

A response to:

# **Transformational Government Enabled by Technology**

by Adobe Systems Europe Ltd



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The vision of Adobe is *To revolutionise how the world engages with ideas and information - anytime, anywhere, through any medium*

More specifically, the Government strategy of Adobe is to *Help transform services delivery by enabling information interoperability via a global information sharing infrastructure*

The management and (secure) sharing of information is central to establishing an efficient and effective Government, and this importance will only increase as more (integrated) services are exposed to citizens

The Government set out its vision and strategy for technology enabled transformational Government at the end of 2005. We believe the publication of *Transformational Government* is an essential first step on the way and acknowledge the Government's commitment to drive forward this initiative in a ten year programme.

Adobe revolutionises how the world engages with ideas and information. For more than two decades, our award-winning software and technologies have redefined business, entertainment and personal communications by setting new standards for producing and delivering content that engages people anywhere at any time, through any medium.

Adobe's acquisition of Macromedia in 2005 provides exciting and unparalleled opportunities of merging the capabilities of both technologies. In addition to Adobe Reader being present on 93 per cent of desk top devices, Macromedia Flash Player is installed on more than 98 per cent of internet connected desktops and the world's top 10 PC manufacturers ship their systems with PDF technology pre-installed. This is the new Adobe.

The impact of the new Adobe solutions is evident across industries and felt by anyone who creates, views, and interacts with information. With a reputation for excellence and a portfolio of many of the most respected and recognizable software brands, Adobe is one of the world's largest and most diversified software companies.

This synergy between what Adobe does and how Government would like to do what it does underpins our response to the eGovernment strategy.

Our response addresses each element of the strategy set out in *Transformational Government – Enabled by Technology* and is based around the three key objectives of the strategy:

- Centring the design and delivery of services on citizens and business
- Moving to a shared services culture
- Delivering services professionally

In addition we include comments on the timescale of the strategy under the heading the *Road to 2015*.

We believe that Government faces significant challenges in achieving the objectives which the strategy sets out. Delivering the cost and efficiency savings demanded by the commitment to the recommendations of the Gershon review is hampered by inflexible and outmoded legacy systems together with a naturally risk-averse culture which discourages innovation. Despite this, we believe that there is much which can be done to begin to address these challenges and are encouraged by the start made with the new strategy. Our response to that Strategy is driven essentially by our desire to share our global experience of Governments and private enterprise and make available that expertise to help UK Government in its objective of delivering citizen and business centred services efficiently, effectively and professionally.

### **Why Adobe?**

There are four reasons why Adobe is qualified to comment on the initial UK Government strategy :

- The broad suite of Adobe technology solutions are centred on the efficient and effective provision of services, whether it be in the public or private sector.
- Adobe is uniquely positioned to provide intellectual know-how and technology solutions focused on the management of documents and information.
- Especially with the Macromedia acquisition, Adobe is able to focus on the need to provide a highly interactive user interface, which is absolutely necessary to engage citizens
- In 2005, Adobe sponsored primary research by the Work Foundation into the drivers and dynamics of ICT usage within UK Government

## 2. Executive Summary

### Introduction

The vision of Adobe is: *To revolutionise how the world engages with ideas and information – anytime, anywhere, through any medium*

More specifically, the Government strategy of Adobe is to *Help transform services delivery by enabling information interoperability via a global information sharing infrastructure*

We believe the publication of *Transformational Government* is an essential first step on the way and acknowledge the Government's commitment to drive forward this initiative in a ten year programme.

However, we believe that Government faces significant challenges in achieving the objectives which the strategy sets out. Delivering the cost and efficiency savings demanded by the commitment to the recommendations of the Gershon review is hampered by inflexible and outmoded legacy systems together with a naturally risk-averse culture which discourages innovation. Despite this, we believe that there is much which can be done to begin to address these challenges and are encouraged by the start made with the new strategy.

