

E-Governance – Some Challenges Ahead: Social Media Spurring Participation

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Agenda

- Public Governance and Participation
- EGOV 2.0 – Social Media Spurring Participation
- The Citizen Side
- The Administration Side

e-Government has a History

- Concepts on Government and IT have changed.
- The *praxis*: Big administrative projects since *five decades*.
- *Academic* interest emerged *three decades* ago starting with the term Data Processing in Public Administration.
- *International* institutionalisation by *IFIP* (International Federation of Computer Societies) with founding 1990 IFIP Working Group “Information Systems in Public Administration”.
- *One decade* ago the concepts *electronic Government* (Europe) and *digital Government* (US) were created.
- *Further concepts* have emerged: some replacing “e” with “m” for mobile or “k” for knowledge; others such as “*drop the e*” bring a radical view.
- Now *Public Governance* broadens the scope. To stress this fact the label e-Governance is sometimes used.

Definition of e-Government used by the EU-Commission

„eGovernment is the use of information and communication technologies in public administrations - combined with organisational change and new skills - to improve public services and democratic processes and to strengthen support to public policies.”

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/soccul/egov/index_en.htm

Public Governance as a Broader Scope

- Public Governance can be seen covering three zones.
- *Inner*: Public Administration as the machinery of Government – it is the dominant theme in e-Government.
- *Middle*: The “governance cycle“ or “policy cycle“ and support by ICT.
- *Outer*: The shifting balance of the public and private realm; also the role of new actors (intermediaries, NGOs) and new means (Public Private Partnership)
- As to recall - the discussion on Governance has got momentum on diverse grounds:
 - a co-evolution of Public Governance and e-Transformation;
 - a trend in evaluating/ranking Governments (Education: PISA);
 - a stimulation by the corporate governance discussion.

Governance Cycle Spurring new (old) Themes

- Ideas from the Sixties are recalled (e.g. political cybernetics with Luhmann etc).
- The whole “governance cycle” is regarded.
- Several new (old) themes are spurred:
 1. E-Participation and e-Voting
 2. EGOV 2.0: Social Media changing Government
 3. Evaluation of e-Maturity
 4. Evaluation of projects and using Good Practice
 5. Managing knowledge
 6. Assisting collaborative work (planning, policy making and democratic deliberation)
 7. Assisting law making and policy modelling

E-Democracy

- E-Democracy is the support and enhancement of democracy, democratic processes and institutions. So empowerment is the red thread in many activities.
- There is a lot that technologies may be doing for democracy which may be summarized in three points:
 - 1. Reinforcing existing institutions of representative politics – so by enhancing transparency and accountability.
 - 2. Engaging citizens in several forms of direct democracy such as to mention in petitioning.
 - 3. Improving deliberation in the public sphere and building communities as communitarian goals.

e-Participation

- Participation is the way, democracy is the goal. It will transform the nature of representative democracy by facilitating more direct and more numerous links between representatives and individual voters.
- Government has to support the formation of a democratic culture.
- So e-Participation develops and implements new forms of participation in decision and policy making processes for citizens.
- The communication will involve citizens, public authorities, elected representatives etc.
- In that way planning processes in the political system get more input. Knowledge and expertise of citizens waits for being "tapped".
- So decisions become better and more sustainable. Important is the construction of a social environment. Virtual communities emerge by means of various technical tools.

High Level Policy Goals

- Fostering democratic participation and citizenship
- Every-day democracy in workplaces etc.
- Institutional transparency and openness
- Culture of consultation and dialogue
- Community empowerment (collective action)
- Individual empowerment (Choices and voices)
- Social inclusion active citizenship and quality of live
- Shaping political culture
- Innovation and community learning

EGOV 2.0: Social Media Change Public Governance

- Social Webs are emerging and promiss a way to improve Public Governance.
- Especially for e-Democracy and e-Participation the building of Social Webs becomes important.
- Then there is a help for Government in the general administrative part (conventional e-Government).
- So it provides feedback for agencies and makes administration it more accessible.
- It is the call for giving power to the people.

