

2008 Publications (11)

Reports (1)



Using XML for Web Site Management: Lessons Learned Report

Jan 2008

This report is based on the lessons learned from CTG's XML Testbed. The success of the Testbed rested on the enthusiastic participation of five New York State (NYS) agencies who committed to extensive hours of workshops, training, and prototype development. CTG extends its thanks to the NYS Department of Civil Service, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal, NYS Higher Education Services Corporation, NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, and the NYS Office of Cultural Education, State Education Department. The Testbed was undertaken in partnership with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER), the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and the Office for Technology (OFT).

Journal Articles and Conference Papers (1)

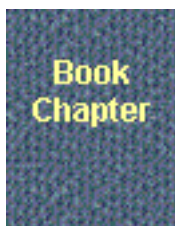


Governance structures in cross-boundary information sharing: Lessons from state and local criminal justice initiatives

Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS 2008), Jan 2008, p.211

Governments are increasingly using collaborative, cross-boundary strategies to face complex social problems. Many of these cross-boundary initiatives have at their core the use, and in many cases, the sharing of information and communication technologies. In fact, government managers and researchers alike are now recognizing the value and great opportunities offered by cross-boundary information sharing, in particular. Current research has identified important factors that affect these cross-boundary information sharing initiatives. Governance structures are among those factors found to be important in cross-boundary information sharing. However, there is little research about the determinants of an effective governance structure in these multi-organizational settings. Based on semistructured interviews with participants in four state and local government criminal justice initiatives, this paper systematically identifies the determinants of governance structures for cross-boundary information sharing initiatives. By doing so, this study contributes to theory, but also supports the development of more specific guidelines for public managers and other individuals involved in crossboundary information sharing.

Book Chapters (2)



Information Sharing and Public Health: A Case-based Look at the ICT Expectations-Reality Gap

In Albert Meijer, Kees Boersma, Pieter Wagenaar (Eds.) *ICTs, Citizens & Governance: After the Hype!* . pp.180-197. Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Sharing information across organizational boundaries is central to efforts to improve government operations and services. However, creating the capability necessary to enable information sharing across the boundaries of organizations is among the most difficult types of information technology projects. New knowledge about information sharing is required; in particular, new understanding about how government, non-governmental and private sector organizations come together to share information is necessary. This chapter draws on the experiences of key actors in three states in the United States as they organized to create new capability to share information as part of their responses to the West Nile virus outbreaks. The cases highlight the gap between expectations and reality, providing opportunity to more fully understand the gaps between expectations (the hype) about ICTs and the reality facing government practitioners who seek to use ICTs to share information. Examining the cases in terms of four contexts of information integration and sharing provides a more specific understanding about the gaps between these expectations and the reality (after the hype). The lessons learned in the context of public health include the central role of information sharing and the implications of resource constraints on data capture and use capability in the context of an outbreak management and surveillance effort. Insight into the interdependence of system design and process support and improvement in the context of public health surveillance was also found to be critical to future planning of public health surveillance systems. This chapter serves to reemphasize to both researchers and practitioners the need to close the gap between expectations and reality; the point is made again through the cases that closing the gap depends on strategies that draw on technology, process, interorganizational, and political perspectives and resources.

Sustainable cross-boundary information sharing

In H. Chen, L. Brandt, V. Gregg, R. Traunmüller, S. Dawes, E. Hovy, A. Macintosh, & C. A. Larson (Eds.) *Digital government: Advanced research and case studies, and Implementation*. pp.421-438. New York: Springer.

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.

Working Papers (7)



A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Digital Government Capability Assessment

Mar 2008

The issue of organizational capability is central to virtually all efforts to improve government performance, particularly in the area of information technology innovation. Capability assessment can play an important role in the digital government domain in at least two ways: one is to provide a basis for judging whether agencies are ready to initiate some digital government innovation, and the other is to judge the impact of a digital government initiative in terms of improved capabilities. Data on capabilities targeted by digital government initiatives can provide both baseline measurements and evidence of subsequent improvements. As part of its research and development on several digital government projects, the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) has developed an approach to capability assessment, resulting in specific assessment toolkits for use in different types of digital government initiatives. This paper describes the approach used in developing these toolkits generally, with an example from one version intended for use in justice information integration projects. The paper includes the theoretical rationale for the design of the toolkits, methods for their use, and implications for use in practice.

