Digital Government - From Vision to the Reality of Strategy Implementation

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Abstract

ICT-based solutions are increasingly being recognised as effective tools that can foster an environment of transparency and improved government. Today, access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) plays an essential role in economic and social development. As public interest in the Internet and Web-based solutions continues to grow, there is an increasing expectation that they will be utilised in national and local governments for improving public access to information and social inclusion. ICT-enabled (digital) government has become a catalyst for enabling more effective government through better access to services and the democratic process. However, it is essential to ensure that those who lack access, skills and/or desire to make use of technology are not excluded from the process. There is much debate over the key issues that affect the successful implementation of digital government initiatives. This paper discusses some of the parameters that can influence the carrying out of digital government strategy plans - including: the view of theoreticians and practitioners that may guide public opinion; social, cultural and political factors; availability and access to ICTs; common digital government inhibitors and public view of the effectiveness of digital government.

1. The Challenge of Effective Governance in a Globally Connected World

The staggering growth in global computer networking has made it possible for organizations to use the Internet as a platform for developing new and creative methods in which to operate and communicate. The competitive imperative of the private sector within the past few years has driven businesses into the digital world. Consequently, the private sector has increasingly set high standards of service through electronic platforms both domestically and internationally.

As public interest in the Internet and Web-based solutions continues to grow, there is an increasing expectation that they will be utilised in national and local governments. Communities and citizens appear to increasingly expect the same level of service from the agencies in the public sector as they do from business organizations. As a result, innovative public sector agencies world-wide have had to constantly create new ways in which to use Web-based solutions in order to provide digital governance facilities and services. Local, regional and national governments throughout the world are attempting to broaden service delivery and citizens’ inclusion by providing effective digital government solutions.

The adoption of digital (electronic) governance practices has resulted in a paradigm shift away from traditional information monopolies within governments. Governance practices have traditionally operated on a hierarchical model of information flow and interaction. A hierarchical model implies that information flows from a single governmental source through a system of designated recipients, where it is passively received and acted upon. In the upward flow of information, the feedback from the society flows through a limited number of channels - for example, in the form of elections.

Within today’s knowledge society, the challenge of effective public service management is profound. There has been much debate over the success of digital government initiatives (as a tool for improved public service management) and the ways in which its success or effectiveness can be assessed (e.g. [2], [4], [6], [7], [10], [32], and [19]).

This paper elaborates on some of the key issues that impact upon the vision becoming a reality for digital government initiatives.
2. The Essence of Digital Government

This paper views the term ‘governance’ as a guiding process for decision-making and managing day-to-day activities and interaction with one another (within organizations, groups or societies). Digital Governance (e-governance) is a term used to emphasize the application of Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) in governance systems and processes. Digital Government (e-government) is the use of ICTs in general and Web-based technologies in particular, in order to: promote and motivate a more operationally efficient and cost-effective government; facilitate more convenient government services (and information) to citizens and businesses; enhance economic development; reshape and redefine community and government processes; and make government more accountable to their citizens. Digital government often consists of digital service delivery, digital governance and digital democracy.

Technology is the backbone of the required infrastructure that supports digital government. Yet there is a danger in placing too much emphasis on technology. Technical innovation on its own is not enough to drive the development of digital government solutions.

The political and financial support for digital government can be accompanied by rhetoric and hype. It is fair to say that the potential benefits of environment. There is also a need for considering tools and metrics (performance measures) in order to not only assess progress and effectiveness on an ongoing basis, but also to ensure that rhetoric of digital government is matched by reality.

Digital government can only materialize when initiatives are introduced as part of a well-planned and properly supported social and cultural Digital government is not primarily a technical exercise, but rather an attempt to improve the political and social environments and to introduce a fundamental change in the ways in which public sector functions are performed. The essence of government centres on relationships. Hence, an effective model for developing digital government solutions needs to view digital government as a hub whereby Web-based solutions are introduced so as to interconnect the various domains of governance.

Extensive research has been carried out (by various practitioners and advisory/interest groups such as the International Centre for e-Governance – www.icegov.org) in order to examine the right level of integration of governance domains and the role and capacity of government (e.g. [4], [3], [21], [22], [19], [23], and [29]). Overall, there can be no one particular answer that can address all cases of digital government across the board.

