums, electricity bills, water bills, phone bills, property tax etc. has been made convenient preventing delay's in payments and eliminating the need to travel.

The portal has brought efficiency in the functioning of government departments by saving financial resources (*Annexure III*) and resulting in better time management strategies. There is no wastage of stationary, no requirement of temporary staff and additional storage space for processing manual applications.

Online off-campus counseling for Department of Technical Education

It is noteworthy to mention that MP is one of the pioneers state in introducing online off-campus counselling for the Department of Technical Education (DTE). It has brought about major changes in front end processes and back end processes benefitting both students and the concerned departments.

Table 2: Changes in Department of Technical Education counseling process and impact with DTE's integration with MPOnline

Source: Computer Society of India, 2010

Earlier	Now
Major front end processes	
Time and money spent to travel to the counselling centres	Provision to choose option from any engineering institutes without the need to travel at all
Spending time in queues with no infrastructure or basic amenities available at counselling centres	May undergo counselling at home by direct login into portal or visiting local internet café or the nearest kiosk/CSC
Major back end processes	
Options available depended upon number of stalls available	Online all courses available may be viewed
Not able to research the option and had to take immediate decisions	Have option to research on various colleges and options before making any decision
Lack of transparency in the system and there was scope to be misled during counseling by agents	The students have a real view of colleges available and seats vacant, seats reserved etc.

For the department	
Since human resources from all the departments of the college were deployed for a month long counseling exercise, academic were disturbed. Courses were delayed and commenced only when the all the seats were full	The requirement of human resources has gone down with two to three people at each of the help centres established by the department. Allotment for each round takes only a few days, thus academic session commences on time.

Of the 13 counselling sessions conducted by MPOnline for DTE, the most significant is the BE counselling for engineering students. The solution was first deployed on demo server so as to orient the students and the concerned departments followed by a 2 months training prior to the start of the programme. Nearly 2 lakh seats have been handled in DTE counseling involving 3.63 lakh students since its inception in 2009.

Popular services availed on MPOnline

In addition to the DTE service, other highly used services offered by MPOnline are:

- Online applications for examinations held by the MP Professional Examination Board (Vyapam). A total of 30 exams such as PPT, PMT, MCA/MET, GNST/PNST, PEPT/PAT, PAHUT, pre-PG as well as examination for jobs are applied for through MPOnline.

- Online applications for the MP Board of Secondary Education. A host of services such as application for supplementary exams, retotaling, answer books, duplicate mark sheets and migration certificates are provided through MPOnline.

- The Temporary Teacher's Recruitment Application had a staggering 20 lakh transactions in a single month.

- The Online Assessment Examination handled *patwari* vacancies for one lakh candidates.

Awards and recognitions

The potential of MPOnline as a ICT based e-governance initiative for making public service delivery more efficient, transparent and accountable has been recognized and the initiative has been awarded with a number of national and state level awards namely CSI Nihilient E-Governance Award (2009-10), Editors' Choice Best Website India E-Gov 2.0 (2010), NASSCOM/CNBC-TV 18'IT Users Award (2009), Best IT for Masses Project of Madhya Pradesh (2009-10) and Good Governance Award (2010) in regional category. For conducting *the Online Assessment for Patwari recruitments in the State of MP, MPOnline has also been conferred with SKOCH Digital Inclusion Award and Manthan Awards 2012.*

8. Challenges in Implementation

Lack of trained IT staff

One of the major challenges faced prior to and during the implementation of project was lack of trained IT manpower in the public sector for project management and monitoring. In order to address the issue, a BOOT model was adopted where full infrastructure and manpower support was provided through collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services for design, implementation and overall management of the project. At the same time, a number of capacity building exercises were undertaken for the personnel of client departments.

Lack of computer literacy

Lack of computer literacy is one of the biggest challenges in initiating any ICT based initiative. The existence of a digital divide presents numerous challenges in the implementation of an ICT based initiative. In order to overcome this challenge, MPOnline followed the "Assisted Access" model to deliver online services to citizens wherein it integrated an extensive network of kiosks and CSCs with the MPOnline portal to deliver services throughout the state. These kiosks/CSCs are equipped with trained manpower to assist citizens to access various services through the portal.

