



# Driving High Performance in Government by Mastering Information Management

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Point of View

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Accenture Information  
Management Services

Information management and high performance  
in the public sector

A public sector agency exists to empower, govern and provide services to its citizens, but the mechanics of government are really about managing information. In some cases, information has value itself as the product being delivered to constituents. In other cases, information is the basis for a nearly endless number of activities and services: protecting the people, enforcing the law, determining eligibility for benefits and administering a system affecting millions of citizens and workers.

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When government is seen properly as an extended enterprise that is primarily about managing information, it becomes clear why the need is so intense today for technologies, processes and structures that support better information management. Information management solutions can help governments deliver better service to citizens and support decision makers with high-quality and timely data, whenever and wherever they need it. Ultimately, advanced information management capabilities help public sector organizations advance toward high performance, with more effective and more efficient government.

## The public sector information environment

Consider the challenges of managing information in the public sector today:

### **Proliferation.**

The amount of information available at any moment can be bewildering to anyone attempting to manage it. A recent report from industry analyst IDC<sup>1</sup> notes that the quantity of digitized information alone today exceeds 161 exabytes (an exabyte is equal to one quadrillion kilobytes) and is expected to grow to 988 exabytes by 2010. (That represents about 3 million times the information in all the books ever written.) Compounding the problem is that the sources and types of data are also exploding. Fueled in part by Internet usage, information now includes not only structured data managed by enterprise systems, but also unstructured materials such as text documents, e-mail, instant messages, visual images and audio.

### **Disorganization.**

The portion of the sum total of information that resides within a government agency is generally scattered throughout different technology platforms and multiple systems dedicated to specific purposes such as enterprise resource planning, supply chain management and citizen service management. Many agencies are looking for more robust IT and enterprise capabilities as well as data governance processes and procedures.

### **Isolation.**

Government organizational structures may impede the ability of agencies to share information with each other. Yet the need to cooperate—to provide services in such areas as health information and border protection—is expected to grow dramatically in the coming years. Agencies will be required to collaborate with both internal and external organizations—a capability that agencies must now focus on developing.

### **Contamination.**

Separating the valid data and information from that which is out of date and incorrect has become more challenging. A recent survey of 300 CIOs—part of Accenture's ongoing research into the characteristics of high-performance companies and government agencies—found that the potential damage posed by aging or incorrect data is deeper and more widespread than generally believed. In fact, in another survey of more than 160 CIOs, we found significant gaps between CIOs' existing data management capabilities and their goals when it comes to enforcing data quality standards across multiple agencies<sup>2</sup>.

### **Regulation.**

Government CIOs must provide assurance as to the security and integrity of data sources, and must comply with continually evolving regulatory requirements such as Sarbanes-Oxley, Basel II and the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA).

### **Frustration.**

With so much information of uncertain quality, government executives must focus even more on eliminating delays and cost overruns in multiple areas—something of great concern today as pressure continues on governments to deliver higher levels of service without increased funding. Inadequate information management capabilities can impede effective citizen service. A recent Accenture survey of more than 1,000 middle managers of large companies found that these workers spend about 25 percent of their time just looking for information—and that only about half the information they receive has the value required to do their jobs<sup>3</sup>. According to Royce Bell, CEO of Accenture Information Management Services, “the findings show that companies are failing to get the right information to their employees. People and organizations cannot keep up with the volume of information produced by technological innovation. Managers in particular are having great difficulty navigating a rapidly expanding sea of information, and the situation is only getting worse.

The effect of this difficult information environment on the performance of government can be exacerbated by changes in administration and leadership that often occur at more frequent intervals than in the private sector. Such discontinuity adds to the challenge of carrying out long-term information management programs and aligning those efforts with organizational strategies.

1. Source: IDC, “The Expanding Digital Universe: A Forecast of Worldwide Information Growth through 2010,” March 2007

2. Source: “Cultivating High Performance through Information Management,” Accenture 2007

3. Source: “Managers Say the Majority of Information Obtained for Their Work Is Useless,” Accenture 2007

## The need for an enterprisewide approach to information management

Government executives are trying to work within limited budgets to address their information challenges, often through various one-off, point solutions. Particular administrations or leadership teams may initiate a technology-based program focused on data integration, perhaps, or data warehousing, document management, customer reporting or other kinds of ad hoc analyses.

