

# GOVERNMENT SERVICES FORUM

A dialogue on the future of government services

Summary of the Roundtable held on Feb 9, 2019

منتدى الخدمات الحكومية  
 GOVERNMENT SERVICES FORUM



WORLD GOVERNMENT SUMMIT

DUBAI

MINA A'SALAM HOTEL

MADINAT JUMEIRAH

SUPPORTED BY



WINSTON  
 & STRAWN  
 LLP





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*The future of service delivery needs to be looked at in the context of the future. It sounds obvious, but don't design with only today in mind. And be careful not to base your assumptions about future experience needs on an assessment of the current state.*

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# GOVERNMENT SERVICES FORUM

## INTRODUCTION

The inaugural Government Services Forum took place on 9 February 2019, at this year's World Government Summit. Launched by the Emirates Government Service Excellence Program and supported by EY and Winston & Strawn, a panel of distinguished attendees discussed the future of government services, collaboration, and how to establish a shared vision for digitally-engaged customers.

## THEMES



Addressing radical  
shift in citizen  
expectations



Challenges in  
delivering citizen  
centric services



Future of  
government  
services



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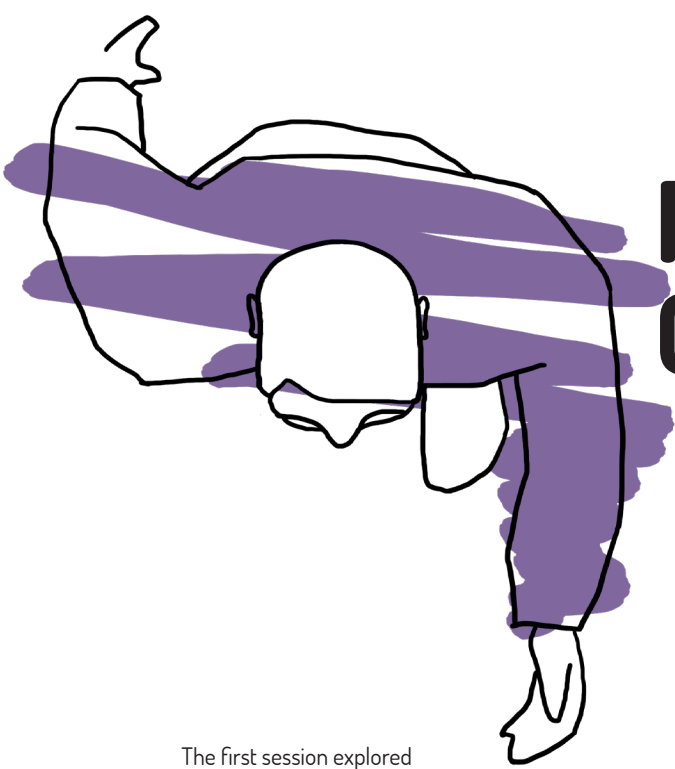
# PANELISTS

# MODERATOR



**JONATHAN REICHENTAL**  
Consultant and Professor, City  
of Palo Alto, USA





# FUTURE CITIZEN NOW

The first session explored the implications of changing customer expectations on government services. Reimagining the customer experience with a “government for me” model emerged as the key theme of the discussion.

## RECOGNITION OF PARADIGM SHIFTS IN CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

The levels of service afforded to people all over the world today would have seemed like science fiction a generation ago. But the combination of smartphones, sophisticated apps and always-on internet connectivity has created an environment where almost **anything you want is almost only a click, a tap or a swipe away**. The panel reflected on the fact that **nice-to-haves have become must-haves** while value-added services have become hygiene factors. In short, expectations are higher than ever and show no sign of declining.

And, these attitudes are no longer just something for private enterprise to grapple with. There has been a shift in the relationship dynamic where customers and governments are concerned. **Governments are no longer just a source of information. Instead, they are multifaceted arbiters of help, advice, services and solutions.** The panel agreed that today's digital customers expect to be able to transact fully with their governments.

**Has e-government developed to regard citizens holistically?** Too often, it has not. Customers may have to engage in multiple separate conversations with different entities to receive help for just one aspect of their lives. When technology is deployed in silos, it may meet the needs of that department or agency, but sometimes this happens at the expense of user satisfaction. Perhaps **it's time government services were re-engineered as 'citizen services'** to ensure a customer-centric outlook is always top-of-mind. That calls for an assessment of what customers need, followed by the building of those services using the right technology.



