

CISD
Central Information Systems Division
Ministry of Information Technology,
Communication and Innovation

**TECH
HUB**



Website Homepage Revamp




Technical Support System




CISD App Store

More Inside 

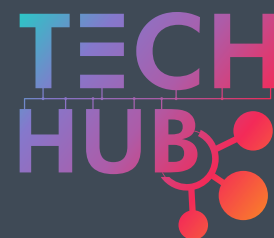
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Innovating with Emerging Technologies



CENTRAL
INFORMATION
SYSTEMS
DIVISION

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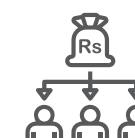
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Director's Message

Dear Readers

In our 2nd edition of the newsletter, we are providing some highlights of our main activities during the past 6 months on how CISD has worked closely with stakeholders and contributed to maintain an acceptable level of ICT support during the crisis. Furthermore, we are showcasing some of our major achievements in terms of operational support and progress.

I would like to thank all staff of CISD for their continuous support and dedication.

Ved Boodhun
Director

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New Homepage for a Change



New Look! New Design! New Features!

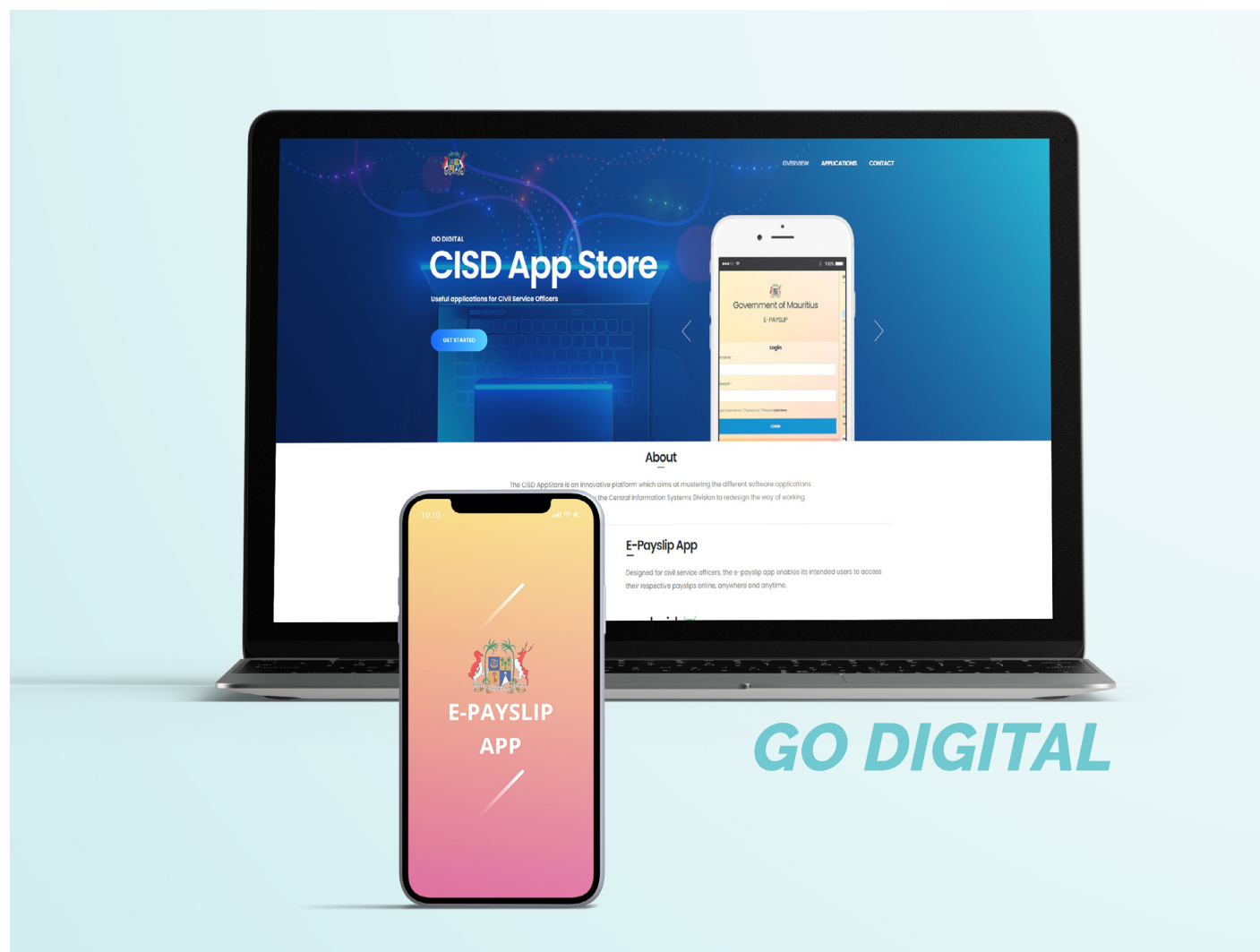
With the advent of new technology, building a robust online presence is a must for all organisations. Over the past decade, technology has had a huge influence on web design. A website is the window through which an organisation presents itself to the outside world. To be effective, the website has to be attractive enough to grab the attention of a visitor by providing essential and relevant information as far as possible.