Web 2.0 as Label: Creating Social Webs

- Under the name of Web 2.0 a new wave of web-based applications has emerged.
- These applications rely on the concept of the user as a producer of information.
- As a consequence Social Webs are emerging. Also Virtual Worlds become common.
- Web 2.0 may be defined as a set of technologies, applications, values:
 1. Technologies: XML, Open API, Microformats etc.
 2. Applications: Blog, Wiki, Podcast, Tagging, Social networks (Facebook, MySpace)
 3. Values: User as producer, wisdom of the crowd, collaboration and networking, social networks

Creation of Collaborative Content

- Creation of collaborative content is done in three ways:
 1. Blogs are online notebooks ready open to comment for other users.
 2. Wiki are built by collaborative edition of content. The editor function can be more or less decentralized. Mainly used for e-Learning and Knowledge Management.
 3. Tagging is not co-creation but co-sharing that is organized by references (bookmarks, URLs).
- Special forms are given in the combination of references, editing and sharing of media (video, music, photos). Examples are YouTube, Flickr.com, etc.
- Web 2.0 means collaborative creation *and* knowledge sharing.

The General Background

- Web 2.0 has also to be seen with the background of new and emerging ICT developments and societal changes.
- The double role - society constructs and is constructed by technology:
 1. ICT has proven to be a powerful force in transforming the ways in which societies and economies operate.
 2. ICT is shaped by the character of the society that produces them. Social practices, relationships and institutions are interrelated with designing, producing, distributing and using technology.
- The impact of ICT is moving deeper and deeper into economic and social domains. Also basic skills become pervasive.
- The emerging intelligent Web is providing promising services. The expressiveness of semantics is increasing ranging from shallow tags to detailed descriptions.
- So the widening use of ICT has profound impacts on patterns of living, communicating and work. Technology results from social, political, economic and cultural as well as technological choices.

Empowerment as Rational

- Time (25 Dec 2006) made the User the Person of the Year. Therefore the front-page of that edition had a mirroring foil.
- The idea of empowering means: giving someone the power that he was deficient before.
- With a social web new concepts (including political ideas) are diffusing much more rapidly.
- Web 2.0 also can become politically important, so especially when people seek change. So it was in the 2008 Presidential election in US.
- Institutions in power often fear that with the Web 2.0 technology a power-shift may come. So such institutions may try to block and hinder dissemination.

User Roles

- Four types of user role (estimations in % of Web-users):
 1. Producing content: (3%) Blogs, analyzes to wikis
 2. Providing ratings, reviews: (10%) Rating of hotels (HRS)
 3. Using user generated content: (40%) Reading opinions
 4. Providing attention, taste data: (100%) Using on-line services, going to a most read page
- As the level of engagement decreases, the number of users increases.
- Paradox on uptake: Low for large scale online public services; high for low-budget user-driven services.

Drivers for Web 2.0

- Big drivers are synergies by convergence with some other trends as following.
- Young people with a proper understanding and more knowledge workers enter the labour field.
- Important is coming together of transformative new ICT and a new net generation.
- Further, informal learning with peers by “communities of practice” becomes common. Also more organisations become network based.
- More information sharing is performed by customers/ clients.

Risks of Web 2.0

- Uptake in usage is low.
- Participation is restricted to an elite and that may create a divide.
- An excessive “noise generation” is exerted by having to many low quality contributions.
- Esteem for privacy is low.
- Transparency may damage confidential and privacy information.
- A loss of control for public authorities may occur.
- Destructive behaviour of individuals and groups arises.

