

Wyo. turns to Google for gov't computing services

June 22 2011, By MEAD GRUVER , Associated Press

(AP) -- Wyoming has become the first state to begin using a suite of cloud computing tools from Google for its entire executive branch of government, allowing data and applications to be stored on remote servers and accessed over the Internet.

New technologies enabled by Google Apps for Government include desk-to-desk [video conferencing](#) and live online collaboration while creating documents.

The system, which went online in Wyoming on Monday, was formally unveiled Wednesday as Gov. Matt Mead cut a red data cable with scissors.

"Wyoming likes to be first and that's a great message for us. This is kind of an early round in this technology and for a company like Google, we need the right partners to work with," said Dave Girouard, president of enterprise for Google, who flew to Cheyenne for the event.

Wyoming expects to save at least \$1 million a year because it won't need to maintain some servers and will rely instead on secure remote servers operated by Google. The state also won't need to bother with figuring out how to update platforms, which Google handles.

Meanwhile, all state agencies will share a uniform [email system](#) containing an employee directory for the first time.

Several cities including Los Angeles have begun using Google Apps for Government over the past year or so. Federal agencies including the General Services Administration and the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) likewise have chosen Google over government services available through competitor Microsoft.

Wyoming doesn't have a reputation as a high-tech state but that could change. This month Mead plugged a \$70 million National Center for Atmospheric Research supercomputing facility near Cheyenne as a project sure to draw more tech business after it becomes operational next year.

[Google](#) Apps for Government will enable the state to save through government efficiency that's difficult to quantify, said Flint Waters, the state's [chief technology officer](#).

"In man-hours saved, I'm sure that \$1 million is very, very conservative," he said.

Wyoming has allocated \$5 million for the switch but Waters said he expects the state to come in under budget.

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