

TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNMENT ENABLED BY TECHNOLOGY

THE ATOS ORIGIN RESPONSE

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1. Introduction

Transformational Government offers a succinct and welcome perspective on how to optimise technology within the future delivery of public services. It identifies real opportunities and existing anomalies that merit strategic and focused attention.

Atos Origin is pleased that comment is invited. We have taken time to reflect on the strategy and submit observations and viewpoints in the hope that they may add value to its implementation.

2. Overarching Observations

In tone and argument, the strategy is both positive and balanced. It identifies some real issues and inefficiencies that, from any business management standpoint, are imperatives for action. These include meeting increased demand for electronic access to public services, the need to rationalise the Government's call centre as well as back office functions and migrating from high cost legacy IT systems to ones that truly give more "bang for the buck." The document also picks up on many of the challenges that make transformation and change difficult in the public sector. It is particularly pleasing to note that the strategy places centre stage an issue that has consistently challenged the IT supplier community; the need for government to build capacity and capability within its own cadre of IT professionals.

Yet technology is not unique in being an enabler of change and transformation. It is reassuring to note that the eGovernment Unit with its CIO Council recognises this in giving the strategy its title, "Transformational Government - Enabled by Technology". To leverage technology more successfully, Ministers and senior officials will need to continue to give commensurate backing and emphasis to other key enablers of successful transformation.

Like all large IT service providers to the public sector, Atos Origin shares government concern at the public criticism and loss of confidence that has arisen from technology projects that have failed to deliver. Government and private sector IT professional bodies must accept criticism and continue to learn from mistakes that have contributed to project failure. Yet other officials and professional advisors involved in policy formulation, investment planning, service design, procurement and contracting and, perhaps most importantly, in operational management must also raise the bar within their respective domains.

Operational business and transformational project leadership is in short supply. Government must look to find, and offer greater incentive to, those officials who have the talent to lead and deliver transformational projects that are increasingly complex and ambitious. These leaders need not necessarily

be career IT professionals as they have to tackle difficult and sensitive issues around changing working practices, customer service mindsets as well as human and financial resource allocations that are out of step with modern competitive economies. Atos Origin holds the view that the Government's vision for technology enabled transformational government is well argued and attainable. We similarly believe that it will occur sooner and at lower cost, if the leadership philosophy and culture achieves a better balance in focusing across the key tasks of realising benefit and managing risk.

To ensure that momentum is not lost, Government will need to develop an appropriate procurement strategy which balances the need to offer best value to the public sector whilst ensuring that the private sector investments are optimised. Similarly, the procurement timetable for the transformation programme must reflect the pressing need to gain the benefits described.

The four principal areas where clarification and discussion would be welcomed are as follows:

3. Leadership & Governance

One of the most important elements put forward by the paper is the creation of the Customer Group Directors and the Service Transformation Board, to 'join up' services. We are keen to have clarity around the authority and governance in these areas in relation to existing roles:

- What is the relationship between the CGD and the Permanent Secretary?
- Will the CGD have authority to make fundamental changes to departmental organisation, practices and budgets?
- What is the scope of the Transformation initiative? Will it include "touch points" that the public actually perceive as an interface with public services such as pharmacies, Post Offices, "Learndirect" centres, libraries etc?
- What is the relationship and roles in the MSP framework and those roles defined the transformation government programme?

We note that the paper indicates that the roles and responsibilities will be established by those 'first in post'. Given the criticality of these roles we would suggest that the job descriptions are developed in a small joint forum of suppliers and civil servants, building in the experience and knowledge of cross functional and matrix management skills.

Additional support needs to be given to those trailblazing these posts.

4. Measurement of Benefits and Success

As the success of the Gershon programme has shown, government departments can respond well to the challenges of driving out greater efficiencies within their department.

However, transformational government seeks a focus on greater effectiveness; to be perceived as effective, transformation government programme will have to place benefits realisation and management at its heart:

- What will be the benefits management strategy?
- How will the benefits be defined and quantified?
- How will Government offset the benefits against the cost of realising them?

There is a difference between IT for Government and IT for public services and the measurement systems will differ. Many of the departments are implementing a balanced scorecard to benchmark their corporate performance but a very different scorecard may be needed to measure success in the delivery of services to the public. Importantly ICT intended to support the delivery of public services must not exacerbate social exclusion and the role of the citizen in achieving transformational change in public services delivery must not be underestimated.

The transformational government programme should also be clear on its collective measurement system. There needs to be very clear accountability against individuals. Furthermore, these individuals need career and short term recognition and reward incentives linked to benefits realisation targets.

5. Shared Services

In respect of shared services the business case for Government is an obvious and compelling one.

Efficiency should not be the primary driver. The reference point should be how corporate services can make the most valuable contribution to public service; singly or collaboratively, centralised or decentralised, in house or outsourced. Shared services should be a means to an end and not an end in itself.

