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Author(s): Steve Jackson, 2007-2009.

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SI 507: Information Policy Analysis and Design

Wk 11: Digital Government

Bureaucratic organization
(Max Weber)

- Jurisdictions
- Hierarchy (power and accountability)
- Specialized training / division of labor
- Professional neutrality
- Structured in rules; "rationalized"
- Files / records

Trends in public administration: practice and theory

- From patronage to professional civil service (early 20th century)
- Massive federal expansion (1930s to post-war; New Deal and the Great Society) in size and responsibility
- Public administrative science (rise of MBAs and MPAs, later schools of public policy (e.g. Harvard Kennedy School, Ford School) (mid-20th century)

IT in government

- Early and ongoing leadership in specialized agencies (defense, energy, etc.) (1940s-)
- Office automation, database development, and in-house IT expertise (1960s-70s)
- Outsourcing and (relative) decline (1970s-80s)
- Why has innovative IT practice proved historically hard to achieve in government?:

- fragmentation / marginalization of IT staff within dominant bureaucratic structures;
- weak paths to bureaucratic leadership;
- slow development of IT professionalism

Public Sector Reform: the "New Public Management"

Later 1980s through 1990s. Distinctive features:

- TQM and business process reengineering;
- Fiscal pressures, downsizing;
- Pressures for accountability, transparency, etc.
- Emphasis on efficiency, standardization, quantifiable performance, etc.

U.S. E-Government Policy (1)

1993 National Performance Review: "a loose collection of policy and management initiatives designed to increase efficiency, accountability, and performance in bureaucratic states largely through greater use of markets and market-based management systems" (Fountain 19). © FAIR USE

Worked through "grassroots activists" within agencies to suggest new initiatives for streamlining and efficiency, organized in "reinvention teams" coordinated by the Office of the Vice-President. September 1993 "Gore Report on Reinventing Government," leading to Government Performance and Results Act.

Strong emphasis on IT as enabler / multiplier of structural change and efficiency gains in government (e.g. 1993 report, "Reengineering Through Information Technology.")

U.S. E-Government Policy (2)

- **President's Management Agenda (2002)** identifies E-Government as one of 5 priority government-wide initiatives (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2002/mgmt.pdf); critiques current state of E-Gov adoption and bureaucratic reforms; proposes taskforce structure for surfacing and supporting innovative ideas; $345 million E-Government Fund for interagency projects
- **E-Government Act of 2002**
  - establishes Office of E-Government and Chief Information Officer within Office of Management and Budget
  - formalizes gov't-wide Chief Information Officers Council

U.S. E-Government Policy (3)

- Jan 21, 2009: Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on Transparency and Open Government ("Government should be transparent… Government should be participatory… Government should be collaborative.")
- April 17, 2009: First U.S. Chief Technology Officer appointed: Aneesh Chopra (formerly CTO of Virginia)
- Data.gov: http://www.data.gov/
- http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/innovations/

Recent directions in DG scholarship and practice

- 'back office' integration
- 'whole-of-government' approaches
- Mobile devices ('M-government')
- Personalization / customization
- Mainstreaming in public sector practice
- Integration with other info policy areas (broadband access, privacy and freedom of information, etc.)
- Global benchmarking – national and sub-national rankings and comparisons (http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan028607.pdf)

Stage I - Emerging: A government's online presence is mainly comprised of a web page and/or an official website; links to ministries or departments of education, health, social welfare, labour and finance may/may not exist. Much of the information is static and there is little interaction with citizens.

Stage II - Enhanced: Governments provide more information on public policy and governance. They have created links to archived information that is easily accessible to citizens, as for instance, documents, forms, reports, laws and regulations, and newsletters.

Stage III - Interactive: Governments deliver online services such as downloadable forms for tax payments and applications for license renewals. In addition, the beginnings of an interactive portal or website with services to enhance the convenience of citizens are evident.

Stage IV - Transactional: Governments begin to transform themselves by introducing two-way interactions between 'citizen and government'. It includes options for paying taxes, applying for ID cards, birth certificates, passports and license renewals, as well as other similar G to C interactions, and allows the citizen to access these services online 24/7. All transactions are conducted online.

Stage V - Connected: Governments transform themselves into a connected entity that responds to the needs of its citizens by developing an integrated back office infrastructure. This is the most sophisticated level of online e-government initiatives and is characterized by:

1. Horizontal connections (among government agencies);
2. Vertical connections (central and local government agencies)
3. Infrastructure connections (interoperability issues)
4. Connections between governments and citizens
5. Connections among stakeholders (government, private sector, academic institutions, NGOs and civil society)