

Not All Integrated Tax Systems (ITS) COTS Products are Created Equal

Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) Systems Come in Many Forms, Differentiating between Types of COTS Systems is a Crucial Business and Technical Decision

ITS COMMERCIAL-OFF-THE-SHELF SYSTEMS

An agency's choice to go with a COTS solution is often a managerial decision rather than technical decision based upon specific risk and costs parameters. COTS products offer the additional confidence a solution is immediately operational and will be fit for purpose. Many solutions are described as COTS products, however there is a significant spectrum of characteristics and functionality across COTS products.

COTS is a generic term for out-of-the-box software for a core operational product used by multiple customers. The advantage of any COTS system is that the overall development and implementation costs are lower and meet the most common requirements of a broad customer base. Many COTS products can vary significantly in their ability to provide; configurability, transparency, flexibility, extensibility and future independence on the part of the client. RSI has identified two unique categories of COTS products across this spectrum which RSI has coined COTS 1.0 and COTS 2.0.

Careful consideration should be given in determining which COTS version, COTS 1.0 or COTS 2.0, will best meet an agency's specific requirements.

ITS COTS 1.0

COTS 1.0 software is typically developed within a rigid development framework. User training and technical support materials often focus on what the system can and cannot do – and how the organization must change their business processes to “fit” the COTS 1.0 system.

Closed System: Systems are confined to a single, holistic product, built by a solution company. This means any non-standard modification to the system is impossible. These restricted systems are often used for expedited implementations (e.g., a big-bang approach), limiting unique client configurations and modifications.

Vendor-Dependent: System updates and future releases must be performed exclusively by the solution company.

Non-Extensible: Systems are entirely self-contained and built in-house. This means agencies are not able to take advantage of external third-party “best of industry/best-of-breed” components (e.g., correspondence system, business rules management, web portal) because of the challenges of integrating with the self-contained solution.

Proprietary and Opaque: Systems are entirely proprietary and resultingly opaque and inaccessible to the client-user.

Critical Mass Requirement: Software enhancements and new features are dependent upon a critical mass of the prospective and existing customer base before being developed.

Business Process Change Required: Systems require business processes to change to mirror system architecture. Organizations frequently must redesign existing processes and policy to be compatible with the new systems, sometimes resulting in a step backward for the agency.

ITS COTS 2.0

COTS 2.0 continues to be out-of-the-box operational, but also offers greater configurability both now and in the future. The systems are modular and can be incrementally implemented and allow for long-term greater user independence, as well as staying abreast of the latest technology advances.

Open System: Systems are open and therefore can be highly configurable to meet unique client requirements. Clients have access to their data and can use as needed.

Extensible and Modular: A single, flexible platform facilitates new capabilities and functionality, now and in the future. This also supports incremental implementation to manage risk.

Client Self-Sufficiency: Systems enable client administrators to customize business rules to meet needs of the business therefore allowing for self-sufficiency. With a business rules engine, the client is able to make software changes without relying upon the solution provider involvement.

Industry Standard: Systems use the current industry standard language and platform which allows for integration of best-of-breed technology.

Highly Configurable for Client Specific Features and Processes: Systems support configuration for client specific features to adapt to client requirements with the need to await critical mass market demand.

Business Process Change Optional: Systems are adaptable to existing business processes; the organization is not forced to change business processes and policies to accommodate a rigid system and can retain their existing best practices.



The Experience to Deliver Government Innovation



ABOUT RSI

RSI's mission is to streamline government operations and improve citizen services through the delivery of transformative technologies.

Federal, State and Municipal government agencies rely on RSI's extensive expertise in business and technical domains. With a dedicated team of full-time business and information systems consultants and a suite of software solutions, RSI is one of the largest organizations of its kind dedicated exclusively to government. RSI provides solutions to tax, labor and child support agencies. RSI's solutions have generated more than \$2 billion in increased revenue for clients.

ABOUT REVENUE PREMIER

Revenue Premier®, RSI's flagship product, provides an integrated, functional and advanced technical solution to support the processing, tax accounting and compliance functions of a revenue agency. Revenue Premier is comprised of four primary modules – Integrated Tax Processor, Collections Manager, Portfolio Warehouse and Audit Manager. Revenue Premier boasts an open technical design and a set of shared services which provide vast flexibility for reusing services, integrating other products and a variety of supporting technical infrastructure options. Revenue Premier is a modular solution that can be implemented according to the priorities and budget of the client.

CONTACT US

For more information on our tax, unemployment and related services and solutions, visit us at www.RSIdelivers.com or email info@RSImail.com or call 1-888-826-1541.