

Challenges for E-Government Strategy

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Governments worldwide are faced with the challenge of transformation and the need to reinvent government systems in order to deliver efficient and cost effective services, information and knowledge through information and communication technologies. Development of Information and communication technologies catalyzed and led up to E-government.

E-government is about transforming the way government interacts with the governed. The process is neither quick nor simple. The success of e-government requires fundamentally changing how government works and how people view the ways in which government helps them

Governments have different strategies to build e-government. Some have created comprehensive long-term plans. Others have opted to identify just a few key areas as the focus of early projects. In all cases, however, the countries identified as most successful have begun with smaller projects in phases on which to build a structure.

Research suggests that there is large potential for e-governance, creating a channel that would bring the government closer to citizens by increasing the speed and efficiency of their interactions. In order for e-government to reach it's full potential, there are several barriers it must overcome.

Keywords: e-government, e-citizens, e-transactions, e-privacy.

The waves of e-government are rising through public organizations and public administration across the world. More and more governments are using information and communication technology especially Internet or web-based network, to provide services between government agencies and citizens, businesses, employees and other non-governmental agencies.

More and more attractions appeal researchers and practitioners come to search for a consensus regarding e-government diagrams and initiatives. E-government may be defined as a continuum from information provision when organizations and public agencies publish static information to the Internet to web interactive communication and E-transactions, and to one-stop integrated virtual governmental services.

But, what means e-government? Usually is the use of information and communication technologies in public administration – combined with organizational changes and new skills – to improve public sector services processes and to strengthen support to public policies.

E-Government does not mean:

- to equal digitalisation with modernisa-

tion;

- to replace analogous bureaucracy by digital bureaucracy.

It's important to say, that e-Government, efficiently and purposefully implemented, can be an important tool for deep institutional reform in the public and private sectors, for civil service reform, for greater efficiency in the provision of public sector goods and services and in government procurement. E-Government - as a major instrument for achieving good governance- accompanied by important investments in MICT can be an important source of productivity growth and economic growth along with economic development and democracy in the region. The emphasis in the previous sentence is on can: e-Government is not a panacea. It can provide a framework for organising comprehensive e-reform, starting with government and the public sector. E-Government and investment in MICT are enabling factors and tools that can and should be used to effect, implement wide-ranging policy reforms.

The roadmap for e-government implementation is:

- Define a vision and priority areas;

- Assess e-government readiness;
- Find e-leaders and political will ;
- Select the right projects;
- Plan and manage e-government projects;
- Overcame resistance from within a government;
- Measure and communicate progress;
- Keep relationship with private sectors and National government organisations.

Effective E-Government enables decision-making as well as decision follow-through across three primary components:

- **Leadership:** The roles and responsibilities of the organization's appointed officials and senior executive management that shape

the organization's strategic vision, culture, decision-making processes, and plan for action;

- **Organizational Structure:** The structure and form of organizational relationships that support decision-making, foster appropriate culture, and build essential skills in order to marshal resources to make things happen;

- **Process Management:** The management of how organizations serve their customers and measure success or failure, including leadership and decision-making processes, as well as changes to operational processes required to support new E-Government capabilities.

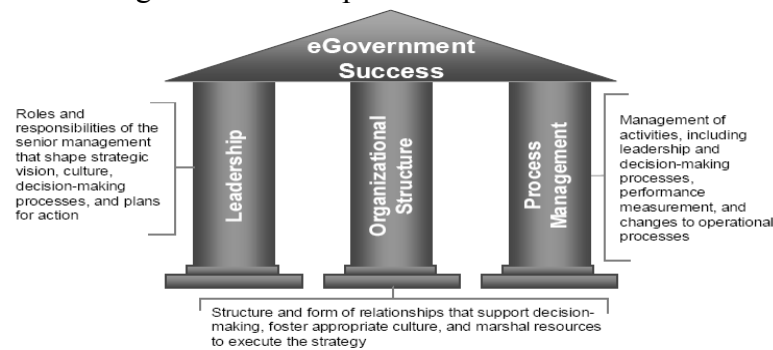


Figure 1 The “Three Pillars” of eGovernment

In order for the governments to reap the full potential of benefits of e-Government, a number of conditions, a number of building-blocks, are necessary: leadership, connectivity and network readiness, business environment, human capital, privacy, trust and security:

- is the leadership and strategic thinking ready?
- is the technological infrastructure ready?
- is the institutional infrastructure ready?
- is the population e-aware and e-ready?
- is the legal infrastructure ready?

