



Social business in government: Improving citizen services

Executive summary

As the path to a strong economic recovery continues to elude communities worldwide, people are applying for government assistance in record numbers. They are relying on public programs and subsidies to help feed their families, pay their utility bills and access affordable health care. Clearly, government safety nets in the new millennium need to be wider, deeper and stronger than ever. Yet citizen services organizations operate within a complex environment in which a number of worldwide trends significantly shape their agendas. One is changing demographics, especially in developed countries, where the average age is rising, driving social service and health care costs even higher. Another is accelerating globalization. As the world becomes more economically and technologically interconnected across political, social and cultural boundaries, people are interacting and transacting through a variety of new channels.

Growing citizen expectations compound the complexity of today's governmental landscape. Despite ever-shrinking budget constraints, today's citizens simply expect more from their leaders. They look to government at all levels to help improve their lives and foster social change. Instead of faltering in the face of these challenges, many government leaders view this era as a time to embrace a new approach—a people-centric approach that integrates social tools and networks with business processes. They recognize distinct opportunities to help drive positive change, while achieving significant business results.



Imagine, for instance, if citizens could access information and complete transactions anywhere, anytime, without visiting their local county office. If caseworkers could make quicker, more informed decisions because they have all the data they need at their fingertips, including contact information for other professionals with whom they need to consult. If government agencies could engage with constituents and service providers to gain new insight into how to improve services. A citizen services organization can enable all of these things and more—and become a smarter government—by making the transition to social business.

IBM Solutions for Social Business are designed to help citizen services organizations move forward and become a social business—that is, to become more citizen-centric, efficient and effective. They help simplify the transformation by allowing organizations to combine applications and services with core social capabilities to create exceptional web experiences, delivered through employee intranets and through citizen and vendor extranets. When people connect using IBM Solutions for Social Business, better business outcomes can be achieved through enhanced interactions, information access and insights.

“Over the next five years, 95 percent of standout organizations plan to focus more on “getting closer to the citizens customer.”

—IBM, Capitalizing on Complexity: Insights from the Global Chief Executive Officer Study, May 2010.

Meeting new expectations and demands for citizen services

Throughout the world, people depend on a host of government-provided services and benefits. In fact, in some countries, government spending on citizen services represents a significant portion of the gross domestic product. At the same time that directors are looking for every way possible to reduce costs, citizens are expecting efficient, responsive assistance from service agents and caseworkers. They also expect to quickly access information, resources and services, anytime, anywhere and from the devices of their choice. Forward-thinking leaders recognize that they must adopt a more citizen-centric model, one that puts people first and focuses on improving access, services, and social and business outcomes.

Embracing social business as the new way forward

A social business embraces networks of people to create business value. Through the strategic use of social collaboration software and analytics tools, it activates networks of people to change the way relationships are established and nurtured, as well as the way information, insights and expertise are shared and leveraged. A social business is, by definition, engaged, transparent and nimble.

A government organization that is becoming a social business, for example, uses more-efficient delivery channels to interact with citizens and provide easier access to services. It leverages technology to create a single view of the citizen, helping reduce data duplication and improper payments. It effectively manages information to target resources, enable effective collaboration across programs and service providers, and better demonstrate the contributions it makes to society.

Building the core capabilities of a social business

Each organization's path to becoming a social business will vary according to its particular challenges and objectives. All organizations, however, make the transition by gradually building a set of core capabilities. They improve how information is collected and accessed. They seamlessly integrate data among internal and external sources, making comprehensive views of citizens and cases possible, as well as enabling real-time collaboration among caseworkers, clients and other providers. They also apply social analytics tools, so resources can be targeted in context to particular situations and so insights can be gleaned to help reduce fraud and errors.

Many citizen services organizations that have begun the transformation are already attaining significant business value. Serving 2.4 million residents, Miami-Dade County in Florida deployed a self-service citizen portal that centralizes county services. Residents can use the portal 24x7 to access services information personalized to their area and needs and to make payments online. By saving citizens the trouble of visiting the county office, the county has increased both employee efficiencies and citizen satisfaction.

In Odense Municipality, Denmark, a case management portal has helped improve delivery of social services for the city's 190,000 residents. The portal provides caseworkers with a comprehensive view of each citizen's history, reducing the average search time for client data by approximately 90 percent. Its collaborative environment also promotes faster, simpler interactions, helping drive better decision making.

In another example, the government serving city and county residents in and around Essex, Windsor, in Ontario, Canada, engages residents through online communities in which citizens and service providers work together to help improve their

quality of life. A discussion among asthma sufferers and doctors in one online community resulted in a 60 percent reduction in asthma-related visits to the emergency room.

IBM Solutions for Social Business

IBM Solutions for Social Business offer the combined capabilities your organization needs to deliver compelling online experiences to citizens, employees and business associates. They include web content management, an enterprise portal and mashup presentation framework; built-in social and real-time communication features; search, personalization and marketing tools; comprehensive integration capabilities; mobile device, commerce and analytics support; and rich media management.

With IBM Solutions for Social Business, your citizen services organization can benefit in the following ways:

- Improve citizen access to critical services through web-based information delivery and participatory government
- Increase responsiveness by providing constituents with a self-service model for routine tasks, enabling employees to focus on exception issues
- Provide better, faster service with online forms tools that lead citizens through complex government transactions
- Enhance the ability to provide agency-to-agency collaboration, especially for case management

Start your social business transformation with IBM

With a long-standing commitment to government organizations, IBM has successfully implemented citizen services solutions across the globe. Our marketplace-leading social collaboration solutions can be deployed as on-premises, cloud-based or hybrid solutions that can be evolved as requirements shift. Our portfolio of business solutions, developed exclusively for government, helps organizations provide the right program, at the right time, in the right way.

For more information

To learn more about how your government organization can leverage IBM Solutions for Social Business to become a social business, contact your IBM sales representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit:

<http://www.ibm.com/smarterplanet/us/en/socialbusiness/overview/index.html>

Additionally, IBM Global Financing can help you acquire the IT solutions that your business needs in the most cost-effective and strategic way possible. We'll partner with credit qualified clients to customize an IT financing solution to suit your business goals, enable effective cash management, and improve your total cost of ownership. IBM Global Financing is your smartest choice to fund critical IT investments and propel your business forward. For more information, visit: ibm.com/financing



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