Lack of awareness of e-governance initiatives among citizens

Creating awareness among citizens about this new service delivery model was an extremely challenging task for MPOnline. As a part of its change management strategy, MPOnline created awareness among citizens about the benefits of initiative through audio-visual mediums such as the internet, cable TV, and radio.

Building trust among government stakeholders

The MPOnline Portal has collaborations with more than 50 state government departments for online public service delivery. Since the portal is a joint venture with TCS as a private stakeholder, there was a certain level of discomfort and sense of insecurity amongst departments' officials. To overcome this challenge, MPOnline adopted a strategy to involve stakeholders equally in all key decision making processes from fixing rates for services, designing an implementation process to developing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The price fixing mechanism is as follows[11]:

1. After finalizing the process flow of services, a cost justification is prepared considering various parameters such as the cost of hardware, servers, helpdesk, disaster recovery, bandwidth, system software and application development.

---

[11] Chief Operating Officer. MPOnline Pvt Ltd. April 2013.

2. A cost per transaction is arrived at by dividing the total cost with the expected number of transactions over three years.

3. A price committee constituted by the MPOnline team, the Principal Secretary of Information and Technology and the concerned client department gives the final approval.

There is no upfront financial burden on the department for application development. A nominal portal fee is charged from the citizen and the total cost is recovered in a span of three years.

Lack of motivation among franchisees

MPOnline is operational all over the state in its 50 districts through registered franchises established as kiosks or CSCs. In some cases franchises are not cooperative enough to assist the citizens in accessing various services through the MPOnline portal. Many times they have a tendency to limit their assistance to services that are financially remunerating which restricts the overall objective of the initiative i.e. the provision of all public services to citizens at their door steps. To enhance motivation among franchisees, tested measures have been adopted. These include regular recognition of the role and contribution of franchisees through awards, giving them certificates of excellence that many have prominently displayed in their kiosks, organizing social events to help franchisees learn from each other's experiences.

Inadequate technical connectivity

One of the major challenges that MPOnline faces is limited technological connectivity especially in rural areas of the state and the inadequate supply of electricity. As a result of limitations, the provision of services through the portal is hampered. The overcoming of this challenge depends on the overall development of the state's IT and power infrastructure.

Challenges faced in the Joint Venture

1. In convincing government departments to introduce online applications, a lot of persistence and follow-up communication is required.

2. Government departments negotiate hard with TCS to provide lower charges for citizens. However, the increasing cost of developing applications, servers, real estate space, bandwidth, inflation and salary increments to employees with reasonable margins does not allow MPOnline to keep the service charges very low.

3. A major challenge involves changes in the heads of departments. Applications that have been developed are sometimes not made live due to the new head not wanting online applications. In such scenarios, the entire cost of production goes waste.

9. Key Lessons

MPOnline is a successful example of leveraging a PPP model for the creation of an ICT based public service delivery model. **In a PPP model, there are well defined roles and responsibilities for each partner. Specifically in the context of ICT based initiatives for public service delivery, collaboration with efficient technology partners from the private sector helps in establishing a sound IT set-up and saves the government the hassle of dealing with technical glitches.**

MPOnline was initiated with a strong political and bureaucratic support from Government of Madhya Pradesh. MPOnline Limited was formed with a cabinet approval and strongly backed by state government. It is currently headed by Secretary IT in the capacity of chairman which brings in a proactive involvement of bureaucratic community for taking the initiative ahead. Its close association with Department of IT (DIT), Government of Madhya Pradesh also inculcates confidence among its stakeholders. **Strong political and bureaucratic support is a must for any governance reform ICT or otherwise to take root in the system and be sustainable in the long run.**

 A key achievement of the MPOnline portal is that it has been designed keeping in mind the existing digital divide. Hence, **a delivery mechanism that can cater to the needs of both rural and urban citizens irrespective of their computer literacy has been developed.** MPOnline is a cost effective mechanism to avail public services in real time and also enabled the government and other clients to deliver services in an accountable manner.

