Web 2.0 – A New Chapter in Government Customer Service

Digital Government Institute’s Government Customer Service Conference
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U.S. General Services Administration
What we do:

• Office of Citizen Services is part of the U.S. General Services Administration

• We operate:
  
  • USA.gov
  • 1 (800) FED INFO
  • Publications order center in Pueblo, Colorado
  • Other websites: GobiernoUSA.gov, pueblo.gsa.gov, mymoney.gov consumeraction.gov, consumidor.gov, kids.gov
Format

- Blogs, micro blogs, podcasting, video sharing, RSS feeds, widgets, virtual worlds, social networks, social bookmarks

- Definition

- What the researchers say

- How the technology is being used (and the potential) for government customer service
Web 2.0

- Web 1.0 (website browsing, HTML)
- Web 2.0 is a new generation of technologies
- Collection of tools that encourages a high level of social interactivity and collaboration
- Producers aren’t 100% in control anymore
- Is New Media a better term than Web 2.0?
  - DOD started New Media Office in Oct. of 2006
  - Have a staff member with title “New Media Strategist”
  - Transition team has a New Media Dir.
Groundswell Definition

- A social trend in which people use technologies to get things they need from each other, rather than from traditional institutions like corporations.
Time’s Person of the Year

You.
Yes, you.
You control the Information Age.
Welcome to your world.
You are still Person of the Year!

The technologies we’re going to talk about allow everyone to be:

- An amateur movie maker (YouTube)
- A web content contributor (blogs)

- Pew Internet and American Life Project - Gen Y: 62% of web content they consume is written/produced by someone they know

- Edelman’s 2007 Trust Barometer report found that information from “a person like me” has most credibility
Why should Government use Web 2.0 technologies?

- Increase dissemination, awareness, use, usefulness, and potential impact of government information and services
  - Be where people are. Increasing public use of social media.
  - Expand reach to new and diverse audiences
  - Viral impact
- Facilitate interactive communication
  - Put human face on government
- Knowledge sharing
  - Cross boundaries
  - Reduce duplication. Save time.
Forrester Research Profiles

- Collectors – 12% of online adults
  - Add “tags” to Web pages
  - “Vote” for Web sites online

- Critics – 25%
  - Comment on blogs

- Joiners – 25%
  - Visit social networking sites, maintain profile (Facebook, LinkedIn)

- Spectators – 48%
  - Read blogs
  - Watch peer generated video
  - Listen to podcasts
Specific Government Applications

- Outreach, education
- Public input to surface issues and help solve them
- Live government deliberations
- Emergency news and announcements
- Recruitment
Blogs

• Web + log = blog

• Online journal or diary

• Entries typically 200-300 words

• People can comment

• Search engines like blogs, since the content is updated frequently
Blogs and Government

- 37 Active Federal Agency Public-Facing Blogs

- Elected Official Blogs at All Levels

- Webcontent.gov provides advice on government blogs
Top Officials Speak

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Secretary Mike Leavitt’s Blog

Dealing With Medicare

I suppose the compulsive need to get people’s attention on the plight of the Medicare Trust Fund can be attributed to my current close association with it. Medicare is part of HHS and I’m also a Trustee.

This week, I released our budget proposal for the next five years. Medicare makes up 36 percent of the $737 billion we spend. I said at a news conference our proposal should be viewed as a stark warning. Medicare, on its current course, is just eleven years from going broke.

Eleven years is going to fly by. Here’s a perspective builder. The Fourth of July last year seems like yesterday. In 20 times that time, left on autopilot, Medicare will be broke.

Systems as big and complex as Medicare don’t turn on a dime. We need to start dealing with this.

I’m certainly not the first person to warn of this. Part of the problem is that the entire country has been desensitized, numb to the repeated cycle of alarms and inaction.

Dire warnings on Medicare insolvency have become a seasonal thing. It’s always the same story. We need to start doing something about it before it’s too late.
Topics of Great Public Interest

2,06.2008

HOORAY BLOGGERS!

A Win for the Blogosphere

Posts on this blog have had their first official impact on our operations.
That's right, less than one week since we began the blog and already
you're affecting security in a very positive way.

On Monday afternoon we began receiving questions about airports that
were requiring ALL electronics to be removed from carry-on bags
(everything, including blackberries, iPads and even cords). This practice
was also mentioned on several other blogs and left us scratching our
heads.

So...we check with our security operations team to figure out what was
going on. After some calls to our airports, we learned that this exercise
was set up by local TSA offices and was not part of any grand plan
across the country. These practices were stopped on Monday afternoon
and blackberries, cords and iPads began to flow through checkpoints like

http://www.tsa.gov/blog
Newest Government Blogs

• DOE’s Energy Savers Blog
  • Launched September 4
  • http://eere.typepad.com/energysavers/

• NYC Health Department
  • Launched October 9, first post was about new requirement for chain restaurants to post calorie counts
  • http://pulse.typepad.com/
Four Years and Counting...

