



POLICY AT A GLANCE

Horizons Invites: Anthony Williams

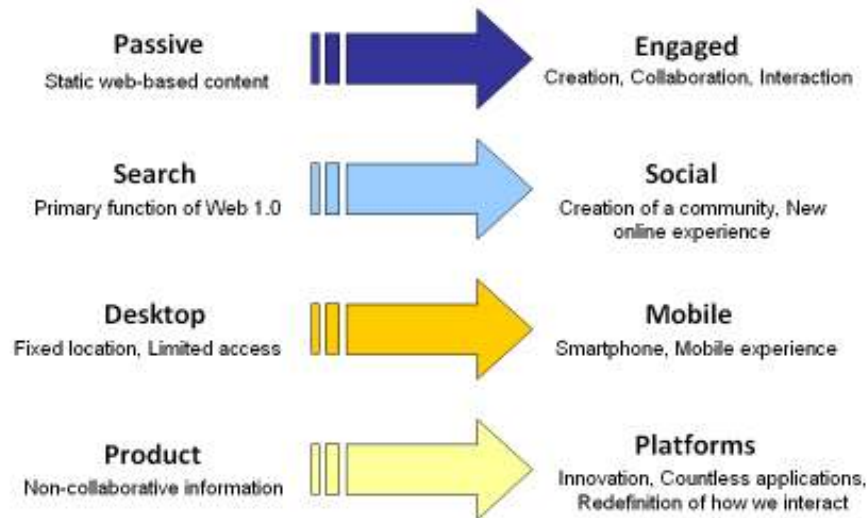
Governing in the Wiki World

The next wave of innovation presents a historic occasion to fundamentally redesign how government operates, how and what the public sector provides, and ultimately, how governments interact and engage with their citizens. Government can and must rise to these challenges. (Tapscott and Williams, Macrowikinomics: pp. 278-279)

On February 24, 2011, Anthony Williams, co-author of the best-selling books on mass collaboration, *Wikinomics* and *Macrowikinomics*, presented his perspective on how Web 2.0 technology can change the way that governments connect with citizens, necessitating new models of governance based on openness, collaboration, sharing, integrity, and interdependence.

From information highway to global gateway

The move from Web 1.0 to 2.0 has enabled a number of fundamental shifts that are changing the way we connect with the world:



Williams proposed a series of ideas that explored potential public sector applications of social media in the context of crowd-sourcing, open data and personalized content, including:

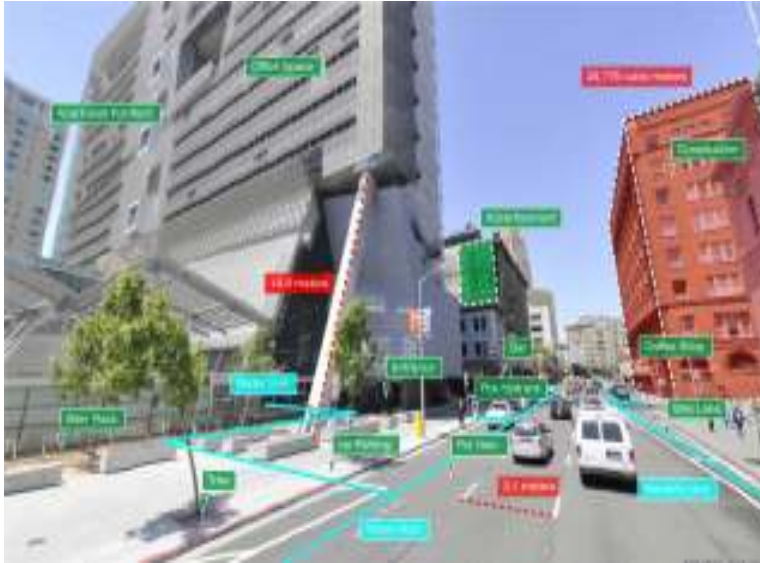
1. **Interactive service portals** – enhancing service-based websites with less transactional, more interactive features.
2. **Syndicating information and services** – links and widgets on popular internet and social media sites to communicate and consult.
3. **Personalized service** – personalized 'MyGovernment' sites for individuals that contain tailored feeds and applications for 21st century engagement.
4. **Open data** – making data accessible to drive innovation, collaboration and economic opportunities, while also fostering transparency and accountability.
5. **Enhancing and extending services through innovation** – virtual communities of interest have positive social outcomes, facilitate communication and mitigate risk across large segments of population.
6. **gBay for public services and assets** – different actors offer services and products online allowing individual choice from a hybrid public/private mix.
7. **Bootstrapping the virtual bureaucracy** – expand talent pool of the public service by engaging online communities from other sectors of society.
8. **The citizen regulator** – social media could allow citizen participation in regulatory enforcement.
9. **The citizen legislator** – establishing a method for outreach and inclusion may enable civic engagement and civic competency.
10. **Institutional re-organization** – the patchwork of jurisdictions - transformation of global institutions to be more user-friendly for the public.

The future is closer than we think

[...] there is a new kind of public sector organization emerging – one that opens its doors to the world; co-innovates with everyone, especially citizens; shares resources that were previously closely guarded; harnesses the power of mass collaboration and behaves not as an isolated department or jurisdiction, but as something new: a truly integrated organization.
(Macrowikinomics, pp. 264-265)

The shifts highlighted above are providing countless opportunities for organizations and citizens to become more informed, more engaged and more productive. Below, are some examples of emerging trends that could foster powerful change with respect to how government interacts with its citizens.

Power of the engaged citizen: private sector and academic groups have begun to harness the power of engaged citizens and are experiencing better than anticipated outcomes. For example, **Proctor and Gamble** challenged the web community to propose innovative ideas and solutions. The company now claims that 50% of their new ideas come from outside the company. This crowd sourcing strategy has increased capacity and productivity without increasing the payroll and is proving to be a key input to their innovative process.



Data, data, everywhere: Through enhanced mobile phones and other mobile devices, individuals are becoming real-time conduits for data in that they can both generate data and receive it instantaneously. Examples include eco-sensor phones with GPS technology to measure ambient air-quality that can allow individuals with respiratory conditions to instantly assess risk and make informed decisions, and sensors in "smart" shoes and underwear that can detect blood pressure, stress level

and body temperature for health monitoring. Innovative uses of data form the basis of many Smartphone applications that allow users to interact with their surroundings and obtain up-to-date information.

It's all about me: With the vast amount of information online, individuals will increasingly select and define the sources and types of information they receive by customizing RSS feeds, following certain 'tweets', downloading select 'apps', and creating a social network of peers. Users can therefore define how narrowly or how wide they 'cast their net'. In such an environment, the web experience will be unique for each user and competition for an individual's attention will be fierce.

It's time to reboot (*but not reinvent*) the public square

As the public sector begins to define its level and venue for engagement in the Web 2.0 world, the most efficient approach may be to work with existing tools and networks that are already established and popular amongst users. The challenge for the public sector therefore lies in how to navigate the tools and networks in a responsible and innovative way that fulfills mandates and obligations to citizens.

"Call it governing by network, or Government 2.0, it all adds up to the same thing. In the wiki world, government shouldn't even try to create all of this capability internally when it can leverage the social networks that are already flourishing. Instead of creating new departments and new layers of management, governments should be creating platforms for social achievement." (Macrowikinomics, p.262)

Resources

Tapscott, Don and Anthony D. Williams. 2010. *Macrowikinomics: Rebooting Business and the World*. Toronto: Penguin Group.

<http://www.shapingtomorrow.com/nav-frameset.cfm?li=94724>