Commerce Department Looks to Modernize IT by Sharing

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The Commerce Department's CIO, Steve Cooper, has called out three focus areas for technology priorities: shared services, infrastructure, and modernizing the department's technology strategy. Implementation of shared services will have a palpable impact on contracting, since the federal agency is considering a broker model to deliver services and achieve cost savings.

The Department of Commerce has established four working groups targeting opportunities to implement shared services within technology, finance, human resources, and acquisition. The aim of these groups is to identify capabilities within those lanes to have delivered by a set of shared service providers. The department will likely stand up a shared service broker, an internal organization that will be responsible for selecting and managing providers, service agreements, and performance. By focusing shared services for commodity technologies and capabilities, bureaus will be able to free up resources to deliver greater value to mission activities.

According to **a recent interview with Commerce's CIO**, the acquisition approach has yet to be determined. One potential option will be to pursue shared services as a joint effort along with other functional areas. The other option would treat these services independently. While bureau leadership is in favor of more broadly adopting a shared service model, none of the bureau CIOs have volunteered to take on the responsibilities of being the provider. This presents an opportunity for vendors to fill the role. A request for information (RFI) is expected out by the end of the year, which will then lead to a request for proposals (RFP) for the selected services. Since the leadership consensus across Commerce's CIOs is inclined toward testing out shared service models sooner rather than later, service providers should watch for upcoming opportunities. In the short term, an RFI and RFP are expected for video teleconferencing and audio conferencing.

Additional direction for efforts related to shared services and cloud services implementation are covered in the department's enterprise transformation roadmap. Other areas to monitor for opportunities at Commerce include technology infrastructure modernization, like secure wireless.

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