E-government and public libraries in Japan

Dr Rowena Cullen

Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Visiting Research Fellow, University of Tsukuba

Outline of presentation

- What is e-government?

- E-government goals of Japanese government

- Role of public libraries in e-government

- How to make this role more effective

What is e-government?

- Also known as: electronic government, digital government, e-governance

- How to define e-government?

  "The use by government agencies of Information and communications technologies (ICTs) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government."

OECD definition of E-Government

- The use of ICTs and the Internet as a tool to achieve better government

- More about government than 'e'

- Guidelines for success include
  - Vision/political will
  - Common frameworks/co-operation
  - Customer focus/responsibility
  - Online consultation
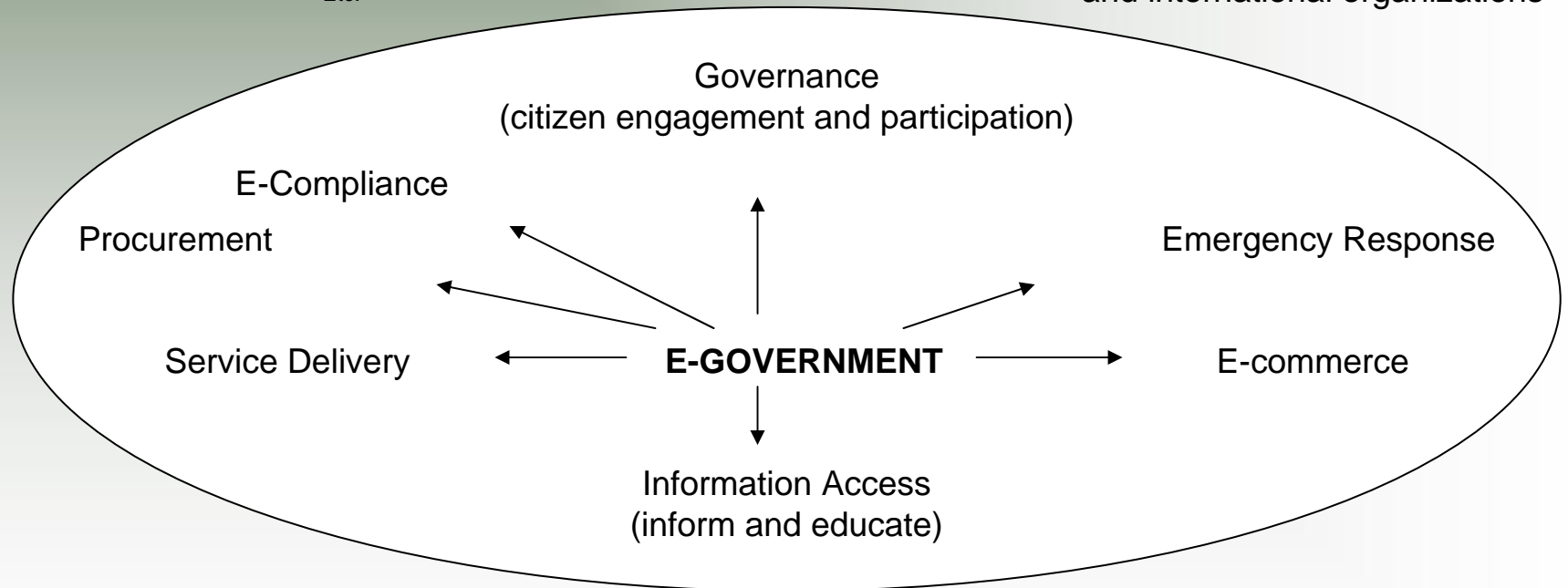 - International co-operation (Muller)

Results Oriented

(Management and Oversight)

Productivity

Privacy

Effectiveness (Cost)

Efficiency (Cost)

Satisfaction

Security

Authentication & Integrity Management

Etc.

Government to …

Government
Business
Citizens and other individuals

Local to national government, and international organizations

Governance
(citizen engagement and participation)

E-Compliance

Procurement

Emergency Response

Service Delivery ← E-GOVERNMENT → E-commerce

Information Access
(inform and educate)

Hernon: Model of E-government

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Stages of e-government
(Layne and Lee)

- Catalogue
  - Online presence, catalogue, govt information online, downloadable printable forms
- Transaction
  - Services and forms completed online
  - Working database supporting online transactions
- Vertical integration
  - local systems linked to higher level systems within similar functionalities
- Horizontal integration
  - systems integrated across different functions/agencies, real 'one-stop-shop' for citizens

E-government in Japan

- Began 1995 with Basic policy for the Promotion of Advanced Information and Communication Society, and IT Basic Law (2000)

- E-Japan Priority Policy Program, 2001, updated yearly, leading to e-Japan Priority Policy program 2004, e-Japan Strategy II packages, and IT Policy Package 2005.

- Current plan: Priority Policy Program 2006

- From earliest days, the Prime Minister has overseen the e-government program, and chairs the ITHQ committee that is responsible for the high level strategy

Changing focus . . .

