Chapter 66
Raising Citizen–Government Communication With Business Process Models

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ABSTRACT

This chapter draws out the challenge of how to provide information to citizens with respect to organizational business processes, particularly public service processes. The aim is to discuss the issues concerning organizations' disclosure to citizens, particularly in describing how services are performed in these organizations. It relies on the idea that an urgent step to improve citizen participation in public matters, especially in public service delivery, is to provide citizens with ways to understand how and why internal processes must be conducted. The chapter reports on how business process models can be used for organizational communication and describes proposals to extend this communication to external actors. The conclusion presents remarks on challenges and future work.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations have been charged for their ability to provide transparency regarding their performance, management and outcomes. Such ability is deemed as a step ahead towards offering good quality services to their clients/citizens. Different laws and treaties have been signed demonstrating the intention both from the public and the private sectors to obtain transparency, like Sarbanes-Oxley, BASEL – Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, EITI – Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, OGP – Open Government Partnership and FOIA – Freedom of Information Action. In different countries and especially

in Brazil, the Transparency Law (Law 131, 2009) and the Access Law (Law 12.527, 2011) have been enacted, guiding public organizations toward publishing information for citizen use through their web portals. Additionally, the Service Portfolio for Citizens (Statute nº 6932, 2011) has rendered mandatory for Brazilian public institutions providing services to the population, to present detailed information about each service provided.

One implication of this movement towards organizational transparency, is that it can be seen as an important step to widen democracy and citizen participation in public matters (Harrison et al., 2011) (Diirr, Araujo & Cappelli, 2009) (Fung, Graham, & Weil, 2007). Organizational transparency can be seen as the basis for democratic information access, social participation and dialogue between public organizations and citizens, giving ground to innovative approaches to support this dialogue (Niehaves & Malsch, 2009) (Candiello, Albarelli & Cortesi, 2010) (Harrison et al., 2011).

In order to improve efficiency and to better manage their processes, organizations have been interested in self-understanding. To address this challenge, they have invested in Business Process Management (BPM) approaches (Dumas et al., 2013). To implement BPM, organizations must build models representing their business process operations. These models are artifacts for defining, analyzing, implementing and managing organizational processes. Therefore, business process models comprise important instruments for communicating information about organizational processes among those responsible for process management and operation (managers and actors) as well as those who consume their outcomes (clients) (Melcher et al., 2009) (Ferreira, Araujo & Baião, 2010).

The main focus of this chapter is to show how business process models can be used to promote organizational transparency on public service processes. The chapter will present perspectives on the issues, controversies and problems of presenting business process models to citizens and their effectiveness for understanding service delivery activities, responsibilities, rules and outcomes.

The chapter starts in Section 2 with a literature review on the use of business process models as artifact for organizational internal communication and why and how these can be shifted to become an instrument for promoting transparency and communication between public organizations and their clients (citizens). Following this, Section 3 presents an approach for transforming public service process models obtained as an outcome of business process management initiatives into process models understandable by citizens (Engiel, 2012). Section 4 presents examples of public service process model transformation in a public organization within the educational domain. Recommendations are also outlined on the use of the catalogue by process analysts and findings about the level of understandability acquired by the generated models are discussed. The chapter closes with remarks on challenges and future work.

BUSINESS PROCESS MODELS AS COMMUNICATION ARTIFACTS

Business models are a set of views of distinct aspects of a business (Eriksson & Penker, 2000) (BPMN 2014). Combined, these views move towards broad understanding about the organization and its business. This can also be used as a basis for business improvement and innovation. From the main aspects that an organization must know about its business, business process models answer the question about *how* the work is performed in order to achieve the desired business goals. (Sharp et al., 2008)(Eriksson et al., 2000) (IDS Scheer, 2008). To answer this question, business process models usually describe the fundamental parts of a process, i.e. the information which comprises the '3Rs' of a process: Rules (why

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