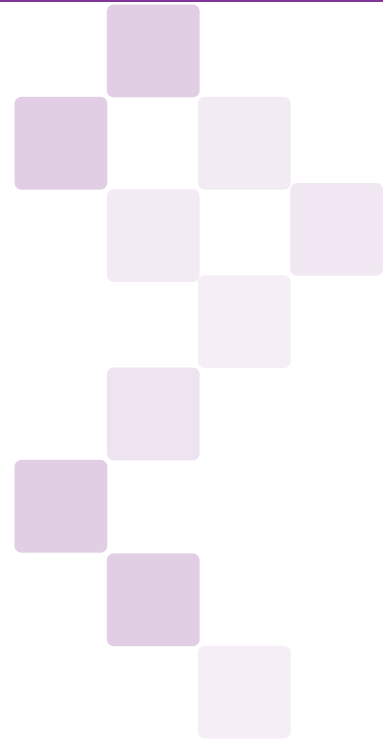# Supporting Federal Data Center Initiatives

with Modern DCIM Software

Sunbird®
DCIM that's easy, fast, and complete

Introduction

Federal data centers are at a pivotal moment in their efforts to modernize and align with evolving governmental mandates.

The introduction of the Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI) in 2016 spurred significant consolidation and cost savings. However, gaps identified by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) underscore the need for further improvement.

Proposed legislation aims to bolster optimization efforts with stringent requirements for sustainability, availability, resiliency, and cybersecurity. Despite challenges, data center modernization remains imperative to mitigate risks associated with outdated systems and capitalize on the benefits of modern infrastructure.

Sunbird's Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM) software emerges as an important tool in this endeavor, offering asset management, monitoring, efficient resource utilization, and robust reporting capabilities to support federal data center initiatives.

This eBook explores how Sunbird DCIM supports the modernization and optimization goals for federal agencies.

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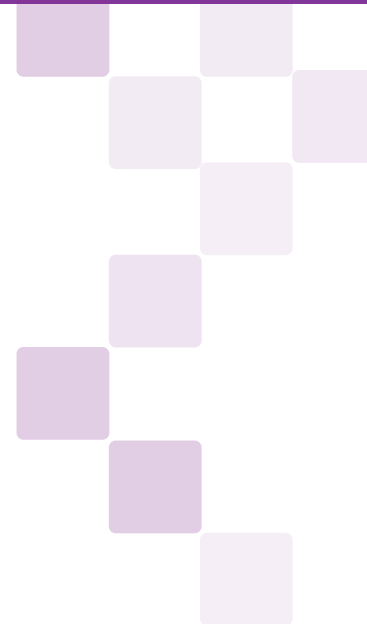
The Current Landscape of Federal Data Center Initiatives

Enhanced Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI)

DCOI was introduced by the Office of Management and Budget (OMDB) in 2016, aiming at improving energy efficiency, reducing costs, and enhancing cybersecurity for federal data centers.

Agencies were required to conduct comprehensive physical and virtual asset inventories, measure and report on their energy consumption, develop consolidation and optimization plans, and regularly report on their progress.

Initial results were positive, with the DCOI mandate driving more than 6,000 federal data center consolidations and $5.8 billion in savings.

However, the GAO noted that while agencies were making progress, many had incomplete plans and were not meeting their goals. The GAO provided 126 recommendations, but by December 2022, 16 of the recommendations were still not fully implemented. These recommendations include agencies taking action to meet the data center optimization metric targets established under DCOI.

Today, with agencies having fallen short of the DCOI mandate, momentum is building for a new bill to optimize federal data centers.

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The Current Landscape of Federal Data Center Initiatives (continued)

Requirements under the proposed Federal Data Center Enhancement Act include:

- **Sustainability.** Federal data centers must meet environmental standards and promote energy efficiency.
- **Availability.** Minimum standards for uptime percentages will guarantee that data centers are available for a certain amount of time per year.
- **Resiliency.** Agencies must demonstrate their data centers' resilience against a range of threats including power failures, physical intrusions, and natural disasters.
- **Cybersecurity.** Federal data centers are mandated to meet high security standards to prevent unauthorized access and cyberattacks.

If passed, the bill will introduce new mandates for agencies to report specific data center management and financial decisions to the GSA and Congress. Additionally, the GSA would be required to maintain a public website detailing agency compliance with these mandates. The GAO would also need to report on adherence to the new requirements.

While the DCOI made strides in optimizing federal data centers, challenges persist, prompting the introduction of new legislation which will have a significant impact on federal data centers in the near future.

(continued)

The Current Landscape of Federal Data Center Initiatives (continued)

Data Center Modernization

Despite initiatives like DCOI, progress towards the modernization of federal data centers has been slow and uneven.

Various administrations have recognized the need to modernize aging data centers to address inefficiencies, rising costs, and security vulnerabilities. However, federal agencies hesitate to implement potentially disruptive and expensive modernization projects to legacy systems that still work.

The reality is that modernization is not as daunting as it once was. Today's data center infrastructure is designed for incremental, modular growth, allowing agencies to phase in new systems without significant disruption. Modern systems offer better energy efficiency, reliability, and security compared to legacy systems. They are also more scalable as capacity can be more easily added as needed, avoiding the overprovisioning of the past.

Financially, the cost of inaction is high. Maintaining outdated systems is expensive and risky. Modern systems, while requiring an upfront investment, offer better total cost of ownership through increased efficiency, reduced footprint, simplified operations, and fewer service disruptions. Additionally, the cost of unplanned downtime is significant, making a strong case for proactive modernization efforts.

Ultimately, federal data center modernization is essential for keeping pace with technological advancements and ensuring the government's IT infrastructure can support evolving operational needs and cybersecurity requirements. While progress has been made, much work remains to fully modernize federal data centers and close the gap with the private sector and international counterparts.

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