

The Digital Society:
**Better government services and new
opportunities for democratic participation**
(invited talk)

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Context: Internet use in Norway

- 67% of all men and 54% of all women use internet daily (2006 statistics)
 - Above age 67 is the largest growing user group of Internet banking services. The use of Internet among this group has doubled from 2004 to 2006 (from 10% to 20%).
- Digital divide is fading.
- Full broadband coverage (>99%) in 2008
 - Government funded broadband program
 - (60 million Euro / 2006-2008)

What is e-Government

- The use of ICT within government to provide better services to its citizens
- Improve government efficiency and quality
 - Externally
 - Internally

Early e-Government

- Provide electronic services for citizens 24 hours / 7 days a week
- Self-service
- Transactions through forms
 - Applying for Kindergarten
 - Tax return statements through Internet
- Technology, not organization

e-Government today

- Focus on backoffice integration
- Process engineering
- Multiple channel service delivery
- Portals and customization
- Organization, not technology

Plans and documents

- National ICT strategy: eNorway 2009
- Government whitepaper on ICT-policies
- Municipal ICT strategy (The Digital Leap)
 - Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
- Recent report on government renewal effort (December 2007)

UNDESA (UN)

- E-government readiness (2008)
 - Norway ranked as no. 3 after Sweden and Denmark
 - Norway ranked as no. 10 in 2005
- Web measurement (2008)
 - Norway ranked as no. 4 after Denmark, Sweden and USA
 - Norway ranked as no. 14 in 2005
- E-participation (2008)
 - Norway ranked as no. 16 ☹️

Challenges (Accenture 2008)

- While the government ranked 6th overall, it ranked 10th in the cross-government collaboration pillar.
- In addition, in terms of citizen voice scores alone, Norway ranked 19th out of 22 countries for cross-government collaboration.
- A number of other studies, including studies from the Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development, show that Norway **must develop a more committed coordination between public-sector players.**

Coordinating e-Government

- Agency for Public Management and eGovernment (DIFI) was established on January 1st 2008

Major developments

- MinSide.no (MyPage.no)
 - One stop portal for citizens
- AltInn.no
 - One stop portal for businesses
- Regjeringen.no
 - Government information portal

New strategies

- Electronic communication is to be the main channel of interaction with public sector
- Self-service kiosks in public offices
- Provision of 24 hour government ICT helpdesk

Current standardization efforts:

- Reference catalog for open ICT-standards will be established
- (New) ICT standards for public administration is under development
- Strategy for eID and electronic signatures is in progress
- National standard for public transportation e-tickets

Current standardization efforts:

- Accessibility (Universal design) legal requirement
- More rigorous requirements for public websites

New services

- Electronic police station
- Electronic submission of reports of crime
- Electronic submission of building plans
- Electronic customs auction (ebay..)

New services

- E-invoices to government agencies
 - (Denmark requires use of e-invoicing)
- E-procurement
- Electronic prescriptions

Own R&D

- Vestfold University College collaborates with consortium of 12 Vestfold municipalities.
- Some projects:
 - Common Portal Information Structure
 - Digital Planning Dialog / Høykom
 - Webcasts of local council meetings

Common Portal Information Structure

- Every municipality has its own portal
- Vestfold is densely populated area, five cities close to each other
- But citizens live in one, work in another, and use the cultural offerings of the third
- Project to establish a common information infrastructure

Common Portal Information Infrastructure

- Collaboration brings better opportunities to use research methods in the design process
 - Click analysis
 - Search keywords
 - Exit interviews
 - Usability experts

Webcasting project

- Webcasts of local government meetings
- Rationale: Transparent government
- User requirements:
 - No extra personell!
 - Inexpensive
 - Cross indexing / integration

