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ICA Round Table

Keynote Address:

Leadership in Government Service: Building the Trust
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Good Afternoon. Before I begin, I would like to know who in this audience is familiar with Accenture's reports on Leadership in Government Service in what used to be called e-Government Research - some; thank you. For those of you who are not familiar with our recent report, up till this year one of the key issues in our report was a country ranking, this year we decided to do things decidedly different. We looked in turn from the leaders approach and not only did we do our natural language research in the 21 countries that we study; we talked to 8,600 citizens in 21 countries and we also interviewed more than 4 dozen executives who have been key in helping their countries make strides in customer service.

We talked about their plans; their strategies; we found out what worked what did not and while we may return to the rankings next year I think that this year we have found a number of interesting things. Let me put this into context.

Accenture has been studying e-Government or government customer service for the past seven years. This was our seventh annual report and we have observed that e-Government and customer services have gone through clearly marked stages, the first of which is just the establishment of e-Government; getting the infrastructure in place; getting the portals working etc. Secondly came, using e-Government; transactions back and forth; driving citizen uptake, to actually use portals and websites.

Recently, we have seen governments internalising their principles of what we call leadership in government service and those are providing services that are citizen-centered, cross government, both horizontally and vertically, multi-channel and proactively communicate it.

Both the United Kingdom and Spain, have for example, have recently announced broad, sweeping agendas. The one in the United Kingdom is their transformational government strategy, and it truly reflects a critical shift for the country. Its towards a view of technology as an enabler as opposed to an end upon itself, and it also acknowledges the important structural changes that a government must undertake in tandem. Things like shared services. In addition, they created a new position called Customer Group Directors which are individuals who are responsible for transforming services in relationship to a particular demographic, so parents or senior citizens. A brand new role for the government. And in Spain, a modernisation plan takes into account all the initiatives within their previous e-government strategy but into a much broader agenda and is pushing transparency, timeliness and simplified processes. My third finding was that successful governments were advancing by putting into place new modes of operation that vary dramatically from the past. As governments have developed increasingly rich e-government programmes, they have created

a new vantage point for themselves. They can now see that the true picture of leadership in customer service is a whole of government perspective. Its much more complicated than they previously understood, its not just about technology. Much of their existing infrastructure is going to be inadequate to support those broad, whole of government initiatives. In response, leading governments have begun to implement new internal structures and processes. Some of these include simplification and business re-engineering, consolidation and forays into shared services.

Let me give you some examples of these: regarding simplification and business re-engineering, the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry, specifically their online business licensing service, did a government-wide review of start-up licences required by 30+ agencies; irrelevant and obsolete licences were deleted and other licences were merged or turned into a one-time, one-off lifetime licence. From a consolidation perspective, in France the budget department in the Ministry of Finance created a new department to drive state modernisation. This was formally four separate agencies, now combined into one, and three of those four agencies had previously directly reported to the Prime Minister. In Canada, an excellent example of shared services, in the forming of their shared corporate administrative and information technology services. This was done to make the country's internal operations more effective and efficient, and it was one of the government's key components in its overall service transformation agenda, the other being the outward-facing service Canada initiative. And even the US government, in 2004, established lines of businesses to consolidate various activities within the government to make things more efficient.

Now, what's interesting is these ideas and processes are not new to the private sector, they have been around. But in many cases they are very, very new to government.

Our fourth finding was that successful governments are using a combination of four proactive tactics to promote adoption of their service strategies. The notion of if you build it they will come does not work. A number of leading countries still struggle with converting high internet usage into usage of e-government and what you see on the chart here is this shows e-government usage from 2005 to 2006 what has the change been according to our citizen's survey over the past couple of years and what is interesting is it is fairly flat basically plus 7 to minus 7 there hasn't been a lot of change and with the number of initiatives that are being introduced with the activities and driving traffic that's surprising and in some cases disheartening. Adoption and changing perceptions needs to be through pro-active marketing. Marketing in government. It is not something that usually goes together. And the four tactics that we are seeing leading governments use are a stick which is mandatory, regulatory pressure, the carrot which is incentives for on-line use, marketing poll which is campaigns to increase awareness and educate users and something we call high-touch push which is help and support, showing people how to use the technology and let me give you some global examples of each one of those. Regarding the stick, in Denmark since 2005 the government has only accepted electronic payment – full stop. If you cannot accept them we can't pay you. As far as the carrot goes the United States and a number of other countries have on-line tax filing, you get your money quicker if you file electronically. As far as the marketing poll one example is Singapore's biz-file system 2 where they were looking for feed-back suggestions and they held a raffle giving away prizes like I-pod minis and other things to get people to write in, tell them what they liked, what they didn't like about the system, getting their citizens involved and as far as high-touch push goes another example comes from Singapore in a number of agencies where kiosks had been implemented they actually put helpers there, someone would come in queue up, someone would approach them, what would you like to do today, did you know you can do it with the kiosk, oh, I'm not comfortable – let me show you and what was interesting is after we released the report my father came to visit, just an aside, he's 75 years old has flown a lot, took him back to the airport and went up to the kiosk and said let me have a credit card I'm going to check you in, I'm not comfortable with this, I'd like to talk to someone, oh, it's fine, I use it all the time, let me check you in, I'd like to talk to someone and the woman behind the counter was very perceptive, she came out and