- Local government (Montgomery County, MD)
- Questions come in and are answered
Help for Teachers

Amongst my group of friends, I am the oddball. This has a little to do with my taste in music, but more so that I am not a teacher. While it’s not ENTIRELY the case, it sure seems like all of my friends are teachers.

My best friend commands a tribe of 5th graders. My high school partner in crime teaches middle school English (a feat that deserves a medal—battling the awkward braces years and all). My college roommate? 3rd grade. Next door neighbor/sandbox buddy? She’s also holding down the 5th grade. And finally, my roommate—kindergarten and first grade.

Because of these relationships, I am privy to the daily trials and tribulations that come with life when one educates the youth of America. Some of my favorites?

- Weekly battles to secure the "best" times on the laminator machine user schedule.
- Highly contested space on hallway bulletin boards.

I had little insight or potential solutions to problems of this realm until recently.

Due to the frigid weather we’ve been experiencing lately, the kids have
Putting a Human Face on Government

GovGab.gov Bloggers at USA.gov

Jake – Frequently Asked Questions
  *Rocker*

Nancy – TV, print and radio PSAs
  *Media whiz*

Stephanie – Web content manager
  *New Mom*

Colleen – Consumer information specialist
  *Newbie bureaucrat*

Joanne – Web content manager
  *Mom, lives on farm*
Should You Blog?

• Issues to Consider
  • Enough content of interest?
  • Long-term commitment?
  • Who can write/represent the agency? What content allowed?
  • Who reviews?
  • Comment policies
  • Don’t have a blog if you won’t accept comments

• Even if you don’t blog, communicate with bloggers by commenting
• Search Technorati.com to see what bloggers are writing about your agency
Micro-blogging

- Limited to 140 characters
- Twitter is well-known
- Users sign up to follow your “tweets”
- USA.gov and GobiernoUSA.gov used Twitter during the recent emergency in Mumbai, India

- Has been used for
  - Metro service alerts
  - By JetBlue for weather related flight delays
  - Tornado warnings
  - Los Angeles Fire Department
    - to reach employees and public via PC or cell
Government and Micro-blogging Other Potential Uses

- Emergencies (earthquakes, floods)
- Office Status
- Breaking news
- Security situations
- Weather information
- General website updates
- Local government – crime watches, fugitive alerts, AmberAlerts, utilities interruptions, traffic, road construction
- Reminders (Medicare application deadlines, other government benefit deadlines)
- Event invitations
Podcasting
More Untapped Opportunity

• Publishing MP3 audio files on the web so they can be downloaded onto computers or portable listening devices, such as iPods

• Listener can tune in at their leisure

• Start where you are already recording

• Get your podcasts to the listeners (iTunes government category)
Podcasts

February 10, 2008
President Bush and President Kagame of Rwanda Dedicate United States Embassy Kigali

President Bush on Tuesday said, “And so it’s an honor to be here to cut the ribbon for this new embassy. It’s an honor to be in front of people who’ve got compassion in their hearts, and efficiency on their minds, and willing to do the right thing to get to be free. And this is how to be a great friend and ally, forever.”

February 10, 2008
President Bush Discusses Kosovo

President Bush on Tuesday said, “The independence of Kosovo is a historic step for the Balkan region. It presents an opportunity to move beyond the conflicts of the past and toward a future of freedom and stability and peace. The United States and the European Union must seize this opportunity to offer all the nations of this region the prospect of integration into the political, economic and security structures of the Black Atlantic community.” The way we all, the people of the United States will be able to see the progress of a better life for themselves and for their children.”

February 10, 2008
President Bush Participates in Joint Press Availability with President Kagame of Rwanda

President Bush on Tuesday said, “He had good discussions on a variety of subjects. We’re working toward a future of freedom and stability and peace. The United States and the European Union must seize this opportunity to offer all the nations of this region the prospect of integration into the political, economic and security structures of the Black Atlantic community.”

