



Ministry of Education and
Child Care, British Columbia

A cloud first for the Government of BC



The Ministry of Education and Child Care, British Columbia, trusts Fujitsu to manage its critical IT systems. Fujitsu proposed moving the critical MyEdBC student information system to the cloud to enhance scalability and avoid slowdowns at peak periods.

Challenge

British Columbia in Canada has strict privacy laws. The Ministry needed to ensure student data privacy would be protected and regulatory requirements for in-country data storage would be met when moving to the cloud.

Solution

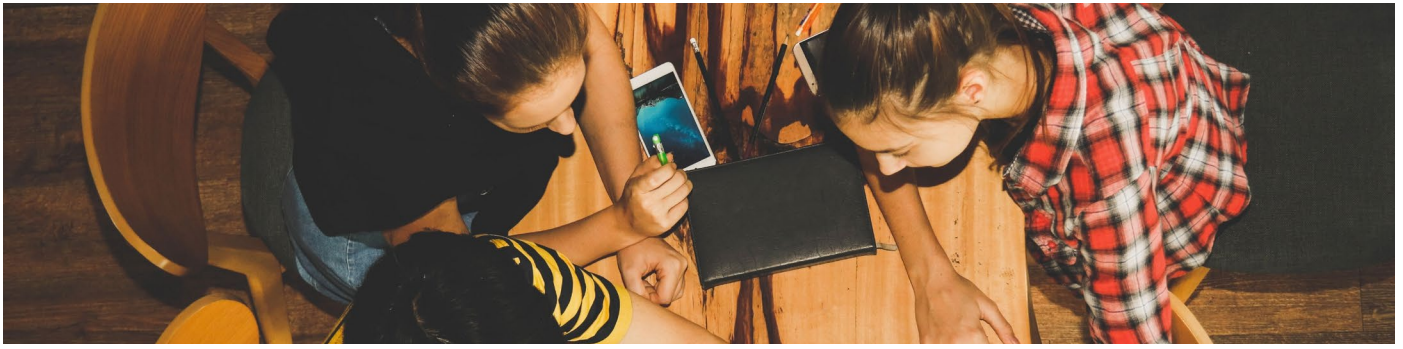
The Ministry, in collaboration with Fujitsu, carried out a Privacy Impact Assessment and produced a submission to the government for approval to move to the cloud. Fujitsu also introduced Agile development processes for evolving MyEdBC.

Outcomes

- The first Ministry to successfully move core government services to the cloud in British Columbia
- Removed delays in accessing information pertaining to students
- Zero complaints from users during peak periods

“The Agile approach introduced by Fujitsu has streamlined product development and increased transparency. We can align with policy much more readily than in the past.”

Spokesperson, Services and Technology, Ministry of Education and Child Care, British Columbia



0 information access delays

Providing tailored education services

For students with special learning challenges, their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the services they receive are critical to their learning journey. The faster the plan and services are transferred to their new school when they move, the quicker the new school can start delivering services to meet that child's needs.

For the spokesperson at Services and Technology, Ministry of Education and Child Care, British Columbia, the student information system (SIS), MyEdBC, plays a critical role: "When a student gets diagnosed with perhaps a learning disability, that information is captured within MyEdBC, and an Individual Education Plan is built for that child. When the student moves from one school to another, the information is there in the school or the district or their authority to access through the student's unique personal education number."

The province implemented MyEdBC SIS in 2014 to modernize and streamline student information and data across British Columbia. The system provides a single source of truth. Schools across all 60 school districts use MyEdBC for school administration, demographics, registration, scheduling, report cards, notification of special student designations, communication with parents and students, course selection and more.

However, the SIS struggled to perform during peak periods. "During reporting and registration periods, the number of concurrent users goes sky high," explains the spokesperson. "We would get a lot of complaints about system slowdowns during those peak periods. We had to overbuild capacity to manage the surge that we see a couple of times a year."

Collaborating with end-users

With an infrastructure refresh scheduled, technology partner Fujitsu proposed moving to the cloud rather than replacing the existing legacy hardware. "Cloud was becoming more prevalent, more secure and more available in British Columbia," says the spokesperson. "MyEdBC needed to comply with the strict privacy laws in BC."

As part of that process, the Fujitsu team also worked closely with Microsoft, assessing the Toronto-based Azure cloud to ensure it would meet British Columbia's strict regulatory requirements for in-country data storage.

"We had a lot of work to do with the Chief Information Officer of the Privacy Compliance Group within government because it was something new," says the spokesperson. "Fujitsu worked very hard to ensure we complied with legislation. They carried out a comprehensive Privacy Impact Assessment, mapped out our data and data flow, and produced a submission to the government of British Columbia for approval for the move to the cloud. It took a while, but we got it signed off."

MyEdBC's migration to the Azure cloud was British Columbia's first major government-sponsored system with personal information to move to the cloud and the move was very smooth. There was almost no impact on the service, except for an improvement.

In addition to assisting the Ministry with ensuring the success of MyEdBC's move into the cloud, Fujitsu also introduced Agile development methodologies for evolving MyEdBC. "We wanted to improve the responsiveness and the development process for enhancements within the MyEdBC service," explains the spokesperson.

Industry:
Education

Location:
Canada

Website:
**BC Ministry
of Education**

About the customer

The purpose of the school system in British Columbia is to enable children enrolled in each school year to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy. The Ministry of Education and Child Care, British Columbia is responsible for all aspects of PreK-12 public education on behalf of British Columbia's population of 5M people.



0
slowdowns at
peak times

"We had already seen some success with Agile in other parts of government, so when Fujitsu came to us with a proposal for moving to an Agile process, we were very enthusiastic."

The Agile project brings together representatives from across all the province's districts to suggest new features they would like to see in the system. For example, many districts had already developed their own online registration and online payment systems and wanted to see that capability built into MyEdBC.

Partnering to enhance the education experience

With MyEdBC now running in the Azure cloud, delays in giving schools access to information around the specific needs of a new student are now a thing of the past. "As soon as a child gets to a new school or district, their teachers can look up information about that child. They can look at their history and what they've been served in the past, and start building those services immediately. That's super important," says the spokesperson. "In the past, it could take months."

The cloud-based service was particularly useful in 2020 when schools were forced to close because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In British Columbia, schools were only shut down for April and May, reopening partially in June and fully in September. Without MyEdBC, the Ministry would not have been able to track attendance at the provincial level as an indicator of what was happening in different districts. That data was shared with the province's health authorities, where it became part of the mix influencing decision-making.

Overall, users are delighted with MyEdBC's move to the Azure cloud, particularly with the high levels of scalability. The spokesperson reveals that the June report card period, the Ministry's first surge period after the migration, was the first time the team hadn't received any complaints of a slowdown.

The districts are also very pleased with the Agile approach. "We used to hear complaints from the districts that they would never know the status of their suggestions or enhancements to MyEdBC," shares the spokesperson. "The Agile approach introduced by Fujitsu has streamlined the product development process and increased transparency. We can add new features and change the application to align with policy much more readily than we were able to in the past."

Customer:



Ministry of
Education and
Child Care

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