But rather than easing an agency's information management challenges, such solutions may simply add to them by creating additional layers of information that then need to be managed as well.

Accenture's vision for successful information management, fueled by research and by practical innovations working with leading government agencies around the world, is an enterprisewide approach, focused on managing and creating value from all of the diverse information assets needed to plan and run a high-performance government.

## Characteristics of an enterprisewide approach

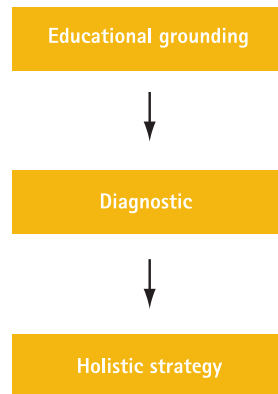
Our enterprisewide approach includes:

- **All types of data**—from internal and external to structured and unstructured.
- **The entire information life cycle**—from acquisition to storage to cleansing to integration to analysis to, ultimately, delivering timely and relevant information for decision making.
- **Technology**—for managing information and for providing security, governance models, enterprise standards and practices, as well as the roles and responsibilities associated with these activities.
- **Integrating people, structures processes and technologies**—to regain control of information and drive high performance for the long term.

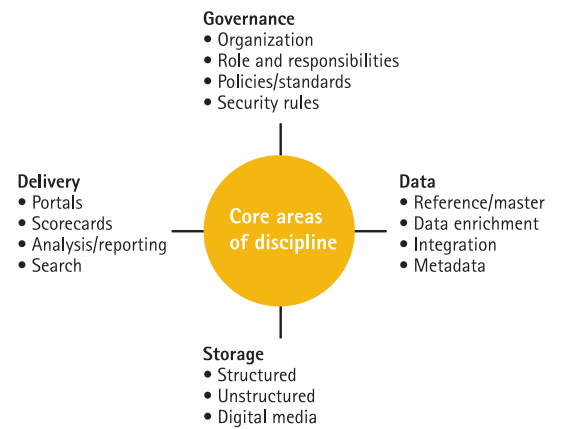
Accenture's framework for a comprehensive approach to information

## Accenture's phased approach to enterprisewide information management

Phase 1: Defining



Phase 2: Supporting the strategy



management (see figure) provides for secure, integrated access to applications, content and business intelligence supported by practical governance models that make sense for the organization. Using such a framework, government agencies can more effectively define an information management strategy and then support it, even over discontinuous periods of leadership.

## Figure: Accenture's phased approach to creating enterprisewide information management capabilities

Educational grounding is often the starting point for an agency. Even executives well-versed in the primary information management issues and technologies often need to find common ground in their understanding and approaches. With agreement as to an agency's information needs and challenges, and common definitions of key terms and concepts, executive sponsors have a better chance of managing the change journey over an extended period.

Diagnosing a government's existing information management situation is also vital. Such an analysis begins with a series of broad questions: How could better information help this organization perform at a higher level, or carry out its operations with greater speed, effectiveness and efficiency?


How could service to citizens improve if government employees had the information they need at their fingertips? How could management decision making supported by more timely data enable an organization to take advantage of new opportunities more quickly?

The Accenture Information Management Diagnostic, for example, was developed based on a series of information management implementations at large government clients. The diagnostic enables an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of existing information management capabilities across six core areas:

- Strategy
- Governance
- Delivery
- Data
- Storage
- Security

The diagnostic then supports government decision makers as they envision a new end state for information management and develop a business case for specific improvement opportunities.

By spending time upfront defining the information strategy in detail, teams find that the next phase of work, which includes the



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Chief financial officer and business systems division chief,  
public sector agency for measurement standards and technology

implementation and support of new information management capabilities, proceeds smoothly and they are able to achieve greater buy-in from key stakeholders. As shown in the figure, implementation requires attention to several key areas of discipline, including data, storage, delivery and governance.