The homepage, being the entry point into the website, has to project a vibrant and updated image of the organisation. Therefore, CISD has redesigned the homepage of its website to align with modern trends, thereby displaying information with info graphics highlight and significant statistics.

We've implemented a dynamic banner with slides to display latest events in CISD, animated counters to display useful information of services to make it more appealing via images and visual effects and a "Did you know" section to share useful information with users. This homepage has been redesigned at the moment when CISD is harnessing emerging technologies to enhance further its services.

We are changing the world with technology

- Bill Gates



CISC AppStore

E-Payslip App



The traditional epayslip application available via desktops (<https://epayslip.govmu.org/epayslip/>) has given way to a novel method of access. Now, Public Service officers can view their epayslip anytime on any Android device from anywhere. The CISC AppStore is an innovative platform which aims at mustering the different software apps to assist in enhancing user experience. Key highlights of CISC Appstore:

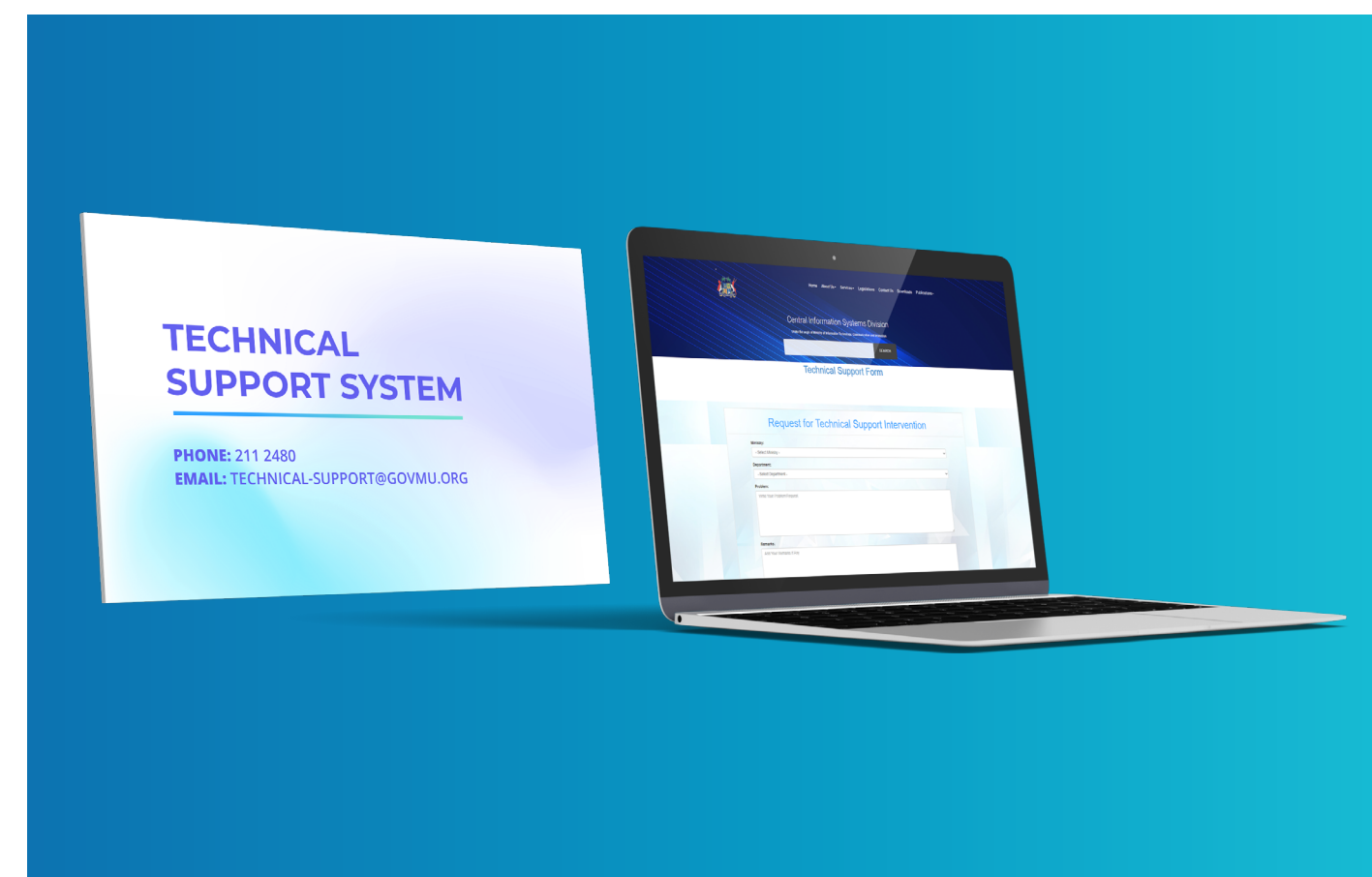
- It displays apps developed by CISC and provides the options to download with just one click
- Banner slider designed in a mobile layout to display featured applications developed
- It is mobile responsive