Web 2.0 Applications for Government: The Citizen Side

- Web 2.0 applications are used and can be used in several government-related activities.
- First turning to the citizen side. Examples for applications include:
 1. Participation
 2. Petitions
 3. Campaigning
 4. Monitoring
 5. Advice and ratings for public service
 6. Law enforcement
 7. Modeling citizen behavior

Petitions

- Here two examples are given:
- European Parliament has an e-Petitioning system for complaints or requests on certain issues.
- The Petitions Committee of the European Parliament examines electronic petitions and takes action considered appropriate to resolve the issue in question.
- The initiators of the petition are informed on the process and outcome.
- Also the UK has an E-Petition system.
- This System allows citizen to submit petitions directly to the Prime Ministers Office. Reach 2 millions in 6 months.

Campaigning

- Citizens may become quite active in supporting their representatives at elections. Earlier Campaigning in was performed by print media, party meetings, rallies, public speeches.
- Then electronic media, radio and TV, arrived. Since the mid-Nineties the Web 1.0 got used, a new medium but an old message.
- Now there is a move to Web 2.0 as new medium bring additional messages.
- E-Campaigning is about raising awareness about issues as well as engaging with people and encouraging people to engage with each other. So it channels the power of public opinion to advance a progressive drive.
- One has to be aware that the context is quite different: Citizen-based, decentralized, individualistic using social micro-networks and flowing continuously.

Monitoring

- There are several targets of monitoring.
 - Persons such as politicians
 - Groups such as political unions
 - Events such as elections
 - Modes such as proper fund-spending
 - Compliance in behavior
- On EU level a website was launched "Financial Transparency system" that will allow free access to the details.
- Many European Member States have put in place a website containing information on the payments from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Public Service: Advice and Ratings

- Usage for service providing. Several examples are given.
- Re-packaging public information in a better usable form.
- Hints how to deal with special administrative problems.
- Rating for helping other persons' choices. This started in hotel advisors (e.g. HRS) but has expanded in ratings for hospital services.
- Recommendation lists for readers, music fans etc.
- For ratings some moderating may be necessary to ensure quality and remove destructive and insulting comments.

Law Enforcement

- Citizen can monitor other citizen and shame them after trespasses (“Little brother” role).
- So citizen may post photos of cars parking in an disturbing way (bike lane etc).
- So a public shaming of bad parkers in New York with MyBikeLane with reporting 1400 infractions.
- Existing social networks may be used by Government, so in Chicago YouTube for Videos of criminals caught by surveillance cameras.
- Note – there is also usage of hindering law enforcement. As an example the location of speed cameras is made public.

Modelling Citizen Behaviour

- There is a lot of interest in investigations social dynamics. All this could better support policy makers in performing analysis and forecasts.
- One idea addressing such issues is studying gaming and simulations. Citizens might create avatars that will interact and negotiate with other ones. So one could reason about citizens opinions.
- Another idea is exploring virtual world dynamics (Second Life).
- So the number of people using virtual worlds is increasing. The virtual world can be viewed as a micro-society with dynamics resembling those of real world societies.
- Virtual spaces incorporate the dynamics of social networks. There is some research connecting virtual world economics to the real world.

Analyzing Trends

- There is a lot of interest in investigations social dynamics.
- Analyzing and visualizing the flow of knowledge may reveal trends. So here some examples of different social interaction scenarios:
- Innovation in research and development: A globally active research and development community of a management consulting firm.
- Learning through online innovation dissemination: Preparation and execution of a Web conference.
- Project management: Communication in a distributed software development team.
- Sales force: Account management processes in a consulting practice.

Web 2.0 Applications for Government: The Administration Side

- Web 2.0 applications now for the administration side.
Examples for applications include:
 1. Feedback for improvements
 2. Cross-agency collaboration
 3. Good Practice Exchange
 4. Law making
 5. Knowledge Management

User Feedback Improves Government

- On example of improving the workings of government by users was set the Dutch ministry of the Interior.
- In this example best ideas were sought with a portal posing question “how would you improve government”. They got 124 ideas which were given to a jury which nominated six ideas. Then from these the best three were voted.
- The winners were the following ideas:
 1. Help me with this e-form
 2. Government makes it possible (as helping people proactive with getting the benefits that they’re entitled to)
 3. A bottom-up portal that makes government information and services more accessible.