For this reasons E-Government initiatives must be:

- **Citizen-focused** - E-Government is revolutionary in its nature of citizen contact. Government services can be brought to constituents as never before—but Interior’s citizen-centric aspiration extends beyond the

technology that delivers services. E-Government initiatives are focused on citizen needs by enabling Interior employees to perform their tasks better, faster, and often cheaper;

- **Business-focused** - Internet technology is the enabler of Interior’s E-Government strategy, but sound business processes are the foundation of service delivery. Technology solutions must exist to support the business, just as the business exists to support the customer;

- **Transformational** - E-Government is much more than creating web sites to support existing processes. It’s necessary to re-evaluate and innovatively re-designing the business processes to be more streamlined, collaborative, and citizen-focused;

- **Partnership-based** - A complex array of federal, state, and local agencies, as well as private sector organizations, are critical to the

success. The Department's E-Government approach recognizes these relationships by using expertise and capability to best serve citizens, as well as by respecting the partners' relative abilities to participate in E-Government solutions;

- Efficient - E-Government creates the opportunity to evaluate and eliminate redundant or unnecessary steps and processes as well as to reduce costs and cycle times by transitioning from paper-based to electronic processes;
- Integrated - While recognizing the unique missions and capabilities of its Bureaus and offices, the E-Government strategy reflects an approach to serving customers and improving internal processes with integrated solutions;
- Results-oriented - The Department's E-Government initiatives are business-case driven and focused on tangible results. Expanded governance bodies and processes are being implemented to ensure E-Government budgets are linked to critical performance aspirations identified in the Departmental Strategic Plan;
- Secure - Increased risk of unauthorized accesses to technology infrastructure is inherent with increased authorized access;
- Private - Unauthorized access to personal data simply cannot be allowed;
- Transparent - E-Government initiatives create both significant resource obligations as well as potential disruptions to established work routines.

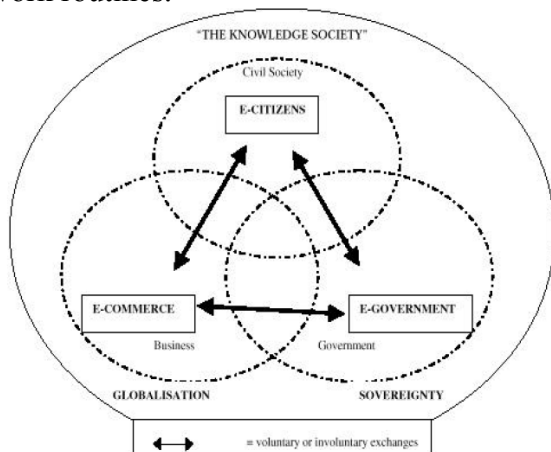


Figure 2 A triangle relationship model among E-Government, Business and Citizens

It's clear that there is a triangle relationship model among E-Government, Business and Citizens that could assure the success. For the success of E-Government strategy there are important barriers that are the key policy and technical issues that must be addressed in order to successfully implement the e-government initiative.

Technical Barriers:

- ✳ Security;
- ✳ Digital Signatures;
- ✳ System Maintenance & Integration;
- ✳ Transition & Systems Interface;
- ✳ Online Payment Setup.

Financial/Economic Barriers:

- ✳ Start Up Costs;
- ✳ Transaction Costs.

Other Barriers:

- ✳ Customer Expectations;
- ✳ Staff Availability, Training, Expertise;
- ✳ Language Barriers;
- ✳ Universal Access.

E-government can offer numerous possibilities for improving how a nation public sector responds to the basic needs of its citizens. There is however a wide variance as to the process in which governments choose to realize such potential. The most important 10 countries in action for E-Government are: USA, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Norway, Canada, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. The experience of all these countries establishes the five important principles of E-Government:

- ✳ Build services around citizens choices;
- ✳ Make government and its services more accessible;
- ✳ Facilitate social inclusion;
- ✳ Provide information responsibly;
- ✳ Use government resources effectively and efficiently.

Conclusions

In conclusion some of the most important challenges for future evolution of E-Government are:

- Technological
 - Access technologies to ensure e-Government for all;
 - Specific technologies for a knowledge-

- based networked e-Government;
- New models for interoperability;
 - Open source tools for e-Government applications development;
 - Quality monitoring tools.
 - Socioeconomic
 - New models for e-Government service provision and delivery and Governance;
 - The role of intermediaries in e-Government service delivery and Governance;
 - Understanding individual user needs;
 - Tools and methods for ensuring trust and security;
 - Resistance to change in the public sector.

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