### Centring services around the citizen & business

- Government will need a suite of services to meet the needs of all users. Our technology and software supports, and provides interoperability between, all channels including mobile, PDAs and TV, as well as desk top PCs. For instance, Flash is used as the interface in 85 per cent of mobile phones. The technology makes it possible to deliver services across a variety of channels. Even services delivered by telephone via call centres rely on technology for timely and correct information.
- The Cabinet Office, e-Government Unit, CIO Council and the Service Transformation Board are vitally important in communicating ICT developments throughout Government and co-ordinating and encouraging take-up.
- ***Adobe would like to host a workshop for the Cabinet Office, e-Government Unit, CIO Council and Service Transformation Board to help scope out the technology futures of tomorrow which may be important today.***
- In line with modern lifestyle changes, Adobe is developing improved access for people 'on the move'. In response to an ever-increasing demand for e-services via mobile technology, we can provide a secure encrypted digital signature for documents shared in this way.
- ***Adobe believes the Government should consider establishing a 'Centre of Excellence' for user interface design to promote best practice and standards across Government.***

## Facilitating Shared Service Delivery/Driving a Shared Services Culture

- We would like to see such examples of innovation in successfully sharing services promoted by the Service Transformation Board and by the Cabinet Office, allowing others to learn from these examples and also to give them the confidence that this approach works.
- ***Adobe would like to host or facilitate an event for Government to showcase successful examples of sharing services.***
- We would very much like to be involved in working with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Constitutional Affairs on “*developing standard solutions to store, maintain, secure and share data; and on developing more comprehensive data standards which facilitate the sharing of data.*” We believe we can bring significant technical expertise to this work.

## Delivering Services Professionally

- The combination of improved professionalisation of ICT specialists within Government and a reshaping of the partnerships between Government CIOs and suppliers will go a long way to addressing issues around delivery and public trust and confidence. We welcome this and look forward to opportunities to work with Government to achieve these objectives. The establishment of a “*standard assessment framework to manage IT supplier intelligence, relationships and performance across Government*” is, we believe, a major step in the right direction.
- One of the most significant issues Government currently face in its relationship with ICT suppliers is establishing procurement processes which encourage entry by innovative suppliers rather than discourage this. Government will only get the most innovative solutions to its ICT problems by addressing this as a matter of urgency and working to encourage this wherever that comes from.

## The road to 2015

- The foundation established now is essential to meeting the goals of realising the financial and service benefits of current and planned investments in ICT. Suppliers and Government must work together to get this right now.
- We would like to see the Strategy accompanied by:
  - A published and annually reviewed action plan
  - A benchmark of where we are today
  - Tracking of change and delivery

### 3. Centring services around the citizen & business

*“Achieving the vision will require key transformations:*

*Services enabled by IT must be **designed around the citizen or business**, not the provider, and provided through modern, co-ordinated delivery channels. This will improve the customer experience, achieve better policy outcomes, reduce paperwork burdens and improve efficiency by reducing duplication and routine processing, leveraging delivery capacity and streamlining processes.”*

*(Transformational Government Para 21(1))*

As a company which has based its success on designing innovative software around the needs of customers it is difficult to envisage that anyone would do it any other way. Transforming public services to the benefit of the citizen, business, taxpayers and front-line staff is absolutely essential if they are to retain public support. It is right that the strategy has placed this objective at the top of the list. Like Government, we too recognise that whilst technology can provide solutions and tools to help achieve transformation, technology is not an end in itself.

Technology as an enabler needs to underpin and support the requirements of the business and provide the touch points based upon a clear understanding of customer needs and behavioural patterns.

#### **Medway Council**

Medway Council provides services for a quarter of a million people in Medway. Medway faced the joint challenges of complying with the UK Online initiative by the 2005 deadline, ensuring citizens adopted e-Government services, improving customer services and simplifying form completion and processing. Since many people would be accessing the services from public terminals, security was a particular issue.

Adode worked with Medway to help them address these challenges one form at a time - starting with the customer complaint form. Despite not advertising the availability of the form, within three months the Council had received more than 250 forms. Next came the adoption and fostering application form. The new form featured built-in intelligence that shortened the overall form length according to the candidate's answers, made the application form quicker and simpler to complete.

Local users can now join the library, apply for council tax discounts, report racist or homophobic abuse, register for waste collection, order a memorial, apply to be a foster parent, or report potholes, vandalism, illegal dumping, graffiti and broken street lights - online.

Customers will be able to track the progress of any requests or complaints submitted to the Council via the Council's website.

