Chapter 102
Electronic Records Management – An Old Solution to a New Problem:
Governments Providing Usable Information to Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of technology and interactive nature of Government 2.0 (Gov 2.0) is generating large data sets for Government, resulting in a struggle to control, manage, and extract the right information. Therefore, research into these large data sets (termed Big Data) has become necessary. Governments are now spending significant finances on storing and processing vast amounts of information because of the huge proliferation and complexity of Big Data and a lack of effective records management. On the other hand, there is a method called Electronic Records Management (ERM), for controlling and governing the important data of an organisation. This paper investigates the challenges identified from reviewing the literature for Gov 2.0, Big Data, and ERM in order to develop a better understanding of the application of ERM to Big Data to extract useable information in the context of Gov 2.0. The paper suggests that a key building block in providing useable information to stakeholders could potentially be ERM with its well established governance policies. A framework is constructed to illustrate how ERM can play a role in the context of Gov 2.0. Future research is necessary to address the specific constraints and expectations placed on governments in terms of data retention and use.

INTRODUCTION

Governments around the world are increasingly seeking ways to meet the information needs of their stakeholders particularly in the era of Government 2.0 (Gov 2.0). This paper aims to explore issues posed by Gov 2.0 and Big Data in the provision of information as well as issues faced by Electronic Records Management (ERM) in the context of Gov 2.0. Through this process, this paper will enhance understanding of the link between Gov 2.0, Big Data, and ERM and pave the way for providing useable information to stakeholders.

The emergence of electronic government (e-Gov), especially Gov 2.0 has marked a significant step in the application of new information technologies (IT) in meeting the information needs of citizens by improving the performance capabilities to access public information (Appleby, 2012; Lee, 2013); increasing transparency and accountability (e.g. Foxworthy & Bingham, 2013); limiting corruption and bureaucracy, and saving administrative costs (Peña-López, 2008; Zhang & Zhang, 2009). However, studies reflect that Gov 2.0 has not brought benefits as promised (for example: Meijer, Koops, Pieterson, Overman, & Tije, 2012). The evidence of this is a range of information issues posed by Gov 2.0 such as information overload (Abbott, 2010; McNurlin, Sprague, & Bui, 2009); difficulty in capturing and ensuring authentic information (Jaeger, Bertot, & Shuler, 2010; Mintz, 2008); inadequately meeting information needs (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012); issues in long-term preservation and accessibility (Hoke, 2012; Mossberger, 2013); high risk in security and privacy (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2011); and lack of automatic recordkeeping and archives on social media sites (Willson *et al.*, 2011). These issues are directly related to the management and governance of important records that will affect the quality of information provided by government. These issues are further exacerbated by the use of Web 2.0 and social media technologies that require information to be made available on multiple platforms and allowing users to generate content through participation.

According to Bauhr and Grimes (2012), the provision of information is considered a key component of transparency of government. Transparency refers to government providing citizens with information about what government is doing (Obama, 2009). While governments have spent significant amounts of money on the provision of information and services to demonstrate transparency and accountability, governments still have not fully addressed citizens' demands of high quality information (National Audit Office, 2007).

Another area of research that has become popular in recent times is 'Big Data'. Big Data is very large sets of data, from which it is difficult to extract useful information (Claasen, 2012). Due to the large size and complexity of the data it is difficult to process the data with traditional data base technology (Claasen, 2012). The issues related to Big Data are relevant for governments as well as for commercial organisations, particularly in capturing, mantaining, and documenting evidence of their activities. Meanwhile, ERM is considered a necessary responsibility of governments for implementation of evidence-recording tasks (Hui-Chen, Nunes, Zhou, & Peng, 2011) and it plays an important role in providing reliable and authentic information of activities (Lin, Ramaiah, & Wal, 2003). Therefore, exploring the relationship between Big Data and ERM can be necessary to government and organisations.

In the era of Gov 2.0, the exponential growth of data from the use of new technologies has led to governments struggling to control, manage, and extract the right information from scattered data (Abbott, 2010). Although the use of Gov 2.0 technologies is necessary to improve decision-making and problem-solving by government, it also poses many difficulties in capturing, maintaining and accessing the right information (Bertot *et al.,* 2012). Governments are now spending significant finances on keeping

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