

## Chapter 65

# Relations among Actors in Governmental Projects: The Case of Paraná mGov

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to study an eleven-year project of Mobile Government (mGov) in the state of Paraná, Brazil. The precocious experience in Brazil in mGov and the number of cell phones used in the country are not arguments for these to be used in providing mass public services. Mason's Historical Method was used to get to know the project, raising available information and retrieving happenings and results. To identify events, relevant actors, their roles, aspects in collaboration, setting and density of the relations among these actors, Social Network Analysis was used. The authors conclude it is important to formalize the project, but that will not guarantee its continuity in the long run. Characterizing phases minimizes the importance given to the change of governors after new elections in large corporative projects. The networks forming favors the dissemination of IT knowledge among actors.*

### INTRODUCTION

There have been a good amount of papers focusing on e-service within the field of e-government (Islam & Scupola, 2011), and the necessary transition from e-government to mobile government (Medeni *et al.*, 2011). This paper dwells on the experience of Paraná State Government, Brazil, using cell phones to provide services to citizens.

It reports on the investigation on how the Mobile Government (mGov) Project was developed from 2000 to 2010. It reports especially on the relations among the actors in the project. Paraná State Government pioneered in making cell phone services available. In 2000, services already prospered in this platform, offering traffic services, job opening warnings, prices of agricultural products, frost warning and giving access to cultural events. In

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the 1990s, in various countries, there was massive access to cell phone services. In Brazil, they greatly spread out after the regulation of pre-paid services. Brazil has the fifth largest number of cell phones in the world. In Latin America, it's the leader in cell phone lines. According to the National Agency for Telecommunications (Anatel, 2012), 5,565 Brazilian cities will have cell phone service by 2016.

The potential of mobile arena is affecting all aspects of society and economy, even Government services (Adams & Mouatt, 2010) and the numbers show the potential of this infrastructure for the government to offer m-services to citizens in Brazil. Despite over a decade of mGov projects in the country, these devices are not yet a channel for mass delivery of public services. In other developing countries, the situation is similar. One of the explanations is the difficulty to establish relations among multiple actors of mGov, necessary for a corporative model to sustain itself and be operative in the long run. Such actors include state government departments and autarchies, governmental computing organizations (computing companies), departmental computing structures in those Departments and autarchies, telecommunication companies, brokers, Information Communication Technology (ICT) providers and the main actors- citizens.

The results of this work can be useful to public managers, including CIOs, who use this technology to offer new channels of service providing for citizens, and for business partners, such as telecommunication companies. Or, yet, this study may bring insights to managers of corporative projects of governmental technology. In the theoretical context, a relation is sought between the studied themes and the Social Network Analysis, bearing in mind that the use of mobile government is recent in Brazilian public administration. Few studies have been identified in literature regarding the use of mGov. Such studies and researches do

not show how and to what extent networks influence the adoption and implementation of projects using mobile technology.

This paper is comprised of five sections. After this introduction, the first section provides background information about the mGov in Brazil: Electronic Government (eGov) and Mobile Government. The second section introduces the methods used: Historical Method and Social Network Analysis. The third section describes Paraná Mobile Government and discusses some outcomes of the work. The fourth section is the discussion and interpretation. The last section provides the main conclusions from the research.

## **ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT AND MOBILE GOVERNMENT**

To present the context of the use of mobile telephony by the Government of Brazil, one must first understand how eGov and mGov take place.

In Brazil, the State reform is a historical process whose dimension is proportional to its crisis. It began in the 1970s, boomed in the 1980s, brought about the reappearance of Liberalism and a profound critique of the forms of intervention or the regulation of the State. In the 1990s, this theme became very broad and complex, as it involves political, economical and administrative aspects. The intended result was a more efficient State, properly reaching the citizens. It would be a state acting in partnership with society and in accordance with its desires, not exactly trying to protect the market, but rather trying to render itself more able to compete (Bresser-Pereira, 1998).

In the scope of State Reform, actions of Administrative Reform gained force in the Federal (national), State and local governments in Brazil. There were amplifications of the use of ICT in the implementation of public policies, in public management, in providing services for citizens'

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