Building a State Government Digital Preservation Community: Lessons on Interorganizational Collaboration

Mar 2008

As a part of the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP), the Library of Congress sponsored a series of collaborative workshops between April and May 2005 to help state governments identify their needs and priorities for digital preservation. During these workshops, state and territory representatives showed strong interest in fostering partnership efforts and collaborative strategies toward preserving state government digital information. Based on the findings of the workshops and previous efforts on digital preservation, this paper discusses the challenges and opportunities regarding interorganizational collaboration and community building for digital preservation of state government information.

Building Response Capacity through Cross-boundary Information Sharing: The Critical Role of Trust

Mar 2008

Governments around the world are increasingly turning to information sharing and integration to help solve problems in a wide range of programs and policy areas. These complex interorganizational efforts face not only the technical challenges of many information technology initiatives, but also the difficulties derived from interacting among multiple and diverse organizations. Trust has been identified as one the most important organizational factors for cross-boundary information sharing and integration. However, more research is needed regarding the determinants of trust building in this multi-organizational contexts. This paper highlights the relevant role of trust in cross-boundary information sharing initiatives and provides evidence about three of its most important determinants.

Critical Issues and Practical Challenges of IT Tools for Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation

Mar 2008

Policy makers and public managers want and need to know how well government programs perform, but few have the information to accurately and continuously evaluate them. The dynamic nature of public programs, and the traditional methods used to assess them, compound this problem. Performance measurement and performance-based decisions can be improved by more sophisticated information systems designed for to support analysis and decision making. However, such systems demand close and continuing involvement of program staff, attention to programmatic context, and much better understanding of business processes and the data they generate. Through the use of a case example, the prototype Homeless Information Management System, this paper highlights how attention to these issues can lead to useful and usable performance analysis and evaluation systems.

Fostering Innovation in Electronic Government: Benefits and Challenges of XML for Web Site Management

Mar 2008

As government Web sites have grown in size, complexity, and prominence, Web site management, content management, maintenance costs, and accessibility have become growing concerns for federal, state and local governments. Government agencies are losing the ability to be responsive and flexible in providing new information and services and the costs of maintaining these Web sites have become prohibitive. Government webmasters and system administrators have come to realize that the technologies and strategies used in the past to build most Web sites are designed to produce individual Web pages. They do not provide a structure to easily maintain entire Web sites, keep them responsive to changing needs, or manage the workflow involved in Web content production and maintenance; nor do they facilitate the sharing and reuse of Web site content. This paper examines the potential of XML for Web site content management in government settings. Five state government agency teams were selected, looking for a mixture of several aspects such as technological expertise, organizational capabilities, agency size, and institutional environment. The study uses multiple research methods such as semi-structured interviews, surveys, and analysis of relevant documents to explore the benefits and challenges of using XML for Web site content management in government agencies. Overall, participants identified information consistency, reduction of data and content duplication, and compatibility with new devices and formats as the main benefits. Organizational and individual resistance to change, multiple and different priorities, and unrealistic goals were identified as the most important barriers. The paper also reports some differences in perceptions between technical and program staff.

Measures and Conditions of Success in Public Sector Knowledge Networks

Mar 2008

Interorganizational networks are increasingly the subject of both theoretical and empirical research in sociology, economics, organizational behavior, and public and business management. While the most common network concepts and studies have focused on multi-organizational forms of production, "network" has also emerged as a way to describe how organizations share and integrate knowledge and information. This paper focuses on a type of network that is increasingly important in public affairs, but largely unaccounted for in the extant literature – the public sector knowledge network. The paper synthesizes and augments the exiting literature to include public sector knowledge networks. It then identifies performance measures that can be used to evaluate them at the network, organizational, and individual levels of analysis and identifies critical success factors that pertain to each level.

New models of collaboration for delivering e-government services: A dynamic model drawn from multi-national research

Mar 2008

This paper presents a conceptual model of how organizations collaborate to deliver electronic public services. The model is derived from a comparative study of 12 e-government collaborations in Canada, the US, and Europe that involved various combinations of public, private, and nonprofit organizations pursuing a variety of service objectives. The study draws on the literature of interorganizational relations, as well as management information systems, public management, and organizational behavior to devise a preliminary model of how such collaborations form and operate. The case study data are then compared to the preliminary model and a revised, more dynamic model is presented. The revised model more closely fits the case experiences across various service types, project structures, and national settings.