Government – citizen communication through the web

Call for papers to a Special Issue in Systems, Signs & Actions

---------- *Extended time for submission: December 10* ----------

Background and focus

The web is nowadays a dominant media for communication between public agencies and citizens. Governmental information is published on websites to be read and used by different citizens. Such websites may also contain e-services to be used by citizens for their communication to government, e.g. application for permits and allowances. There are many examples of websites with one-way communication from government to citizens (Ancarani, 2005). There is, however, a growing number of websites that contain two-way communication between government and citizens (ibid; Goldkuhl, 2007). People can initiate and follow cases (requests, applications, etc.) through the web. There exist different degrees of sophistication in the web interaction between government and citizen. This has been described in different taxonomies and stage models; see e.g. Layne & Lee (2001), Siau & Long (2005), Andersen & Henriksen (2006), Goldkuhl & Persson, 2006, and Kim & Grant (2010). Many of these frameworks describe an evolutionary process of e-government from simple one-way communication to complex and integrated services. Later frameworks and development efforts also include wider citizen participation and uses of web 2.0 principles (Chun et al, 2010). Recent development also includes enhanced personalisation of services to users (Millard, 2011).

Many governmental websites contain an immense volume of information and it might be very hard for citizens to find what is desired. Governmental information can be structured in many ways and there is a great challenge to find principles that make navigation in large websites easy (Tan & Benbasat, 2009). There exist websites for single agencies, but there also exist websites that integrate information and services over agency borders (Janssen & van Venstra, 2005; Siau & Long, 2005). Such portals/websites are challenging to build and they can be either facilitating for citizens to use or confusing to use (Wimmer, 2002; Gouscos et al, 2007).

Quality of governmental e-services has been conceptualised and investigated taking different perspectives. Inspiration has been obtained from general service quality frameworks (Zeithaml et al, 2002; Barnes & Vidgen, 2003; Halaris et al, 2007; Alhyari et al, 2012). There are other arguments for establishing quality criteria especially adapted for the e-government context (Tan & Benbasat, 2009; Tate & Everman, 2010). The focus in these quality assessments is on the citizen as a user. When taking a two-way communication perspective it is also necessary to consider effects on the governmental agencies and their staff. To receive information from the citizens through the web often entails changes in business processes (Scholl, 2003; Chourabi et al, 2009; Corradini et al, 2010) and information systems interoperability (Janssen & Cresswell, 2005; Klischewski & Scholl, 2006).

E-government policies and all kinds of laws and other statutes regulate website communication with citizens (Alpar & Olbrich, 2005; Allouache & Khadraoui, 2011; Goldkuhl, 2011). Besides classical issues of user – system interaction, the regulative nature of governmental communication adds more complexity to the design of governmental websites.

A communication perspective on governmental websites implies a clarification of
- the communicators (governmental agencies and citizens) and their intentions and actions
- the website as media, content and communicative actions

Investigations of governmental websites may get lost in structural and technical issues. This Special Issue emphasises the web as relational media with communicative purposes and with governmental and citizen users. Information and communication are fore-grounded (Goldkuhl & Persson, 2006; Axelsson et al, 2007; Goldkuhl 2007).

Systems, Signs & Actions (www.sysiac.org) is an open access journal focused on information technology, work and communication. We now invite scholars to submit papers on governmental websites as means for communication between government and citizens. Government should be understood as all kind of governmental bodies that have contacts with citizens. Citizens include both private individuals and representatives for business companies.

Papers for this Special Issue should deal with websites and e-services as means for communication between government and citizens. Different aspects of websites and e-services can be treated as long as communication is acknowledged.

Topics

Proposed topics to address; other related topics are welcome as well:

- Different types of governmental websites
- Different types of governmental e-services
- Information services vs. transaction services
- Governmental portals
- Integration in websites between agencies
- Principles for structuring large information sets in governmental websites
- Citizens' searches on governmental websites
- Legal transparency in governmental websites
- Website communication vs. other contact channels
- Website communication and the arrangement of business processes
- Quality criteria for user-interfaces of governmental websites
- Governmental websites and citizen behaviour
- User identification and authentication on governmental websites
- Use of social media for government – citizen communication
- E-government policies and web communication
- Design of websites and e-services
- Citizens' influence on the design of governmental websites
- Stakeholder perspective on design of governmental websites
- Public-private partnership for development of websites and e-services
- Evaluation of websites and e-services
- Consequences for citizens and co-workers using governmental websites
- Competing websites for governmental contents and citizens' choice
- Websites with mixed public and private contents

- Communication theories and governmental websites

Editors for this Special Issue

- Karin Axelsson, Department of Management and Engineering, Linköping University (karin.axelsson@liu.se)
- Göran Goldkuhl, Department of Management and Engineering, Linköping University (goran.goldkuhl@liu.se)

