



Overview

In the twenty-first century, growth, economic value and competitive differentiation of cities will increasingly be derived from people and their skills, creativity and knowledge, as well as the capacity of the economy to create and absorb innovation. To compete in this new economic environment, cities will need to better apply advanced information technology, analytics and systems thinking to develop a more citizen-centric approach to services. By doing so, they can better attract, create, enable and retain their citizens' skills, knowledge and creativity.

IBM Institute for Business Value

Smarter cities for smarter growth

How cities can optimize their systems for the talent-based economy

More than ever before, the traditional “bricks-and-mortar” drivers of economic growth are giving way to an economy based on “brains and creativity,” where the skills, aptitude, knowledge, creativity and innovation of a workforce are becoming increasingly important drivers of economic growth and activity. Cities are the focal points for this transformation.

Forward-looking civic leaders will alter their investment strategies to optimize city services around highly skilled, innovative citizens and communities, as well as knowledge-intensive businesses. Cities can achieve improvements in their current service delivery capabilities, as well as lay the foundation for new and expanded services, by making their core systems “smarter.” This requires a shift from appealing to mass audiences to appealing to individual citizens en masse (see Figure).

Cities need to focus initially on four high-impact areas of improvement:

- Reduce congestion in transport systems.
- Improve public safety by reducing crime and emergency response time.
- Streamline and tailor services for the citizen, including a heavy emphasis on education and training.
- Enable appropriate access to healthcare data for better quality of care, early disease detection and prevention.



