

## IBM Institute for Business Value



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### Overview

The pressure on governments to make better choices, deliver results and demonstrate accountability is intensifying. Recent headlines reflect tensions on multiple fronts due to economic and fiscal uncertainty amid social and political change. They also highlight new dynamics in the relationships among citizens, organizations and their governments long in the making. “Open” principles such as accessibility, transparency, collaboration and participation lie at the heart of these expectations.

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## Opening up government

### *How to unleash the power of information for new economic growth*

At the same time, leaders tell us that they continue to struggle with the information explosion and use different approaches and technologies to manage it all. Leaders acknowledge both a perpetual information explosion and a persistent “data paradox” – the management dilemma associated with having too much data and too little insight. Even so, they also recognize three other realities about government information: (1) governments are not going to stop collecting data; (2) the touchpoints to that data continue to expand far beyond government; and (3) citizens’ and businesses’ demands for access to the data are increasing.

Government leaders must make increasingly difficult choices to promote improved standards of living, economic health and new growth, social progress, security and public safety. Even as leaders scramble to cut costs in an increasingly uncertain economic and fiscal climate, they are seeking new “recipes” to kickstart new and smarter economic development. They may already have one.

### What does “open” mean now?

While open government and open data are intertwined, their definitions have evolved. That evolution requires new actions by management.

As a style of public administration, the open paradigm is both evolving and expanding. It includes “supplying” data for transparency, but is moving toward sharing information (and related data) relevant to outcomes and users. In this paradigm, many leaders see compelling potential benefits for citizens to use government data as raw material in ways that are important to them: to innovate; create new economic opportunities; and meaningfully engage with government. In the process, governments can collect new revenues, demonstrate open principles in action, gain insights into what really matters to citizens, avoid costs and improve how government works.



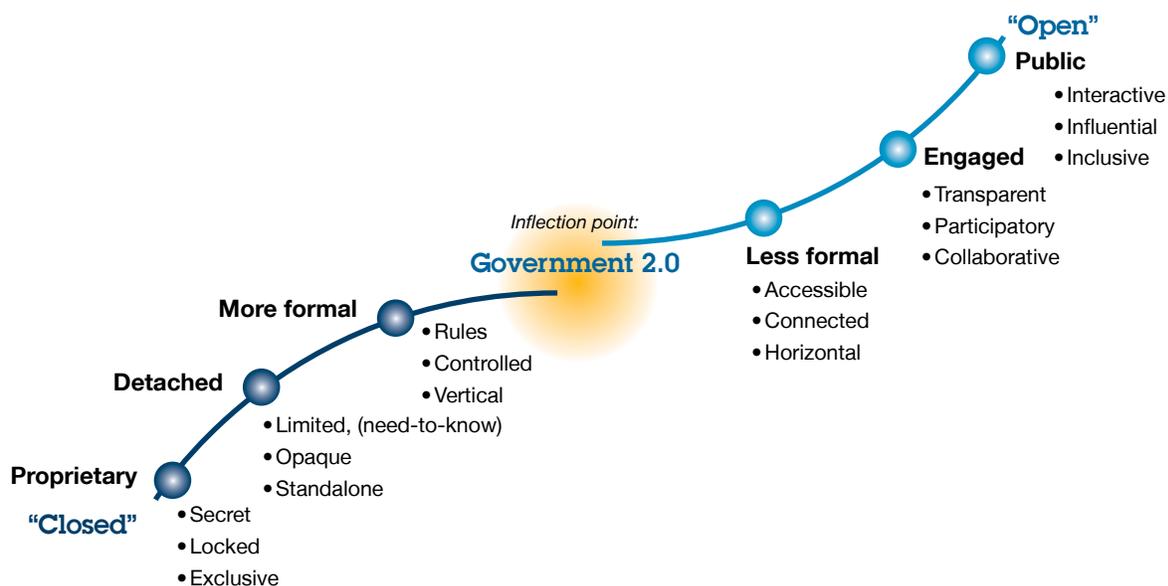
Today’s open government has evolved too. As powerful global forces continue to reshape societies, they are also fundamentally shifting how societies are governed.<sup>1</sup> The same forces are also compounding complexities associated with the trend of shifting services responsibilities from national to local governments, from one agency to another. In the process, there is renewed emphasis on open government that is global, competitive and different – becoming outcome-based.

Being open embodies different management principles and patterns of behavior that extend to the public sector and PSI (see Figure 1). Leaders are recognizing the need to factor in the dynamics of “demand” and “engagement” – along with “supply” – in their open government journey.

Today, governments are more focused on the Engaged dimension, though emphasis, practice and intent varies. In most jurisdictions, transparency is the prevailing reason for providing data such as public budget and expenditure data.

Many jurisdictions are experimenting with open initiatives. Others are already well along their open government journey and some have borne fruit. To realize and nurture the potential benefits of open government, four areas require strategic integration, execution and measurement:

- Information. Start or continue to define and provide information relevant to economic development outcomes that makes sense to citizens.
- Engagement model. Put a flexible and sustainable business model in place that allows effective two-way interaction.
- Digital platform. Construct and use a technical infrastructure to catalyze collaboration and responsible information sharing.
- Analytics competency. Build and apply analytics skill to leverage the power of information.



Source: IBM Institute for Business Value

Figure 1: The patterns of behavior and underlying principles span a range of styles of public administration.

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Open government is a global and societal megatrend. Neither the potential benefits nor the change implications (and opportunity costs of not doing so) should be ignored. There are good lessons from which to learn and there is more work to be done to accelerate progress toward desired outcomes. How? Take three steps and repeat them progressively over time: (1) Define and measure openness, (2) Open up and (3) Capitalize on greater openness.

Many societies have already made a shift – instead of demanding openness, they are practicing it. More important, all are seeking new recipes to stem the uncertainty and spur new job creation and smarter economic growth – outcomes shared by citizens, businesses and governments. The ingredients exist to strategically integrate information, digital platform and analytics competency into flexible, sustainable engagement models. It is time to openly blend those ingredients to enable desired economic outcomes.

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## How can IBM help?

- *Public Sector Information Strategy*: Define an information-led strategy for pinpointing change and value creation that accounts for the public sector context, the dynamic nature of underlying data and its use
  - *Social Business*: Enable communities to effectively and meaningfully engage and collaborate within and across agencies and with constituents beyond government
  - *Analytics*: Leverage new insights to make better decisions, optimize/improve ways of working, measure progress, impact and performance and see/capitalize on new opportunities, especially as big data gets bigger
  - *Cloud computing*: Transform your computing environment (software, platform, infrastructure and related service deployment models) to enable open engagement models and government-as-platform
  - *Security*: Evaluate security risks, evaluate threats and facilitate compliance in the context of an increasingly open, instrumented and complex world to help manage tensions such as data privacy and its utility, data access and its use
  - *Smarter Cities*: Define strategic, operational and technological gaps in achieving desired city outcomes
  - *Expert Systems*: Leverage transformational technologies in ways that fundamentally change how organizations look at solving problems and bring new intelligence into decision making
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#### Reference

- 1 Global forces are changing demographics, accelerating globalization, evolving societal relationships, raising environmental concerns, growing threats to social stability and order, and expanding the impact of technology. For more detail, see: Cortada, James W., Sietze Dijkstra, Gerard Mooney and Todd Ramsey. “Government 2020 and the perpetual collaboration mandate: Six worldwide drivers demand customized strategies.” IBM Institute for Business Value. 2008. <http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/gbs/bus/html/government2020-pcm.html>



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