Submission and dates

- Research papers between 5 000 - 10 000 words are welcome. Original research papers or developed papers from conference or workshop papers. The papers will go through a regular peer-review process.
- Submit to submission@sysiac.org.
- Extended submission date: December 10, 2012
- Planned publishing: 2013

References

Alhyari S, Alazab M, Venkatraman S, Alazab M, Alazab A (2012) Six Sigma approach to improve quality in e-services: An empirical study in Jordan, *International Journal of Electronic Government Research*, Vol 8 (2), p 57-74

Allouache W, Khadraoui A (2011) Strategies to Construct e-Government Services in Compliance with Legal Framework - Case Study: Services Dedicated to the Algerian Health Insurance, *Journal of e-Government Studies and Best Practices*, Vol 2011

Alpar P, Olbrich S (2005) Legal Requirements and Modelling of Processes in e-Government, *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, Vol 3 (3), p 107-116

Ancarani A (2005) Towards quality e-service in the public sector: The evolution of web sites in the local public service sector, *Managing Service Quality*, Vol 15 (1), p 6-23

Andersen K V, Henriksen H Z (2006) E-government maturity models: Extension of the Layne and Lee model, *Government Information Quarterly*, Vol 23, pp 236–248

Axelsson K, Melin U, Persson A (2007) Communication Analysis of Public Forms – Discovering Multi-functional Purposes in Citizen and Government Communication, *International Journal of Public Information Systems*, Vol 2007 (3), p 161-181

Barnes S, Vidgen R (2003) Interactive e-government: Evaluating the web site of the UK Inland Revenue, *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations*, Vol 2 (1)

Chourabi H, Mellouli S, Bouslama F (2009) Modeling e-government business processes: New approaches to transparent and efficient performance, *Information Polity*, Vol 14, p 91–109

Chun S A, Shulman S, Sandoval R, Hovy E (2010) Government 2.0: Making connections between citizens, data and government, *Information Polity*, Vol 15, p 1–9

Corradini F, Falcioni D, Polini A, Polzonetti A, Re B (2010) Designing quality business processes for e-government digital services, in Wimmer M et al (Eds. 2010) *EGOV 2010*, LNCS 6228, p 424–435, Springer, Berlin

Goldkuhl G (2007) What does it mean to serve the citizen in e-services? - Towards a practical theory founded in socio-instrumental pragmatism, *International Journal of Public Information Systems,* Vol 2007 (3), p 135-159

Goldkuhl G (2011) Generic Regulation Model – the Evolution of a Practical Theory for E-government, *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*, Vol 5 (3), p 249-267

Goldkuhl G, Persson A (2006) Characteristics of Public E-services: Investigating the E-diamond Model, in *Proceedings of the First International Pragmatic Web Conference*, Stuttgart

Gouscos D, Kalikakis M, Legal M, Papadopoulou S (2007) A general model of performance and quality for one-stop e-Government service offerings, *Government Information Quarterly*, Vol 24, p 860–885

Halaris C, Magoutas B, Papadomichelaki X, Mentzas G (2007) Classification and synthesis of quality approaches in e-government services, *Internet Research*, Vol 17 (4), p 378-401

Janssen M, Cresswell A (2005) An enterprise application integration methodology for e-government, *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, Vol. 18 (5), p 531-547

Janssen M, van Venstra (2005) Stages of growth in e-government: An architectural approach, *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, Vol 3 (4), p 193-200

Kim D-Y, Grant G (2010) E-government maturity model using the capability maturity model integration, *Journal of Systems and Information Technology*, Vol 12 (3), p 230-244

Klischewski R, Scholl H J (2006) Information quality as a common ground for key players in e-government integration and interoperability, in *Proceedings of the 39th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*

Layne K, Lee J (2001) Developing Fully Functional E-government: A four-stage model, *Government Information Quarterly,* Vol 18 (2), p 122-136

Millard J (2011) Are you being served? Transforming e-government through service personalisation, *International Journal of Electronic Government Research*, Vol 7 (4), p 1-18

Scholl H J (2003) E-government: A special case of ICT-enabled business process change, *Proceedings of the 36th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*

Siau K, Long Y (2005) Synthesizing e-government stage models – a meta-synthesis based on meta-ethnography approach, *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, Vol 105 (4), pp. 443-458

Tan C W, Benbasat I (2009) IT mediated customer services in e-government: A citizen's perspective, *Communications of the AIS*, Vol 24, Art 12

Tate M, Everman J (2010) The end of ServQual in online services research: Where to from here?, *e-Service Journal*, Vol 7, (1), p 60-85

Wimmer M A (2002) Integrated Service Modelling for Online One-stop Government, *Electronic Markets*, Vol 12 (3), p 149-156

Zeithaml V, Parasurman A, Malhotra A (2002) Service quality delivery through web sites: A critical review of extant knowledge, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol 30 (4), p 362-375