



IDEA GROUP PUBLISHING

701 E. Chocolate Avenue, Suite 200, Hershey PA 17033-1240, USA
Tel: 717/533-8845; Fax 717/533-8661; URL-<http://www.idea-group.com>

ITB9458

Chapter VI

The Organizational Culture of Digital Government: Technology, Accountability & Shared Governance

Barbara Allen
University of Ottawa, Canada

Luc Juillet
University of Ottawa, Canada

Mike Miles
University of Ottawa, Canada

Gilles Paquet
University of Ottawa, Canada

Jeffrey Roy
University of Ottawa, Canada

Kevin Wilkins
University of Ottawa, Canada

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the characteristics of government organizations that influence their capacity to employ information technology (IT) in a strategic manner such that it assists them in their quest to meet governance challenges. We explore the organizational factors, architectural and cultural, that impede large government departments from

moving beyond the adoption of IT as a mere instrument that assists the execution of routine tasks in the traditional way and move into new forms of governance that alter the relationships between individuals and units within the organization and between the organization and its external environment. Our objective is to provide a useful framework for the analysis of the barriers to, and potential catalysts of, an IT mediated transformation of the governance of large government departments. Our insights are based on explorations of the issues surrounding the development of new governance models for data and informatics management within Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the federal department with a leading role in a wide range of activities relating to Canada's marine environment. As one of the world's leading marine science institutions, this case underscores the fact that technical competence alone is insufficient to facilitate a shift towards digital government. Using IT strategically is a governance challenge that is contingent upon organizational structure and culture.

Science and engineering produce 'know-how'; but 'know-how' is nothing by itself; it is a means without an end, a mere potentiality, an unfinished sentence. 'Know-how' is no more a culture than a piano is music.

E.F. Schumacher

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the characteristics of government organizations that influence their capacity to employ information technology (IT) in a strategic manner such that it assists them in their quest to meet the governance challenges they face. We explore the organizational factors, architectural and cultural, that impede large government departments from moving beyond the adoption of IT as a mere instrument that assists the execution of routine tasks in the traditional way and move into new forms of governance that alter the relationships between individuals and units within the organization and between the organization and its external environment.

Our objective is to provide a useful framework for the analysis of the barriers to, and potential catalysts of, an IT mediated transformation of the governance of large government departments. Our insights are based on explorations of the issues surrounding the development of new governance models for data and informatics management within Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the federal department with a leading role in a wide range of activities relating to Canada's marine environment. As one of the world's leading marine science institutions, this case underscores the fact that technical competence alone is insufficient to facilitate a shift towards digital government. Using IT strategically is a governance challenge that is contingent upon organizational structure and culture.

In the next section, we outline the challenges of a socio-economic environment driven by heightened change, complexity and turbulence — outlining the important role that IT can have in coping with a turbulent conditions. In the section following that, we explore organizational factors that act as barriers to the strategic employment of IT in a manner that is consistent with and contributes to the principal governance challenges of government agencies in a digital world. The obstacles explored include those that inhibit government departments from developing information systems that integrate across their organizational units and those that inhibit a more strategic design of accountability and technology within the context of digital government. The third

17 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/organizational-culture-digital-government/8385

Related Content

Benchmarking Municipal E-Government Services: A Bottom-Up Methodology and Pilot Results

Joan Batlle-Montserrat, Josep Blatand Ernest Abadal (2014). *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (pp. 57-75).

www.irma-international.org/article/benchmarking-municipal-e-government-services/122483

I-FGM as a Real Time Information Retrieval Tool for E-Governance

Eugent Santos Jr., Eunice E. Santos, Hien Nguyen, Long Pan, John Korahand Huadong Xia (2008). *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (pp. 14-35).

www.irma-international.org/article/fgm-real-time-information-retrieval/2043

Theoretical Approach for Instrument Development in Measuring User-Perceived E-Government Service Quality: A Case of Oman E-Government Services

Taisira Al Balushiand Saqib Ali (2020). *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (pp. 40-58).

www.irma-international.org/article/theoretical-approach-for-instrument-development-in-measuring-user-perceived-e-government-service-quality/260955

E-CRM and Managerial Discretion

Tim Coltmanand Sara Dolnicar (2008). *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 3090-3106).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/crm-managerial-discretion/9915

Palming the Future: E-Government Strategy Development for a Tertiary Education Organisation

Judith Symonds (2008). *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 3764-3776).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/palming-future-government-strategy-development/9960