The paper recognises that there are major challenges around Data Sharing, Identity Management and Technology Strategy and Architectures. These issues must be actively addressed in a realistic timescale (months not years) or this will seriously impact the ability to realise the strategy.

Of course there is no perfect business model; different solutions will suit different circumstances. For example, conceptually optimal designs may be infeasible because of IT, people, estates or other constraints. Forcing collaboration across organisations with very different businesses and

interests could be counter productive, resulting in lowest common denominator service scope. However the financial benefits can only be realised by the development of consistent processes, be they HR, expenses policy or purchasing.

It is hard to see optimal delivery arrangements developing without high level direction and some coercion. To this end, incentive and governance models will be key to progress.

From our experience in the design and delivery of shared services we have drawn the following key lessons for success:

- A clear understanding of customer need
- Strong sponsorship needs to be cascaded down throughout Government
- Those sharing the services need to hold a shared vision for the desired future state.
- Emphasis should be placed on involving stakeholders in building and realising the business case to deliver significant benefits at pace
- Strong programme and change management are vital
- Radical simplification with minimum compromises, optimising the balance between automation of the routine and human intervention for managing exceptions
- Alignment of the IT, process and Shared Service strategy
- Focus on the creation of a high performance service culture giving consideration to both the quality of resource and the optimum location
- Select leaders based on the competencies required.

6. Security

The use of a secure personal identification system is a key enabler to streamlining many aspects of Government and the wider commercial, local authority and charitable fields. In particular, not only could it reduce fraud and error, but also save significant effort in well-established processes such as form-filling and validation; the latter being a direct cost to all Departments. It can also open up new opportunities for on-line services through secure tokens for on-line access, enabling the Government Gateway to provide the common secure route to most if not public services and avoid the need for signatures on paper. The portal can also provide citizens with a view of their records including their requests, responses, notifications and a personal audit trail of actions affecting them without fear of providing information to the wrong person.

The Identity cards scheme will provide a personal token that offers the certainty to support a wide spectrum of commercial and Government systems. A key to enthusiastic wide-spread adoption and the much wider

potential across all sectors is the provision of robust privacy protection and personal control mechanisms that are pervasive; the citizen needs to feel in charge of his identity, not a pawn to be checked. Essential mechanisms are strong barriers to impersonation when used for remote access and security token management that avoids replay. These require early and systematic specification to avoid the pitfalls that will be exploited mercilessly.

In the design of a solution, there are a variety of exceptional conditions that must not be excluded. For example, in many systems it is essential to cater for transactions initiated by a proxy. This is vital where the intended beneficiary of the transaction is unable, for whatever reason, to conduct the transaction personally.

High profile security lapses in Online/internet-enabled systems (unintended disclosure of data, fraudulent claims etc) will not be prevented by an identity card alone. However, in order to prevent the Identity Card being blamed for future failures, counter-measures need to be examined against potential future types of threat as well as current threats. Secure solutions need to be approached more holistically and with a longer term view than any sector of industry can be expected to support on its own. In particular, to support both security in depth and privacy, a combination of barriers will be needed to enforce the necessary levels of protection needed. This will facilitate both the citizen's access for monitoring and usage of his identity as well as support of Government and commercial requirements of the scheme. Procedural and detection techniques will be needed and will need to be balanced without imposing strait-jackets on citizen's management of their identity. These will impact on systems in all Government systems to re-align their view of identity with concepts of identity management from the ID Cards scheme, not to attempt to replace one inaccurate token of identity with another source.


Effective design of technical counter-measures combined with the all-important human processes will be the primary determinant of widespread uptake of the Identity Card scheme across society, rather than limiting its use to a few Government functions.

7. In Conclusion

This massive Programme of Change is well suited to using the best practice principles as defined within the Government's own framework for Managing Successful Programmes (OGC - MSP) and this could be adopted as the de facto change management method for the delivery of the programme

Atos Origin supports the adoption of *MSP* and would encourage suppliers to adopt this methodology across their public sector projects.

Meanwhile, the Gershon reviews should continue to drive out further efficiencies whilst supporting the adoption of shared services within a department by broadening their remit to departmental clusters.




We suppliers should identify our core strengths and identify the appropriate alliances to ensure we can offer a joined up response to government initiatives. Government and suppliers must be willing to share risk and reward of programme delivery and benefits realisation.

In addition we should participate in the boards /design authorities and the various working groups and review bids and current projects in the light of the Transformational government strategy.

The transforming government strategy offers an excellent platform upon which government and the private sector can develop and deliver the modern, joined-up public services needed by citizens and businesses alike.

Atos Origin will be pleased to work with Government, its suppliers and its stakeholders to ensure the emergence of a detailed plan action plan over the coming months and to participate in its delivery.



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