

Developing the Advertisement Permits Issuance Service

Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning in cooperation with the eGovernment Authority

In 1973, Legislative Decree No. (14) was issued with reference to regulating advertisements; out of which Clause (3) states that it is not permitted to advertise without obtaining an advertisement permit from the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning. The law explains how to apply for advertisement permits and specifies all the information regarding permits' conditions, examinations and related decision-making processes as well as issuance and renewal costs.

The authority is authorized to coordinate and implement all the eGovernment programs in accordance with the strategies, plans and programs approved by the Supreme Committee for Information and Communication Technology (SCICT) - Legislative Decree No. (69) of the year 2007. Hence, it takes the responsibility of the following:

- Proposing the general policy and the appropriate strategy for the eGovernment programs, as well as presenting them to the SCICT for approval. Proposing necessary Information Technology (IT) programs to provide eServices and facilitate communication between all government entities. The programs approved by the SCICT will be implemented in order to activate the eGovernment programs. Putting forward the enactment of legislations and decisions necessary for the implementation of the eGovernment programs.
- Establishing electronic channels to deliver the eGovernment services. Offering technical and scientific support to ministries and other governmental entities so as to activate the eGovernment programs.



There is no doubt that Information Technology has become one of the core elements in the development of government services in general and the development of the services of the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning in particular. Therefore, the Ministry has pursued a strategy that takes advantage of Information Technology to facilitate a variety of services for individuals and business owners. This strategy has contributed to changing the traditional process to a great extent.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Urban Planning and Works in cooperation with the eGovernment Authority launched a range of services that fall under "Advertisement Permits Issuance services", namely:

- Applying for the approval of the advertisement's content
- Calculating the advertisement's cost.
- Applying for a commercial advertisement – Non-Commercial
- Renewal of commercial advertisement permits – Non-Commercial
- Viewing advertisement violations

Issuing advertisement permits for individuals and business owners is one of the main services provided by the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning. The service has been beneficial for both, the clients and the Kingdom of Bahrain in general and will be clarified as follows:

Case Study: Advertisement Permits Issuance Service

In 2014, the Ministry issued and renewed 14040 commercial and non-commercial permits through electronic and traditional channels. The following is a brief overview of

how to develop the service in cooperation between the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning and the eGovernment Authority in this regard:

- Before launching the eService, the process of issuing advertisement Permits required the applicants to visit the concerned municipality twice. The first visit was to submit the application and the second visit was to pay the fees if the application was approved.
- When the applicant visits the Permits Issuance Department to apply for a commercial or non-commercial advertisement permit, he/she fills in the application form and attaches a letter obtained from the employer, a copy of the commercial registration and a copy of the advertisement as well as the approval of the service agencies depending on the type of the advertisement.
- Upon the submission of the application, the reception's technician performs the initial data entry task. Then the application is forwarded to a specialist in order to be reviewed and entered into the system. After that, the application is forwarded to the engineer in order to be certified. Once the application is certified, the specialist notifies the applicant about the application's status so that the applicant can pay the fees and receive the printed permit after collecting the required signatures.
- Due to all of these traditional processes that are performed by four employees, it used to require a long time to process the application and issue the advertisement permit (around 3 weeks).

- After providing the Advertisement Permits Issuance eService, the applicants have been able to submit their applications online at any time without the requirement of visiting the municipal.
- The applicant could receive the advertisement permit in a maximum of 3-5 working days if the application is complete and meets all the required documents.
- The applicant could choose the permit type he/she wishes to receive, complete their details, download the necessary documents, and pay the prescribed fees online after the engineer in charge has approved it. When the application is certified, the applicant can receive his/her permit by email. Through this eService, the application process has become more straightforward and effortless.
- The applicant has the opportunity to create other applications related to advertisement permits without having to visit the ministry or concerned municipality, such as renewing advertisement permits, calculating the cost of the advertisement, inquiring about the status of an online application, inquiring about the violations and updating contact information.
- The number of staff assigned to carry out the service has been reduced to two instead of four employees. The employee in charge receives the electronic applications online, reviews and previews them, and then forwards the applications to the head of the department for approval.
- In general, and in line with the latest international practices, the eGovernment's standards ensure maximum security, confidentiality, and personal data protection.

- The direct and indirect cost associated with the advertisement permits issuance (cost of paper - printing - archiving) has been reduced. In addition, the employees and staff's productivity has increased.
- The following Table shows the added value and benefits that have been achieved through the development of that eService (estimated at government level by the Bahraini dinar per year):

Value-added Element	Total cost of the transactions/ per year (14,040 transactions annually)			Per each transaction			Saving percentage
	Cost of traditional procedure	Cost of e-procedure	Value of financial saving	Cost of traditional procedure	Cost of e-procedure	Value of financial saving	
Direct cost (Papers- Printing- equipments maintenance)	1,497	613,52	883	0,110	0,040	0,06	59%
Indirect cost (productivity of human resources - fuel subsidy - citizens productivity)	129,290	49	129,241	9,20	0	9,2	100%

The tremendous development in the field of information technology (IT) and the use of the World Wide Web has imposed a big challenge on the ministries and government entities to develop the quality of the services they provide. The government entities have to become more dynamic and able to provide various services and use the advances in information technologies.

The cooperation between the eGovernment Authority and all government entities in general and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Urban Planning and Works, in particular, have led to many successes in the field of electronic services. Which has resulted in making the authority stand in the ranks of the most advanced entities in Bahrain as well as the region. Besides the development of the e-services, the cooperation between the eGovernment Authority and the government entities did not stop at the development of e-services only, but continued to be a source of accurate statistical information that can always be relied on to support the process of decision- making.

Appendix

Table 6: The benefits of the e-service

Value-added element	traditional procedure	Electronic procedure	Value-added
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time required for the completion of the service 	15 working days	5 working days	10 working days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of visits 	two visits	No visits	two visits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Size of greenhouse gas emissions from burning car fuel while getting the service ▪ (Unit of measurement: metric ton/year) 	84	-	84
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amount of paper consumed for the implementation of the service (data Form to be filled by the applicant and copies of the ID of the father, mother and the marriage contract and fax correspondences), ▪ (Unit of measurement: paper/year) 	84,300	28,100	65,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of trees that can be retained as a result of e-transformation ▪ (Unit of measurement: tree/year) 	11	4	7