A Research on Pattern of Municipal E-government Construction: A Case Study in China

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Abstract

In this paper, the status of municipal E-Government of China is described. Then, the choice of E-Government pattern and the decision of the preferential construction program are analyzed. And also, the critical problem of the municipal e-government is discussed. Finally, some thoughts are put forward for the municipal e-government construction.

Keywords: E-Government, Municipality, Construction pattern

It is a four-level management system of province, city, county and township in local government of China. So, municipal E-government construction is vital during the course of implementing e-government in China. In other words, whether China can entirely and truly realize e-government lies on municipal E-government construction. A suit of rational construction pattern is needed if we want to make sure that municipal E-government construction is successful. In this paper, the status quo of municipal e-government of China is described. Then, the choice of E-government pattern and decision of the preferential construction program are analyzed. And also, the critical problem of the municipal e-government is discussed. Finally, some thoughts are put forward for the municipal e-government construction.

1. The status quo of municipal E-government of China

According to service depth and scope, the development of municipal E-government of China is distinguished four phases, which are information issuance, unilateral intercourse, mutual intercourse and disposal on-line. At the present time, according to serving capability, the municipal E-government of China just passed the phase of information issuance and is standing on the phase of unilateralism. As shown in Figure 1, the municipal E-government of China is primary, presently. Representation of it are:

1.1 the level of development and application as a whole is lowness

Presently, it is just a beginning to improve administration efficiency, to increase service ability, and promote changeover of government function by E-government in China. The effect of E-government has, yet, been unseen, not to mention its comprehensive benefit. Especially, E-government is just at germination step in some far and underdeveloped regions, where it is being constructed and hardly put into use.
1.2 The development level of E-government is very disproportion and great discrepancy among different regions and departments

We can distinctly find, by surveying some government websites, that the disparity of E-government is great. But the worse is, there is a lack of evidence to show the gap will become narrow, on the contrary, it is tending to be wider.

1.3 The benefit of E-government, as a whole, is not observable

In some regions where E-government has been or is being constructed, its benefit as a whole has not become evident. The common circumstances are that the government affair process are not entirely improved, E-government and traditional government are coexistent, government information resource are not completely open to the public, it is difficult to harmonize and cooperate among different departments, and the government websites enjoins low influence. The service given the public by governmental network is very limited and primary.

1.4 The exterior surroundings of E-government in China is needed to be improved

The exterior surroundings of E-government, such as policy and laws, capital, brains, information and technology establishment, and public information consciousness, are all to be improved.

Scholars have discussed many reasons for above phenomena, but I think that the following causes should answer to status quo of municipal E-government in China, which mainly are: 1). At the initial stage, the public servers unfamiliar with and have no profound understanding of E-government, with no enough experience of management and operation. 2). Government have no enough motivation and good service to develop E-government, especially government websites, not mention strong consciousness of innovation. 3). Most construction of E-government are short of indemnificatory systems (institution, brains, finance). 4). In municipal governments, there are extremely short of composite talents who are both familiar with government business and information technology.

Figure 1. The status of municipal E-government in China
Table 1. Construction projects of municipal E-government in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Hypo-priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G2G</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e-files system</td>
<td>e-geography system</td>
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<tr>
<td>e-finance management</td>
<td>e-judicatory file</td>
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<tr>
<td>disaster and crisis management system</td>
<td>great invent record system</td>
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<td>e-statistic</td>
<td></td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>G2B</strong></td>
<td>On-line bidding system</td>
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<td>e-taxeconomic policy query system</td>
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<tr>
<td>e-certification system</td>
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<tr>
<td>corporate information &amp; management system</td>
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<tr>
<td>on-line information consultation &amp; query</td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>IV</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>G2C</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>On-line employment system</td>
<td>e-management of traffic</td>
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<tr>
<td>e-certification management</td>
<td>e-tax for citizens</td>
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<tr>
<td>long-distance medical treatment</td>
<td>on-line education &amp; training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social insurance network</td>
<td>welfare &amp; service system</td>
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<tr>
<td>on-line entertainment &amp; information system</td>
<td>VI</td>
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<td>V</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>G2E</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies &amp; statutes</td>
<td>Performance evaluation system</td>
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<tr>
<td>e-files</td>
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<td>OA</td>
<td>Human resource management</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-line training</td>
<td>e-record document</td>
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<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>VIII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Construction pattern and projects of municipal E-government

Facing the superior or junior, municipal government in China has different functions. One is carrying out all kinds of laws and policies constituted by the superior (province and central governments) and supporting decision-making of the superior. The other is communicating files to and directing the junior (county and township government), at the same time, municipal government has to face and serve directly
corporations and the public. On this ground, construction pattern choice and project orientation of municipal E-government are put forward.

