

Design Principles for Essentially Digital Governance

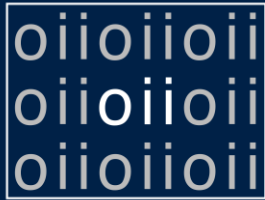


Helen Margetts

Director

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“We have worked with government departments to build sense-making capability with social media data – but meet cultural resistance in formal institutional processes to using this kind of part-authenticated information. I want to find ways of overcoming that resistance in government. “



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Design Principles for Essentially Digital Governance

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Essentially Digital Governance (EDGe)

- Now by 2015, governments ARE their digital presence
- Calls for redesign of state placing 'digital' at the core
- Moving beyond Digital Era Governance
- Overcoming cultural barriers
- Using design principles - and normative principles



Cultural Barriers to EDGe

- Bureaucracy and hierarchy are government's core competency
- "Government doesn't do cool" – "it only works if it is boring"
- Young people are not real people
- No part-authenticated information
- Premium levels of security applied to ALL information
- We stand alone - the state does not integrate into society's networks
- Users (people!) have no presence, no role, no feedback, no voice

Principle 1

Do it once

- Plan, procure, provide services once
- Single central core of servicing units
- Government as a platform
- Platforms are 'partly finished products'

Eg. App Store or 'software stack'

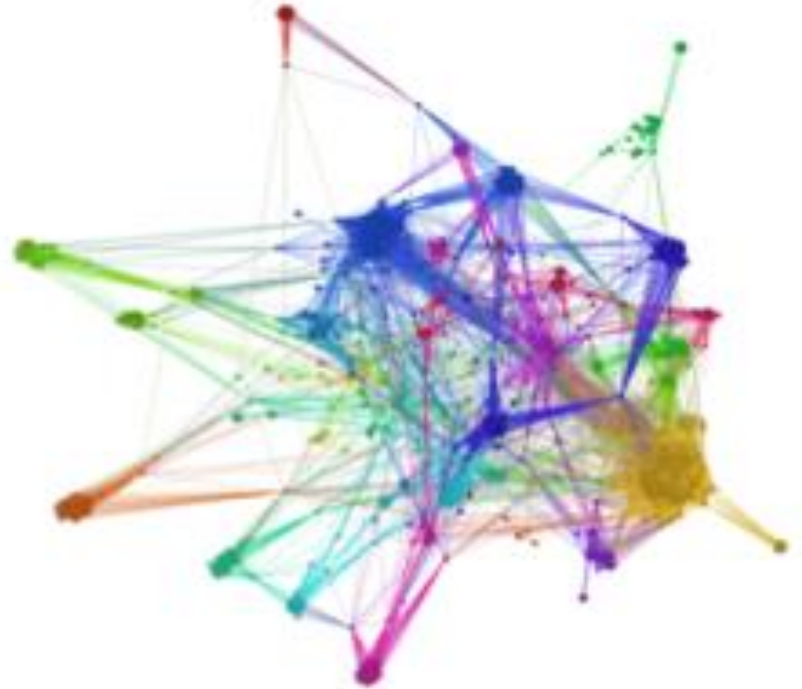


Principle 2

Use (already existing) digital data

- States can lag behind other sectors in use of big data
- Including reflection of policy change in social media
- Can yield new insight
- Allow intelligent centre – devolved delivery
- Developing data science capacity – for social good

Learning in MOOCs



Source: Nabeel Gillani, Taha Yasseri, Rebecca Eynon, Isis Hjorth (2014)

Principle 3

Isocratic (DIY) Government

- Active citizens (for which no room in traditional models of government bureaucracy)
- Isocratic government – citizens manage their own affairs
- New levels of co-production, co-creation, citizen audit - networks of self-selecting citizen experts
- Tapping into people's willingness to contribute to policy-making