The strength of MPOnline lies on the extensive network of franchises, registered as kiosks and CSCs spread all over the state These franchise are well equipped with appropriately skilled staff to assist the citizens in getting access to any service through the MPOnline portal. Through this model, MPOnline has generated employment opportunities for small entrepreneurs and has also made the model financially sustainable. **The adoption of a similar approach in other sectors such as education, health, adult literacy, sanitation etc. may bring about a significant change. It may be an innovative strategy for employment generation while improving public service delivery at the same time.**

Digital divide is one of the most important challenges posed to the initiative. Thus there is an urgent need to enhance exposure to technology particularly among rural citizens. In this context IT literacy programmes may be initiated accompanied by increasing citizen's access to internet banking/credit/debit cards in order to enable them to have independent access to public services. **The government may collaborate with and financial institutions in generating technical and financial literacy among citizens so as to expand the reach of such ICT based initiatives.**

MPOnline is predominantly operational in rural areas through kiosks or CSCs. But inadequate supply of electricity and poor internet connectivity are some major issues that

need to be addressed. **TCS or similar technology partners may play a significant role in ensuring efficient internet connectivity and maintenance of software on regular basis for kiosks and CSCs located in rural areas.**

10.The Way Forward

The approach adopted by the MPOnline portal can be replicated in other states to enhance efficiency of public service delivery. The Government of Maharashtra launched the MahaOnline portal in 2010.Replication of this model is also in pipeline for Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Chhatisgarh. The approach may also be adopted to create an all India online portal.

Many more services are being planned to be integrated with the MPOnline delivery mechanism in Madhya Pradesh. These include:

- Online applications for Jabalpur Medical University, Madhya Pradesh Paramedical Council, SV Polytechnic, Chattisgarh Professional Service Board, Chattisgarh Board of Secondary Education

- Online Application for payments of water , Royalty , lease and maintenance and land application for allotment for Gwalior, Jabalpur and Rewa region

- Online Facility to request for new and lost PDS coupons

- Initiation of e-PRI-Panchayati Raj system in Madhya Pradesh

Research Methodology

MPOnline portal utilizes and ICT based approach to bring efficiency, accountability and transparency in public service delivery in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The portal adopts a revenue generating model which makes it financially sustainable, furthermore the initiative is successfully overcoming the digital divide and reaching all urban and rural citizens alike.

In order to understand the working of the MPOnline portal, the research team of OneWorld Foundation India conducted thorough secondary research. The primary resources referred for this documentation include the Governance Knowledge Centre case-study on MPOnline, MPOnline Website, TCS website, Review of MP Online by Secretary Government of Madhya Pradesh, e-India award 2011, and CSI Nihilent e-Governance Award 2009-10. Other referred sources were UN e-Government Survey 2012 and various other reliable academic articles on e-governance available online. The Chief Operating Officer of MPOnline Limited was consulted on various occasions to fill gaps in information available.

Conclusion

MPOnline portal is a remarkable example of leveraging an ICT based PPP model for the delivery of public services. It enables citizens to avail a wide spectrum of education, employment and business related serviced conveniently through a web portal. By studying the approach adopted by MPOnline, government practitioners will get valuable insights on the operation of a financially sustainable and economically viable technology based initiative which is also successfully overcoming the digital divide.