### An enterprisewide approach in action

What does an enterprisewide approach to information management look like in an actual implementation?

Accenture worked on a recent information management initiative with a government agency that develops and promotes measurement standards and technologies. The project was intended initially to focus on implementing a financial management system.

As part of the diagnostic process, however, Accenture and the agency's

project team members stepped back to take a larger strategic view, asking themselves: What additional value would result if users could access information not just for reporting purposes but for forecasting and planning? How would the user experience improve if tools for managing and analyzing information were available through a single portal interface? What if that portal also could provide access to news, educational materials, user forms and online support? And what if users could access all business systems through the same portal?

Answers to those questions became the basis of a broader strategic vision for the agency's business portal, which serves as a launch pad for integrated access by 10 agencies to more than 15 business system applications and related content.

# Driving high performance: Measurable benefits from enterprisewide information management

A comprehensive approach to information management has produced measurable benefits to a number of government agencies pursuing high performance. These benefits include:

## Integrated information accessible through a portal or other single-source channel

Effective information management solutions provide a clear line of sight into organizationwide data. Advanced analytics, content management and knowledge management systems enable integrated and high-quality data to be made available to decision makers and service employees at their point of need through a comprehensive information portal. Such portals enable a key characteristic of high-performance governments, as identified by Accenture's ongoing research program: continuous efforts to improve the quality of service at lower cost.

Accenture has worked with multiple governments at different levels on advanced information management programs resulting in portal solutions.

For example, New York City once faced the daunting challenge of managing information and government services comprising more than 4,000 entries on 14 pages of the New York City telephone book. Not surprisingly, residents were often confused about where to find the help they needed. To address this need, New York City experts, working with Accenture, structured information on more than 6,000 services and division offices existing throughout the city's government. The result: a

comprehensive and searchable knowledge repository that now makes it possible for call center workers to quickly find what they need to help citizens. Today, city residents can dial 3-1-1 anytime, day or night, and speak with a live citizen service representative who can assist them with a wide range of service requests and information in 171 languages from Amharic to Zulu. During its first year of operation, 3-1-1 received more than 8 million calls and is now averaging more than 40,000 calls per day.

## Streamlined and transformed technology environment

An information management program can also play a vital role in supporting a more sweeping change initiative touching upon technology and global reporting capabilities. At a national taxation agency executives initiated a comprehensive change program to streamline and modernize its technology environment to provide improved client experiences and operational savings. The office's existing environment was made up of multiple, separate and ad hoc reporting architectures across the business. This situation had led to a high cost for reporting and limited confidence in the quality of the underlying data.

Working with Accenture, the tax agency identified advanced analytics as a key enabling technology for the agency's future business improvement. A new

business intelligence solution was implemented to support the wider change program, including a new enterprise data warehouse and single reporting architecture. The data warehouse provides a single, integrated repository of enterprise data. The project team also deployed predictive analytics to provide improved case selection.

The new solution, which also includes an information portal, resulted in significant cost savings, due in part to lower costs to deliver meaningful reporting information. New customer relationship management applications created as part of the project, and improved access to timely and relevant information, are enabling the agency to improve customer service satisfaction.

## Better decision making

As the agency for measurement standards and technology found through its information management program, better information delivery is actually the means to the ultimate destination of achieving high performance through better decision making. Because new information governance practices are a part of an effective information management project, executives have greater assurance that they are steering their organizations based on the best data available.

According to the measurement agency's chief financial officer and business systems division chief, "Before we implemented the information portal,

users often had to make management decisions based on two- or three-week old data that had to be manually reconciled. Now that users can access their business systems and data through the portal, they have more time to spend analyzing integrated data that they know is current. They can make more informed management decisions based on that data.

## Improved understanding of customers and citizens, resulting in better and more focused service

The analytics and intelligence capabilities that are developed as part of a comprehensive information management program help improve the quality of service to citizens and raise satisfaction levels among constituents.