## Working with the Work Foundation

Adobe wanted to develop an in depth understanding of the relationship between the citizen, Government and public services and how ICT helped or hindered that relationship. We commissioned the Work Foundation to conduct a year long programme of research throughout 2005. The results of this research were published as a series of reports on ICT and Public Services. These can be found at: [www.adobe.co.uk/idp-interact](http://www.adobe.co.uk/idp-interact).

The research included polling of the public and, uniquely, of front line public sector managers to help us understand what each of these audiences want from ICT and public services. The research identified a number of key issues including:

- The need to incentivise citizens to employ online services whilst at the same time allowing the citizen the choices in how they access services
- Staff need to be aware of how ICT will benefit customers so that they can help facilitate and encourage customer usage of ICT
- Both frontline staff and citizens broadly thought high levels of customer satisfaction is a key indicator of what makes services high quality.

The work carried out for Adobe by the Work Foundation has been shared with Ministers, officials and policy makers and we hope this has made a useful contribution to the work of the e-Government Unit in the lead up to the publication of the Strategy.

The overriding objective of Government ICT strategy up to 2005 was to get all Government departments and services online. Whilst it is true that all Government departments now have an online presence there is still an enormous way to go to get services online. The strategic shift of focus by the Government to how citizens and Government interact is the right one. The real challenge now is to ensure that the interface works for users. Citizens have been exposed to the notion of online services but this does not necessarily result in an increased disposition to use them.

In this context, the differing needs and demands of different citizens – from the elderly to the disabled – have become increasingly important. The appointment of Directors to lead service development for specific groups will help to ensure that these services are designed to maximise their accessibility and uptake.

Government will need a suite of services to meet the needs of all users. Our technology and software supports, and provides interoperability between, all channels including mobile, PDAs and TV, as well as desk top PCs. For instance, Flash is used as the interface in 85 per cent of mobile phones. The technology makes it possible to deliver services across a variety of channels. Even services delivered by telephone via call centres rely on technology for timely and correct information.

### **Working with the RNIB & the UK Cabinet Office**

Accessibility of eGovernment services is becoming increasingly important from a regulatory and Government perspective. The UK Government is at the forefront of development of new regulation of its current Government web guidelines.

Having complied with eAccessibility regulation in different parts of the world, Adobe has provided expertise for the position of accessible non-HTML formats in the UK Government Web Guidelines. Working directly with the UK Cabinet Office, the accessibility capabilities of PDF and Flash are clearly spelled out in the forthcoming version of the UK Government Accessible Guidelines for Websites.

As an example: at last year's UK EU Ministerial eGovernment conference in Manchester, the UK Cabinet Office distributed the report 'eAccessibility of public sector services in the European Union' in the fully Accessible PDF format.

Over the last year Adobe has been engaged with RNIB in numerous events to raise awareness of eAccessibility in general and PDF and Flash accessibility in particular. Target audiences are e.g. users, Government website developers.

In addition, Adobe also contributed to the DRC's initiative to develop formal guidance on website accessibility. This project, executed by BSI, recently published 'Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 78 - Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites'. Other contributors were RNIB, the UK Cabinet Office and W3C.

### **The Service Transformation Board**

The creation of a Service Transformation Board is key to co-ordinating and driving through the changes necessary. To do that successfully it needs to have significant Ministerial backing in pushing through the changes outlined in the Strategy.

The Service Transformation Board will be uniquely placed to monitor and identify developments in technology and to plan for Government to be able to take advantage of these developments.

Changes in the ICT industry are fast paced and constant. The onus should be on industry to keep Government abreast of these changes and continuously to look forward to the innovative application of new technology to improve the interaction between the citizen and Government, as well as between those delivering services.

The merger of Adobe and Macromedia, for instance, provides unparalleled scope for the merging of the technical capabilities of both companies, providing new ways of thinking about and doing things.

Government approach to ICT must take this constant forward motion of capabilities into account. Whilst it may not be possible to 'future-proof' investment, it is possible to invest in technology which is interoperable and flexible. Adobe's technology allows for the smooth, secure and personalised flow of forms-based information between users which is changing the way the business of Government is conducted. Building in flexibility and compatibility between systems, software and databases as far as possible helps to prevent Government from being 'locked in' to outmoded, incompatible ICT.

