



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Government

Businesses

Legislature

Employees

Taxpayers

OUR MESSAGE

Our FY2016-2020 strategic plan takes its inspiration from the adage, "Customer service is not a department, it's an attitude." Good customer service doesn't cost anything. All it requires is listening, and going the extra mile to be as helpful as possible in what can sometimes be trying situations for our taxpayers.

We've always viewed customer service as one of our highest goals—but until recently, we haven't had the tools to support our decision-making with data.

In the past year, however, a major upgrade of our core tax processing software gave us the ability to glean massive amounts of data from the tax information we have on file, and we're delving into areas that promise to help us improve our customer service more than ever before.

We've been surveying taxpayers who have been audited, in hopes of getting feedback that will help us improve our service to audit recipients in the future. We're also tracking the most



(L-R) Chairman Rich Jackson, Commissioner Elliot Werk, Commissioner Tom Katsilometes (seated) Commissioner Ken Roberts

frequent types of calls our Taxpayer Services section deals with, and we're using those results to improve the information we provide on our website and in our communication with taxpayers.

Our efforts aren't just external. We believe that customer service begins at home, and our employees need to model positive experiences with each other in order to best serve the public. We're attempting to make outstanding service part of our cultural DNA—something that comes naturally to everything we do.

We plan to use data from internal and external surveys to let us know how we're doing, what we can do better, and what taxpayers and employees expect from us in the future. Those insights will continue to help us evolve in our quest to turn our vision of exemplary customer service into reality.

WHAT WE DO

Our vision

The Tax Commission will inspire public confidence through innovative service delivery, courteous professional conduct, effective education, and fairness in tax administration.

Our mission

To administer the state's tax laws in a fair, timely, and cost-effective manner to benefit all Idaho citizens.

Our values

Accomplishment, Credibility, Dependability, Enjoyment, Fairness, Integrity, Quality, Respect, Teamwork.

PERSPECTIVE

Customer Service

Our improved Taxpayer Access Portal (TAP) provides a new level of customer service to taxpayers who prefer doing business with us online. TAP's self-service approach allows users to manage many aspects of their accounts on their own—without intervention from us. Over 61,000 users have logged into TAP since January and we expect continued growth as more taxpayers discover how useful the system can be. Meanwhile, we've added an extra layer of security to taxpayer logons, and assigned different levels of access to information based on each user's need. We're striving to balance the benefits of our online system with the need to maintain a high level of security and taxpayer confidence that our data systems are protected.

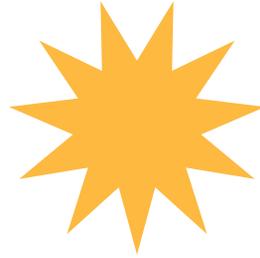
Technology

Our recently upgraded tax processing system, GenTax, opens up new opportunities for us to access and employ data to improve the way we do business. But our technology must keep evolving, to meet the demands of an ever-changing environment. We deal with the dynamics of changing laws, policies, and federal requirements, all of which increase the need for our system to do more and different things in new ways. This ongoing requirement to keep up with the world around us comes at a price. With a finite budget for technology purchases, we will be continually challenged to offset our available resources against our duty to protect the integrity of our taxpayers' data.

Security

Our business involves data, and data requires security. Nationally, tax fraud and identity theft are increasing at an alarming rate, and we're seeing similar growth in Idaho. In an effort to stay at the forefront of fraud prevention, we're participating in a national endeavor to develop methods of protecting taxpayer data and preventing refund fraud. Here at home, we're being equally vigilant. For example, we now ask callers or walk-ins to answer several questions, making sure of their identity before we discuss confidential account information with them. We're aware of the need to constantly educate our employees and communicate outwardly to increase public confidence and trust in our tax filing system.

GOAL I



Explore and implement new methods of providing customer service above and beyond current customer service levels.



Customer service is the number one priority for the Tax Commission. We will strive to provide extraordinary service in every interaction with every taxpayer every day.



Elliot Werk, Commissioner

Objectives

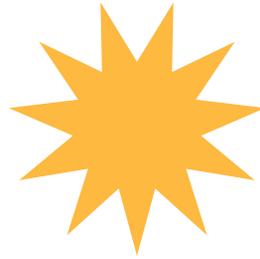
1. Enhance internal and external customer service by increasing our education and outreach efforts.
2. Analyze agency business processes and procedures to increase knowledge about taxpayer customer service needs.

