

# Improving Government through Better Use of the Web

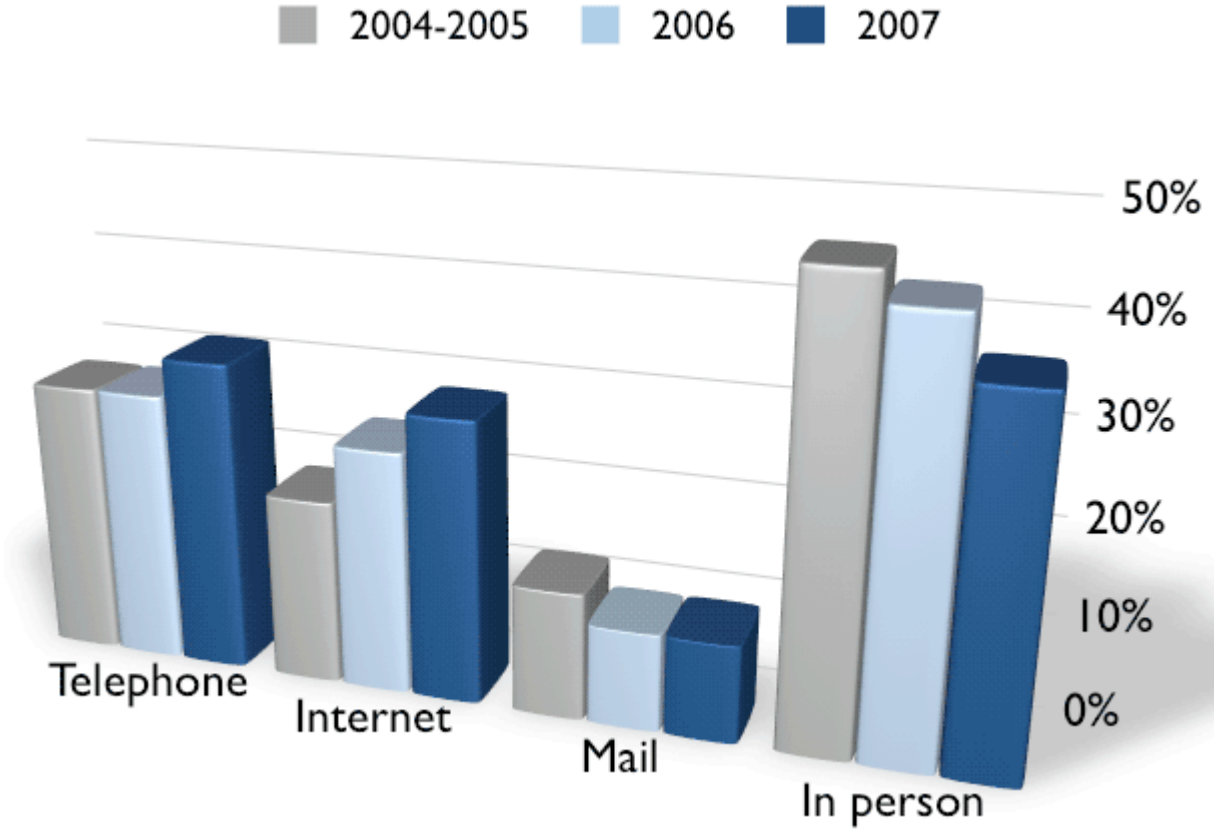
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# Disclaimers

- Formal work has just started
- We don't have the solutions!
  - *trying to identify the challenges*
- Not yet the view of the Group
  - *but the view of the [charter](#)*

# Role of the Web



Source: Australians' Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services – 2007



