

Sustainable cross-boundary information sharing

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Information is one of the most valuable resources in government. Government managers are finding however, that information needed to plan, make decisions, and act is often held outside their own organizations, maintained in disparate formats, and used for widely different purposes. Efforts to bring this data together across boundaries have provided new understanding into just how difficult cross-boundary information sharing is. Finding ways to bring together information and integrate it for use in solving pressing public problems is fast becoming a focus of attention for digital government practitioners and researchers alike. This chapter reports on one such study¹ of cross-boundary information integration that revealed three important lessons for creating and sustaining cross-boundary information sharing: 1) interoperability is key, 2) a shift in agency culture is necessary, and 3) the role of policymakers is central to this type of project. Four recommendations for action derived from the case studies are presented as well. Government executives and policy-makers need to ensure the creation of enterprise-wide mechanisms and capabilities such as (1) governance structures, (2) resource allocation models, (3) scalable strategies, and (4) non-crisis capacity.

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