

# Success WITH CA

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## Client Info AT A GLANCE

**Company Name:**

Missouri Department  
of Elementary &  
Secondary Education

**Industry:**

Education

**Geographic Location:**

Jefferson City, Missouri

**CA Solution:**

Advantage™ Gen  
for Enterprise Servers

**Biggest ROI:**

Reduced the grant application  
process from weeks to days.



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## Missouri Department of Education Boosts Efficiency by Developing Web Grant Application System With CA's Advantage™ Gen

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) serves a widespread, diverse population. Children, children with special needs, adults in need of vocational training and adults in need of rehabilitative services utilize their facilities, programs and instructors year-round. The department encompasses 525 school districts, more than 10,000 schools and millions of teachers, students, parents and other public groups.

### Manual Systems Drain Time and Resources

To process federal and state grants and distribute the associated funds, DESE needed to eliminate time-consuming manual processes. Their district customers, administrators, superintendents, principals and teachers were becoming overwhelmed by the forms and procedures required to submit information and process grant applications. They needed a web-based grant application management program that would simplify forms entry, prompt users when information was incomplete or incorrect, calculate disbursements and provide reporting and analysis features. They also wanted to integrate that system with the statewide accounting system so that funding checks could be cut and sent to each school or district upon approval.

The education department's IT organization had previously attempted to integrate their legacy applications, but they found that the personnel required for the job were difficult to find. Their systems were part automated, part manual and they often failed to spend all their grant money because the application processes took so long.

### Web System Cuts Weeks Out of the Grant Application Process

Missouri DESE looked at a number of development tools that would allow them integrate their diverse systems and eliminate all the unnecessary, time-consuming paperwork — and they chose Advantage™ Gen for Enterprise Servers (Advantage Gen) from Computer Associates International, Inc. (CA). “Advantage Gen provides the capabilities and integration we need, along with the component approach that allows us to quickly develop new

applications as we evolve,” said Paul Wright, CIO of Missouri DESE.

“The principals and superintendents don't have to deal with paper forms and long, drawn out processes anymore,” continued Wright. “The application we developed with Advantage Gen does the appropriate calculations, checks information for errors in real time and allows them to fill out forms anytime, anywhere, with a simple browser.” They used to send in their applications on paper. Corrections would be made and sent back to them, and then they would send the application back, hoping it was right. “Now they're free to do the jobs they were hired for, and they can stop pushing paper.”

Before the new system was implemented, processing applications took more than 60 days. In many instances, that time has been reduced to five days. With the new streamlined process, DESE eliminated 17 forms and reduced the turnaround for school payments from weeks to days.

Prior to implementation the department had 16 people receiving, reviewing and filing paper documents. “We were able to reallocate 14 of these people to work directly with the districts, helping schools to better utilize the grant funding,” said Wright.



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Missouri Department  
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The finished grant application system, which was operational only four months after development began, allows users to log in, work online, save work in progress and electronically file with DESE on completion.

Advantage Gen allows DESE to build and modify their systems more rapidly. Since the technical environment has improved, new, related applications are falling into place much more quickly and easily. The department's Advantage Gen developers use Microsoft Windows NT Workstations, the core system runs on an RS600 AIX UNIX system and data is pulled from Oracle. End users log on via browsers across the district, in their home offices and anywhere else they may be working.

Missouri DESE's grant application system was the first web-enabled grant application in the country, and they have been helping other states develop similar systems by using the DESE technology project as a model.

## Component Development Saves Time and Effort

DESE shares various components with Advantage Gen, including applications from other states and from the private sector, to build extended functionality into their systems. For example, they re-used components from the Missouri State Highway Patrol to reengineer their systems to achieve Year 2000 readiness. Their payment process is also a business component, and a common security component is used throughout their various applications. "Advantage Gen allows us to quickly combine components, make minor tweaks and devise new applications for very specific needs," said Wright.



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