Generally speaking, there are four models for E-government (Jin, Zhijun 2005).

(1). G2G, it is E-government between the superior and junior governments, regions and regions, departments and departments. Construction projects of G2G are I and II listed in table 1.

(2). G2B, it is E-government between governments and corporations, in detail, which contains all kinds of public service for corporations provided by governments. Construction projects of G2B are III and IV listed in table 1.

(3). G2C, it is e-service for the public provided by governments by network. Construction projects of G2C are V and VI listed in table 1.

(4). G2E, it is a kind of E-government by which governments can manage and server civil servants. Construction projects of G2E are VII and VIII listed in table 1.

In the four models, municipal government should attach importance to two. One is developing G2B which mainly contains service and management for industries and corporations. A majority of enterprises in China are administered by municipal governments. So, building municipal E-government will ameliorate corporate operation circumstances, save time and cost when corporations transact with government, increase corporate operation efficiency. In fact, municipal G2B is a field where remarkable effect can be easily gained. The other is G2C which mainly are heightening information service in cities and communities. The goals of G2C are, in detail, government function shift from management to service, bringing advantage and shortcut of government network into play, realization open and transparency of government, and connecting close government and denizens.

According to above ideals, construction projects and its priority of municipal E-government put forward, as seen in Table 1.

3. System and borderline of municipal E-government

In order to construct effectively municipal E-government, system and borderline of which must be made clear. In other words, the following questions must be answered firstly.

1). How to construct E-government?
2). Who do manage and plan?
3). What is main body of E-government?
4). What is rational model?
5). How to construct system of security?
6). How to construct system of standard?
7). How to construct system of prompting?
8). How to construct system of benefit evaluation?
9). How to serve corporation and the public?
10). How to serve the superior and junior governments?

In the basis of above questions being considered, the interior borderline of municipal E-government is put
forward, which is how to construct an effective system of E-government that not only can realize OA but also implement government function in a totally new and nontraditional way. Then, the exterior borderline of municipal E-government are discussed, which is asked both effective in itself, and punctual and effective while providing information and service to the superior or junior government, corporations, citizens.

Obviously, the interior borderline of municipal E-government contains the preceding eight of ten above questions, whose objective is optimizing government operation. While, the exterior borderline of municipal E-government contains all above question, whose objective is not only optimizing government operation but also providing qualitative and effective service to all objects.

4. Construction thoughts of municipal E-government

Through preceding analyses, we know that constructing municipal E-government should be lead by demand and put corporations and citizens in center. E-government should be an open, effective, safe and mutual service system. Then, a question with three levels must be resolved firstly. The first level is cognition. Objective, value, meaning, occasion, significance, advantages and disadvantages of E-government must be understood clearly. The second level is operation. i.e. How to run E-government, in brief, which contains management, planning, investment, organizing, operation, evaluating and so on. At the same time, configuration, law and environment of E-government must also be considered. The third level is engineering and technology. i.e. How to carrying E-government into execution, which contains software and hardware, security, authentication, and personnel training etc.

Five suggestions for developing municipal E-government are brought forward in the following text.

4.1 To spread propaganda, to pay attention to actual effect, and to front on demand

In recent years, along with developing of electron information technology and Internet, E-government is an emerging way of administration, whose conception; connotation and characteristic have not yet been totally understood by a majority of civil servants. So, the different between E-government and traditional administration, the distinction between E-government and OA, the leading effect of E-government for the information industries and so on must be highly propagandized in order to make all public servants avoid misunderstanding and build up right ideas.

While constructing municipal E-government, some misunderstandings, such as “draw by technology” or “pushed by government", must be avoided. A rational and healthy E-government is pushed by and faced demand. The building system of hardware should accord to principal of meeting current need and rational considering the future, avoiding pursuing advanced equipment and enlarging investment with blindness. The investment proportion of software should be increase, while the investment balance of software and hardware should be kept.