# Some Challenges

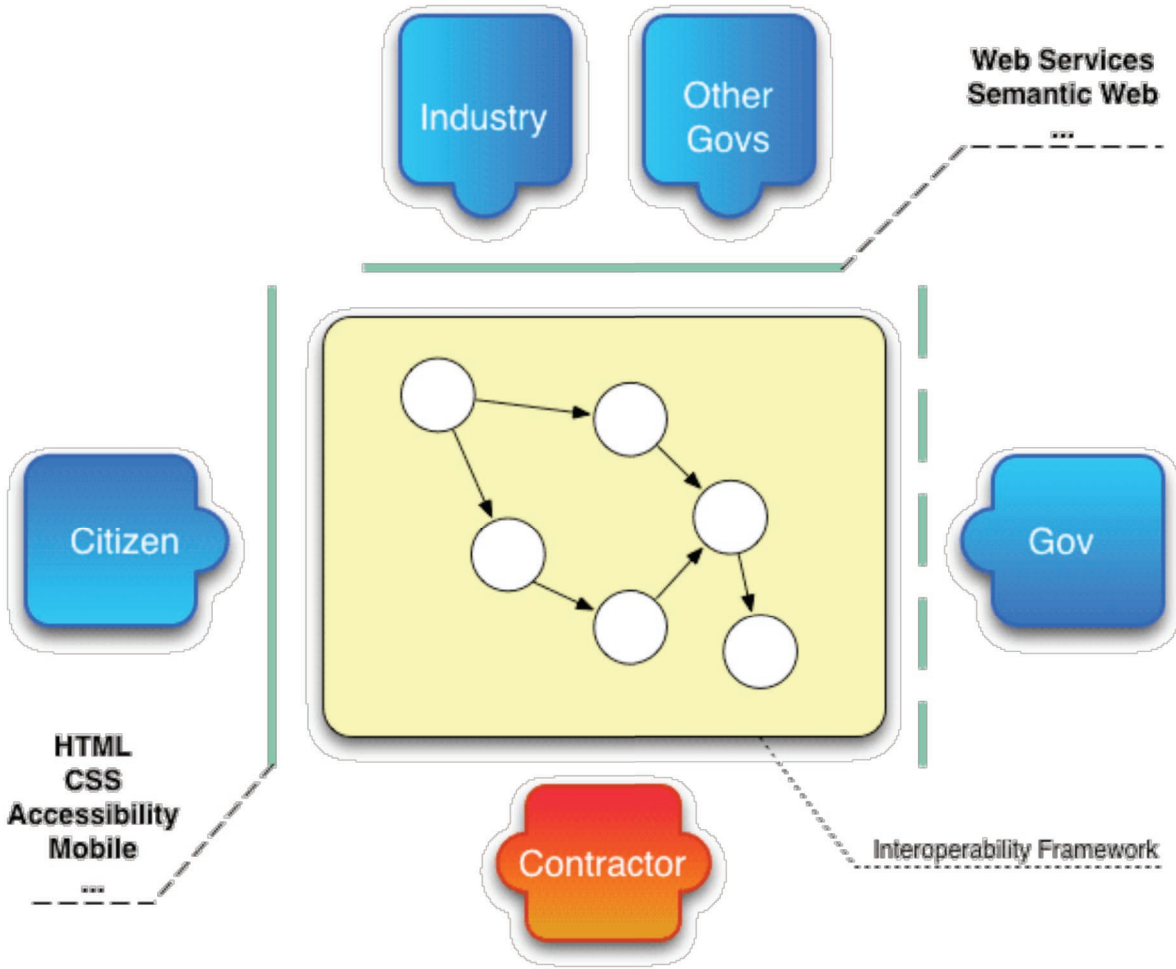
- 29% people would now prefer to contact government by internet, but more needs to be done...
- Improve content and design of websites
- Strategies to make government services easier to find
- Security is a fundamental condition

Source: [Australians' Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services – 2007](#)

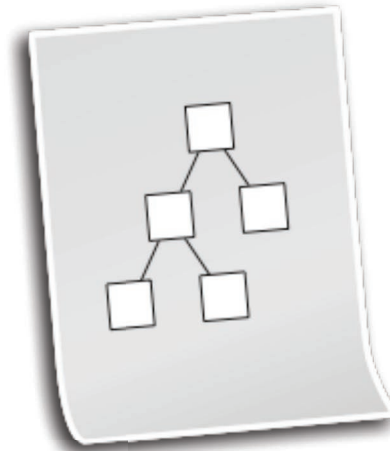
Activity to tackle issues in three main areas:

