



Multnomah County's AI Journey

State of Oregon - Joint
Committee On Information
Management and
Technology

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What is Artificial Intelligence?

- **What is AI?**

- A branch of computer science devoted to developing data processing systems that performs functions normally associated with human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, and self-improvement. [NIST](#)

- **What is Generative AI?**

- The class of AI models that emulate the structure and characteristics of input data in order to generate derived synthetic content. This can include images, videos, audio, text, and other digital content. [NIST](#)



Agenda

1. Multnomah County's Journey with AI
2. Early Learning
3. Gemini for Enterprise
4. Scaling AI Processes
5. Lessons Learned & Questions





Multnomah County Journey with AI

01



Administrative Engagement



Who

The County began work ~ 2 years ago and involved ~70 people in the AI research process across the organization



What

We established an AI Steering Team (Director level) and began monthly meetings and training

Established an AI Technical Team (staff level)



How

Our work reflects three core themes:

1. Protect Privacy;
2. Verify Results;
3. A human always reviews the Gen AI 'product'



Focus on Governance

01

Developed Administrative Procedure for staff
IT-4: Generative Artificial Intelligence Use & Procedures

02

Updated Personnel Rule *MCPR 3-35: Use of Information Technology* to include Generative AI guardrails

03

Developed *Responsible AI Principles* aligned to County Mission, Vision and Values, our “Moral Compass”

04

Developed a scalable methodology for risk evaluation based on our policy, NIST AI 100-1 & 600-1, our principles, and [GovAI Coalition](#) risk frameworks



Engaging the User

If IT is this excited about AI/GenAI, what about County staff?

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People were already using GenAI!
Identified by scanning email (ChatGPT)



Early Innovators - Official Pilot Projects



Pre-Req

- Provided a user agreement with instructions
- A commitment to answer questions about bias, ethics, and their use cases every two months



Users & Tools

- Pilots expanded to ~200 people
- Multiple GenAI tools included: Chat GPT 3.5; Writer.ai; Google Bard/Gemini/Duet AI



IT R&D

- Partnered with Google to test their AI tools internally
- Natural language LLM - testing was completed
- Unstructured Search and Chatbots - underway now





Early Learning Initial Pilot Projects

02



Early Learning

- Extensive education and training was required to get to this point
- We found significant initial efficiency gains
- There were positive implications for digital accessibility, e.g., dyslexia, and staff who use English as a second language
- Identified areas for investment (our use cases)
- Building your own AI tool is hard, the landscape is changing rapidly
- We obtained the Chair's approval to expand our pilot to 1000 Gemini for Enterprise, privacy protected, licenses



Next Steps Gemini for Enterprise

03



What is Gemini?

- It is a powerful suite of AI tools designed to enhance your productivity and creativity directly within the Google Workspace environment. It seamlessly integrates with:
 - Gmail, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drive and Meet
- Think of it as your own AI assistant
- Staff use Gemini to help write and edit documents, perform research, create images and slides, spark creativity, and save time
- **It is privacy protected.** Nothing the County asks is ever sent to, or used by, Google.



Gemini Rollout Process

- We built Workday training covering our internal AI policies, as well as training and support websites for staff
- We built automated tools to request and activate Gemini licenses
- We developed a quantitative and qualitative feedback process to measure benefits, value, and capture risks
- We set a deadline to move all current AI testers to Gemini, blocking access to unapproved tools due to the privacy risks



April Rollout and Beyond



Group 1 - Current Pilots

- Current pilot testers
- Chair and COO
- AI Steering Team
- DCA Leadership
- Library staff



Group 2 - Accessibility

- DEI Staff
- ODE Staff
- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Communications Staff
- IT Staff



Group 3 - Broad Use

- Management Analysts
- Data Analysts
- Administrative Analysts
- Content Creators
- **Open internal invitation**



Next Steps

Scaling AI Processes

04



Scaling our AI Processes

- AI and Gen AI tools are here to stay. The impacts require a focused, dedicated, effort by the County. This includes many departments:
 - IT, Contracts and Procurement, Legal, Risk, HR, and Senior Leadership
- After 6m+ of work, the AI Steering Team has applied our AI Decision Making and Risk Framework, evaluating a request to use a Generative AI tool in our Health Dept.
- The County has reached the point where our AI work is scalable and intersects with existing purchasing, security and software review processes.
- Our focus has been internal up to this point. External uses of AI will be cautiously explored.



Lessons Learned & Questions

05



Lessons Learned

- Partnerships are crucial! Our learning involved numerous phone calls with state and local government across the country, including reading international policies.
- We sought advice from technology advisory firms and learned from universities.
- Our involvement with the [GovAI Coalition](#) continues to be very important.
 - This coalition includes 600 public servants from over 250 local, county, and state governments that represent over 150 million Americans across the nation united in our mission to promote responsible and purposeful AI in the public sector.
- In Oregon ~40 shared services are used by the State and Local Government. This means we must coordinate work on policy, standards and technology.



Questions?

