

Assignment #1: IT Management Topic Paper

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2023SP-Technology and Public Administration 20:834:521:90

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Sunday, February 26, 2023

Abstract

Government has been using technology to refresh their processes and increase access within the last decade. Since COVID emerged in 2020, there has been a feverish desire to move toward full use of technology while increasing inclusion. This is true at all levels of government and will only accelerate as new innovations are developed. Many public entities have been taking advantage of what new technology has to offer. This essay will demonstrate how government is utilizing new found tech to advance public agenda.

Introduction

Technology is becoming more and more part of the fabric of government, and uses multiple platforms to reach the public. I will argue that this paradigm shift toward electronic access has led to changing how government does business. Government is using technology to bolster transparency and accessibility, build employee and constituent efficiency, and reduce inequity. This essay will further demonstrate that this societal change is qualitative in nature and has changed the way we govern through the use of technology.

Body

To begin, government focus has been to increase transparency and accessibility to a public that demands to know how their representatives are supporting the beliefs of constituents. America being a representative democracy, demands that the voices of the voters are heard and their will is supported by their elected officials. That necessitates transparency and accessibility. New and unique ways to increase transparency and accessibility include televised hearings and meetings on platforms such as YouTube, real time information government websites and openly accessible email banks. The City of Bloomington, MN, has “an active channel with over 2,000 videos, Bloomington offers its residents an organized tool with plenty of information. This allows them to stay informed and connected with their community. They have videos that touch on every sector of their city, including but not limited to city council meetings, Housing and Redevelopment Authority issues, and more.” (2021) Utilizing YouTube has made it that anyone can watch any public meeting any time they want and they even have the ability to research archives to fact check or just catch up. Adding to YouTube meetings, most towns have websites that are very informative and will provide up to the minute information including storm updates, disaster declarations, evacuation instructions or lower priority events such as press releases or

fun events within the municipality. Today, Wayne Township, NJ has an emergency message that recycling pickup will be canceled due to inclement weather. Not only did they place this on their website, but they also used a reverse calling system to notify residents via phone and a text message alert to cell phones using newer technology to synthesize communication vessels.

(Wayne, 2023) There are also email banks that can be easily accessed to find who a constituent would like to email questions or concerns. One of the most important features of email is that it is time stamped and can be coupled with read receipts that clearly shows receipt of the concern. If there is no action within a certain time, the constituent has proof of inaction.

Furthermore, government desires to make processes better for employees and constituents alike. By making internal systems better for employees to input data, citizens can then access that data more quickly. One of the biggest issues that municipalities face is streamlining of permit processes and changing the way it has always been done. Denver Colorado appears to have it right with the introduction of their e-permitting system. This system has an access portal, a frequently asked questions section and tutorials. A constituent can even track their permits on a mobile device and request inspections. Anyone with a smartphone can access and request permits. This system will reduce log jams of backed up permits and reduce the likelihood of individuals doing work without a permit due to frustrations from delays. This is efficient for everyone since the documents would be easily accessed under the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA). (Denver, 2023) There are many other similar website access portals throughout the US. They are all intended to increase access and transparency.

Inequity of protected classes and economically depressed individuals often arises as a concern for governments becoming more accessible. It is my contention that these qualitative efforts to change the way governments operate using technology will further access of those

normally shut out of access to government. The first impediment is connectivity. The Biden administration recently announced and passed the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) to make it that everyone in America can access high speed internet. (White House, 2023) The first initiative is \$175 million directly to minority institutions to build accessibility infrastructure. (White House) This commitment to accessibility is an important qualitative action to ensure we are being inclusive of this valuable service to all. With access, services like YouTube Council Meetings can be easily streamed to those that are, as an example, disabled or a single parent that cannot attend a live meeting due to childcare concerns. If not having a cell phone is a concern, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) offers the lifeline assistance program to facilitate those that need help getting access. There are numerous programs to afford individuals access to the web, which means access to government technology. Also, according to the American Library Association, there are 123,627 libraries in the United States and 801 Government Libraries. (ALA, 2023) These Libraries are free with internet access. Access is the biggest obstacle to overcoming inequity regarding technology and government. There are so many vessels to provide access, one just needs to take advantage of said accessibilities to technology.

Conclusion

Today's government is leaning sprinting toward fully adopting technology in a qualitative manner in order to change the way government works. Creating transparency and accessibility is a way to meet the needs of the public to keep informed on how their representatives are working for them and to easily question them when you disagree. Creating efficiency of services through portals to allow constituents to utilize services from the comfort of their home or office is a way to positively support objectives of the public and openly present

documents to those wishing to review them. Technology in public entities is also gearing toward removing inequities of the past. Everyone has a reasonable opportunity to access government form multiple venues driven by federal programs and incentives. Qualitative use of technology will certainly gear for continuous change long into the future as innovations continue to evolve.

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