- Open Standards
- Participation and Transparency
- Data Integration

# Open Standards: Big Picture

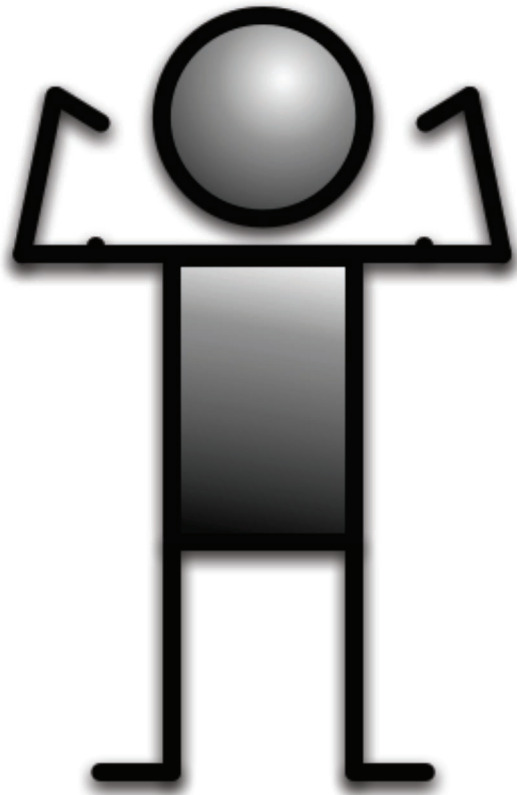


# Organization vs. User





# One stop shops



# But...

- Example: get to a purchase order

- *Click 2 javascript: links*

- *Go through 3 pop-up windows*

- *Finally, get to a URI like this:*

- [https://www.example.com/PublicAccess/PA\\_POCheck.aspx?IdPurchase=YES&QS=ER4TEngVFRMXeBQSERIfHxQ=](https://www.example.com/PublicAccess/PA_POCheck.aspx?IdPurchase=YES&QS=ER4TEngVFRMXeBQSERIfHxQ=)*

# Replay (with common sense)

- Example: get to a purchase order
  - *Click one regular link*
  - *Get to a URI like this:*  
*<https://www.example.com/PurchaseOrders/2008/05/19/IDXXX>*  
*or*  
*<https://www.example.com/PurchaseOrders/IDXXX>*