*The frame of reference for citizen expectations of seamless government services has shifted dramatically from being 'a nice to have' to 'a must have'*



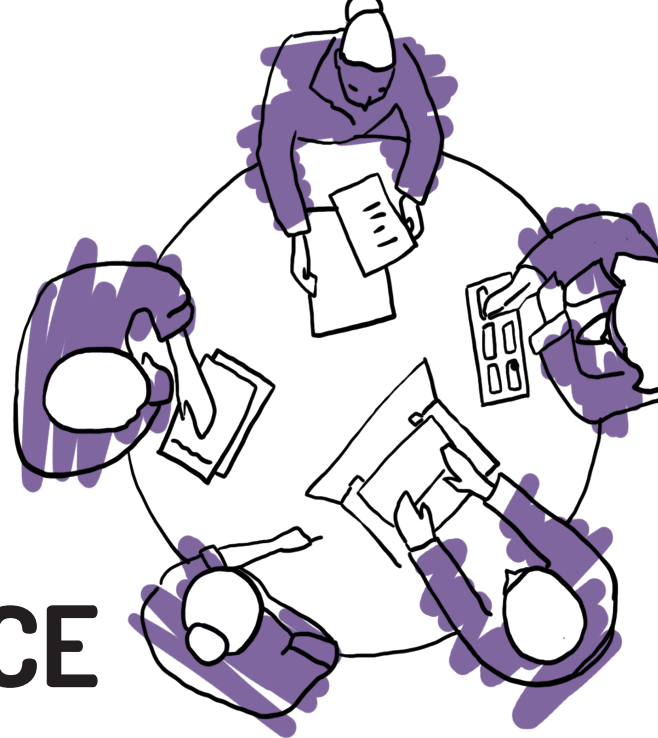
*Governments need to evolve from being service operators to generators of value.*

## CONVENIENCE, EXPERIENCE AND PERSONALIZATION

Young and old alike have complex, but differing needs where governments are concerned. It might be securing a place at university, applying for funding or benefits, getting a hospital appointment, or applying for a passport. Or, it could be connected to life's major milestone events – birth, marriage, death. Whatever the need, if government portals can't offer real value and frictionless transactions, they will become a barrier to fulfilment.

Customers expect to be treated like individuals and to feel valued. It's what happens when they transact with the new generation of digital business, after all. Governments need to understand the importance of seeing things from the customers' perspective and on becoming effective communicators. Currently, many governments exist primarily to administer, and while communication has always been part of that, it has tended to be the top-down broadcast approach to communication. Some of the panellists felt that much greater collaboration between customers and government agencies will be needed in order to ensure services are relevant and fit-for-purpose. Governments **need to go beyond co-creation**, take the lead and show customers what futuristic services look like.

The second session, explored challenges being faced by governments in delivering customer centric services. Panellists acknowledged that customers want to access government 'as a whole', rather than conducting separate, isolated interactions with different departments.



# SHIFTING SERVICE MODELS



*Data protection first, and then data innovation – people need to see the value of sharing and using data*



*Governments today should consider how they can bring data to life through one seamless memorable experience after another.*



*Maybe we need to get together as governments to create a global measure for services*

## ACKNOWLEDGING THE CHALLENGES AND OVERCOMING THEM

Adopting a **life cycle approach to delivering services requires data to be shared** across multiple entities. As an example, a family doctor may need to share medical notes with a hospital consultant, who may in turn need to share information with a community healthcare team. It sounds simple and straightforward. But this is a complex data protection challenge that needs to be overcome.

From a technology point of view, there needs to be an infrastructure in place to facilitate such communication – securely. There also needs to be **sufficient data protection regulation** in place to ensure customers' data is treated properly and isn't shared or even sold. This is a crucial part of **building trust between government and communities**; if people are wary of engaging with an online service because of data security fears, that service's ability to add value to people's lives becomes severely compromised.

Once that data resides in an e-government framework, it needs to be redelivered to the customers such that they would want to engage. One way to address this, could be through the **introduction of citizen data dashboards**. This will allow people to see their data; they can then start to make informed choices and decisions based on the veracity of that data, how it is being used, and who they are happy to share it with.

Getting to this point, however, calls for an investment in people and resources. **Governments are already on the backfoot in the race for talent**. Governments must transform their approach to talent acquisition by **speaking to the audience they want to attract** – the young and the digitally savvy. For the public sector, that means focusing the talent acquisition strategy on mutual value creation rather than long-standing loyalty.

The panel also stressed on the importance of **measuring impact of services**. Perspectives ranged from benchmarking against the private sector and measurements within a government entity.



*Governments will need to start thinking like entrepreneurs – be visionary, go beyond asking citizens what they want and show them what the future could look like.*

The final session, explored the future of government services in a customer-centric, instant, interactive, digital world. Panellists offered future visions that ranged from customers using AI and blockchain technologies to transact with governments. The forum concluded with panellists agreeing to continue the dialogue on the future of government services through the GX portal and the Government Services Forum.