she said, oh, sir you look like a smart man you're not going to let a machine get the best of you, well, no, my dad's a smart man he's not going to let the machine get the best of him, she showed him how to check in and since then he has never talked to an agent at the airport unless he has to, he checks himself in because he's a smart man he can use this technology.

Our last finding is more of a cautionary one in that today's leaders may not be tomorrow's leaders – you know, as governments make great strides in using innovation in the service approaches to connecting with the citizens it is becoming clear that there is still a number of divides. Whether and how governments can breach these divides and connect with their citizens is what is going to make a leader in the future. And these divides are not just about technology, it's not just about structure and organisation of government. Governments also need to realise that the culture of a country and its citizens added to its e-norms need to be taken into account.

Another challenge is that service channels are exploding. It gives citizens greater opportunity to interact with the government; government's greater opportunity to interact with citizens but it has increased complexity. Building the ability to cooperate across all boundaries in all level of government defines easy answers and hence the whole of government challenge. Now, as the chart on this slide shows – in more than half the countries we surveyed the citizens' perception reporting that government services and departments were working together at least fairly efficiently, is declining. Not a good perception. Many governments are compromising their ability to prepare for the future by focusing too heavily on tactical services and not enough on the bigger picture. How governments' ways to meet these challenges to connect strategy, to implementation will determine which governments create an environment of service value and implicit trust for their citizens and make themselves the leaders of tomorrow.

The quote that we have here from Andrew Sheffield; Mr Sheffield is the director of service transformation for the U.K., and he said we need to have the ability to be quite self-critical. Even if we launch something and we think it's absolutely terrific, we should be going back and saying, actually, how can we make it better? And he gave an example that supported this: one of the first things that the U.K. did was car registration, car tax, licensing online. The required field for that was the mileage of your vehicle. People were getting to the field, realising it was required, going to the hallway, getting their keys, going into the garage, going to the driveway, starting the car, noting the miles and coming back in. And the session had timed out through the government's security. So as Andrew said, every time you think you have something right, the registering of cars online, you can make it better (make that session a little longer).

So recommendations, what about them? Our recommendations are based on the studies we've done over the past seven years as well as working with hundreds of governments around the world. Importantly, ICT isn't a magic bullet, but we believe, and as Stuart says, it's an enabler. And as the chart shows, we found that as you build trust with citizens they are more likely to use more and more sophisticated technologies.

Let's talk about some specific recommendations. First of all, dried out complacency. The leaders of the future will be the ones that have a taste for continuous improvement. They talk, they send delegations, they read, they learn. And this event and organisation is an excellent example of that. Secondly, set your own standards for excellence. Develop a strategic vision of service that reflects your own culture, your own aspirations, your own values. What works very well in one country may not work at all in another. Organise for effective execution. Recognise that good policy's only possible when it's linked to good execution. Aggressive link cooperate private sector learnings but in a way that makes sense in a public service context. Leverage the private sector's best thinking, leverage anyone's best thinking frankly, but fold the innovations into a governmental framework. Develop accountability and transparency, especially across initiatives that's being multiple governmental organisations. Implement strong models for building accountability due to ensure progress is made, and

make sure you secure support at all levels of government. Develop continuity of leadership. Without continuity of leadership transformational initiatives tend to fall apart, and even in countries with frequent turnovers of administration, leadership continuity can be established in the civil services. And most importantly, strengthen your connections with the citizens, but use technology to continue to push the limits of what can be done online. Get your citizens engaged, market your services. Remember, 'if you build it, they will come' does not work.

In conclusion let me just share with you a few final thoughts. As I mentioned before, a government's future for citizen service will determine whether they build an implicit trust with the citizen and continue to progress, or fail to improve their connections with their citizens and stall. Transformation of this magnitude encompasses much more than just ICT or e-government. Its one that values e-government as a catalyst but moves beyond that into all channels of interaction and across all levels of government. Developing true leadership and customer service takes time, takes effort, it takes money but the pay-offs are tremendous for both the governments and the citizens they serve. I hope, for those of you here, whatever you are in the path of high performance, that our study and today's brief presentation have been helpful. Thank you for your attention, and if we have time I would be more than happy to entertain any questions from the floor.