The President’s Weekly Radio Address to the Nation is available to download. Click Here to Listen.
Other government examples

- Earth Day was April 22
- 8 EPA podcasts with tips for protecting the environment
  - [http://www.epa.gov/earthday/podcasts/](http://www.epa.gov/earthday/podcasts/)
  - Reached #2 on iTunes

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - English and Spanish
  - [http://www.cdc.gov/podcasts](http://www.cdc.gov/podcasts)
  - Also on iTunes
Video Sharing

- Upload videos
- 48% of internet users have visited YouTube or sites like it
- USA.gov Public Service Announcements are on YouTube, as are Los Angeles Fire Department PSAs
- U.S. House of Representatives Hearings
- Federal Trade Commission and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have YouTube channels
Virtual Worlds and Government

- Simulations of environments and people
- Three dimensional
- Linden Labs Second Life
  - 9 million accounts
  - Sweden has an “embassy”
  - Reuters has a news desk
- Active Worlds, Kaneva, ProtoSphere, Entropia Universe, uWorld
CDC in Second Life
RSS Feeds

• Really Simple Syndication
• News feed is another term

• “Put my headlines on someone else’s Web page automatically” – Jeffrey Levy, EPA Webmaster

• News readers like RSS Owl “pick up”
• Share your news releases, what’s new on your website, blog entries

• Write once, publish many!
Link to Government Blogs, Podcasts, Videos, RSS Feeds

http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Multimedia.shtml
EPA Widgets

- 1 a day for April (Earth Month)
- You didn’t have to go to EPA’s website everyday
- The daily tip was automatically delivered to your personalized website, i.e. MyYahoo or iGoogle
Other gov. widgets

- [http://www.fbi.gov/page2/nov08/topten_112908.html](http://www.fbi.gov/page2/nov08/topten_112908.html)

- Widget created in the aftermath of finance/housing crisis
Social Bookmarking

- Our blog GovGab has “social bookmarking” capabilities
- Expands presence to Facebook, Digg, myspace, etc.
Social Networking & Government
Social Networks – Who is Using Them?

- MySpace most popular social networking site
  - One of most visited U.S. sites, accounting for almost 5% of all Internet visits. At its peak in June 2007, accounted for 7% of all Internet visits
- Facebook in distant, but rising, second place
  - Recently ranked as 9th most popular U.S. Website, accounting for 1% of all Internet visits
- Rapid influx of older users
Other uses

- Organizational page

- As a USA.gov fan, I received a USA.gov update on the Mumbai incident in my Facebook inbox

- Reach out to influencers
Social Media Synergy

- Readers can post GovGab blog entries to facebook page for “friends” to read
- Spreads the word
# Social Media Press Releases

## WebEx

### Social Media News Release

**WebEx launches the Green Guide to your Office**

### Contacts

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### Core Facts/Messages

- **WebEx**, the leader in on-demand collaboration applications and services, today launched the Green Guide to your Office - a free booklet designed to give businesses advice on how to be more environmentally friendly when using technology at work.

- The guide has been written in partnership with environmental charity The Climate Group, IT analysts Quocirca and technology vendors Cisco, Vodafone and Fujitsu-Siemens.

- The guide focuses on five key technological areas: communications, employees, mobile devices, desktop hardware and data storage.

- The advice ranges from practical, short-term steps that can be implemented immediately to longer-term solutions for change that require planning and support.

### Multimedia

**Photos.**  
**Video.**  
**Audio.**  
**Podcasts.**
Gov’s First Social Media Release

- Included traditional press release copy
- Added multi-media: Videos, podcasts, pictures, comment blocks, live links, related coverage, link to blog post
Transition on the Web

- www.obamocto.org
- Newly launched site where people can submit ideas, vote
- Expand broadband access has gotten a lot of votes, bridge the digital divide
- http://change.gov/
Yesterday’s Capitol Hill hearing on online worlds was broadcast simultaneously in cyberspace. Comments posted on the hearing by Second Life visitors were then displayed on a screen in the Rayburn House Office Building. In Second Life, Rep. Edward J. Markey was depicted as an avatar leading the meeting.
Where do I start?

- You don’t have to implement all
- Think about your needs

- Example: PSAs that encourage people to join the military are on YouTube
- Appeals to people the right age
- Of 2.6 million uniformed military, 65% of them are 27 or under “digital natives”
Web Content Managers Forum

- http://members.webcontent.gov/?page=About Us
- Replaces list serv
- Discussions
- Task groups
Other resources

- Webcontent.gov, click on social media
  - Defines Web 2.0 technologies
  - also how to implement, benefits, challenges, providers, which agencies are using it

- New Media Toolkit

- CDC Data Briefs

- Web 2.0 in local government
Webinars

- 2 free EPA webinars
  - 12/16 writing a blog post
  - 12/18 mixing Web 1.0 and 2.0
- [http://www.epa.gov/webtraining/schedule.html](http://www.epa.gov/webtraining/schedule.html)
Videos

• Under 2 minute video that defines social networking
  • http://www.commoncraft.com/video-social-networking

• Twitter
  • http://www.commoncraft.com/twitter
Specific Government Applications of Social Media

- Outreach, education
  - EPA podcasts for earth month

- Public input to surface issues and help solve them
  - TSA blog

- Live government deliberations
  - House of Representatives hearings via video, YouTube

- Emergency news and announcements
  - Twitter
  - Facebook

- Recruitment
  - Peace Corp blog
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