



## Developing the Human Network to Deliver More Efficient Tax and Revenue Operations

### Abstract

Tax and revenue agencies face a two-part challenge: they need to maximize revenues while satisfying citizen expectations for more effective government service. Initiatives to support these goals include:

- Enhanced service to taxpayers: Citizen satisfaction increases when they can get their questions answered in a single phone call and file their returns online.
- Enhanced interagency collaboration: Government service effectiveness improves when personnel can reach each other on the right device, the first try, and quickly establish voice, video, and Web conferences with colleagues and citizens.
- Streamlined revenue process, increased compliance, and reduced appeals: When taxpayers can file online and receive real-time feedback on their filing, processing costs go down, compliance increases, and the number of appeals decreases.
- Optimized use of human resources: Agency employees become more productive and more responsive to taxpayer inquiries if they have advanced tools for communication and collaboration.

Read on to learn how tax and revenue agencies around the world are using Cisco® solutions to achieve these goals.

### Enhance Service to Taxpayers

**The vision:** Taxpayers can get answers to their questions in a single call and file online 24 hours a day.

Today, the information that agency employees need to answer citizen questions is often isolated in departmental systems. Therefore, taxpayers might have to repeat information to personnel in multiple departments just to get a question answered or make a transaction. Services are typically only available in certain locations and during business hours, which can inconvenience working citizens or those who live far from government offices.

With Cisco Unified Communications solutions, employees in different departments can collaborate easily to answer citizen questions during a single call. They can find out what experts are available, and at what number, by checking the presence information on the screen of their Cisco Unified IP Phone. Then, they can initiate a spontaneous voice, video, or Web collaboration session by simply dragging the person’s name into a window. For high-level discussions—with businesses, for example—agency employees can use Cisco TelePresence, which creates an in-person experience by displaying life-size, high-definition images of conference participants.

Taxpayer satisfaction also increases when agencies offer self-service tax and revenue submission applications and online information on filer rights and compliance requirements. Cisco networks provide the security, high performance, and scalability to enable fast response and deliver video-based training.

**Rechenzentrum der Finanzen, Germany**

**Challenge:** The Rechenzentrum der Finanzen (RZF), one of Germany’s largest finance administrations, comprises 145 agencies with 28,000 employees. RZF agencies had been using different private branch exchange switches from multiple vendors. One of the problems was that employees could not transfer callers to another agency. Citizens who reached the wrong agency had to hang up and redial.

**Solution:** Cisco Unified Communications

**Results:** Employees can now transfer callers to the appropriate agency, enhancing citizen service. In addition, citizens who dial a central number can immediately transfer to their personal representative by entering their taxpayer ID number. An interactive voice response system handles approximately 20 percent of all incoming calls, which improves service to taxpayers and frees up employees to handle more complex requests.

**Table 1 Enhancing Taxpayer Service with Cisco Solutions**

Today’s barriers	Information is isolated in departmental systems Networks lack the performance to support self-service applications
Cisco solutions	Cisco Unified Communications facilitates interdepartmental collaboration to answer citizen questions  A highly secure Cisco network foundation enables self-service applications for tax and revenue submission and validation, electronic signature, and information on filer rights and compliance requirements

**Promote Collaboration**

**The vision:** Improve service effectiveness and productivity by promoting collaboration among employees in different departments and agencies.

Today, obtaining information from employees in other agencies or departments typically requires finding an available employee with the needed expertise and then scheduling a meeting. It is not unusual to dial both an office phone and a mobile phone, leave voicemail on each, write an e-mail, and send an instant message before finally reaching the other employee—or not.

Cisco Unified Communications promotes interdepartmental collaboration. Cisco presence technology enables employees to view each other’s availability and preferred method of communication—office phone, cell phone, e-mail, instant message, or other—right on their Cisco Unified IP Phone or PC screen. Employees can spontaneously initiate a voice, video, or Web conference with Cisco Unified MeetingPlace by dragging the names of available participants into a window.

