



2017 iGO INNOVATOR AWARD

RECORDER'S DIVISION

DEBRA JOHNSON

DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO



Waiting in Line is Fun - Said No One Ever

The Denver Office of the Clerk & Recorder took the fun out of waiting in line by slashing our customer wait times.

There's no time for your feet to get cold – the once 45-minute wait to get your marriage license from the Clerk & Recorder is now less than 38 seconds. And customers are happier because they know we value their time.

The Big Picture

Government agencies are monopolies; we are the only provider of our goods and services. The lack of competition has led to the *perception* of tangled bureaucracy and government workers who don't care about the customer. And perception is reality.

Clerk and Recorder Debra Johnson made customer service one of her top priorities when she took office in 2011.

We've transformed the way customers view city/county government. Every day we hear how quick and easy it is to do business at the Clerk & Recorder's Office and how we exceed our customer's expectations.

Our customers' perception now is that they are our priority every day. We strive to reduce their time in our offices by providing online access to resources like real estate records and marriage applications. Customers can do business 24/7 with online recording, online payments and renewals as well as research of city records. Customers can look at the Clerk & Recorder website (and PocketGov) before driving downtown to see how long the wait time is and plan accordingly.

As management, this innovation lets us look at our employees as our customers. Staff helped identify the problems and design the solutions. The metrics we now gather help us hold staff accountable for their work time. It ensures an equitable distribution of work and customers. Through these metrics we can design better processes and identify areas for improvement and further training. We can reward staff who exceed expectations because now we can measure their productivity.

How We Did It

We looked for ways for our customers to do business without ever coming to see us in person.

Website

We revamped our website so that customers could find more information, faster. We looked at the metrics behind the old website and completed two redesigns to make it more efficient.

We started with 256 web pages and now have fewer than 50 pages. We worked with the City's technology services team to determine which pages were used the most by our customers. Now, the answer to any question is not more than three clicks away.

We consolidated information and continue to try to present the information in common language – not hiding behind legalese and bureaucratic terms.

We produced videos to help people navigate the website. And we try to make statistics sexy and produce our own graphics and news for the website. By making our information easy to understand, we reduce the trips to our office and the phone calls asking questions.

Denver 311

When people call the City, they first talk to someone at Denver 311. This team has the pulse of the City and can help with anything from figuring out when trash gets picked up to how to file a lien.

We worked closely with the 311 team to find out more of the types of questions people ask about our office, and how we can give better answers to 311. We honed simple articles that link to our websites so that 311 operators can give good information to callers quickly. The 311 operators know how to navigate our website and can help people find information quickly.

Recently, we took down a “how to” video we had on our site because it was a bit outdated. Less than 2 hours later, 311 let us know how much they depended on that video to help our customers. We put the video back on the website in five minutes and have since updated it. Our partnership with 311 on this “issue” is a small example of how important, and productive, this relationship is.

Our first-call resolution is up to 68 percent thru 311. Calls for Clerk and Recorder questions have decreased by 33 percent because of website innovations since 2011.

Queuing System

We're able to show our wait times on our website and on PocketGov because we invested in an electronic queuing system.

Customers can check out our wait times, by service, to see how long the wait is before driving downtown.

When a customer arrives at the office, the queuing kiosks asks the customer a short series of questions, issues a ticket for the appropriate service, and a counter number usually pops up in about 10 seconds. For instance, if you need to file a lien, you're not going to wait for a clerk issuing marriage licenses.

The system also lets us track metrics like transaction type and time to serve a customer. The metrics can be parsed by day and hour, if necessary. The metrics show our staff who is performing well and holds everyone accountable. They can hold each other accountable. It ensures an equitable distribution of work and customers.

As management, this innovation lets us look at our employees as our customers or as one of our stakeholders. Staff helped identify the problems and design the solutions. Through these metrics we can design better processes and identify areas for improvement and further training. We also can reward staff who exceed expectations because now we can, quantitatively, measure productivity.

Online Access to Records

As the Clerk and Recorder's Office, we are the custodian for a lot of records for the City and County of Denver. Those records often affect people's lives directly – like their mortgage, the Release of Deed of Trust or a lien against their property.

In 2011, the office did not have a single record available online. If you wanted to get a copy of anything that had been recorded, you had to drive downtown to our office. That search could take hours.

At the end of 2016, we had more than 11 million records searchable online. Now, if you want to research a piece of property, get a copy of your marriage license or access a City ordinance, you can do it on your own time from your own home.

Online transactions

Our customers are using this online repository; we had almost 14,000 online transactions in 2016. That's 49 percent increase in online transactions than in 2015. And 11 percent fewer people came into our office. They didn't have to pay for parking. They didn't have to sneeze at the dust on the books. That saves them time and money because there's no waiting online.

And for our large-volume customers like banks and title companies, they can now record their documents electronically. That saves them so much time and money because they send the document in electronically and we record it in less than 24 hours.

In 2016, customers recorded 176,000 documents; 65 percent of those were submitted electronically. No waiting for the mail or to see a clerk in our office.

Summary

Our customers love us! We have a 99 percent positive customer satisfaction rating.

And our customer wait time, well, it's less than 38 seconds. People usually don't even get a chance to take a seat before we're ready to help them.

Nevertheless, we continue to look for ways to serve our customers faster. We've worked hard to change the stodgy, bureaucratic perception of local government. And we think we're winning over the people of Denver.

For more information on our innovations, check out our [2016 Annual Report](#) video. (https://youtu.be/anp_buVrpBo)

DEBRA JOHNSON
Denver Clerk & Recorder
Public Trustee



Clerk and Recorder Division

Public Trustee ★ City Clerk ★ Recording

CUSTOMER SERVICE

***Our Vision:**
To be regarded as the most
customer-centric and trusted clerk &
recorder team in the state of
Colorado*



Wait Time < 38 seconds

99%
Customer Satisfaction



First Call Resolution
2015 - 68%
2011 - 33%

33% Decrease in Calls to
Denver 311



INNOVATION

*Technological and process
innovations result in cost saving
through employee time/reduced
staffing levels, improves our
services, and builds a more
sustainable city.*

\$6.8 Million to General Fund

11 Million Records Available Online

**152,885 Visitors to Website
(Sept. 2015 - May 2016)**

8,000 Online Transactions

**\$2 Million in Excess Funds
Distributed**

25%

*Reduction in staffing levels
while never sacrificing
customer service.*