Cross Agency Cooperation

- To take an example, Intellipedia is a usage for cross-agency cooperation in the field of intelligence. So different agencies may write joint reports.
- Using wiki as tools intelligence reports are stored.
- Role of users: Analysts provide reports and rate others.
- Cooperation is informal – no hierarchies.
- Quality is self-regulated; award systems drive for quality.

Knowledge Management

- Knowledge Management can be found for larger communities of knowledge workers: research groups, law firms etc.
- The usage for Knowledge Management means especially sharing of informal and tacit knowledge among employees.
- Besides information sharing important – it is to get an understanding what other persons of the community do.
- Engaged participation is driven by peer-recognition.
- A proper collaborative culture among participants is seen as essential.
- Sharing of sensitive data may be a risks; so some light moderation is needed.

Good Practice Exchange

- The portal www.epractice.eu is an online environment created and promoted by the European Commission.
- The community has different stakeholders: politicians, administrators, companies, researchers.
- Main elements are databases of project cases and documents, groups, events and members.
- The devise is: meet – share –learn.
- So one can edit a personal profile and meet other persons with similar interests.
- E-Practice promotes the use of external tagging mechanisms (Digg, Technorati, Del.icio.us).
- A weekly newsletter gives support.

Appendix A: ICT and Less Developed Countries

- With a key focus on developing countries, one has to put emphasis on low-cost, grassroots, sustainable solutions.
- Especial important are emails and mobile phones.
- Low band-width is a technical problem; so one needs community platform based on emails (one example Dgroups).
- Blogs are citizen journalism and so very important.
- One of the major forces is the growth of mobile phones, so their transformation to a multi-purpose tool and their ubiquitous nature.
- On mobile phones priority is to deploy content and applications.
- Important is to facilitate the creation, development and availability of services and content. Key issues are in capacity building and toolkit/software packages.
- Further one needs good practices and guidelines on different aspects: technology, entrepreneurship, cultural relevance etc.

SMS Applications Strengths

- SMS applications are the most common way used in the Developing World to provide eServices. People, knowing the phone number associated with the service, send an SMS to this number with appropriate keywords, and get back the answer by SMS.
- The reasons of the success of this technology are numerous:
 - Ease of use for users: using SMS capability of a mobile phone is very easy and natural for users. People are used to use text-messaging for people-to-people communications, and so using the same mechanism to reach a service is easy.
 - Availability: All mobile phones are able to send and receive SMS.
 - Low network requirements: SMS don't need high-bandwidth network, and GSM networks are sufficient to run services.
 - Low and predictable cost: Both with prepaid Simcard and subscription plans, one always Often the reception of SMS is free. So receiving data is free to users.

Apendix B: Some Projects

- We treat some projects.
 - Consultation systems
 - MyPage
 - ePetition
 - PortalU

Consultation Systems in Cities

- In *Madrid* – *p* user centred services are run
- In addition it is a consultation tool
- Used for pedestrian zones, conservation of parks, etc.
- Take-up nearly 50 percent in some issues

- In *VirtuoCity* there is virtual three-dimension presentation of the cities
- Used for rebuilding some cities in The Netherlands (Apeldoorn, Helmond, Tilburg)

My page

- This is a citizen centric user-portal set up in Norway
- A portal to get many services
- Citizen know which data are stored on them
- 200 services available
- After one year 5 percent of the population used it

ePetition

- Launched by the Prime Ministers Office
- It allows a two-way dialogue
- Target group higher as electorate (no age limit; also citizens from Dominion States)
- 6 percent of the population uses it

PortalU

- A German Environmental Portal
- Holds data on environments that are publicly accessible
- Is used by many stakeholders: industry, citizens, authorities
- A sound financial basis for sustainability
- The licence free open source software may be spread