References

- Bhargava, Pramod. "Response to Questionnaire on MPOnline". Message to the author. 9 April. 2013. E-mail.
- Computer Society of India. *CSI Nihilent-E-Governance Award*. Web. 21 February. 2013 <http://www.csinihilent-governanceawards.org/publications/Sec2-Chapter6.pdf>
- Computer Society of India. Enablers of Change: Selected e-Governance Initiatives in India. CSI Nihilent E-Governance Award. 2010 Web: 5 March 2013 <http://www.csinihilent-egovernanceawards.org/e_governance_2010.php>
- Debjani Bhattacharya, Umesh Gulla and M. P. Gupta. *Assessing Effectiveness of State Government Portals in India*.Web. 21 February. 2013 < http://www.csi-sigegov.org/1/29-418.pdf>
- Karwal Anita. *Effective Public Service Delivery and e-Governance: Who Drives Whom*. Web. 20 February. 2013 .<http://www.csi-igegov.org/casestudies/02_effect_public_service.pdf>
- MP Online Limited. Web. 21 February. 2013 <http://awards.eletsonline.com/2011/11/15/mponline-limited/>
- MPOnline Home Page Web: 20 February 2013 <https://www.mponline.gov.in/Portal/index.aspx>
- MPOnline Limited. A Revolutionary Approach to Delivering Citizen-Centric Services. May 2012.
- *Review of MP Online by Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh.* Web. 21 February. 2013. <http://www.mapit.gov.in/PDF/MPOnline.pdf>
- *The Citizen's Charter: Indian Experience.* Web. 21 February. 2013. <http://goicharters.nic.in/ccinitiative.html>
- *The Madhya Pradesh Government goes online with the support of TCS.* Web. 20 February. 2013. <http://www.tcs.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/Case%20Studies/Government_CaseStudy_Madhya-Pradesh-government-online-TCS-support_05_2011.pdf>
- *Towards an ideal e-governance scenario in India, Tata Consultancy Services.* 2008. Web. 28 February. 2013 < http://www.tcs.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/White%20Papers/tcs_government_idealegovernanceindia.pdf>
- *United Nations E-Government Survey. E-Government for People 2012.* Web. 20 February. 2013. < http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan048065.pdf>
- Vincent. Annie. *Public Private Intervention in Improving Public Service Delivery: MPOnline Portal in Madhya Pradesh.* Governance Knowledge Centre. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. 2012.

Case Fact Sheet

I. Demographic information:

	MP	India
Total population	7,25,97,565	1,21,01,93,422
Male	3,76,12,920	62,37,24,248
Female	3,49,84,645	58,64,69,174
Decadal growth in	20.30	17.64
Sex ratio	930	940
Density in population	236	382
Literacy rate	70.63	74.04
Male	80.53	82.14
Female	60.02	65.46
Population below poverty	36.7	29.8
Schedule Caste Population	9,155,177	166,635,700
Schedule Tribe Population	12,233,474	84,326,240

Demographic profile of Madhya Pradesh and its comparison with national level data Source: Provisional Population Totals, census of India 2011, Government of India and Planning Commission, Government of India, 2012

II. Sector to which the project belongs: ICT and Public Service Delivery

III. Stakeholder and beneficiaries:

   i. Stakeholders-MPOnline Limited, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Tata Consultancy Services, Kiosks/Common Service Centres, Financial Institutions such as ICICI, SBI, Union Bank of India, AXIS bank etc. and Government Departments

   ii. Beneficiaries- Citizens of Madhya Pradesh Educational institutions, Commercial organizations and Government departments

IV. Calendar of major events:

MoU signed with Government of Madhya Pradesh	July 2006
Portal goes live	March
First kiosk established	February
First service goes live	April 2007

First payment gateway becomes operational	April 2007
Introduced Department of Technical Education (DTE) Online Off Campus	2009
Online registration of contractors for the first time in country with MPPWD	2011-12

V.   Financial costs: Adopts BOOT (Build-Own-Operate-Transfer) Model and revenue is generated via a user pay model. The overall project cost was INR 2.72 crore that was spent on procuring hardware and software components and training and capacity building efforts.

VI.   Services offered:

   i.   G2C services:

- *Free down load of application forms for admission and recruitment*

- *Online payment of electricity bills*

- *Online registration for driving license/learners' license*

- *Online reservation for national parks and online bus booking*

- *Online Off Campus Counselling*

- *Online payment of property tax/water tax/birth or death certificate registration*

   ii.   G2B services

- *Online payment of insurance premium/Online payment of landline phone/mobile phone bills*

   iii.   G2G services

- *Open School Online admission*

- *Online applications for examination by MP Professional Examination Board*

- *Online application for MP Board of Secondary Education*

- *IGNOU application forms for paramedical courses*

- *Online admission for various universities*

VII.   Sources of data:

   i.   Governance Knowledge Centre, DARPG, GoI

   ii.   MPOnline Home Page

iii.   Tata Consultancy Services

iv.   Government of Madhya Pradesh

VIII.   <u>Owner of the project:</u> MPOnline Limited, Government of Madhya Pradesh

List of Abbreviations

AISECT	All India Society for Electronics & Computer Technology
ATM	Automatic Teller Machine
BOOT	Build Own Operate and Transfer
CGPSC	Chattisgarh Public Service Commission
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CSC	Common Service Centre
CSI	Computer Society of India
DAR & PG	Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DME	Department of Medical Education
DTE	Department of Technical Education
FIR	First Information Report
GoMP	Government of Madhya Pradesh
G2C	Government to Citizen
G2B	Government to Business
G2G	Government to Government
ICICI	Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India
ICT	Information and Communication technology
ID	Identification
IT	Information technology
MIS	Management Information System
MP	Madhya Pradesh
MPSEDC	Madhya Pradesh State Electronics Development Corporation
MPSOS	Madhya Pradesh State Open School
MPBSC	Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education
MPPSC	Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission
MPPWD	Madhya Pradesh Public Works Department
NICT	Network for Information and Computer Technology
PDS	Public Distribution System
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
PWD	Public Works Department
SBI	State Bank of India
SCA	Service Centre Agencies
TCS	Tata Consultancy Services
TRIFAC	Trade and Investment Facilitation Corporation Ltd.
UN	United Nations

Annexure I: Examples of Services Availed through MPOnline Portal

Government to Citizens (G2C)	Government to Business (G2B)	Government to Government (G2G)
Free download of departmental forms	Online payment of insurance premium-LIC, SBI LIFE & ICICI PRUDENTIAL	Open School Online Admission for X and XII standard
Online payment of electricity bills	Online payment of phone bills Airtel Tata Indicom (Mobile and Landline) BSNL Mobile –All MP BSNL Landline -Bhopal and Indore Tata Docomo-Mobile and Landline	Online Application for examinations held by Professional Examination Board (VYAPAM)-About 30 Exams PPT, PMT, MCA/MET, GNST/PNST, PEPT/PAT, PAHUT, Pre-PG, Examination for jobs
Online registration for driving licence, learners' licence, licence renewal and duplicate licence		Online Application for MP Board of Secondary Education Supplementary Examinations Retotaling, Answer Book request, Duplicate mark Sheet, Migration Certificate etc.
Online reservation and admission tickets for national parks Kanha, Bandhavgarh,		
Online Bus Booking		
Urban Administration Department -Property tax calculation & Property tax payment -Water tax calculation &Water tax payment Birth & Death certificate registration		
Online Counselling/registration/choice filling/allotment admission for Department of Technical Education B.Sc Nursing & B.Ed		
MP Public Service Commission-100% Online Civil Services (Preliminary Examination)		

Source: Review of Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh 2009-10

Annexure II: List of MPOnline Clientele

Existing Government Clientele	Existing Educational Institutions	B2C Clients
MP Board of Secondary	Devi Ahilya University	Airtel
Department of Higher	Vikram University	Tata Docomo
Department of Technical	Jiwaji University	LIC
Department of Tourism	Makhanlal Chaturvedi National	Tata Indicom
Department of Transport	Ujjain Engineering College	BSNL
Directorate of Town and	Higher Education – BEd. Counseling.	Vodafone
Forest Department	MP Board of Secondary Education	Bajaj Alliance
MP State Electricity	MP State Open School	SBI Life
MP State Open School	MP Professional Examination Board (VYAPAM)	ICICI Prudential
Professional Examination Board	Madhya Pradesh Nurses Registration Council	Bajaj Allianz Life
Food and Civil Supplies Department	Madhya Pradesh Paramedical Council	HDFC Life Insurance Co.
MP Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran		SBI Life
MP Public Works Department		Dish TV
Trade and Investment facilitation Corporation Ltd		
Madhya Pradesh Audyogik Kendra Vikas Nigam (MPAKVN)		
Department of Horticulture		
Public Health Engineering		
Department of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare		