As the application of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in governments within the developing nations becomes widespread ([3], [4], [32] and [26]) we begin to observe a progression through the various stages of digital government. A summary of stages of introducing digital government initiatives is displayed in Table 1.

| Phase 1 | Improving internal functional efficiency through the application of ICT |
| Phase 2 | Improving internal communications (through the application of electronic mail) and introducing workflow management systems for increased process efficiency |
| Phase 3 | Providing access to information with regards to services and the democratic process (initial stages of enabling public/social inclusion) |
| Phase 4 | Putting in place applications that would not only enable citizen participation through feedback, but would also allow for transactions between citizens to government (C2G), businesses to government (B2G) and government-to-government (G2G). |
| Phase 5 | Introducing digital democracy - technological solutions that enable participatory action and democratic processes |
| Phase 6 | Introducing integrated electronic or digital governance |
3. What Drives Digital Government?

Overall, the public sector's view (national or local governments) of digital government is likely to include:

- Automating government systems and the online delivery of services
- Adopting network-based technologies and migrating government functions to the Internet
- Introducing electronic capabilities and practices to government so as to reduce costs, reduce fraud, and increase efficiency
- Adopting ICT so as to foster economic growth and conduct business
- Improving (re-engineering) the structures of government and the nature of public administration
- Adopting ICT to foster constituents’ engagement, improved political accountability, and e-democracy

Local governments (e.g. see [27], [5]) seem to concentrate on:

- **Prompt, accurate service** – Local governments can potentially receive millions of calls per year. Resolving a high percentage of these calls the first time they occur can result in significant efficiency gains and cost savings.
- **Improved quality of service** - One client of a local government can potentially generate up to dozens of files in different locations. Local governments are seeking to convert these to one secure and accessible file in order to help provide continuity and coordination of local government support.
- **Removing barriers and tackling social exclusion** – Local governments are aware that many clients do not have the skills to use electronic services. Local government agencies need to set up networks of learning centres in community centres so as to teach people the relevant Web technology skills.
- **Local access points** – It has been shown [27] that up to 20% of customer queries cannot be addressed immediately. Clients often need to meet with a “professional.” Local governments can benefit from the setting up of community access points to allow clients to meet ‘professionals’ through online video links.

A survey of potential driving forces of digital local government [27] indicates that improving service to constituents is rated as being the most important factor (Figure 1).

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**What Drives e-Governance Initiatives within the Public Sector**

![Graph showing perceived driving forces](image)

**Figure 1.** Perceived Driving Forces of Digital Government
4. Theoreticians and Practitioners’ View of Digital Government

The influence of strategists and practitioners’ view on public perception of digital government can impact upon the successful implementation of digital government initiatives.

A review of various viewpoints over the implications of digital government (e.g. [3], [5], [32], [16], [20], and [31]) indicates that there are at least four schools of thought:

- pure optimism
- optimism with some concerns
- pessimism
- technology viewed as a tool only - but not a driving factor on its own

The optimists argue uncompromisingly that the use of technology in governance represents a major once-and-for-all improvement in the capabilities of governance ([20], [18] and [32]). The only cost is considered to be the investment on the ICTs and the day-to-day operational costs. This optimistic view appears to be based on the classical cybernetic theory [29].

The second group accept at least the possibility of greater control, quality and rationality in decision-making. However, they argue the efficiency gains through digital government come at a price. They believe unless safeguards are put in place, digital government may result in compromising citizens’ rights such as:

- the right to individual liberty and privacy
- the right to influence governmental decision-making ([32] and [16])
- losing control over politicians’ decision-making agendas [31]

The pessimists argue that the application of ICTs in government will actually compromise the quality of decision-making. They are concerned that excessive demand for policy analysis based on many categories of information will cause delays in action – “paralysis by over-analysis.” There is a fear that due to mechanical rule following, overly simple modelling, the cultivation and the exercise of judgement in decision-making will be downplayed.

The followers of the last school of thought view technology as a tool and argue that the impact of ICT solutions cannot be viewed in isolation. They view both continuities and changes in governance as being driven socially and politically, and not by technology itself. Technology is seen as a tool for either changing or preserving the styles of governance (e.g. [12] and [8]).

Each theory that has been mentioned above has some empirical support - although most empirical studies have been of a rather limited scope and are not in general designed to test, let alone falsify these rival theories.

Overall, accepting any of these viewpoints as being applicable to every situation would be unrealistic. The viewpoint(s) that can best describe the parameters that influence digital government strategies depends on numerous factors - such as social and cultural aspects; the technological infrastructure; past experience with the application of ICTs; the level of education and interest in the political process, to name a few.