## NEXT GEN GOVERNMENT SERVICES

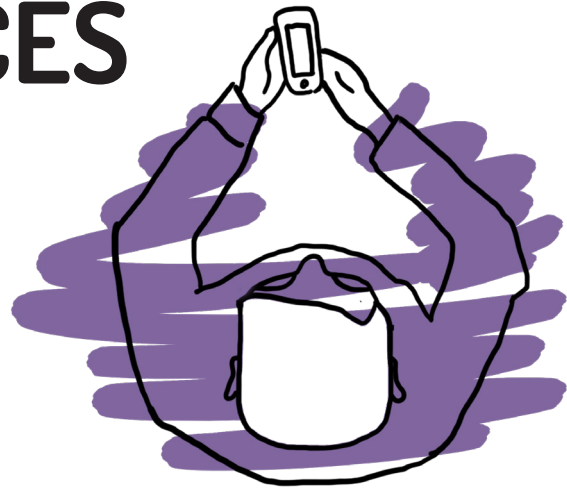
### GOING BEYOND SEAMLESS TO INVISIBLE

We have reached a time when **governments need to start thinking like entrepreneurs**: What do my 'customers' want? What is the most effective delivery model?

The **next generation of service delivery will take the public sector into uncharted but rewarding territory**. But perhaps the biggest change required, the panel felt, is one of culture. Governments will need to make strategic investments in services that meet tomorrow's needs as well as today's. **Creating solutions that do not currently exist, to meet the needs which haven't fully evolved is a priority but also a burden**. In part, this will call upon a more private sector ethos, where looking after the customer is likened to the best examples of customer service and innovative business models.

### LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The advancement of the digital world risks the establishment of a **digital divide** – not age-related as some may assume, but based around income. People without internet access at home – or who live in an area with limited broadband connectivity – could easily get left behind. But by developing programs that help economically challenged households to participate in the digital revolution, governments can lay the foundations of future development. Not only will they see the short-term benefits of getting more people engaged with more cost-effective online service delivery, but they can ensure the next generation of these families and households don't miss out.



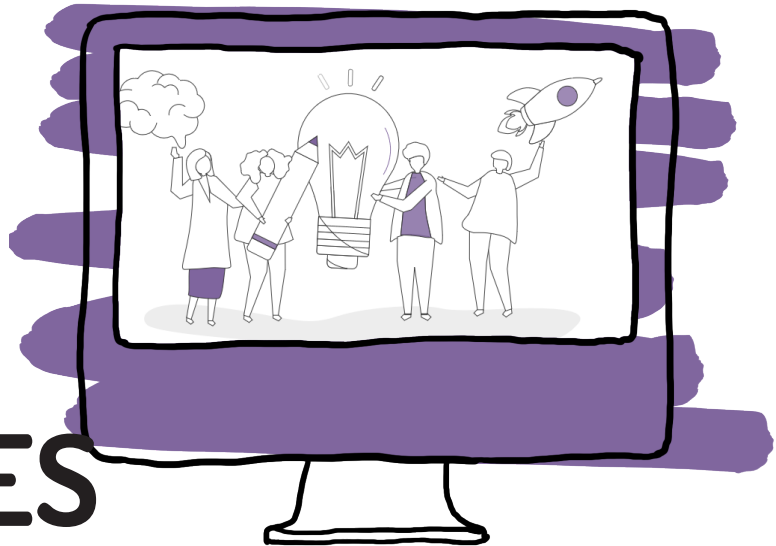
## IN SUMMARY

**The future of government service delivery presents both challenges and many opportunities.** Service delivery has long been the mainstay of e-government programs. Now, it's time to take that forward and to seize the chance to add lasting value to people's everyday lives.

That's a process that starts by gaining a thorough understanding of how people relate to and interact with public authorities, as well as how government agencies can proactively develop programs to meet those needs. This calls for far greater collaboration and a more open culture of co-creation where governments work with best-of-breed partners. Customers will need to be consulted more rigorously and data will need to be shared to ensure a seamless, frictionless customer-centric experience.

In many ways, **this journey is only just beginning**. But when governments truly manage to add value rather than just deliver services, the benefits will be felt by everyone.

# SERVICES PORTAL



[WWW.GX.AE](http://WWW.GX.AE)



Emirates Government Service Excellence Program (EGSEP) launched a portal called 'GX' which is a global platform to share knowledge, enable interaction and activate ideas on government services.

GX aims to unite government decision-makers, global practitioners and renowned innovators to re-examine and re-define Government Experience for the present and the future. It stands for the following and more:

- A one-stop platform to enable interaction and share best practices globally with specific focus on government services
- Single pre-eminent destination for learning, knowledge and consolidation of experiences and practical research stories from around the world
- A forum for idea exchange and resource collaboration for stakeholders that can potentially connect startups and companies with government entities seeking solutions





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*Consuming digitally delivered government services needs to be as frictionless as making a ‘one-click purchase’ on Amazon. The focus should be on making the machinery of government invisible and putting the emphasis on the value creation – this is what’s meant by re-imagining service delivery models.*

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