**Table 2 Enhancing Interagency Collaboration with Cisco Solutions**

Today’s barriers	Employees do not know if their colleagues are available on their office phone or cell phone, instant messaging, or e-mail  Traditional videoconferencing systems are complex, which discourages use
Cisco solutions	Cisco presence technology indicates whether personnel are available, and on which device  Cisco Unified Videoconferencing solutions enable employees to schedule and initiate a video session as easily as a voice call

### Streamline Revenue Process, Increase Compliance, and Reduce Appeals

**The vision:** Citizens can submit their taxes online, their returns are accurate, and citizens claim appropriate entitlements.

Today, getting help to fill out an online tax submission form usually requires calling a phone number and waiting for an agent to become available. Even worse is that many online tax submission systems do not provide real-time feedback to the filer, which increases error rates. It's no wonder that numerous citizens give up and file paper-based returns instead, which eliminates the opportunity for government to increase citizen satisfaction and reduce costs.

With a highly secure Cisco network and Cisco Unified Communications, taxpayers can get immediate online help by clicking a Chat Now button. The system routes requests to the appropriate expert based on the nature of the request—for example, to a tax auditor for desk audits or informal protests, or to tax-processing personnel for questions about return completion. Cisco networks have the reliability and high performance to support real-time feedback, which reduces exception filing, increases citizen satisfaction, can improve revenue collection, and enables more timely and accurate forecasting. Reducing the time that employees spend on appeals also increases the time available to provide personalized service and investigate fraud.

#### Traditional Filing Process

- Taxpayer reenters information from last year's return.
- For questions, taxpayer calls revenue-collecting agency and is probably put on hold.
- Tax agent may not have access to the needed application or database.
- Taxpayer gives up and submits query by mail.
- Taxpayer receives answer weeks later, with instructions to file taxes and additional required paperwork by mail.

#### Streamlined Filing Process, with Cisco Unified Communications

- Tax form is automatically populated with information from last year's return.
- Taxpayer clicks a Live Help button to initiate a chat session with an auditor, who can access the citizen's background information and verify charitable contributions over the shared network. If necessary, the agent can identify other personnel who are currently available and connect them to the conference with a single click.
- Taxpayer successfully completes the online submission and sets up a payment arrangement.
- The tax auditor reports the source of any taxpayer's confusion so that the agency can reword online instructions, reducing future inquiries. Citizen service improves and government reduces support costs.

**Table 3 Streamlining the Revenue Process with Cisco Solutions**

Today's barriers	<p>Getting help often requires a phone call with a long wait, which causes many filers to give up and file paper returns</p> <p>Lack of risk profiling requires personnel to check all returns, which decreases the time they have to serve citizens</p> <p>Lack of real-time feedback increases errors</p>
Cisco solutions	<p>With Cisco Unified Communications, taxpayers can get immediate help from qualified personnel through interactive voice response, online chats, or a virtual call center</p> <p>Cisco networks have the reliability and performance needed to deploy intelligent tax-checking software that can identify anomalies during the early stages of the tax assessment</p>

### Optimize Use of Human Resources

**The vision:** Personnel can provide excellent citizen service and work productively from anywhere, including home or the field.

Inefficient business practices can waste employees' time, decreasing the time they have to serve taxpayers. If mobile employees or home-based teleworkers cannot access departmental databases, for example, they must wait until they return to the office in order to respond to a citizen inquiry. In addition, the complexity of older agency conferencing systems hinders collaboration between colleagues in different departments.

Cisco solutions help tax and revenue agencies increase the productivity of their human resources. With Cisco VPN solutions, personnel can access departmental resources from home or in the field, saving time and reducing carbon emissions caused by extra trips to the office. Cisco Unified Communications solutions promote collaboration between managers and employees within and across agencies. Personnel can view an online directory to see which colleagues are available and spontaneously initiate a voice, video, and Web collaboration session simply by dragging their names into a window. With Cisco wireless solutions, personnel can work from any location in the building, and hearing officers can quickly obtain information during adjudications.

