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01/30/06

New York XML testbed breaks new ground

By [Doug Beizer](#)
Staff Writer

Using XML for Web site management could greatly benefit government agencies, according to the initial findings of five New York state agencies that participated in an XML testbed.

The Center for Technology in Government's XML Testbed assisted the agencies in examining the benefits as well as the challenges of Web site management using XML.

The goal of the Testbed was to provide an environment for the participants to collaborate and explore whether XML is a viable solution for government Web sites.

Beginning in summer 2005, the agencies underwent six months of intensive, hands-on training and workshops, which led to an XML-based Web site prototype and a business case analysis for each agency.

The five participating agencies were the Department of Civil Service, Division of Housing and Community Renewal, Higher Education Services Corporation, and the offices of Cultural Education and Prevention of Domestic Violence.

The agencies said that over the course of the testbed, they learned the value of creating a single-source, open-standard document to achieve streamlined workflow processes, content consistency and reusability, and multichannel publishing.

Officials said the prototype served as a proof of concept and already is saving the Internet unit an about five hours per week.

The improved workflow will let each institution make more publications available faster, with better management of maintenance and revisions, they said.

In the second phase, the Center for Technology in Government will examine the testbed activities and the agency results to produce a set of guidelines and case studies that offer help for others trying to improve the management, performance and value of their Web sites.

In addition, the testbed will produce a sharable library of XML technical resources, to be made available in this spring.

The Center for Technology in Government is an applied research center devoted to improving government and public services through policy, management and technology innovation. The center, at the University at Albany, works with government to develop information strategies that foster innovation and enhances the quality and coordination of public services.

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