Some other social, cultural and ethical aspects of ICTs that may hinder the rollout of digital government initiatives can include:

- concerns on individuals’ rights and privacy
- concerns over information security
- impact on jobs, workplaces and social interaction

5. E-Readiness – Access, Availability and Affordability of ICTs

Today, access to ICTs is critical for economic and social development. Some international organizations including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) have been making efforts to bring together policy makers in order to agree upon commitments to strategies towards socially and digitally inclusive societies worldwide. In 2003, the World Summit on Information Society ([http://www.itu.int/wsis](http://www.itu.int/wsis)) organized by the ITU made progress towards establishing an agreed upon set of strategies to enhance social inclusion (access, availability and affordability).

There is much optimism that we are facing a myriad of digital opportunities where the means exist to broaden participation in the network-based economy and to share its benefits. At the same time, differences in diffusion and the use of ICTs and electronic networks appear to be deepening and intensifying the socio-economic divisions amongst people, businesses and nations. This phenomenon (known as the digital divide) can lead to: divides between countries; social divides within countries (related to income, education, age, family type, and location) and business divides (related to sector, region, and firm size).

A review of some of the studies concerning digital inclusion/exclusion, digital divide and e-
**readiness** (e.g. [25], [1], [9], [13], [26], [30], and [24]) indicates that there are significant differences in the adoption of ICTs, network economy and digital government worldwide. This section of the paper outlines a small sample of these studies.

In 2000, the META Group [13] examined the digital commerce competitiveness of 47 countries. According to the author of this study (Howard Robin), “Traditional industrial-age measures of production and performance have lost relevance in the information age. Currently, information processing capability is a better indicator of national competitive advantage.”

The research by the META Group ranked 47 countries in five different categories in order to establish an overall ‘information age technological competitiveness.’ These categories included knowledge jobs; globalisation; economic dynamism and competition; transformation to digital economy; and technological innovation capacity. The results confirmed differences in the adoption and the use of ICTs and electronic networks within the countries that were studied. The first fifteen countries in the overall ranking of ‘information and technological competitiveness’ included: the USA, Japan, Germany, France, Finland, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Taiwan, New Zealand, Belgium, Spain, Sweden and Hong Kong (SAR).

The 2002 Information Society Index (ISI 2002) involved a study of 23 parameters in order to examine the use of ICTs and electronic networks within 150 countries [24]. The study concluded that 55 out of 150 countries accounted for 98 percent of the total ICT resources. The top 55 countries were classified under four categories – including:

**Skaters** – countries with advanced ICT and social infrastructures.

**Striders** – countries that appear to be moving purposefully into the information age, with much of the necessary infrastructure in place.

**Sprinters** – countries that are moving forward in spurts before needing to catch their breath and shift priorities due to economic, social and political pressures.

**Strollers** – are those moving ahead but inconsistently, due to limited financial resources in relation to their vast populations.

The ‘skaters’ were: Sweden; Norway; Switzerland; the USA; Denmark; the Netherlands; the United Kingdom; Finland; Australia; Taiwan; Hong Kong (SAR); Japan; Singapore and Canada. Table 2 outlines the skaters’ regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>SKATERS</th>
<th>STRIDERS</th>
<th>SPRINTERS</th>
<th>STROLLERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasia</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other regions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey of online governance conducted by UNESCO [26] outlines a number of key inhibitors to the successful implementation of digital government initiatives – see Table 3.

Numerous other studies (e.g. [26], [27], [5] and [5]) indicate that many other factors can hinder the successful introduction and effectiveness of digital government initiatives – some of which are outlined in Figure 2.

A relatively small sample of research outcomes cannot be applied to all countries/regions. However, it appears that many countries are at the initial or halfway stages of adopting Web-based solutions in order to introduce digital government.

It is fair to say that unless the barriers to access, availability and affordability of ICTs within nations are addressed, the success of bringing to reality the vision of digital government would be limited. The causes of digital divide (see Figure 2) can limit the successful implementation of digital government.
The key inhibitors to the development (or effectiveness) of digital governance/government in developing or underdeveloped nations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inhibitor</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of ICT literacy</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness at policy level</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low public incentives</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Internet penetration</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Digital Governance Inhibitors

Barriers to the Success of Digital Government Initiatives

6. The Public’s View of the Effectiveness of Digital Government - A Pilot Study

One of the parameters that can potentially impact upon the successful introduction of digital government would be that of the public’s view (sometimes based on previous experience from digital government solutions) of the effectiveness of digital government. To date, there appears to be little evidence of studies that address the citizens’ view of digital government. This section addresses the users’ view of a digital government initiative within New Zealand – a local government perspective.