You are just one click away. To download the app, visit our CISC AppStore



Technical Support System

Modernising Support Intervention



Creative Process

A new Technical Support System has been developed in-house by the Application Development Unit (ADU) in CISC, using PHP and MySQL. The system, hosted at GOC, can be accessed across all Ministries/ Departments.



Innovative Strategy

This system will benefit all CISC staff as it eliminates the need to fill the intervention report manually each time they attend an intervention. Users need to access the Technical Support Online Form found on our CISC website, whereby they will need to fill an online intervention form to request our CISC staff to resolve an issue.



Behind the Scenes

Users will receive a ticket number by email to inform them that their requests have been well received and actions will be taken accordingly. They will also receive an acknowledgement email when their issues have been resolved. The CISC Staff will access these requests alongside their status. The intervention sheet can also be printed for initiating further actions.

Navigating the New Normal

Online Trainings & Meetings

Use of JITSI

Covid-19 has brought with it a paradigm shift: the new normal is slowly seeping into our culture: limited physical interactions, work from home, virtual meetings, online Training. Recently, four of our staff have passed their online Linux Certification Exams. Training by Civil Service College is being followed online. The Jitsi platform is being extensively used by CISD and other departments to conduct online meetings.



Vaccination form Capture Application

Tracking vaccination records

In its endeavour to provide timely and reliable services, CISD has developed and implemented an application to capture COVID 19 vaccination form data for the Ministry of Health and Wellness in a very short lapse of time. As such, data obtained from this application allows generation of statistics for decision making.

