Chapter 31
E-Guidelines for the Effectiveness of E-Government Process

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ABSTRACT

Computers, the Internet, smart phone technology and other innovations have come about through the developments in technology which have helped to increase the type and number of facilities available to mankind. E-government applications have led the way in the development of these facilities. Today, transactions that used to take a great deal of time can be done in hours, even minutes, with the aid of e-government applications. In e-government processes it is essential that citizens, especially those who are of a certain age and not very familiar with the Internet, can carry out the relevant e-government applications with ease. At this point, e-guidelines that explain the e-government process and applications take on a strategic importance. In this chapter, e-guidelines in the e-government process will be examined; to date, this topic has not been examined in many studies. By emphasizing the importance of developing e-guidelines, the characteristics, usage areas and importance of e-guidelines will be examined and an example e-guideline for the Turkish e-government process, which provides 562 different services from 70 different institutions, will be examined.

The Internet and technology are fundamentally changing the way government operates. But it's not just about giving residents or businesses the ability to interact with government over the Internet. Rather, it's changing the way we deliver services. –Paul Edward Patton

INTRODUCTION

The development of information technologies has resulted in information becoming important in its own right, and subsequently has given way to limitless demands for access (to information). As

a result, due to the use of information and communication technologies in government practices, digitalization has become essential. Today, most governments view their citizens as customers and aim to provide them with a reliable, effective, speedy, transparent and cost-effective service. Within this context, government applications have become now intertwined with the identity of e-services.

In the same vein, as expressed in the paragraph above, Koh et al. (2006, p.30) explain the development of the e-government process in the following words:

Governments provide a wide range of services to individual citizens, businesses and to other government agencies. Driven by legislative mandates to streamline government service delivery and by citizens' growing expectations, all levels of government agencies are pressured to provide more efficient ways for citizens to interact. These service delivery efforts focus on building e-government systems that provide a single electronic interface to a wide range of services that are individually tailored.

The sustainability and success of e-government applications depend on the continuity of use. It is at this point that "Digitally Loyal Citizens" surface within the framework of e-government process and applications. While ensuring both facilities for citizens at the same time as trying to ensure the loyalty of citizens, e-government processes also have their own challenges, including cultural transformation and technological transformation of the citizens.

Cultural transformation can occur naturally over the course of time. However, it is difficult to say the same thing for technological transformation. At this juncture, it is important to prepare tools that ease the use of e-government practices. One of these tools consists of e-guidelines. From the perspective of citizens it is important to be able to use, and continue to use, e-government practices

with ease; thus, when the e-government process is formulated it should be transaction-based and e-guidelines should be explained in a road map structure. The critical point here is that e-guidelines be easily understood, user-friendly and they should contain guidance on e-government applications and transactions. As a result, the preparation of such e-guidelines is both a time-consuming and resource-intensive activity and the success of e-government guidelines is directly proportional to how successfully citizens are able to use the e-government applications.

Whilst preparing e-guidelines it is important not to forget that these tools are created for the target audience of e-government. The target audience of e-government can be any given individual from any age group or educational background. The preparation process of e-guidelines that appeal to all must be carried out with gravity and in a professional manner.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The post-1990s saw the concept of 'customer' replace the concept of 'citizen' and the aim of governance became to ensure customer satisfaction. Under the name of New Public Management and as a result of the great reforms brought about by technological advances, at the forefront of which were the internet and information and communication technology, this process created a need to change to e-government.

The term "e-government" focuses on the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by governments as applied to the full range of government functions. In particular, the networking potential offered by the internet and related technologies has the potential to transform the structures and operation of the government (OECD, 2008, p. 165).

E-government is not just another way of accomplishing tasks; it is a transformation on a scale that fundamentally alters the way public services

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