6.1 Digital Government in New Zealand – Local Government Perspective

New Zealand’s e-government strategy (http://www.e-government.govt.nz) outlines its mission as being “that by 2004 the Internet will be the dominant means of enabling ready access to government information, services and processes.” This strategy envisages the implementation of a single ‘one-stop shop’ portal to all New Zealand government services that are seamlessly integrated with the government’s back office – comprising of the Inland Revenue Department, social services agency, local bodies and a number of other government departments.

The approach to e-local government in New Zealand has been a collective integrated strategy...
by establishing the New Zealand Local Government Online in 1997
(http://www.localgovt.co.nz/LGOL). Local Government Online Limited (LGOL) is a joint initiative of the Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM) and the Association of Local Government Information Management (ALGIM).
LGOL, owned jointly by SOLGM & ALGIM, owns the Website and offers Internet related services to the local government sector. These services are developed and operated under a collaborative approach that engages economies of scale in order to achieve cost and operational efficiencies. LGOL’s current mission is “to help local government transform into e-local government through innovative leadership and by providing leading-edge services and facilities.”

The Website receives over 280,000 requests for information each month and mailing lists provided with services for Councils generate in the vicinity of 45,000 email enquiries and responses within the sector each week. LGOL offers the product ‘Community On Line,’ a template website carefully crafted to meet the e-government requirements of a local authority. Economies of scale have been engaged in order to be able to offer this product at a “cannot be refused” price with a monthly hosting and development charge to allow for continuing development and expansion into the e-commerce area. LGOL has established itself as the pre-eminent provider/facilitator of Internet services to the New Zealand local government with the Website acting as the primary portal to all local governments within New Zealand (http://www.localgovt.co.nz/LGOL).

6.2 Digital Service Delivery in Local Government - Citizens’ Viewpoint

This pilot study of the effectiveness of digital government from the users’ viewpoint involved:

a) a review of a number of digital government cases (e.g. see [2], [5], [7], [11], [15], [17], [28] and [14]).

b) a preliminary study of a New Zealand digital government initiative

In developing and rolling out digital government initiatives, it is essential to develop performance measures in order to assess progress, effectiveness and success. Performance measures should be developed with stakeholders’ input and should be documented and communicated to all parties involved. Performance measures can include: financial parameters (e.g. ROI), productivity factors and citizens’ satisfaction (better service), to name a few. This section of the paper concentrates on the citizens’ view of effectiveness with reference to the results of the study mentioned in Part (b) above.

This study is based on a digital government project within the Canterbury region of New Zealand. This project reflects the trends in local governments worldwide - in the development of ICT based solutions so as to enhance communication and the information flow between governments and their citizens. The key objective is to facilitate improved two-way exchange of information and to enhance its public image as a professional customer service oriented organisation.

The local government that initiated the project seems to be conscious of distinguishing between political rhetoric and the reality of digital government – as demonstrated through measuring the success of the project on an ongoing basis. The performance measures that have been considered include:

- Website hits – which are monitored on an ongoing basis so as to determine the utilization of services
- Customer feedback through the service web sites
- Quantifiable efficiency benefits (e.g. cost savings, time savings, and service level impact and so on)

A review of the electronic services delivery site indicates that this local government is an example of Stage 4 of the progression of digital government initiatives – as discussed in Section 2.

Services/information provided on the web site can be categorized as follows:

Providing Information:

- Current issues of significance (Hot Topics) – e.g. area plans, recent policy changes, annual report(s)
- General information with regards to services – rates information, street maps, rubbish collection, projects in various areas, jobs at the Council, forms, weather, library catalogue, Art Galley, bus timetables, leisure centres and the link to govt.nz
- Specific Council information – about the mayor, councillors, community boards, council meetings, meeting agenda and proceedings, public notices, and newsletter
- Events – events calendar, tourism and visitors’ information, online guide to the city, clubs and groups
Communication and/or feedback: Contact the Council, Ask us, Quick Answers and Have Your Say (feedback RE council projects)

A survey was conducted in order to assess public awareness and their views of the Council’s electronic service delivery initiatives. Sixty one percent of the participants were between 18 and 34 years, 26% were between 35-49 years and the rest were aged 50 years and over. It appeared that 76% of the respondents were aware of the digital governance services that are provided by the Council online.

Approximately 87% of the respondents who were already aware of the Council’s online services and 81% of those who previously did not know of the Council’s web site considered access to online services as being helpful.