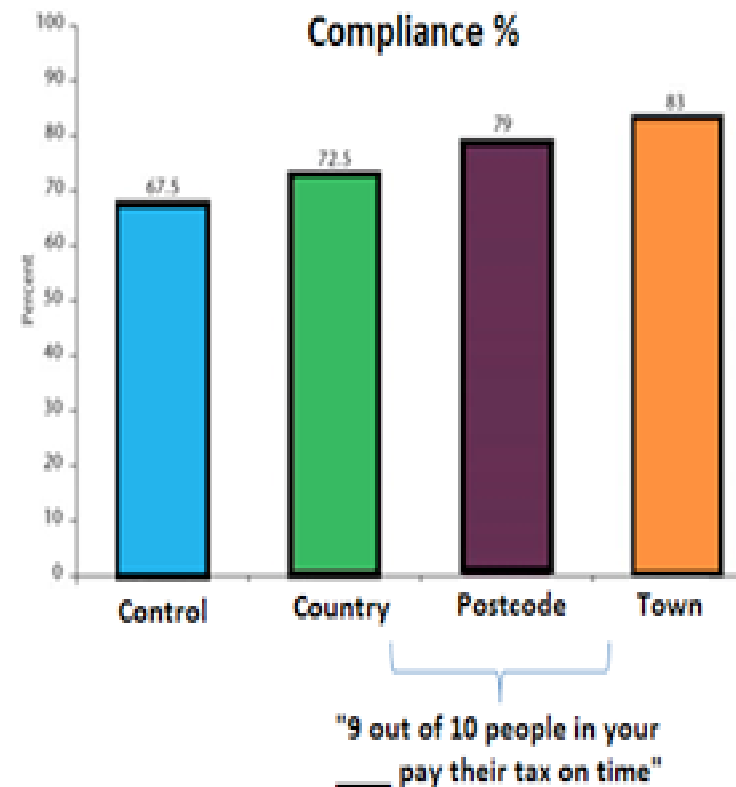


Principle 4

An experimental approach

- Big data alone lacks causal inference
- So use experiments (RCTs)
- Build-and-learn approach
- Moving away from idea of government as finished product
- Building trials into every state of EDGe design through 'nudge' interventions

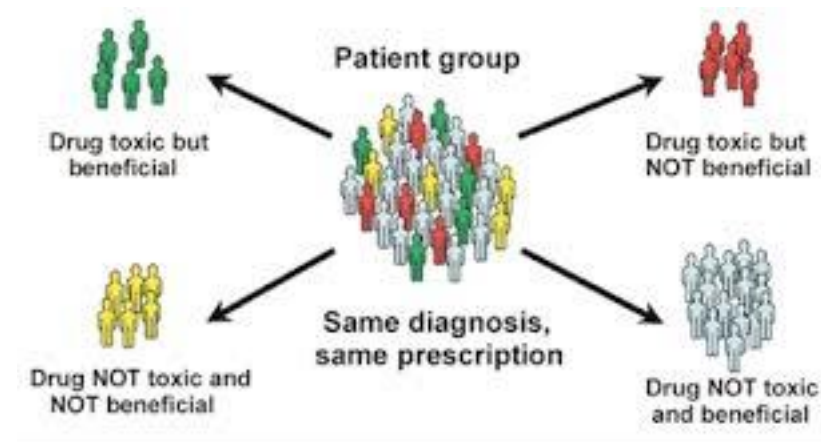
Source: UK Behavioural Insights Team (exporting RCTs to governments, including Singapore)



Principle 5

Value equality of outcome

- Technology is more 'messy' than bureaucracy
- Organizations are no longer 'efficient machines'
- Weberian equality of process challenged by digital world (eg. social media platforms)
- And possibilities for personalization (as in medicine)
- Strive for equality of outcome – not equality of process



Principle 6

Keep the state nodal!

- Government faces new competition for visibility in a digital world
- Government must be present in the timestream
- Remember 9/11 United Airlines flight 93
- Lose assumption of people and chains of command being central to emergencies
- In a contemporary crisis, digital connections may be only links with the non-crisis world