The Cabinet Office, e-Government Unit, CIO Council and the Service Transformation Board are vitally important in communicating ICT developments throughout Government and co-ordinating and encouraging take-up.

*Adobe would like to host a workshop for the Cabinet Office, e-Government Unit, CIO Council and Service Transformation Board to help scope out the technology futures of tomorrow which may be important today.*

### **Transforming the interface between citizen and Government**

Citizens and consumers have high expectations of both the private sector and the public sector – they want to interact with them when they want, in the way most convenient for them and for the information they provide to be handled securely and efficiently.

"Rich Internet Applications" (RIAs) are a new generation of technologies which are already revolutionising the way people interact on the web. "Rich" is the ability to incorporate client side interactivity and intuitive user interfaces with the ability to make your application available to almost anyone, anywhere. Now, after years of struggling with non-intuitive online experiences, organisations are realising that combining the reach of the internet with a rich user interface is the best of both worlds.

Gartner believes that "By 2010, at least 60 per cent of new application development projects will include RIA technology". There has been rapid take-up of this technology, particularly in Retail and Financial Services where the "web experience" is a key differentiator. A key driver for RIA adoption is the need to accommodate multiple devices channels, particularly mobile devices. Adobe is a leader in this market with the "Flex" development environment.

## HBOS

HBOS wanted to increase sales of offset mortgage offering by making their customer web experience more compelling and to cost effectively reach new customers with a powerful, easy-to-use mortgage calculator.

They wanted to do this by helping customers visualise the benefits of their offering through complex what-if scenarios. They wanted to deliver the same functionality via multiple segment-specific brands and deploy these through web and mobile sales force. The new 'rich' application had to work as well on older computers as on newer ones.

Adobe worked with HBOS to develop a Rich Internet Application mortgage calculator. We used Adobe Flex to develop an advanced calculation application for offset mortgages that runs in customers' browsers and on the mobile desktops of thousands of sales staff and brokers. We developed brand specific skins (user interfaces) which allowed users to work online and offline.

Adobe were able to deliver this in a rapid 8 week development cycle which was immediately deployed to both web and mobile sales force.

As a result HBOS saw an immediate 15 per cent increase in offset mortgage sales and improved customer follow through and retention. The responsiveness of call centre staff was enhanced.

Businesses run on sensitive information. Electronic communications make information security even more critical. For financial institutions e-mailing monthly statements, Government agencies making tax forms available on citizen portals, contractors sending design documents to partners for review, or companies preparing financial reports – Adobe Document Services allow the assignment of security parameters to enhance each document in the following ways:

- **Confidentiality** — Control who has access to the document.
- **Authorization** — Control what someone can do with the document.
- **Accountability** — Track what someone does with the document.
- **Integrity** — Show whether a document has been altered.
- **Authenticity** — Verify the source of the document.

By combining sophisticated solutions for document control, digital signatures, and document certification with the capabilities of leading security partners, Adobe helps organisations maintain control over how, when, and by whom documents are accessed. Trusted communications and smoother processes lead to reduced costs, improved employee productivity, and increased customer satisfaction – and critically – customer trust.

The commitment outlined in the Strategy to use customer insight to drive up-take of the best new digital channels and exploit new technologies as they emerge must be the right way forward.

In line with modern lifestyle changes, Adobe is developing improved access for people ‘on the move’. In response to an ever-increasing demand for e-services via mobile technology, we can provide a secure encrypted digital signature for documents shared in this way.

***Adobe believes the Government should consider establishing a ‘Centre of Excellence’ for user interface design to promote best practice and standards across Government.***

### **Milton Keynes Council**

Milton Keynes Council with partner HBS Business Services, are deploying Adobe software as the key technology that will enable straight through processing of local Government transactions. This is a first in the UK. Milton Keynes, HBS and Adobe have collaborated to ensure that a robust and scalable solution is deployed that truly addresses and champions the requirements of the e-Government agenda. This system not only addresses electronic Government requirements but enables Milton Keynes Council to be ready for the efficient Government requirements as stated in the Gershon Efficiency Review.