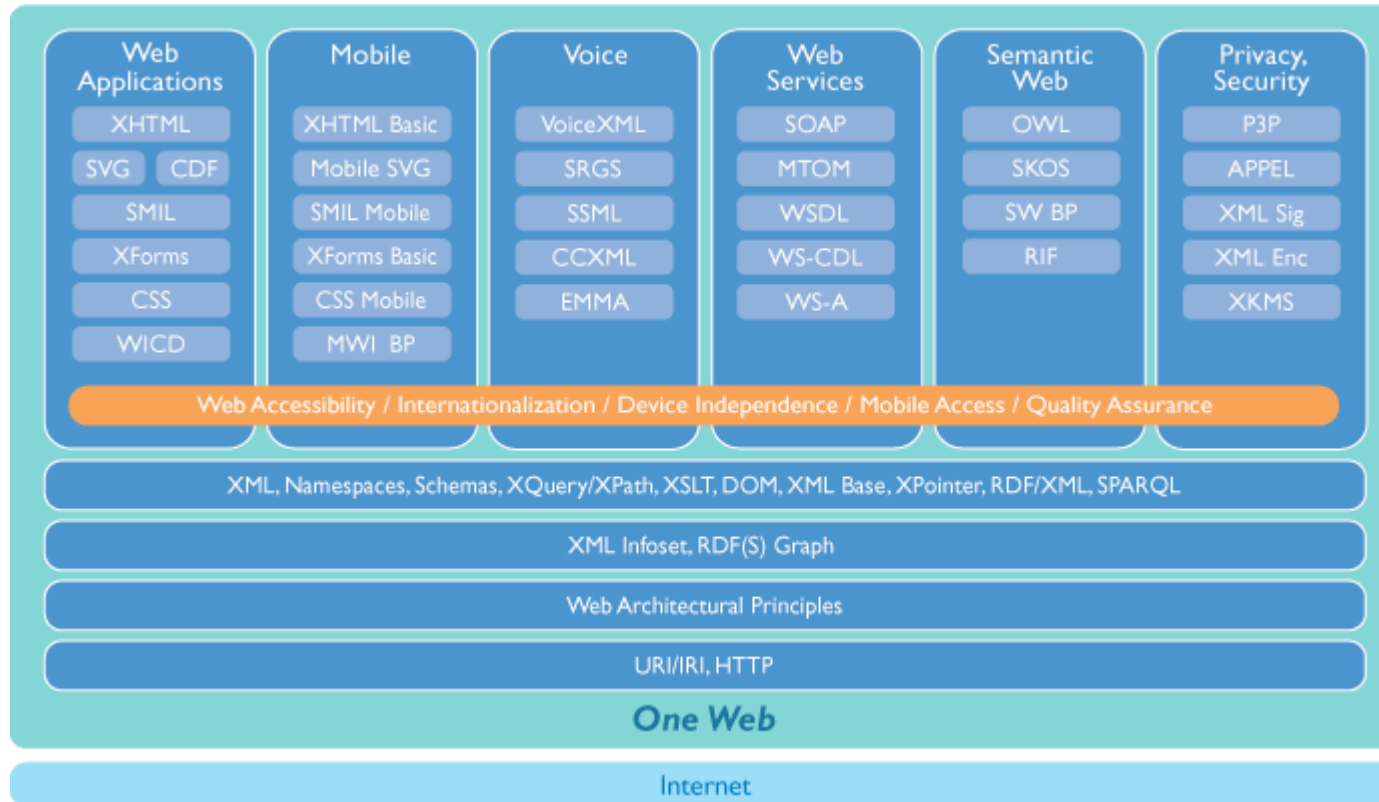
# Open Standards Policies

- Governments should not require people to purchase particular software to access information
- Promote longevity of information
- Openness helps to maximize reuse of knowledge
  - *colleagues, departments, agencies, citizens, companies, other governments, other partners*
- Open standards promote research

... and then...

**“application must be conformant with W3C standards”**

# What W3C offers



# Open Standards: challenges

- What's the best way to enable a given policy goal?
  - *What's the right tool for the job?*
  - *How should I use X plus Y?*
- Suite of open standards to solve the Web-related issues

# Participation and Transparency

**Users are going away...**



# How do citizens search?

- They often use a search engine
  - *very few go to the one-stop shop*
  - *even less to the given agency Web site*
- They get a pointer to Wikipedia (or similar)
- Happy with what they get

# Not convinced yet?

- In a Google search of five keywords or phrases representing the top five news stories of 2007, which will rank higher?
  - *Weblogs*
  - *New York Times' Web site*

# Inversion of Authority

THE ARENA FOR ACCOUNTABLE PREDICTIONS

## A LONG BET:

BET 2

DURATION 5 years (02002-02007)

“In a Google search of five keywords or phrases representing the top five news stories of 2007, weblogs will rank higher than the *New York Times*’ Web site.”



PREDICTOR  
**Dave Winer**

CHALLENGER  
**Martin Nisenholtz**

STAKES \$2,000

Congratulations to Dave and his preferred charity,  
The World Wide Web Consortium ([www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org)), which will receive the stakes!

### VOTE ON THIS BET

Here's how people voted on this bet:

side with predictor

216 people (66%)

[DETAILS »](#)

side with challenger

109 people (34%)