**Table 4 Increasing Productivity with Cisco Solutions**

<p>Today's barriers</p>	<p>Time-consuming back-office functions siphon resources away from citizen service</p> <p>Employees cannot work securely from home or collaborate spontaneously in office meeting spaces</p> <p>The complexity of scheduling video conferences inhibits their use for education or answering taxpayer questions</p>
<p>Cisco solutions</p>	<p>Cisco VPN solutions enable highly secure access to departmental resources from home or the field</p> <p>Cisco Unified Communications promotes collaboration from any location, e-learning, and intra-agency communication</p> <p>Cisco wireless solutions enable personnel to work from any location in the building; hearing officers can quickly obtain information during adjudications</p>

**Belgian Federal Public Service Finance Ministry**

**Challenge:** When it moved to new offices, the Belgian Finance Ministry needed to consolidate from 500 locations to 150. To support the move, the ministry wanted to simplify the many telephone extension moves, adds, and changes that would occur during the reorganization. It also wanted to improve taxpayer service by unifying its phone, e-mail, and fax contact channels.

**Solution:** Cisco Unified Communications

**Results:** Employees who move can become productive immediately by simply connecting their Cisco Unified IP Phones in the new location. Employees can also respond more quickly to citizen inquiries because Cisco Unity unified messaging allows them to view voicemail, e-mail, and faxes from the same inbox.

**The Cisco Solutions Behind the Human Network**

**Cisco Core Foundation**

A Cisco Service-Oriented Network Architecture forms the basis of a human network designed to serve, protect, and foster communities with healthy economies while it reduces costs. Tax and revenue and other government departments can share the costs of a network infrastructure, enabling them to share resources when appropriate. Cisco Self-Defending Network technologies protect the network from infections and information theft, helping to ensure continuity of operations for vital government operations. Other Cisco security technologies enable departments to share information with each other when appropriate, and keep it private otherwise. The network has the intelligence to enforce each agency's policies for access control and data protection.

Benefits of Cisco core foundation technologies include:

- Support for new applications that streamline the revenue process: With a reliable, high-performing network, tax agencies can replace aging tax systems with new applications that enable real-time, automated processing; consolidation of taxpayer databases; and rules-based assessment and calculation engines.
- Network simplification and increased responsiveness: With a highly secure Cisco core foundation, governments can deliver voice, video, and data services over a unified network. This reduces capital and operational expense and enables rapid response to changing business requirements. The Cisco core foundation also provides the basis for unified communications and wireless services.
- Highly secure information sharing between departments: By enabling employees to securely access the information of multiple departmental systems from their office, home, or hotel, the Cisco secure access technologies improve productivity and increase service effectiveness.
- Rich content delivery: Cisco networks provide the quality of service to support voice, video, and data on the same network.
- Security: Cisco security solutions protect employee and citizen privacy and help ensure compliance with legislative mandates.

### Arizona Department of Revenue

**Challenge:** The Arizona Department of Revenue used three small private branch exchange systems to provide telephone services for its nine-story headquarters building. Workers in one department had to use an outside line to contact coworkers in another department, and incoming calls could not be transferred from one department to another.

**Solution:** Cisco Unified Communications

**Results:** The Department of Revenue now communicates as a single entity rather than as fragmented departments. New capabilities such as four-digit dialing, call transferring, and online directories have improved citizen service and employee productivity.

### Cisco Unified Communications

Cisco Unified Communications solutions address a broad spectrum of government communications requirements. IP telephony, voicemail, and collaboration solutions help improve communication and teamwork while reducing costs. Advanced call processing and contact center solutions provide innovative, integrated contact management and self-service capabilities that facilitate interaction between tax agency employees and taxpayers. Cisco videotelephony and Cisco TelePresence solutions integrate video into communications, which increases meeting effectiveness and reduces the need for travel.