Ann Stewart, Australia

John, thank you very much for taking time to come and speak with us today on your review. A couple of things that I just wanted to explore with you. One is, and you will excuse me for being quite frank in my questioning but that's what we do. Just what do you think are the very relevant bits from doing studies which do a ranking across various countries rather than doing something that's more in depth within a country in its own right. So if there is a possibility to do something a little broader. And the second part is in terms of the sample size that you use, I think you indicated something around eight and a half thousand for twenty plus countries, do you think that's really representative?

Jon Brakebill

On and off, toggle switch, everyone can learn about technology, thank you. To your point, Countries are very divided in the country rankings. The leaders love them, the people love them, and it's a good media thing for us. This was the first year we didn't do it. This was also the first year I was in charge of the report. What we found is over the past few years things weren't changing all that much, even if you rank companies to create a plan, operationalise it, and expect to be able to have metrics around change in twelve months is not realistic. So we are looking in this forthcoming year at different things we can do. When we are talking about country's specific, we do have the twenty-one country reports that are in the back that go to a further level of detail. I will be around this afternoon and this evening, and I would be very interested to hear of any thoughts that you have. We've looked at perhaps doing country ranking over time, so how has Canada's services done compared to how it was doing in the past. Versus, say, Singapore, is Canada still the leader because they did more poorly over the last couple of years but they still did less poorly than everyone else? So we are truly open to ideas, and these are not meant to be a competition. We started with e-government and if the time has come to put them to the rest, then the time has come to put them to rest, we're not out to truly make it a competition. Regarding the sample size, 8,600 individuals, 400 people in every country, 600 in the US, we worked with an independent research company out of Ireland that does this for a living, and according to our internal research, and everyone else its statistically relevant. We look at internet users, its 18+ internet users, and we can slice and dice the various metrics a number of different ways, and if you have specific questions about Australia we would be more than happy to dance with those for you. It is based on, to my knowledge the largest sampling size of any of the reports that are even similar to this globally.

Nachman Oron Israel

May I ask you: I come from Israel. I wonder how do you decide to which countries to go, and is Israel one of the point to one countries that you are surveying?

Jon Brakebill

Israel is not one of the countries. This was started mainly where Accenture has a presence where we have our researchers, where we have people, and unlike the UN and Mr Bertucci and his team who charted 192 countries, in Trinidad and Tobago, etc. So we are looking at potentially including other countries, you lose to some extent is the continuity, the year on year continuity that you have we are definitely open to looking at that. It becomes unwieldy at some point, not sure what point that is yet.

Abraham Sotelo, Mexico

On the same line of questioning from Dr Oron, Mexico was considered up to 2005 and, yes I understand you don't have a government practice in Mexico which up to yesterday, there was one. So, for us it would have been really nice to be included in this final report, because we have been following the development of Mexico and would like to put this opportunity // consider that to at least next year it would be nice to have this. Again, probably I don't understand, there might be some other reason besides not having a government practice in Mexico, which you do have, but other than that I would like to talk to you later on about that, because for us it was something important and now we were left out of the picture, and this is a surprise to us by now. Thank you.

Jon Brakebill

Please, let's do talk later. The decision was made at levels above me; I'm not passing blame. But we did do a lot of the research on Mexico this year and if you provide me with your contact information I would be more than happy to share what findings we did have even though they weren't published in the report.

Frank McDonough, US

From an early reading in the Country Reports there is submitted within this council, one of the preliminary thoughts is that for a period of a few years, we had some countries racing ahead pretty fast: Canada, Australia, the U.S., the U.K., for example. Today it seems like all other countries are catching up, and our member countries across Europe, Asia, North America, all seem to be sort of in the same place with regard to a whole of government, with regard to e-gov. Those who moved the fastest earliest seem to be in a kind of "moving not so quickly now". Canada, who's re-thinking for about a year, on where to go. First of all, if you agree with that, do you see any reason why there be a slow-down and a re-thinking? Are governments running into new types of barriers as they reach higher levels? Or any insights?

Jon Brakebill

That speaks exactly to our fifth finding. Today's leaders may not be tomorrow's leaders. What we were finding is that one of the more significant things is getting on ahead and not maintaining, putting efforts towards maintaining a pro-active strategy. Secondly, as I mentioned before, a lot of the operational infrastructure that was into place that made a country and e-government leader is now not what they need to take it to the next level, and become a leader in customer service or build the trust with the citizen. Its expensive, you all know its very, very expensive and re-tooling or even just converting from one system to another is different.