Remote Operations

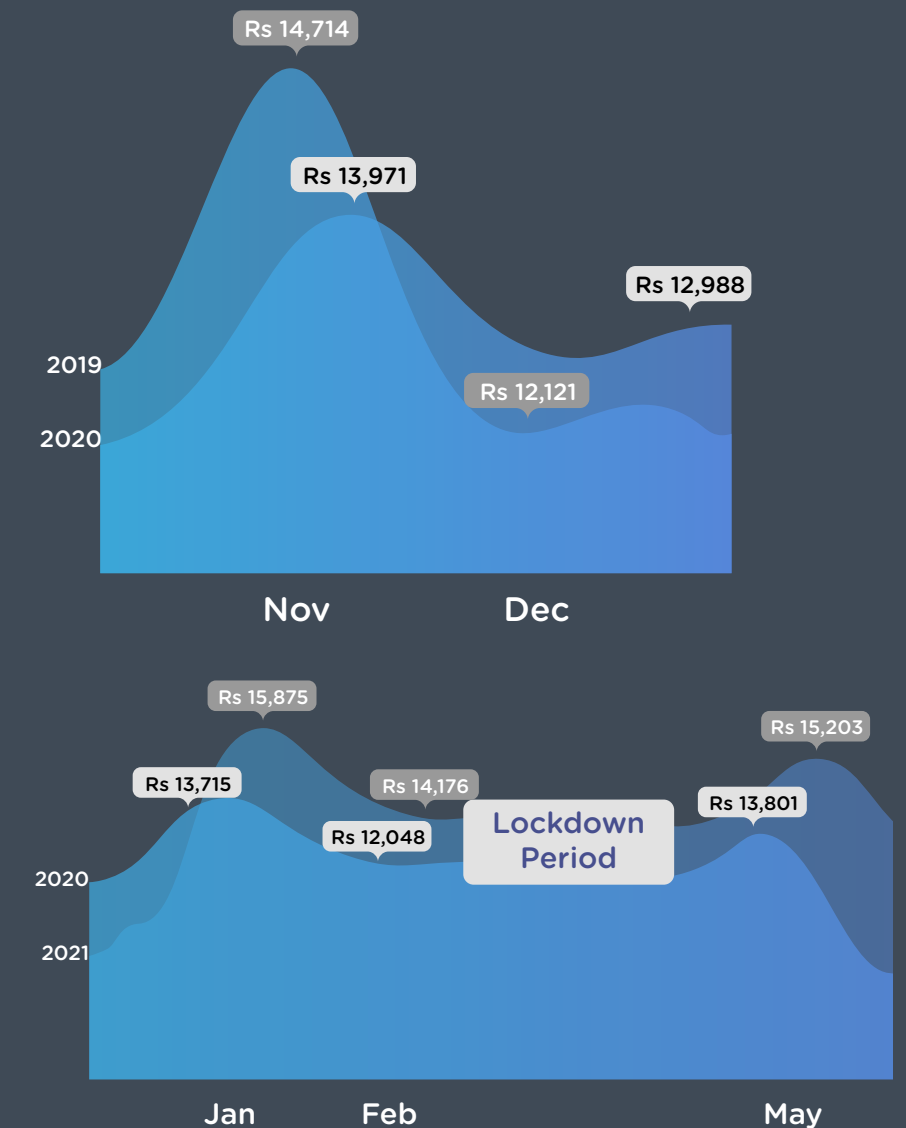
Paperless Payroll

Finance officers are carrying out data capture of payroll variations remotely via an application developed by CISD. No variation forms are being sent to CISD for existing employees. CISD is ready to embark on a paperless environment for payroll.



Rolling out VOIP System

CISD has successfully deployed IP phones to more than 50 Ministries/Departments in its respective IT units. Hosted at GOC (Government Online Centre), the VoIP system has the prime advantage that calls are free of charge among CISD officers using the system. A big reduction in telephone cost has been observed with the implementation of the VoIP system.



Future Plans- Building on VoIP

1. The integration of IP Telephony will be a long journey
2. The issues to be faced are multifaceted
3. In the beginning – technology issues will dominate
4. Within GINS, VoIP has the potential of bringing a drastic reduction in telephone communication cost in the Civil Service.

Our Chatbot with Live Agent

Our Chatbot with Live Agent has stepped into the fray during Covid-19.

Coronavirus has forced us to rethink the way we work and curtailed face-to-face operations in favour of virtual interactions. Unpredictable as it may have been, Covid-19 has shone a spotlight in areas of weakness within organisations. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, employees were left with no choice but to maintain social distancing and work from home. With employees and organizations, both trying to find a balance between how to manage the new working equation, there were many questions that arose.

CISD had to ensure business continuity during the crisis and find ways to leverage technology to mitigate the impact of this disruption. The main challenge was to continue providing timely and reliable services to the Civil Service using means that would minimise physical interactions.



"Customers want to get information as quickly as possible, and a chatbot may be the answer — or it may not."

