Genuine Participation and the Public Value Chain – How Can E-Government Help?

Reinventing Government: Seoul, 26-27 May 2005
About gov3

- gov3 is a new strategic consultancy business helping governments to accelerate the benefits of ICT-enabled change, both within the public sector and across the wider economy.

- gov3 comprises:
  - the top team of senior civil servants who delivered the UK government’s Information Society programme between September 1999 and September 2004
  - an international network of associates from the government sector

- In our first nine months we have worked with the European Commission, the UN, global IT companies, and governments in five continents.

“We chose gov3 because they have a deep understanding from the inside of what it is like trying to drive change from within Government, with real insight and know-how on how to do this successfully. We see it as a way to reap the benefits without having to commit the errors.”

Mikkel Hemmingsen, Danish Ministry of Science and Technology
Why I’ve been asked to speak

December 2004: The United Nations benchmarks the UK as first in the world for e-participation, and second only to the US in e-service functionality.

The truth is, we’ve barely begun the journey

- No government has seriously started to get to grips with the fundamental issues raised by e-participation
Four fallacies of e-participation

- **The scope fallacy**: e-participation is about restoring trust and public engagement in the democratic process.

- **The access fallacy**: putting all government information online will significantly increase the transparency and accountability of government.

- **The choice fallacy**: we can decide when to bring an e-participation dimension into our e-government programme.

- **The impact fallacy**: by applying ICTs to our governance processes, we will increase democratic participation in those processes.
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E-participation impacts on all the ways in which governments create public value

Value created by services for their users

Value created by achieving outcomes

Value created by building trust, legitimacy & confidence

Based on Creating Public Value: An analytical framework for public service reform, 2002, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office, www.strategy.gov.uk
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Online information is a necessary but not sufficient condition

- Online government information tends to be:
  - Voluminous
  - Not user-friendly
  - Structured around the needs of government not citizens
  - Unclear and contradictory

- So while the dash to put all our information online has undoubtedly helped academics and journalists, it is of much less help to the average citizen
State Opening of Parliament

The Queen has set out her Government's legislative programme for the new parliamentary session at the Opening of Parliament.

Full details on the Queen's Speech

Looking for a form?

Search the database of government forms

… Government pledge to end child poverty ... healthy eating for school kids ...

Newsroom

Do it online

Find a local school
Find jobs
Find local property prices
Find a course
Take a mock theory driving test
Check UK weather forecasts
Plan a journey in the UK
About Us

Who are you?

Directionlessgov.com is the result of a small effort by members of the Democracy.org.uk Collective.

We got so fed up with the general uselessness of the multi-million pound shambles otherwise known as the Direct.gov.uk portal, that we decided to build something better in under an hour. Sadly, we ran catastrophically behind schedule, but we still finished before lunch.

For free. Think of it as a gift. When it comes to searching for relevant UK Government resources, we think it beats Direct.gov.uk hands down. Don't believe us? Just compare the two.

Who are you lot?

Democracy.org.uk is a loose collective of like-minded individuals who believe that there is little wrong with UK society that a healthy mixture of transparency and public engagement won't fix.

And if we know one thing, it's that the web does transparency and engagement like no other medium. And it needn't cost much.

Between us, we've developed and run a range of not-for-profit websites of a vaguely similar ilk, including TheyWorkForYou.com, PublicWhip.org.uk and FaxYourMP.com. We conceived and developed the original UpMyStreet.com back in 1998.

We do all this in our spare time, because we think it's worth doing. And if it's worth doing, we might as well try to do it well. Email us at directionlessgov-discuss@lists.beasts.org
This is not because we have built a better search engine than Google!

It is because we have:

• researched intensively what citizens want from our 6 million pages of Government information

• edited this in a way which makes sense from a citizen perspective

• presented it in one place.
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E-participation is not supply-driven ….


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…. it is being driven by citizens, whether or not governments engage with it

- Citizens are using ICT to:
  - Find new sources of information
    *During February 2003, 50% of the readership of online newspapers the Guardian and the Observer were from the US*
  - Make their views known directly, over the heads of government
    *During the invasion of Iraq, the most linked to web log in the world was by a Baghdad citizen, “Salam Pax”*
  - Form common interest groups and take political action
    *In the UK, online opposition forced the government to abandon a new policy on e-security within 24 hours of announcing it*
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- We also need significant cultural change:
  - Willingness to make the policy development and delivery process an open and collective one
  - Which means:
    - active engagement with citizens and service users
    - a culture of collaboration on problem solving and delivery between the public, private and voluntary sectors
    - willingness to get it wrong in public
    - an ability openly to manage a diversity of opinion within government

Confident government
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Some principles for the future

- **Scope**: E-participation is fundamental to improving all the ways in which governments create public value.

- **Accessibility not access**: Meaningful e-participation requires government to shape and edit its online information provision, based around citizen needs.

- **E-participation is not a choice**: E-participation will happen whether you like it or not. A government’s only choice is whether to react defensively to it, or to engage pro-actively in ways which create public value.

- **It’s not about the tools**: To deliver significant benefit, e-participation techniques must be accompanied by systemic cultural change within government.
And finally …..

- Delivering this is hard

- To help, we are today launching a new not-for-profit global organisation: the Gov3 Foundation

- Peer-to-peer networking between e-government leaders:
  - Online
  - Face-to-face: starting with a week-long immersive seminar on “Beyond e-Government: Government for the Third Millennium” in Salzburg in July

- Hands-on, in-country support

- Register now at www.gov3.org
End

Contact details
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