Improved service was extremely important to the business unit of one government's monetary bureau, which manufactures and sells collectible coins. The business unit's primary customer base is aging, now averaging more than 55 years old. Increased competition was coming from the secondary market for distributors and other collectors. The business unit was also suffering from aging, complex and expensive information systems and ineffective direct marketing programs that resulted from the absence of an integrated information management system.

The agency's business unit worked with Accenture to address these challenges with a business-first approach, supported by technology solutions in a number of areas including an online store, data warehousing, reporting and business intelligence. Through data consolidation and cleansing for all customer channels, new reporting and analytics are available for the agency to make improved decisions that have resulted in a more effective direct marketing campaign and increased customer satisfaction. Thanks in part to the new information management program, revenues grew 23 percent in the first year and operational costs fell more than 50 percent.

## Better content management, with improved data consistency and reliability across enterprise systems

Integrated management solutions can help government organizations improve the value delivered from their enterprise (ERP) systems such as SAP and Oracle. Integrating data from disparate sources, including ERP verticals, enables more consistent and reliable, enterprisewide data.

For example, when the Belgian Federal Government initiated an electronic government program to improve service, it teamed with Accenture to deliver a solution that would consolidate information from multiple government agencies into a single point of access. A new government portal allows Belgium's citizens, businesses and government employees to use a convenient, intentions-based approach to accessing 10,000 pages of unique online content and delivering transactional services.

The portal solution is especially innovative in its integration of leading applications from third-party vendors, including enterprise resource planning (ERP) providers. A critical step in the creation of the Belgian portal solution was a content management due diligence phase where Accenture helped define the navigation structure and information taxonomy, as well as the means to manage and update the classification system.

It was this content management definition phase that enabled the government to effectively bring together information from such varied systems and vendors into a successful solution. The portal includes more than 400 government employees and 14 government agencies that contribute content to more than 10,000 Web pages and 3,000 navigation nodes. The platform is capable of handling up to 6,000 hits per second. The single portal solution saves the Belgian government the cost of maintaining separate portals for each department and agency, and is creating numerous additional operational efficiencies.



## Achieving high performance with Accenture Information Management Services

For governments at any level, anywhere in the world, Accenture can help drive high performance through more effective information management solutions. Our deep skills and experience in information management reside in the Accenture Information Management Services organization—a global, cross-industry practice focused on collaborating with clients on solutions that can help them better manage their business, interact with citizens and business partners, and make better strategic, financial and operational decisions.

Our comprehensive information management approach, based on a unique strategic framework, combines technological prowess with a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities unique to the public sector. Our information management solutions for

government are based on deep capabilities in service areas that include:

- Business intelligence
- Content management
- Data management and architecture
- Portals
- Service-oriented architectures
- Storage
- Security

We have a highly efficient network of more than 40 delivery centers around the world that leverage repeatable processes, world-class assets and highly skilled information management resources. We draw on these centers to deliver fast, cost-effective and high-quality information management solutions.

Accenture is vendor-independent, and thus committed only to the right technology components that match the information management environment of our clients and help them achieve their goals. We have alliances with the major players in the information

management field, including vendors in enterprise solutions, business intelligence, content management, customer analytics, customer relationship management and much more.

As government organizations face increasing pressure to acquire, store, manage and analyze more—and more valuable—data, many of them are turning to Accenture for help. Our proven enterprisewide approach and deep capabilities in information management help businesses and governments optimize their use of critical business information. As a result, our clients are able to make more informed decisions, run their organizations more effectively and take a significant step on their journey to high performance.

## Contact us

For more information on how Accenture can help drive high performance for your public service organization through advanced information management strategies and capabilities, contact:

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## About Accenture Information Management Services

Accenture Information Management Services is a global cross-industry organization focused on bringing clients solutions to better manage their business, interact with customers and make strategic, financial and operational decisions. Working across Accenture's service lines and industry groups, this network of 13,000 professionals\* specializes in information management services including business intelligence, portals and content management and data management and architecture. For more information about Accenture Information Management Services, visit [www.accenture.com/informationmanagement](http://www.accenture.com/informationmanagement).

\*as of August 1, 2007.

## About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With 178,000 people in 49 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$19.70 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2007. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).