It appeared that the majority of respondents (49%) were aware of the Council’s website through word of mouth – followed by Web surfing or search engines (32%) and advertising (19%).

Respondents seemed to have accessed library information, agencies’ hours of operation, events in the city and city maps more frequently than other online information – as seen in Table 4.

As you can observe from Table 5, immediate access to information anytime and anywhere appeared to be the most important reason (77%) for the perceived usefulness of the Council’s digital government initiative.

On the issue of difficulties in using the Council’s web site, 32% found the link to be slow whilst 8% could not locate the relevant information and 7% found the navigation to be complex.

Many respondents expressed an interest in enhancing (broadening) the Council’s online services to include rate payments and online transactions – as outlined in Table 6.

Participants were asked to state their concerns about using online services. Results show data security is the greatest concern for customers (71%) – followed by concerns about confidentiality of data (66%); lack of appropriate technical infrastructure (24%); and document incompatibility (6%). It has to be noted that 19% of the participants expressed no concern at all in using online services.

The respondents rated the contents of the Council’s web site as 7.18 (out of 10 – with 10 being highly desirable). The quality of services that are being made available online was rated at 7.52. The rating for the value of access to online services in the public sector in general was 6.93.

In brief, even though the results of this pilot study are not to be considered as final, it appears that this particular digital government initiative is rated favourably. It would appear that there should be support for carrying out future digital government strategies based on the experience users have had from the Council’s existing digital government solution. However, it should be noted that these results cannot be viewed as being applicable to other digital government solutions that are being provided in other countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information Available</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library information/catalogue</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services – hours of operations</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events in the city</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community services/events</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates information</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus timetable</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permits</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job advertisements/applications</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water resources</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population statistics</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Expressed reasons for effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Effectiveness</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate access to information anytime/anywhere</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time saving - no need for time consuming telephone calls and/or visiting the Council</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to relevant information with reasonable details (yet simple to follow)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High level of usability</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to relevant pages/sites</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to navigate</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Requested Online Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired Online Services</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate payments</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online submission of applications (e.g. building permits, resource consents and so on)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia streaming of local events</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee payments</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Council related information</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online voting facilities</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive online services such as discussion groups and online forums</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Summary and Conclusions

Within the past few years, much has been debated over the key factors that would impact upon the implementation of digital government vision and strategies. Overall, practitioners and management scientists tend to agree that the trend for government transformation through digital government is irreversible. Yet there is also a danger. Technical innovation on its own is not enough to drive the development of digital government solutions. The potential benefits of digital government can only materialise when the solutions are introduced as part of a strategically planned process and properly supported environment for citizens and businesses and with a focus on locally relevant objectives. Successful digital government initiatives need to:

- encompass the improvement of service delivery to the citizen, the creation of economic activity and the safeguarding of democracy.
- be orientated towards the citizen. The citizen does not need to be aware of who in the government provides the required service. That is to say, inter-agency and intergovernmental e-governance dimensions are essential.
- be made available to all citizens (not just to a minority who can afford to have access to the required electronic infrastructure).
- provide an opportunity for business process re-engineering – merely automating existing services is inadequate and does not necessarily produce satisfactory results.
- provide opportunities to build viable and sustainable partnerships between the private
and public sectors - where each party would be responsible to provide e-capacity in order to achieve a competitive advantage.

We examined some of the parameters that influence the successful implementation of a vision for digital government – including:

- The view of theoreticians and ICT practitioners with regards to the implications of digital government and their influence on the public perception of digital government – ranging from the optimists who view digital government as being an effective tool (without any concerns) to those who view technology as a tool only (arguing that technology on its own cannot be a driving force for effectiveness).
- The implications of the digital divide and e-readiness – the success of carrying out digital government strategies in a country rely on its state of digital readiness and the ways in which the barriers to the digital divide can be overcome.
- The citizens’ view of experience with digital government initiatives – a pilot study of digital government within the Canterbury region of New Zealand indicated that local citizens rate digital government solutions as being effective. However, these results are not final and cannot be taken as being applicable to other digital government solutions introduced in other countries/regions.

In conclusion, access to the right technology for delivering digital government is essential but insufficient. Even though most of the shortcomings (as they concern the effectiveness of digital government) can be resolved by improving the technology infrastructure, technology by itself does not necessarily result in better, more efficient government. Technological advancements are only effective if they are considered alongside other key parameters such as social structure; cultural values and attitudes; ethical considerations and the political culture within governments.

References


