The Digital Society:
Better government services and new opportunities for democratic participation
(invited talk)

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Context: Internet use in Norway

- 67% of all men and 54% of all women use internet daily (2006 statistics)
  - Above age 67 is the largest growing user group of Internet banking services. The use of Internet among this group has doubled from 2004 to 2006 (from 10% to 20%).
- Digital divide is fading.
- Full broadband coverage (>99%) in 2008
  - Government funded broadband program
  - (60 million Euro / 2006-2008)
What is e-Government

• The use of ICT within government to provide better services to its citizens
• Improve government efficiency and quality
  – Externally
  – Internally
Early e-Government

• Provide electronic services for citizens 24 hours / 7 days a week

• Self-service

• Transactions through forms
  – Applying for Kindergarten
  – Tax return statements through Internet

• Technology, not organization
e-Government today

- Focus on backoffice integration
- Process engineering
- Multiple channel service delivery
- Portals and customization
- Organization, not technology
Plans and documents

- National ICT strategy: eNorway 2009
- Government whitepaper on ICT-policies
- Municipal ICT strategy (The Digital Leap)
  - Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
- Recent report on government renewal effort (December 2007)
UNDESA (UN)

• E-government readiness (2008)
  – Norway ranked as no. 3 after Sweden and Denmark
  – Norway ranked as no. 10 in 2005

• Web measurement (2008)
  – Norway ranked as no. 4 after Denmark, Sweden and USA
  – Norway ranked as no. 14 in 2005

• E-participation (2008)
  – Norway ranked as no. 16 😞
Challenges (Accenture 2008)

• While the government ranked 6th overall, it ranked 10th in the cross-government collaboration pillar.
• In addition, in terms of citizen voice scores alone, Norway ranked 19th out of 22 countries for cross-government collaboration.
• A number of other studies, including studies from the Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development, show that Norway must develop a more committed coordination between public-sector players.
Coordinating e-Government

• Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (DIFI) was established on January 1\textsuperscript{st} 2008
Major developments

• MinSide.no (MyPage.no)
  – One stop portal for citizens

• AltInn.no
  – One stop portal for businesses

• Regjeringen.no
  – Government information portal
New strategies

• Electronic communication is to be the main channel of interaction with public sector
• Self-service kiosks in public offices
• Provision of 24 hour government ICT helpdesk
Current standardization efforts:

• Reference catalog for open ICT-standards will be established
• (New) ICT standards for public administration is under development
• Strategy for eID and electronic signatures is in progress
• National standard for public transportation e-tickets
Current standardization efforts:

• Accessibility (Universal design) legal requirement
• More rigorous requirements for public websites
New services

• Electronic police station
• Electronic submission of reports of crime
• Electronic submission of building plans
• Electronic customs auction (ebay..)
New services

• E-invoices to government agencies
  – (Denmark requires use of e-invoicing)
• E-procurement
• Electronic prescriptions
Own R&D

• Vestfold University College collaborates with consortium of 12 Vestfold municipalities.

• Some projects:
  – Common Portal Information Structure
  – Digital Planning Dialog / Høykom
  – Webcasts of local council meetings
Common Portal Information Structure

• Every municipality has its own portal
• Vestfold is densely populated area, five cities close to each other
• But citizens live in one, work in another, and use the cultural offerings of the third
• Project to establish a common information infrastructure
Common Portal Information Infrastructure

• Collaboration brings better opportunities to use research methods in the design process
  – Click analysis
  – Search keywords
  – Exit interviews
  – Usability experts
Webcasting project

• Webcasts of local government meetings
• Rationale: Transparent government
• User requirements:
  – No extra personell!
  – Inexpensive
  – Cross indexing / integration
Webcasting project

• Electronic user survey in City of Tønsberg
  – High response rate
  – Demographics
  – Employees and politicians

• In-depth interviews with politicians
Digital Planning Dialog

- Third generation e-Government application
- Integrates backoffice systems
- Democratic participation
Integration of systems

Case handling and filing system

Data

Geographic Information System

Customer specified module

Integrated web-based GUI

Data

Information used to populate list of documents, and to show current status

Comments submitted by stakeholders through a dialog box

Web-based access
Reflections

• Ambitions: Yes
• Lack of funding (only partial)
• Risk vs. willingness
• Efficiency is good
• But creating value is more than saving money
More information

- [http://egov.hive.no](http://egov.hive.no) has references to papers and links to actual solutions.