—Marc Steffen



Users seek quick and accurate responses when searching for information or assistance

“

- This has been the spark behind implementing a chatbot on the website of CISD.

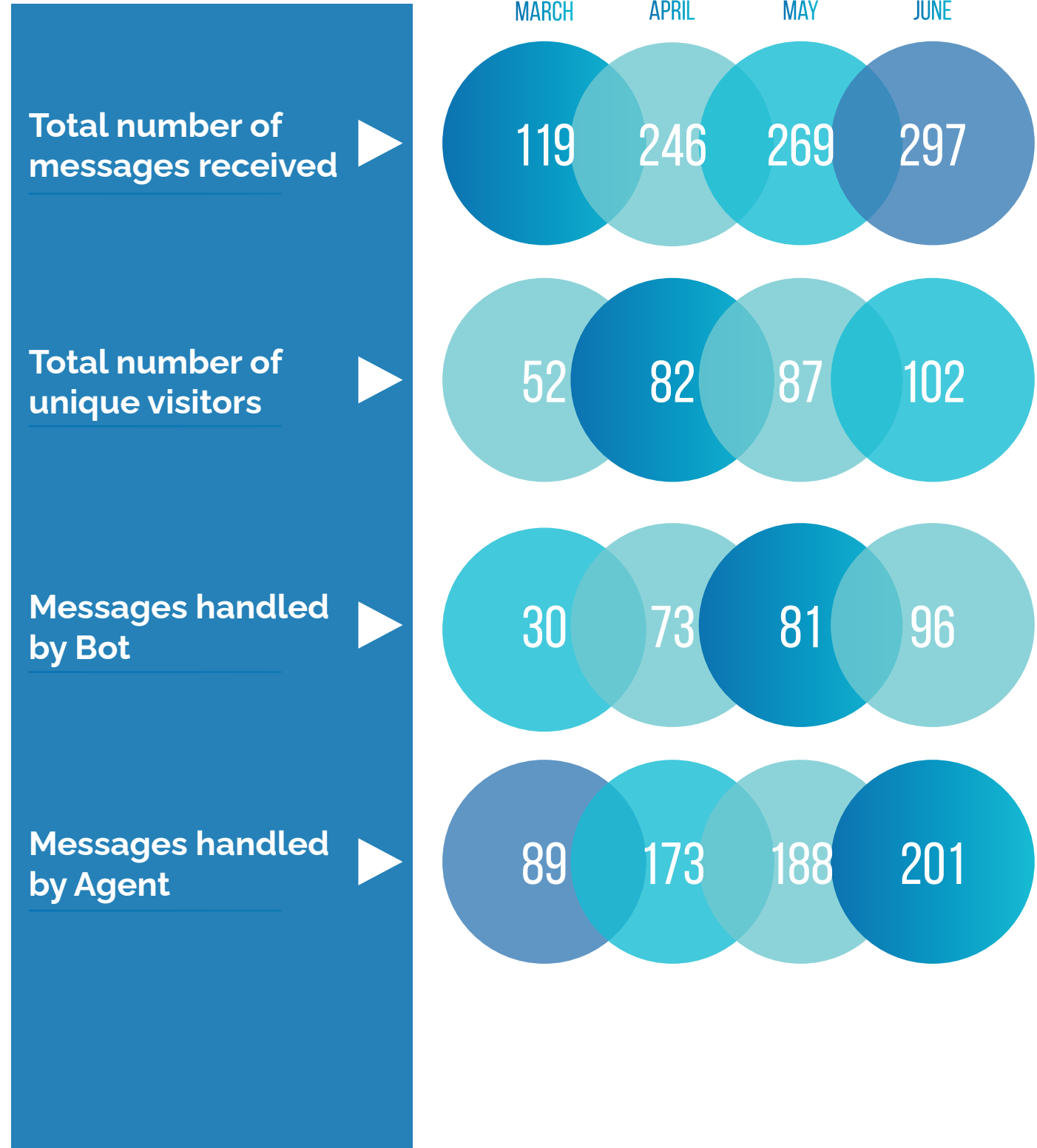
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Automating Helpdesk