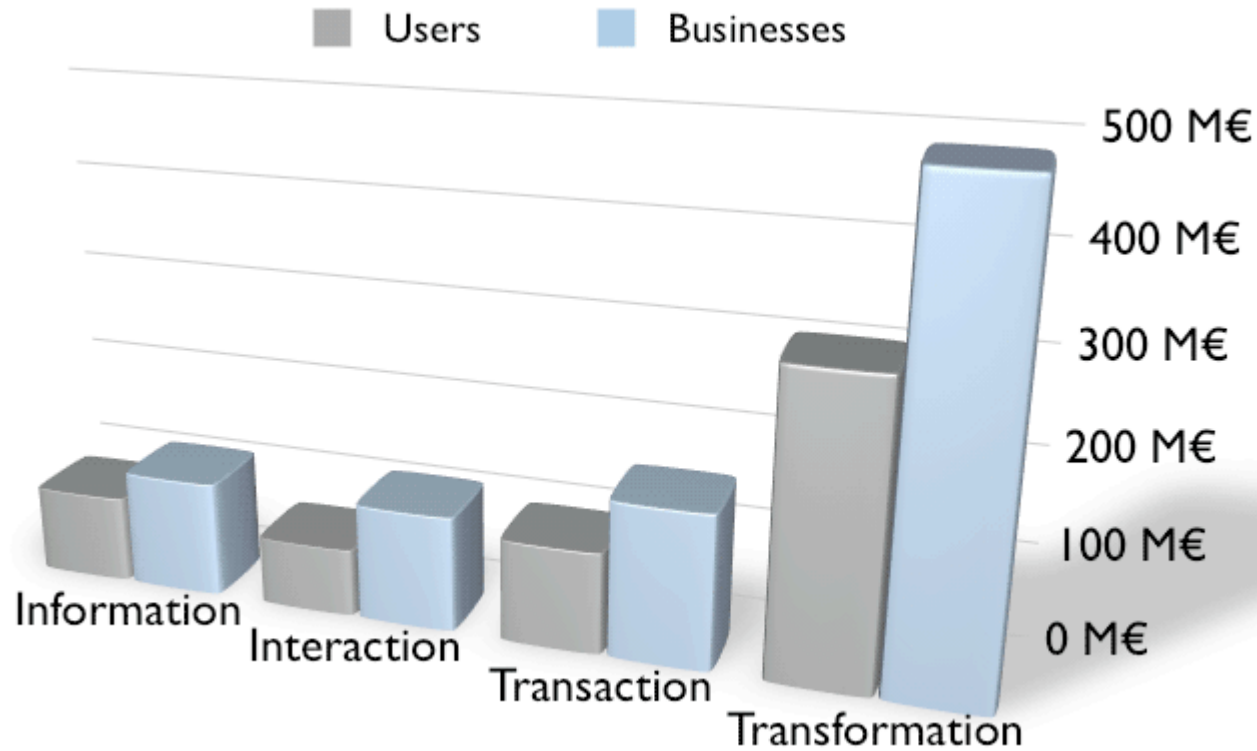
### DISCUSS THIS BET

What do you think of this bet? Post your thoughts, and read what others have added to the conversation.

[JOIN THE DISCUSSION »](#)

The Judgement: Dave Winer has won the bet!

# Sophistication is there...



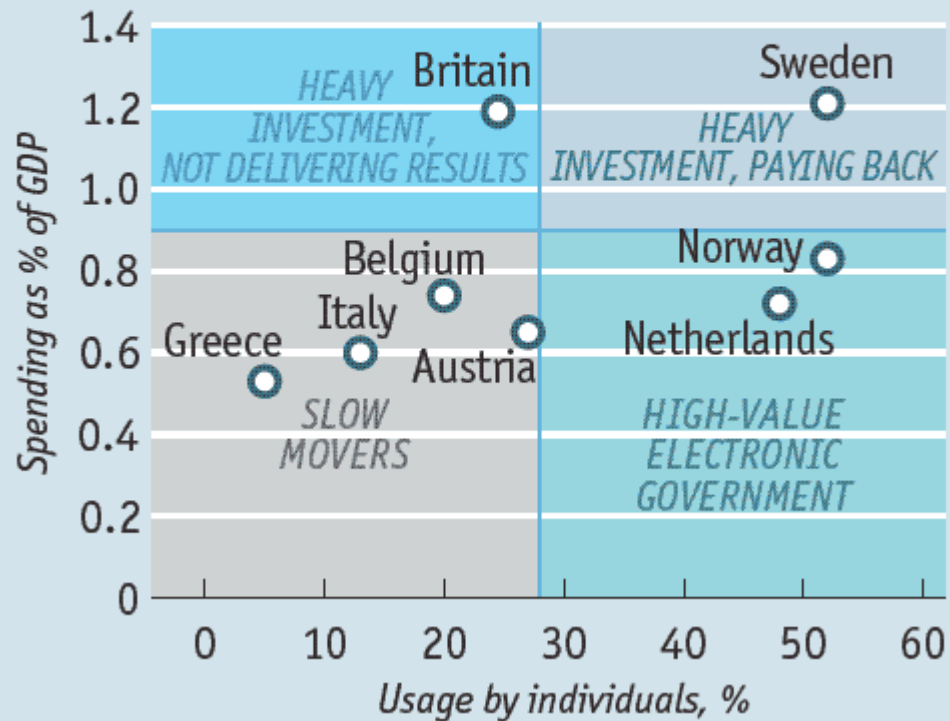
Benefits from eGovernment projects at different levels of sophistication to a mid-size OECD country