This system is truly unique in that it enables Milton Keynes Council to have a single Business Process for all Access Channels enabling a commonality for citizens accessing the Council Services, it also simplifies the processing of transactions through the council directorates by removing the requirement for data gathering and data entry, enabling Council Employees to have increased thought time on the transaction decision path. At every decision point the corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System is updated to ensure a full audit trail, with this information being available to Call Centre Staff through CRM and Citizens through the secure website with authentication being provided by Government Connect Register.

## 4. Facilitating Shared Service Delivery/ Driving a Shared Services Culture

*“Achieving the vision will require key transformations:*

*Government must move to a shared services culture – in the front office, in the back office, in information and in infrastructure – and release efficiencies by standardisation, simplification and sharing.”*

*(Transformational Government Para 21.(2))*

The shared services agenda has been driven by two things: the development of technical ability to share information and streamline processes securely across organisational boundaries; and the fundamental need to realise efficiency savings in order to return resources to the front line delivery of public services outlined in the Gershon Review.

Sharing services requires a change in culture and a change in processes. Many departments and services are already beginning to realise the benefits of shared services and can provide models for how this can be achieved.

### **Working with the DTI**

Adobe is working with the DTI to introduce an ‘on-demand’ Human Resources service. This means that staff will be able to log on and fill in expenses claims or other standard forms and submit these directly. Changes to internal business processes such as these are steps along the path to change cultures and moving towards shared services cultures. Research<sup>1</sup> has estimated that up to 85 per cent of business processes within Government are forms-based, whether electronic or paper based. Further, for every pound spent on producing the form itself, between £30 and £60 is spent on processing the form. There is enormous scope for realising efficiency and cost savings simply by addressing this issue with the technology available to streamline forms and processes.

We would like to see such examples of innovation in successfully sharing services promoted by the Service Transformation Board and by the Cabinet Office, allowing others to learn from these examples and also to give them the confidence that this approach works.

***Adobe would like to host or facilitate an event for Government to showcase successful examples of sharing services.***

<sup>1</sup> Gartner Organisational Cost Impact April 2000

## Balancing security and usability

The balance between security and usability of information and information systems has in the past more closely resembled a ‘trade-off’ of the two. In order to gain usability, security was to some extent weakened. Technology has moved us significantly beyond that point. Digital signatures, intelligent digital documents which have multiple layers of information and access, audit trails and the ability to enforce security protocols even after the document has left the originator have made it possible to share information securely, increase efficiency and release cost savings. Laboriously providing the same information to numerous departments and agencies and filling in paper forms would become a thing of the past.

Adobe’s already powerful offering in this area has been strengthened by the acquisition of the Digital Rights Management Division of Navisware. This software allows for the protection of documents and its capabilities are being integrated into the Adobe Livecycle Server. Now, not only PDFs but also **Microsoft Office** and **CAD (Computer Aided Design)** documents will be protected independent of how they are stored or delivered inside and outside the firewall.

The new Ministerial focus on sharing data without compromising privacy rights and with minimal bureaucracy is entirely deliverable with this technological capability. We would very much like to be involved in working with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Constitutional Affairs on “developing standard solutions to store, maintain, secure and share data; and on developing more comprehensive data standards which facilitate the sharing of data.” We believe we can bring significant technical expertise to this work.

It is important that a consistent approach is determined across Government for standards & architecture, led by the CIO Council, to ensure cost effectiveness and interoperability.

## 5. Delivering Services Professionally

*“Achieving the vision will require:*

*...broadening and deepening of Government’s professionalism in terms of the planning, delivery, management, skills and governance of IT enabled change. This will result in more successful outcomes; fewer costly delivery failures; and increased confidence by citizens and politicians in the delivery of change by the public services”.*

*(Transformational Government Para 21. (3))*

The Strategy highlights the need for Government to be more professional in how it plans, delivers, manages and governs technology-enabled change. We welcome the commitment to launch a new approach to the Government IT profession led by the Director for IT Professionalism. This is in the interests of suppliers and Government. Only with a shared technical and professional understanding of the parameters in which technology-based transformational systems are designed and implemented can these be completed successfully. Examples of where this has been lacking - and the consequences for poorly designed systems and solutions leading to poorly delivered services - have been too numerous in the past. This has damaged the reputation of ICT suppliers and public confidence in Government’s ability to deliver large scale projects.