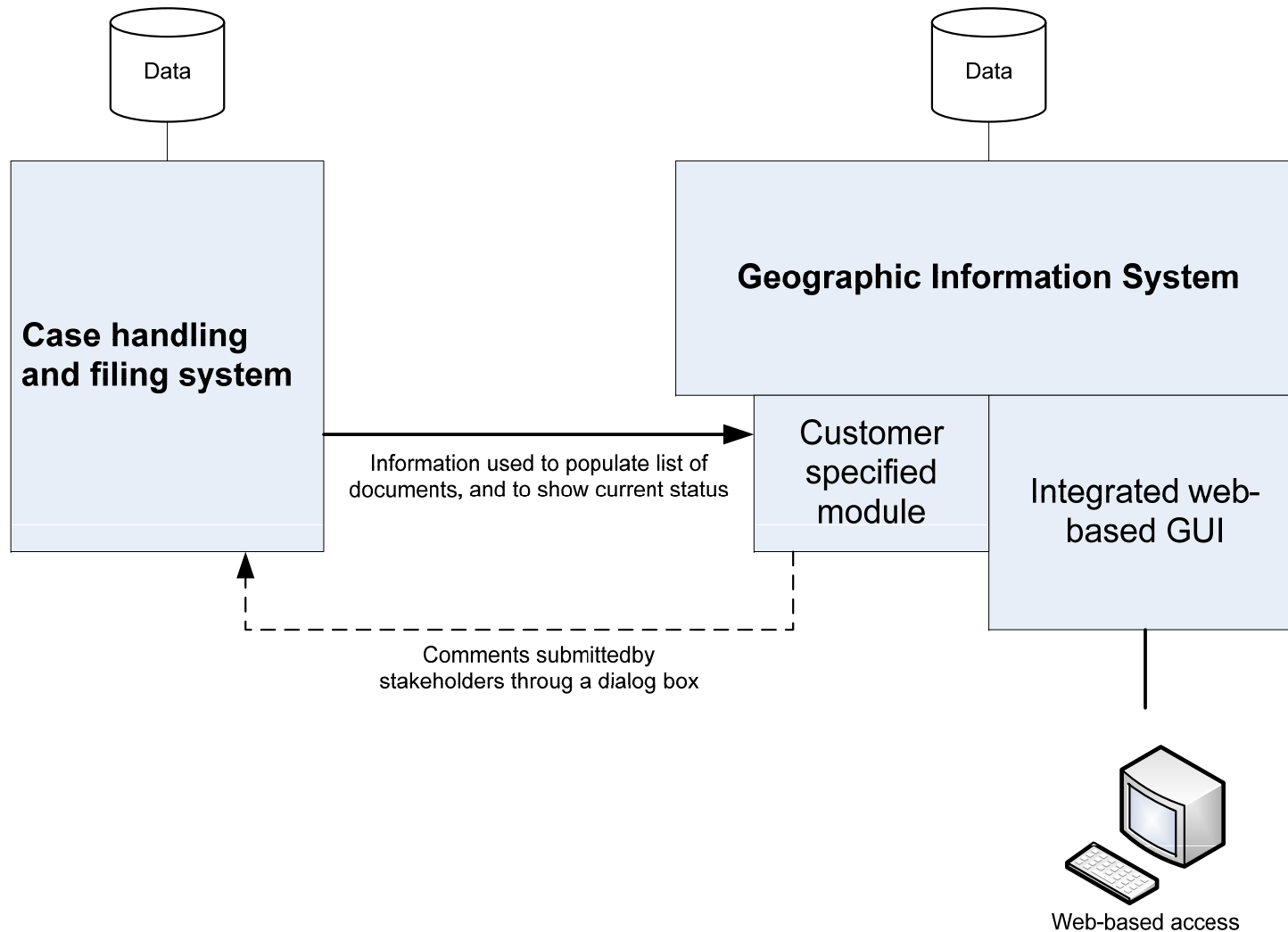
Webcasting project

- Electronic user survey in City of Tønsberg
 - High response rate
 - Demographics
 - Employees and politicians
- In-depth interviews with politicians

Digital Planning Dialog

- Third generation e-Government application
- Integrates backoffice systems
- Democratic participation

Integration of systems



Reflections

- Ambitions: Yes
- Lack of funding (only partial)
- Risk vs. willingness
- Efficiency is good
- But creating value is more than saving money

More information

- <http://egov.hive.no> has references to papers and links to actual solutions.