In the course of engineering of municipal E-government, it is key to heighten the degree of participation, expectation and satisfaction of users that will benefit from E-government. Then, some positive judgment of E-government will gradually come into being (Li Wenzheng, 2005).

Municipal E-government constructing should follow the tenet of citizen-centered and serving people, three aims of which are running cities, serving enterprises and serving citizens. In the basis of integral planning, government gate-websites must firstly constructed. Then according to above three aims and service-oriented, projects of E-government are designed, by breaking borderline of departments and systems. By carding conversely operation, E-government will be engineered in four steps, which prioritize organizing, dividing the work, advancing gradually and serving on-line. So, a project accomplished will format cooperating and information sharing, add new function to government websites.
4.2 To develop E-government with giving priority to government operation

Giving priority to government operation is computerizing and internalizing some fixed or routine function. This can meet need of government and be propitious to reconstruct and transform government function.

Giving priority to government operation is also “combing pigtail” for government business using information technology, while developing E-government. By “combing pigtail” ,some imperative business in government will be found out and the priority of projects of E-government will be determined. When those done, a whole framework of E-government will be clear. During “combing pigtail”, some in consequence government function will be changeover and some redundant departments will be adjusted or incorporated (Qin Tao, 2004).

4.3 Uniform programming and guiding

By referring to experience of some developed countries, the leading institution of E-government, such as CIO (chief information officer), will be established. Its responsibility is unifying leading and organizing E-government construction (Shanghai Information Office, 2003). Two principles are carrying out “planning as a whole and dividing the work”. The former is, in course of constructing municipal E-government, unifying programming, and management, using same policy and criterion and assigning capital of great projects. The latter is that departments synchronize constructing and developing their own system of E–government, and link municipal E-government with same standard. The business data of departments are insured being saved the uniform and standard public data exchange center..All investment and resource, whoever owns in course of constructing, must be shared.

4.4 To choose appropriate programming and construction pattern

“Four-wheel driving” pattern is always used during the programming and construction of municipal E-government, which are programming, performance assessing, financial transferring and technical standard (Zhang Weiying, 2005).

The programming should be feasible so that E-government can be constructed and operated successfully and the aimlessness and repeatability can be reduced during the construction of E-government..

Performance Assessing is a series of criteria, which is used to assess the benefit of applying E-government. Benefit accessing of E-government construction and application should be brought into the achievement assessing of government department, department leader and the relevant staff as soon as possible. For instance, we can establish an detail assessing plan of E-government. This assessing plan can be used to assess the special items of the organization, subsidiary department and major leaders annually.

As to the undeveloped area and the municipalities in the middle and west of China which have the great financial difficulties, we should encourage, lead and support them to develop E-government in order to avoid coming out much greater gap when applying E-government.

Besides, technical standards should be built to standardize and assess the effect of E-government construction and operation. For instance, government website should build compulsive standard to enhance the standardization and benefit of E-government.

During the initial stage of municipal E-government building, the external elements are the major impulse. However, the writer believe that the major impulse comes from local enterprises and public needs during the applying stage. That is a kind of endogenetic mechanism and a guarantee the benign development of municipal E-government.

4.5 Outsourcing model of E-government is available when it is short of constructing fund
Attracting the private sections and nongovernmental organizations to participate in constructing E-government will be very helpful to prompt it. In condition of security of government affair, it can be considered that attracts corporations to take part in investing, building, operating and administering E-government by reasonable authorization. Outsourcing engineering of E-government is both helpful to ease budget stress and propitious to insure enough fund to run governmental webs. In fact, it is win-win. In one hand, corporations can profit from production development, consultation and service of technology and commercialization of data. in the other hand, nongovernmental organizations do some serviceable work such as research, consultancy, statistics and evaluation of E-government will prompt it to develop and improve.

5. Conclusion

This paper, firstly, depicts the status quo of municipal E-government in China and analyzes its causation. Then pattern of municipal E-government is researched, with attaching most importance to G2B and G2C. At the same time, the priority of construction projects is discussed. And then a new conception is put forward, which is interior and exterior borderline of municipal E-government. In brief, the interior objective is optimizing government operation and the exterior objective is serving all objects with high quality. On condition of the above discussion, some construction thoughts of municipal E-government is put forward in five ways.

References