- Movement from building ICT infrastructure (KWAN, LGWAN, Juki Net), to building content, 're-engineering' government, to focus on service, and to encourage citizen uptake

- Current goals:
  - Increased use of online applications target: in 2007 16% transactions ; in 2010 50% or more)
  - Increased efficiency and rationalization of operations (optimization) - reduced operating costs, reduced time
  - Further optimization of sharing, cooperation, collaboration between government agencies
  - Security, reliability of systems

Local e-government goals

(Regional Information Policy Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

- Improve user satisfaction (full access to services 24/7/365)

- Promote administrative reform in local government to simplify processes, boost efficiency, transparency

- Growth boost for local information service industries (outsourcing to promote growth in local economy)

Examples of e-services already functioning

- Okayama City – GIS/GPS environmental information/ disaster management; library book search; event information.

- Yokosuka City – e-bidding; GIS system; library book search; facility reservation; event information; other e-services.

- Ikeda City – Maps and local trader information (with GPS); welfare support information; library new arrival search.

  (Fujita, Izawa, and Ishibashi)

New target areas for local e-government (requiring personal identity authentication)

- Prefectures - prefectural tax returns, vehicle tax, road occupancy permit, high pressure gas, chef licenses, some activities of not-for-profit organisations

- Municipalities – copies of residency cards, certificates of seal registration, tax payment etc., municipal tax returns, care insurance, child benefits, national health insurance, pharmaceutical retailing, water treatment tank

Role of public libraries in e-government?

- Enhancement of own services alongside other government agencies

  – to meet government goals and policies

- Developing knowledge of e-government to support public access, uptake

  - access to government information/services a key plank in democracy

- Sharing knowledge of www, database and information management

Enhancement of own services alongside other government agencies

- Online services (e.g. access to catalogue, new acquisitions, email reference enquiries)

  - Considerable variation in service level apparent
  - Need to establish how many, what services, ensure all towns have public library, web access to library services
  - How can we promote learning between libraries, mutual support, training?

Next stages (some public libraries in Japan already offer some of these):

- – Reserve book online
- – Web-based access to online information, business information, and general databases
- – Online reference service (virtual reference)
- – Online instruction in information literacy
- – Develop web pages to enhance Internet search/links, access to knowledge
- – Chat rooms, blogs

Enhancement, promotion of e-government, contributing to Japan's e-government goals

- Access to government information a key element in liberal democracy

- Opportunity for public libraries to take on this role, e.g. establish support service, to enhance citizen access to government information (formerly only university libraries held government info)

- Work with local government agencies to develop and integrate services (community information, high quality web interface)

- Develop expertise in staff to identify government information/services for users, for general reference, business information services

Use library information science expertise to improve online library and local e-government expertise

- Knowledge of web design, usability, metadata, WC3 standards (accessibility) etc. is key role for librarians in the 21st century

- These skills are critical to success/uptake of e-government

- Knowledge/research about evaluation in LIS sector also very useful to e-government

- How can we measure success in e-government? public library contribution to e-government

Also record-keeping role . . .

- Who is keeping the archive of local government information/business provided/transacted online?

- In most institutions, a 'black hole' exists at the beginnings of the electronic era

- What is your library doing to maintain its own record-keeping in the switch to electronic records?

- What role should it play in the municipality or region - for accountability, historical research, testimony etc.

Many roles for public libraries in relation to e-government

- Public libraries can assist in government campaign to promote use of e-government

- Help 'empower' citizens, and promote democracy

- Many training and development opportunities - for library staff, and for library staff to train local government staff

Some examples from New Zealand

- Christchurch City Libraries

  http://library.christchurch.org.nz/

  online reference, topics/events of interest, community information database, pages for special groups (children, teens, Maori), online databases, business startup support

- Auckland City Libraries

  http://www.aucklandlibrary.co.nz/

  digital library (e-books, e-journals, heritage materials, web sites), community information, e-government (laws, and political information), quick reference tools, homework support, community classes

The example of Yokusaka city, a leading e-government site in Japan
(http://www.city.yokosuka.kanagawa.jp/)

- Advanced IT policy, focused on creating a city which is attractive to residents, and economically strong

- On-line tendering for contracts (significant reduction in costs)

- Geographical information system (e.g. land management, water supply, fire-fighting, disaster communication system, and city information

- Cell phone access to city information – health, facilities booking, certificate of residency request, events, map location of facilities, booking arts events, library search and reservation, school lunches)

- E-democracy - surveys, response to questions/complaints, Discussion Board

A training/research agenda for public libraries in Japan

- What e-services are offered by Japan's public libraries? What can be done to enhance these? What should they be doing vis-à-vis the City Hall?

- How can we measure success in e-government? public library contribution to e-government

- What are Japan's public libraries doing to maintain their own record-keeping in the switch to electronic records?

- What role should they play in their municipality or region - for accountability, historical research, testimony etc.

- What are the training and development opportunities - for library staff, and for library staff to train local government staff

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