Goal I

Strategies, Performance Measures, and Timelines

- 1a. Communications and Revenue Operations will implement a public relations campaign to educate taxpayers and tax preparers on fraud identification, fraud prevention, identity theft, and the impact on income tax processing in order to increase access to information and decrease customer service calls. **June 2016.**
- 1b. Communications will provide additional outreach opportunities in the community through videoconferencing to engage our field offices and the public to increase participation in our Rules Committee and Open Meetings **June 2016.**
- 1c. The Commissioners, working with Taxpayer Guidance will continue offering Tax 101, Tax Communication tours, newsletters, seminars, and provide ongoing education for legislators on Tax Commission practices and policies to strengthen our working relationships. **June 2015.**
- 1d. Appeals will reduce the average time between receipt of a tax appeal and its resolution by decision or settlement by 10%. **December 2017.**
- 1e. Collection, working with Research, will ensure the TPS and ABU abandoned call rate doesn't exceed 10%, resulting in shorter wait times. **December 2016.**
- 1f. Communications will plan and deploy an internal customer service campaign to increase employee awareness and promote effective customer service in order to advocate this within our culture. **June 2016.**
- 2a. Special Projects will provide a business case analysis to determine the best strategy for providing specialized customer service for tax preparers. **December 2015.**
- 2b. Property Tax, working with Research, will create a property tax inquiry call log that records property tax issues by taxpayer and/or practitioner category to determine and resolve customer issues. **June 2016.**

GOAL 2



Administer tax law and develop rules and policies that promote fairness, consistency, compliance, security, and public confidence.

“ We cannot rely on the audit process to ensure the fairness of our tax system. Developing understandable rules and policies in concert with stakeholders, and communicating those guidelines, are critical to increasing voluntary compliance and reducing the need for audits. ”

Randy Tilley, Audit Division Administrator

Objectives

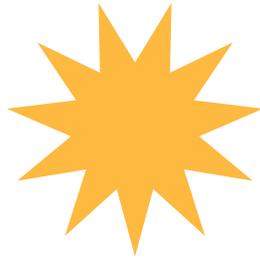
1. Implement methodologies and programs that promote fairness, security, and public confidence.
2. Reorganize agency staff and processes for tax appeals to improve our effectiveness and responsiveness to taxpayers.
3. Improve collaboration opportunities and communication with all stakeholders in the administrative rule-making process.

Goal 2

Strategies, Performance Measures, and Timelines

- 1a. Audit will track the number of identity theft instances detected and stopped, and the refund dollars saved. **June 2016.**
- 1b. Property Tax will seek funding to modernize the GenTax module for Operating Property and GIS in order to standardize data formats. **June 2019.**
- 2a. Appeals will examine the appeals process to identify inefficiencies and the need for improved standards. **June 2016.**
- 2b. Appeals and Legal will improve tax appeal communications and information with appellants. **June 2016.**
- 3a. Taxpayer Guidance will identify the potential impact of pending rules and communicate with parties interested in those changes to encourage their input and assistance in the development of rules. **June 2016.**
- 3b. Taxpayer Guidance will engage the Governor's office, throughout the legislative session, to discuss statute implications to clarify intent. **January 2016 - June 2020.**
- 3c. Taxpayer Guidance and Communications will develop and execute a communication strategy to educate taxpayers and other interested parties of the intent of rule changes. **June 2016.**

GOAL 3



Promote and model behaviors that result in a high-quality work force of employees who take pride in their work and the agency.



Our professional and experienced staff is the key to our success as an agency. Our culture is revealed in the hard work, creativity, respect, and dedication of our employees.



Roxanne Lopez, Human Resources Officer

Objectives

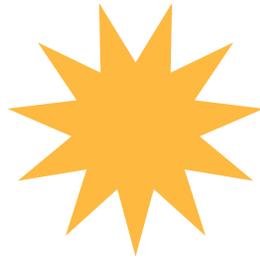
1. Provide training and tools on Tax Commission policies and practices for employee development.
2. Implement an employee opinion survey to assess the agency's culture, leadership, job satisfaction, and training, to improve job satisfaction.
3. Implement programs and projects that provide new staff with organizational information to assist in job performance.

Goal 3

Strategies, Performance Measures, and Timelines

- 1a. Human Resources will partner with agency representatives to communicate, assign, and monitor business unit-specific training and maintain training records in the agency's learning management system. **August 2016.**
- 2a. Human Resources will administer an employee opinion survey. Staff will identify areas for agency improvement. **June 2017.**
- 3a. Human Resources, working with Special Projects, will create a quarterly New Hire program to provide organizational information on business units, make expectations clear, and inform staff about tools and resources. **June 2017.**

GOAL 4



Seek and implement efficient operations within the agency to support our mission.