### **Reshaping the relationship between suppliers and Government**

The combination of improved professionalisation of ICT specialists within Government and a reshaping of the partnerships between Government CIOs and suppliers will go a long way to addressing issues around delivery and public trust and confidence. We welcome this and look forward to opportunities to work with Government to achieve these objectives. The establishment of a *“standard assessment framework to manage IT supplier intelligence, relationships and performance across Government”* is, we believe, a major step in the right direction.

One of the most significant issues Government currently faces in its relationship with ICT suppliers is establishing procurement processes which encourage entry by innovative suppliers rather than discourage this. Government will only get the most innovative solutions to its ICT problems by addressing this as a matter of urgency and working to encourage – wherever that comes from.

### **Effecting business process change without disrupting service delivery**

One of the key challenges to the roll out of e-Government is effecting business process change for the benefit of future customers whilst maintaining a high level of service to existing ones. Legacy systems which are outdated and incompatible with other systems compound this problem.

**Encouraging innovative approaches from suppliers**

Adobe welcomes the commitment to use standardised contracts – particularly to allow usage of additional products and software from other suppliers and SMEs. Standardising contracts to allow for new entrants and second-tier companies helps unlock the door to innovative approaches which might otherwise not be considered.

**Working with the Carter Review of HMRC online services**

Adobe was pleased to be able to provide a detailed technical discussion document to assist Lord Carter in his review of HMRC's online services. The document addresses what has become an 'either or' question - should online services be based on PDF or HTML format? With our technical know-how we were able to demonstrate that this approach is redundant and that you can have the operational capabilities of both.

This apparent dilemma underlines how important it is for Government to work towards a standard transactional format.

## 6. The road to 2015

Transforming Government sets out a ten year programme for achieving change and highlights that a number of major programmes are already planned or underway, including the Olympics, the Census, Identity cards, Connecting for Health, reform of the Criminal Justice System, the harnessing Technology Strategy in education and modernisation of the Defence Infrastructure.

It is accepted that:

- the way that these projects are designed and delivered will shape the technological foundation for the future Government-wide programme;
- the successful delivery of these projects will shape public confidence in the ability of Government and ICT suppliers to deliver transformational change.

However, this can *only* be delivered if Government makes full use of the knowledge and expertise of technology suppliers to achieve these changes.

The new strategy initiates changes which we believe will help ensure that we are moving in the right direction to achieve this vision.

The foundation established now is essential to meeting the goals of realising the financial and service benefits of current and planned investments in ICT. Suppliers and Government must work together to get this right now.

We would like to see the Strategy accompanied by:

- A published and annually reviewed action plan
- A benchmark of where we are today
- Tracking of change and delivery

## 7. Conclusion

Technological advances in all areas of our lives are rapidly changing our expectation of service providers both in the public and the private sector.

Adobe has been at the forefront of these technological advances for 23 years. The combination of Adobe and Macromedia in the new Adobe will unlock an even more powerful set of solutions for creating, managing, and delivering compelling content and experiences across multiple organisations operating systems, devices and media.

We are pleased that Transforming Government acknowledges the changed technological landscape and addresses the changing demands of citizens as customers of public services.

We believe that the new strategy identifies a number of essential steps which need to be undertaken now in order to build the foundation for the achievement of its vision over the next 10 years.

We have set out in this response a number of areas – from hosting workshops to developing common standards and user interfaces - where we would like to work more closely with Government, public sector ICT specialists and policy makers to share knowledge and expertise, visualize and deliver the technological future.

Specifically we are committed to:

- Hosting a workshop for the Cabinet Office, e-Government Unit, CIO Council and Service Transformation Board to help scope out the technology futures of tomorrow which may be important today.
- Hosting or facilitating an event for Government to showcase successful examples of sharing services.
- Working with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Constitutional Affairs on *“developing standard solutions to store, maintain, secure and share data; and on developing more comprehensive data standards which facilitate the sharing of data.”*

We believe we can help revolutionise how Government and citizens engage with ideas and information. We hope that Government will take up this offer.