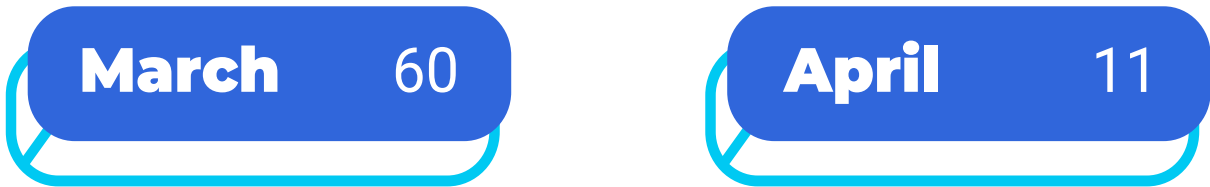
Our Chatbot, available on cisd.govmu.org has been the saving grace amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. The Chatbot with live agent support has indeed shown its significance during the Covid-19 lockdown period, to provide instant answers to queries across Ministries/ Departments. Our Chatbot for the IT help desk provides 24/7 self-service to employees by responding to their queries, thus assisting them in resolving their IT issues promptly. Also, the Chatbot can transfer issues to human help desk agents upon user request during working hours.

The Chatbot attended to more than ten requests per day during the period 15th March to 30th May 2021. It is a proven fact that Chatbots provide inevitable digital transformation capabilities that an organisation must consider adopting. Chatbots were already here long before the COVID-19 outbreak, but this virus has greatly accelerated its adoption. At a time when the world is reeling from the pandemic, customer service requests have spiked, remote working has suddenly become standard practice and organisations have a unique opportunity to make significant progress by using Chatbots with live agents. Allowing agents to work from home and deploying a chatbot is a major step in that direction. It can not only ensure business continuity but also lead to many other benefits.

Chatbot Usage (Cumulative) from March 2021 to June 2021



Keeping people informed through website updates during Covid-19 pandemic

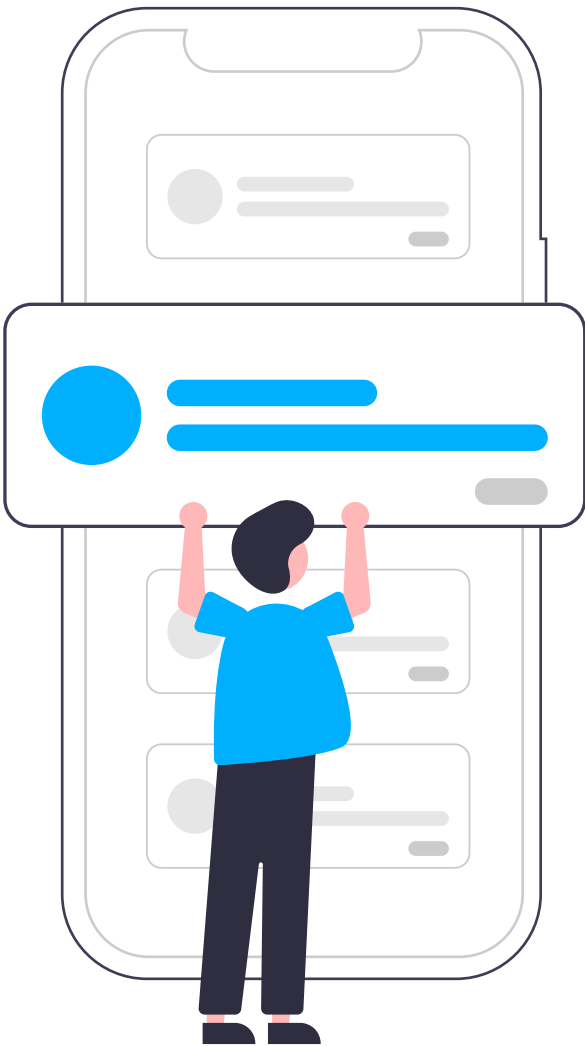


Website Updates Statistics by Web team

Today, government websites still depict the flavour of the area and its people. The difference now is that government websites have several purposes. A government website is a landing place where citizens can learn about the government's history, organizational values, code of ethics, and information about elected officials and other public servants. Another difference is that today's citizens are more likely to look for information about government services online than to pick up the phone and make a call to obtain information.