Benefits of Cisco Unified Communications for tax and revenue agencies include:

- Reduced costs: Voice over IP reduces total cost of ownership compared to private branch exchange (PBX) systems and Centrex.
- Enhanced communication with taxpayers: Cisco videoconferencing solutions enable citizens to interact with tax and revenue personnel from their office, a public kiosk, or home. Rich communication improves citizen satisfaction and facilitates the inclusion of citizens who are disabled or live far from government offices.
- Support for telework: Cisco VPN solutions and Cisco Unified Communications enable employees to work from home as productively as from the office. Government gains an advantage in recruiting and also reduces its carbon emissions and power usage.
- Enhanced communication and training: Used within the department, Cisco videoconferencing solutions enable senior management to communicate more effectively with staff and provide more frequent training. Supervisors can train remote employees using Cisco Unified MeetingPlace, which combines voice, video, and Web collaboration.
- Greater responsiveness: Features such as four-digit call transferring and online directories improve productivity. Cisco presence technology indicates which experts in a particular department are available and how to reach them. The employee can drag the name of another available employee into a collaborative workspace to initiate a recorded voice, video, and Web conference (see Figure 1).
- Improved taxpayer services: With Cisco Unified Contact Center, tax and revenue agencies can intelligently route taxpayer calls to a qualified agent in any location. Detailed reports help the agency staff the contact center appropriately for filing season.

**Figure 1 Cisco Presence Technology Helps Employees Quickly Conference in an Available Employee with the Needed Skills**



### Cisco Wireless Solutions

Tax and revenue personnel become more productive when they have highly secure to network resources from any area of the building or from the field:

- Cisco indoor wireless solutions provide a highly secure, convenient way for employees to access departmental resources from any indoor area or adjacent outdoor area. Flexible access to information and applications improves employee productivity and service effectiveness.
- Hotspots and building-to-building connectivity extend wireless access to parking lots, walkways, and other areas adjacent to buildings.
- Cisco outdoor wireless mesh solutions deliver broadband connections to metropolitan-area environments. Field auditors can spend more time with citizens and businesses when they can access information from the field rather than having to return to the office.

### Conclusion

Tax and revenue agencies increase service effectiveness, enhance taxpayer satisfaction, and can decrease costs by delivering services more efficiently. By making it easier for citizens and businesses to file accurate returns online and obtain immediate help, Cisco solutions help government meet its goals for revenue collection and citizen service.

For more information on Cisco solutions for government, visit:

<http://www.cisco.com/go/government>

**Table 5 Summary: Achieving Tax and Revenue Agency Goals with Cisco Solutions**

Tax and Revenue Agency Goal	Vision	Barrier	Cisco Solutions
Enhance service to taxpayers	Taxpayers can get answers to questions in a single call and file online 24 hours a day	Information is isolated in departmental systems  Networks lack the performance to support self-service applications that provide real-time validation	Cisco Unified Communications enables interdepartmental collaboration to answer citizen questions  Highly secure Cisco network foundation enables self-service applications for tax and revenue submission and validation, electronic signature, and providing information on filer rights and compliance requirements
Promote collaboration	Personnel can reach each other on the right device, on the first try, and quickly establish voice, video, and Web conferences	Personnel do not know if their colleagues are available on their office phone, cell phone, instant messaging, or e-mail  Traditional videoconferencing systems are complex, which discourages use	Cisco presence technology indicates whether or not personnel are available—and on which device  Cisco Unified Videoconferencing solutions enable employees to schedule and initiate a video session as easily as a voice call
Streamline revenue process, increase compliance, and reduce appeals	Citizens can submit their taxes online, returns are accurate, and citizens claim appropriate entitlements	Getting help requires a phone call with a long wait, so many filers give up and file paper returns  Lack of risk profiling requires personnel to check all returns, reducing the time available to serve citizens  Lack of real-time feedback increases errors	Cisco Unified Communications helps taxpayers get immediate assistance from qualified personnel through interactive voice response, online chats, or a virtual call center  Cisco networks have the reliability and performance needed to deploy intelligent tax-checking software that can identify anomalies during the early stages of the tax assessment
Optimize use of human resources	Personnel can provide excellent citizen service and work productively anywhere, even in the field	Time-consuming back-office functions siphon resources away from citizen service  Employees cannot work securely from home or collaborate spontaneously in office meeting spaces  The complexity of scheduling video conferences inhibits their use for education or answering taxpayer	Cisco VPN solutions enable highly secure access to departmental resources from home or the field  Cisco Unified Communications enables spontaneous collaboration, e-learning, and intra-agency communication from any location



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