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Moving Government into the Digital Age

Jim Wyatt, November 2014





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The IBIS World report ***Snapshot of Australia's Digital Future to 2050***, predicts that 70% of Australia's 509 industries will benefit from generalised productivity gains through high speed broadband, leading to the transformation of their business models.

Deloitte's 2012 report ***Digital Disruption Short Fuse, Big Bang*** indicated nearly 48% of all organisations plan to offer mobile apps to customers within three to five years, up from 18%.

Those communities that understand, adapt, share and ultimately exploit digital infrastructure and technology are more likely to achieve greater social and economic outcomes. WA Digital Economy Framework, 2012.

Can Government afford to sit on the sidelines and watch this occur around them?



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The big challenges facing the Australian Government over the next decade:

- Exponential increase in demand for public services – retirement of the baby boomers, increased life expectancy, growing pains requiring expanded infrastructure and impacts of climate change.
- People are more informed, with higher expectations – *the Now Generation*.
- Public revenues are not keeping pace.

A new public service model is required.



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The big technology trends are having a profound impact on the Private Sector and this has spilt over to the Public Sector. But Government still lags Industry.

Cloud: Cost driven and finally shrugging off the privacy paralysis.

Big Data: Yet to truly deliver in shaping policy and strategy.

Mobility: The most mature with over 66 Apps promoted on the “Services” website.

Social Media & Networking: Yet to wake up to the collaboration and skill sharing potential.

BYOD, BYON, BYOA: Another cost strategy focus rather than a productivity and retention approach.



What could the Australian Government accomplish if it embarked on a comprehensive program based around digital technologies and practices?

1. It would become better informed leading to improved public policy decisions by exploiting the vast data resources it retains and continues to collect.
2. It could act in a more efficient and productive manner, by reducing waste and cutting labour intensive and repetitive practices, to deliver greater value to the public.
3. It can achieve higher returns on its investments by better monitoring and managing the life cycle of its infrastructure, assets and facilities.

It could create a new public service model and address the challenges it faces.



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Sounds easy but what's the catch? The Australian Government would have to do things differently.

1. Firstly, there would need to be a shift away from expecting CIO's to drive such an agenda and put the emphasis on line management and divisional executives. This would require a need for digital enlightenment for many.
2. Secondly, it would require a move away from ridged protocols that have shaped the current public sector and the adoption of new paradigms in a similar way to what the private Sector has already embarked upon.
3. And thirdly, it would require an open mind to world's best practice, which is already being adopted in other countries such as the UK, Europe and the US.

Optimi Digital is ideally placed to act as a digital thought leader and partner with Australian Governments, to implement such a future.



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The Strategic Plan:

I would propose the following strategic initiatives to engage the Public Sector in moving down this pathway:

- **Capture the imagination of decision makers** - Establish Digital Pavilions in key locations across the country, in partnership with the digital industry, to showcase world class innovation and technology, focussed on public sector transformation.
- **Propel an ongoing dialogue to stimulate ideas and action** – Deliver a series (quarterly) of summits across the country, to explore case studies of public service delivery and public policy transformed through the exploitation of digital technologies .
- **Encourage the growth of mGovernment across the country** - Expand and increase the frequency of events such as “Gov Hack” and encourage all agencies to pursue Open Source Data initiatives and more flexible procurement strategies for mobile services applications and content.
- **Open up new ways to approach policy and strategy** - Introduce a series of Big Data Challenges, encouraging crowd sourced solutions to public policy issues and outcomes based profiling of major funding initiatives.



I would also look to implement the following supplementary initiatives to drive the discussion around the Digital Government space:

- Establish an online presence focused on Digital Government where agencies could share ideas, tips, experiences and resources.
- Encourage more forums and conferences in various locations across the country focussed on sharing case studies involving digital government transformation.
- Encourage the discussion of digital government in key publications such as the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) Journal.
- Encourage regular discussion in online forums and groups associated with Public Administration, which have a digital government focus.
- Engage various tertiary institutions providing programs in public policy and administration, to incorporate digital transformation topics into their courses.



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Thank you & Questions