It was vital for our CISD staff in all Ministries/ Departments to provide accurate, useful and up-to-date information to Mauritian citizens through their respective websites, particularly during the covid-19 pandemic where we were all confined to work from home. Ensuring people have the right information at the right time in the right format was the main priority.

This year again with the sudden lockdown, several webmasters had to urgently upload communiqué on their respective websites. In general, websites updates are done within the secure GINS connection at the office. Without a proper authorisation, staff could not move to their office to perform website updates. Therefore, they had to use a secure communication means i. e the Virtual Private Network (VPN) to gain access on their website.



E-Payroll

Before the confinement period, our E-payroll system was available only within GINS, thus preventing Finance Officers to work from home to carry out e-payroll related tasks. During the recent lockdown, this issue was resolved as the system was made available on a public server whereby officers were able to access the system 24 hours without any constraint.

During the past lockdown in 2020, the Finance Officers sent payroll changes to payroll section by email. This resulted in lots of issues, for e.g. incorrect formatting, that was indeed time consuming to re-format. Currently, payroll changes are captured at source by Finance Officers with added controls to the system, thus minimizing errors.

Rationale for Revamping

1. Obsolete Technology
2. Redundant Features
3. Not Flexible
4. No integration with other system
5. Not user friendly
6. Limited control
7. Limited audit trail of transaction

This new system will be integrated with the E-payroll system and will be implemented by June 2022. This will entail added features, use of new technology and will be accessible through GINS.

Views of Officers for the benefits of E-Payroll

The introduction of e-payroll system has indeed made our daily tasks less hectic and our load of work has diminished. Physical contacts with different Ministries/Departments have reduced because nearly all payment statements are being directly uploaded into the system, and during the Covid-19 pandemic this has really helped to enforce sanitary measures. The main benefit is that paper has been eliminated from the payroll process as much as possible since (almost) everything is done digitally. We have also saved vast amounts of storage space.

Input/output section

Doris Chan Kee Sin, Urmila Rmburuth,
Jayshree Purahoo- Bullywant

Switching to the new payroll system has handled most of payroll's time-consuming tasks that has helped free up labour hours. We are able to work in a less stressful environment. We are able to work at our own pace to meet deadlines. As finance officers, we can input/validate payroll data from home itself which was not possible before. Furthermore, there's no need for printing, thus using less paper and ink – contributing towards environmental and waste-reduction goals.

Finance section

Putraduthsingh Latchoomun, Oormila
Aujgobee Jain, Mehdi Peerbux

E-payroll system has reduced our workload and the stress at work. We don't need to do overtime to input data at the end of each month as compared to the past. Since, the cadre of Data entry officers have become evanescent, we have only few employees left in this unit, and as such the e-payroll system has indeed played a significant role. This has brought a major means to drive innovation and work smarter. Also, large and significant reduction in paper use and waste paper accumulation has been noted.

Data Entry Officers

The surge of JITSI video conferencing platform

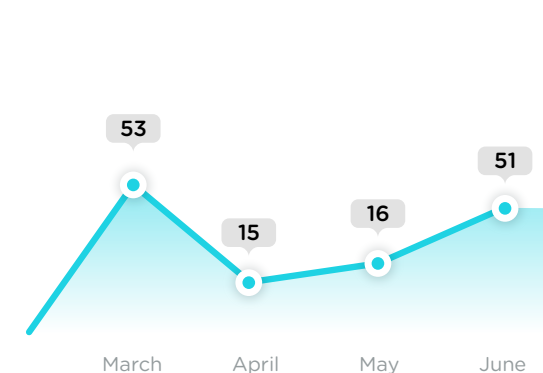
In an attempt to control the spread of the Covid-19, a significant part of the global population had to work from home and keep businesses afloat without the convenience of daily workplace communication methods. Face to face meetings had been put on hold or cancelled, urging many Ministries/Departments to turn to Jitsi video conferencing, an open source platform.