Department of Health and Family Welfare		
Department of Medical		

Source: MPOnline Ltd., March 2013

Annexure III: Savings with Online DTE Counselling

S. No		Traditional approach	Online approach	Total savings
1	Cost of Travel (2/3 visits)	1000	-	1000
2	Cost of Accommodation	1200	-	1200
3	Cost of Food & Beverages	500	-	500
4	Postage & DD Charges	50	-	50
Total savings				2750

Source: MPOnline Power Point Presentation, May 2012

Note: Total number of applicant/candidates is 3, 63,689 (Approx), thus with a cost saving of 2750 per student, the overall savings are nearly INR 100 Crores

Annexure IV: MPOnline Privacy Policy

In the course of using this website or availing the services vide the online application forms and payment gateways, MP Online limited and its Affiliates may become privy to the personal information of its customers, including information that is of a confidential nature. MP Online limited is strongly committed to protecting the privacy of its customers and has taken all necessary and reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the customer information and its transmission through the world wide web and it shall not be held liable for disclosure of the confidential information when in accordance with this Privacy Commitment or in terms of the agreements, if any, with the Customers.

MP Online limited endeavors to safeguard and ensure the security of the information provided by the Customer. MP Online limited uses 128-bit SSL encryption, for the transmission of the information, which is currently the permitted level of encryption in India. When the information provided by the Customers is not transmitted through this encryption, the Customers' system (if configured accordingly) will display an appropriate message ensuring the best level of secrecy for the Customer's information. The Customer would be required to cooperate with MP Online limited in order to ensure the security of the information.

MP Online Limited undertakes not to disclose the information provided by the Customers to any person or organization, unless such action is necessary to:

- Conform to legal requirements or comply with legal process;

- Protect and defend MP Online limited or its Affiliates' rights, interests or property;

- Enforce the terms and conditions of the products or services; or

- Act to protect the interests of MP Online limited, its Affiliates, or its members, constituents or of other persons.

MP Online limited will limit the collection and use of customer information only on a need-to-know basis to deliver better service to the customers. MP Online limited may use and share the information provided by the Customers with its Affiliates and third parties for providing services and any service-related activities such as collecting subscription fees for such services, and notifying or contacting the Customers regarding any problem with, or the expiration of, such services. In this regard, it may be necessary to disclose the customer information to one or more agents and contractors of MP Online limited and their sub-contractors, but such agents, contractors, and sub-contractors will be required to agree to use the information obtained from MP Online limited only for these purposes.

The Customer authorizes MP Online limited to exchange, share, part with all information related to the details and transaction history of the Customers to its Affiliates / banks / financial institutions / credit bureaus / agencies/participation in any telecommunication or

electronic clearing network as may be required by law, customary practice, credit reporting, statistical analysis and credit scoring, verification or risk management and shall not hold MP Online limited liable for use or disclosure of this information.

MP Online limited uses reasonable precautions to keep the personal information undisclosed and secure, unless required by law. However MP Online limited will exchange information with other companies and organizations for the sole purposes of fraud protection and risk reduction. However, in the case of abuse or breach of security, we are not responsible for any actions of any third parties which receive the information illegally. MP Online limited will not distribute customer information to be used in mailing lists, surveys, or any other purpose other than what is required to perform our services.

Changes to the Policy

We reserve the right, at our sole discretion, to modify, add or remove sections of this privacy policy at any time and any changes will be notified to you using the email address you have given us or by an announcement on the webpage available at the "**Privacy Policy**" link on the Sites.

Our Company wide Commitment to Your Privacy

To make sure your personal information is secure; we communicate our privacy and security guidelines to MP Online employees and strictly enforce privacy safeguards within the company.

Privacy Contact Information

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments about our privacy policy you may contact us using the information below:

By Phone: 0755-4019401, 4019402, 4019403, 4019404, 4019405, 4019406.

We reserve the right to make changes to this policy. Any changes to this policy will be posted.