

Chapter 17

E-Government Strategy in Turkey: A Case for m-Government?

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ABSTRACT

Market orientation strategies are now expected to be integrated and enacted by firms and governments alike. While private services will surely continue to take the lead in mobile strategy orientation, others such as government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also becoming prominent Mobile Players (m-Players). Enhanced data services through smart phones are raising expectations that governments will finally deliver services that are in line with a consumer ICT lifestyle. To date, it is not certain which form of technological standards will take the lead, e.g. enhanced m-services or traditional Internet-based applications. Yet, with the introduction of interactive applications and fully transactional services via 3G smart phones, the currently untapped segment of the population (without computers) have the potential to gain access to government services at a low cost.

INTRODUCTION

Our research in Turkey reflects the current market situation in an emerging country and presents an update on the resistance points encountered while engaging with mobile and traditional e-Government interfaces. This exploratory study

presents findings that demonstrate that: (i) ICT expectations need to be defined in practice; (ii) ICT strategies are currently non-homogenous, and are sometimes conflicting; (iii) actions and services deployed to date have yet to justify their value to many skeptical citizens while face-to-face services remain more dependable, and (iv) the policy implication of ubiquitous computing

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and location-aware services has yet to be debated. Finally, beyond m-Government initiatives' success or failure, the mechanisms related to public administration knowledge management of mobile technical capacity building and knowledge transfer are found to remain crucial. We contend that more research is needed to understand the current resistance and expectations regarding location-aware technologies that will unlock intentions to use m-Government services and the overall success rate for large government led digital ICT projects.

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a strong interest by academics and professionals regarding changes in organizational culture, including government (Deshpande et al., 1989; Harris, 1998; Flynn, 1997; OECD, 1987; Self, 1993). In particular, ideas under the general theme of 'market orientation' have become prevalent. Over the years, many studies have shown that the concept of market orientation is central to the study and practice of management (Besanko, Dranove & Shanley 2000) and marketing (Kotler 2000; Day, 1994). Market orientation is defined by four main components including: (i) a belief and philosophy that put customers' interests first in order to develop long-term strategic sustainability (Deshpande et al., 1993); (ii) the need for organizations to generate market intelligence as superior information about current and future customers' needs and wants as well as those of competitors (Brown et al., 2002); (iii) dissemination of the knowledge within the organization especially among top management (Shapiro, 1988; Kirca et al., 2005); and (iv) organization responsiveness as the ability to take action with design and plan development, as well as implementation including the identification of those who diffuse the market orientation's strategies within the organization (Lam et al., 2010; Jawoski et al., 1993).

Another main aspect of market orientation, particularly relevant for this chapter, is the cultural approach stressing the importance of organizational culture as the creator or inhibitor of value creation to customers, or citizens in

this case (Harris, 1998; Homburg & Pflesser, 2000). Two-sided market orientation regarding e-Government, namely supply side (e.g., vertical integration, bidding process for materials and equipment, and horizontal integration such as cataloging standardization and cultural change), and demand side (e.g., transactional e-service delivery and e-democracy) exists, the latter being of concern in this chapter (Borins, 2004). There is no doubt that governments are becoming more and more market-oriented in nature (Schedler & Summermater, 2007). The thrust of the market-oriented argument and technological advancements are that technology led government strategies improve: service delivery, efficiency, accountability, citizen empowerment and save cost (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Yet, a difference has emerged in the literature between what e- and m-Governments' initiatives say they do or should do, and what they actually do in practice.

At the same time, the issue of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) has become pivotal in debates concerning the future role and shape of governments (Kushchu, 2007; Kushchu & Kuscu, 2003; Avgerou, 2000; Garson, 2006a; Jorgensen & Klay, 2007; West, 2007). As such, Turkey, like many other emerging markets, has had mixed success with large ICT projects (OECD, 1991). Empirically, many studies have shown the importance of ICT in public administration activities ranging from: overall digital strategies (Kahraman et al., 2007; Ferguson, 2001), the impact of e-Culture on governments (Hazlett & Hill, 2003), m-Government policy issues (Yildiz, 2007; Lam, 2005), service architecture (Sharma & Gupta, 2004; Abramowicz et al., 2006), e-Governance (Saxena, 2005; Stahl, 2005; Holliday & Kwok, 2004) to a range of e-Government models (Heeks, 2002). While most studies recognized the positive effects of technological development on government service delivery, some also point out concerns regarding: equity of provision across the whole population; the different understanding of the role of the state in society (Fountain, 2001);

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