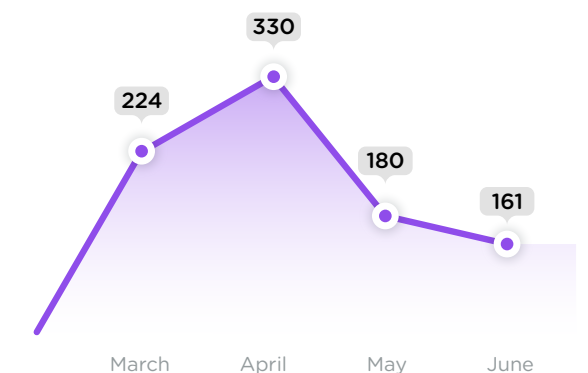
CISD has also delivered online trainings to all its Officers without any hurdle through the Jitsi Platform. Nonetheless, RDT Team provided continuous assistance to users' for using the platform as and when required and also created Jitsi accounts for all Officers concerned. Moreover, a user manual is also available at the following [link](#), to ease the task of users for using the platform.

Back in March 2020, during outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we realized the importance of video conferencing platform. Web conferencing tools have become the unsung heroes of reconnecting employees when they were forced to be physically dispersed. There is no doubt that an immediate response and adoption has been achieved through this. While video conferencing is not a new concept, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has caused the demand for virtual communication to be at an all-time high.

The ongoing COVID-19 situation compelled more people to work from home than ever before, leading governmental organisations to use Jitsi web conferencing as their primary means of communication between employees. Overall, Jitsi's staggering success is due to the ease of getting started on the platform. Users can send a meeting link to anyone. When the recipients access that link in their web browser, their Jitsi client is automatically opened and they are connected to the meeting. The easy-to-use meeting creation and intuitive functionality have made Jitsi an extremely popular platform during the pandemic. While Jitsi's ease-of-use is admirable, it is free.



● Total number of Jitsi account creation



● Total number of Jitsi meeting held

Lockdown: Views of our Staff



Rikesh Pramendra POTHIAH

ADU CISD

Lockdown period was a rush period for me I was under nonstop pressure and had a heavy workload. Being involved in multiple activities such as development of a system for the vaccination registration of citizens in Mauritius, following online training, attending meetings and not forgetting personal life.



Dheeraj, Seesurn, Mujahid, Sundiyana and Anushka

Office Auxiliaries

It was indeed a challenging time for the office auxiliary team during the lockdown as we had to make sure a hygienic environment prevailed throughout. Despite all the risks and a shortage of personnel, the services were delivered to the highest level. Since it has always been in the DNA of CISD, no matter what, the show must go on.



Nasreen Ahsun

Ministry of Social Integration and National Solidarity

During the lockdown, meticulous planning had to be done to attend to all urgent requests and ensure that all pay sheets are prepared on time. Special effort had to be put by CISD officers posted at the Benefits Branch at Rose Hill for preparation of pay sheets for beneficiaries who get their pensions in Post Offices to enable payment of pensions at their residence. Despite the lockdown, CISD Officers at Benefits Branch worked long hours to complete the processing, verifications and printing for timely submission to Post Offices.



Support Officers

CISD

During lockdown period, continuous support was provided by our staff via CISD Chatbot and also by going onsite. In case of urgency, we had to move to various Ministries/Departments like MPI (Moorgate House, Medine News), PRB, Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit to provide technical assistance. Verification of new IT equipment was carried out at various Ministry levels like MOH, Agriculture and Financial Services. In addition, our support team was also attending the MOH for data capture of vaccination forms.

CISD's 50th Anniversary

The Central Information Systems Division (CISD) is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Not only are we celebrating this momentous achievement, but also 50 years of innovation, a rich history and an exceptional reputation in all Ministries/Departments. CISD origins can be traced back to 1971, a period that was marked by centralized computerised systems. The evolution of CISD, by embracing change along its way has led to its perseverance in the ICT landscape in Government.

"We still have a lot to do together!"



National Productivity and Quality Convention

This year CISD Staff of the Application Development Unit participated in NPQC 2020/21 organised by National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) for 'Pursuing Productivity and Quality amidst Covid-19'. Our team obtained a Bronze award for the project entitled 'Enhancement of Government Payroll following Covid-19 Pandemic'.

Congratulations to CISD on the achievement of this award,

"Let's continue improving productivity and quality in CISD"





THANK YOU !

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