Chapter 4.24
American E-Government Service Sectors and Applications

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INTRODUCTION

Citizens routinely use technology to increase the efficiency of their transactions in every area of their lives. It is, therefore, logical that citizens expect technology to be used to improve the efficiency of their transactions with their government. In response, the United States government has developed electronic interfaces combined with the Internet called electronic government or e-government. E-government is the communication between the government and its citizens, businesses or itself by the use of computers and a Web-enabled presence.

BACKGROUND

Government departments were once commonly held to be inefficient because they had little motivation to please the citizen, and the citizen did not have an alternative provider available for these services. E-government represents an opportunity to serve the interests of the government and the citizen because it allows one point of contact at a convenient time. In addition, it allows the government to process information more efficiently and collect data while doing so.

As the scope of government increases, so does the tax burden on the citizen. One of the greatest opportunities to reduce costs is by increasing the efficiency of services delivered. Given that 60% of all current Internet users interact with government Web sites, e-government represents a logical way to reduce transaction costs (E-Government Task Force, 2002). These savings can be realized with virtually no cost to train the citizen, as many citizens are already Internet proficient and have provided the equipment in their own home at no cost to the government. The purpose of this study is to investigate the state of e-government in the United States by examining sectors served by e-government and by reviewing a sample of applications currently in use.

E-GOVERNMENT SERVICE SECTORS

Creation and maintenance of e-government structures will result in significant technology spending for the foreseeable future. In order to focus these efforts the president of the United States has announced the following e-government goals: increased ease of access for citizens, increased responsiveness to citizens, and increased government efficiency (E-Government Task Force, 2002). The United States government organizes service sectors into four service opportunities as presented in Table 1 (E-Government Task Force, 2002).

Table 1.

Service Opportunity by Sector A	cronym
Government to Citizen	G2C
Government to Business G	2B
Government to Government G	2G
Intra-Government Internal Efficiency and Effectiveness	IEE

Government to Citizen (G2C)

This service sector focuses on the ability of the government and citizen to communicate information to each other in an efficient electronic manner. One of the most popular benefits of G2C is the simple posting of forms and registrations that were previously available only to those who were willing to wait in line or await mail delivery. Another benefit is the ability to monitor performance such as public schools testing results. Other examples of benefits are prisoner security, voting and jury selection.

Government to Business (G2B)

This sector focuses on the transactions between government and business with the objective to reduce cost and gather more accurate information. The purpose of this category of service is to allow the government to purchase items, pay invoices, and conduct business more cost effectively, as well as to assist in obtaining data to analyze to assist in decision-making. A goal for this sector is the posting of online regulations for agencies and increasing the electronic tax capabilities for business (i.e., filing W2s on the Internet). Another objective is to consolidate trade information for export/import data, and create a "business compliance" information center. This center will help businesses to check in one place for health, safety, employment, environment, and tax rules (United States International Trade Commission, 2002).

Additional Private Business Issues

The government-to-business relationship can be extended beyond the need for the government to purchase services. Businesses, such as healthcare or pharmaceutical companies, may need to monitor research or rulings posted by the Federal Drug Administration or may need to examine employment requirements, tariffs and other general information required for business support. Such information could be posted online for easy access.

Government to Government (G2G)

The government-to-government sector strives to improve the efficiency of service when transacting information between local, state, and federal levels of government. E-government applications benefit this sector by increasing capabilities in terms of crime detection, emergency response systems, law enforcement, and homeland security. An example of this government to government transaction would be to coordinate disaster site information

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