We are constantly striving to stay ahead in our technology, processes, and training. Social issues such as fraud and identity theft require us to constantly anticipate process improvements to meet our service objectives.



Doreen Warren, Revenue Operations Administrator

Objectives

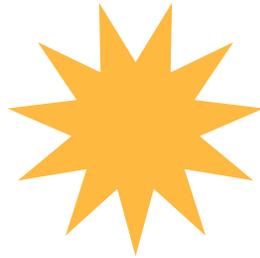
1. Promote e-filing to modernize and improve current audit and revenue processes.
2. Replace or maintain critical equipment and software to ensure that it meets minimum performance standards.
3. Establish a standard methodology for the assessment and allocation of agency resources, to ensure efficient operations.

Goal 4

Strategies, Performance Measures, and Timelines

- 1a. Revenue Operations will increase individual income tax return e-filings to 90% of the individual filing population, which decreases manual processing. **June 2016.**
- 1b. Revenue Operations will increase business income tax return e-filings to 80% of the business filing population, which decreases manual processing. **June 2016.**
- 2a. The percentage of current year income tax refunds that aren't processed within a 60-day limit will be less than 1%. **June 2016.**
- 2b. Collection, working with Revenue Operations, will complete a business case analysis for replacing the Point of Sale (POS) system, including determining the required funding in order to replace the current system. **June 2018.**
- 2c. Revenue Operations will use DEX (Data Exchange Module) software to improve detection of fraud and identity theft to combat potential fraud strategies. **January 2016.**
- 2d. Management Services, working with Information Technology and Human Resources, will upgrade the Navision financial and HR management software to maintain operating system support. **June 2016.**
- 3a. Special Projects will create and implement a quarterly process improvement program for staff to recommend organizational improvement suggestions to improve the agency's effectiveness. **June 2017.**
- 3b. Special Projects will define, document, and implement a process to determine and manage cross-organizational projects for ELT in order to prioritize projects and resources. **September 2015.**

GOAL 5



Expand and enhance how the agency thinks about, maintains, and uses data to inform internal and external decision-making.

Objectives

1. Complete the Agency Issues Project that establishes the creation and periodic review of agency-wide performance.
2. Ensure that the Data Governance Workgroup establishes a system of data-related standards, processes, and expectations across the agency.

We're becoming more sophisticated in how we collect, analyze, and use data to make better-informed decisions, especially in prioritizing work and improving business processes. I see that trend toward sophistication and our reliance on data growing even more in the future.

Scott Grothe
Principal Research Analyst

Goal 5

Strategies, Performance Measures, and Timelines

- 1a. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT), with Research, will complete performance metrics dashboards in order to have consistent agency data reviews. **June 2017.**
- 1b. The Executive Leadership Team, with Research, will establish a periodic performance review during ELT meetings to improve agency performance. **June 2016.**
- 1c. The agency's managers will review, revise, and/or create their group's performance measures to be used to determine their success. **June 2016.**
- 1d. The Divisions' Business Plans will include performance measures used to determine their levels of operational efficiency and outcome success. **June 2016.**
- 2a. The Data Governance Council will provide a quarterly list of decisions and outputs to the Executive Management Team to provide progress and impact reports. **June 2016.**
- 2b. All business units will ensure that all agency GenTax analytical predictive models will be regularly revised based on the frequency of available data to validate target goals. **December 2015.**

KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

Tax modernization

Changes to the tax code impact our tax processing system. Internal training, updated business processes, and external education are required when this occurs.

The Economy

Changes in the economy directly impact revenue forecasts and compliance.

Identity Theft and Fraud

Additional agency resources, technology changes, and public education are being required to prevent and capture the misuse of taxpayer information.

Legislative initiatives

The agency is also watching several legislative initiatives proposed by legislators, lobbyists, and interest groups that would affect us: Streamlined Sales Tax/ Marketplace Fairness, and potential organizational changes.

Aging population

The aging of Idaho's population will have an impact on the state's revenue from taxes.

Cloud computing and "big data"

These new technological capabilities could provide better ways to identify patterns of fraud and non-compliance as well as improve operations.

Electronic services and expanded use of mobile devices

Taxpayers are likely to expect more services and information to be available on new devices, which require resource allocation to technology.

Competition for critical skills

Recruitment and retention continue to be challenges. As the economy improves and our salary ranges for critical skills fall further behind market rates, we are experiencing difficulties attracting and retaining people.