Source: OECD through The Economist

# ...but it's not enough

## The variable price of success

Online public services, 2005



Source: Deloitte Research (2005) through The Economist

# Organizational change is also a must!

- Fires in California (late 2007)

*We can no longer afford to work at the speed of government. We have responsibilities to the public to move the information as quickly as possible ... so that they can make key decisions.*



Brian Humphrey and Ron Myers (LAFD)

# PARTICIPATION

- Yes, in upper case!
- Find ways to engage the users
  - *Collaborative Tools*
- Change, Innovate
  - *if not, others will do it for you*  
(e.g. *third party services*)

# Put the information where needed

- Examples:

- *US Library of Congress + Flickr = Commons*

- *USPTO: Peer Reviewed Prior Art Patent*

- *Third Party Services:*

*FixMyStreet, Follow the Money, MapLight, OpenCongress, GovTrack, TheyWorkForYou*



# Risky? challenging... fun!

- Reliable source of information?
- To mix or not mix
- What happens to the authoritative source of information that the government is?
- ...but also
  - from *Chicago Crime* through *London Metro Police* up to *Show Us a Better Way*

# Transparency has many faces

- Accessible Web site
- Open Government Information

# Granularity and Provenance

**Avoid Obscurity by Default**

# Participation and Transparency Challenges

- Use collaborative tools
  - *balance risks*
  - *design a contingency plan*
- Identify provenance of information
- Release as much as possible
  - *balance with restrictions*

## Why XML is not always enough?



# Semantic Technologies

- Example: reducing the cost of road excavations
- Geographic Referencing Framework
- ...many more SWEO cases

# Linked Data

- No more scraping
  - *cost, maintenance*
- Start simple
  - *RSS, Atom, Microformats, GRDDL, RDFa*
- No need to throw away your existing systems, build on top
- Metadata are the goal (data mashups)
  - *Linking Open Data project*
- Open Government Data Principles

# A Word of Advice

- Authoritative source
- Trust
- Provenance
- Security
- Integrity



## Linked Data (maximize data integration and re-use)

- Increase metadata
- Roadmap for transitioning from existing systems
  - *Don't throw away, build on top*
- Metadata use policies
- Trust-related challenges

# Mobile Phones



(Photo Source: [NY Times](#) )

- What services to prioritize? How? Where?
- **Mobile Web for Social Development**
  - *W3C Goal: to make the Web accessible, relevant, usable and useful for under-privileged populations and rural communities*

## Improving access to government through better use of the Web

- **Interest Group:** forum for discussion
  - *Collective effort*
  - *Governments, Industry, Citizens, Civil Societies, other International Bodies*
- Identification and description of existing challenges and propose ways to address them
- Three Task Forces: Usage of Web Standards, Transparency and Participation and Seamless Integration of Data
- Outcome:
  - *Creation of an **interdisciplinary forum***
  - *Identification and documentation of challenges and propose **good practices** to tackle them*  
(Group Notes)

# Removing the "e" from eGovernment

- Online services not just an alternative
- Becoming “**the**” public services
- More important than ever to solve problems

# Thanks and Q&A

- José M. Alonso <[josema@w3.org](mailto:josema@w3.org)>
- Slides at: <http://www.w3.org/2008/Talks/0926-Corfu-JA/>
- eGovernment at W3C: <http://www.w3.org/2007/eGov/>