Australian Government
Department of Finance and Administration
Australian Government Information Management Office

April 2006
Delivering Australian Government Services
Managing Multiple Channels

A guide for the strategic assessment and development of service delivery channels
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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide Australian Government agencies with:

- insight into the strategic considerations for developing a robust channel strategy
- guidance for aligning customer needs, services outcomes and channel mix.

The need for this approach is confirmed by recent studies of the effectiveness of e-government services and customer satisfaction.

Definition of ‘channel’

In this document, ‘channel’ refers to the access mechanism used by both government and customers to interact. Examples of channels include:

- On-site – shop-fronts, appointments etc.
- On-paper – letters, brochures, reports etc.
- On-call – call centres, hotlines etc.
- On-line – website, e-mail etc.
- On-air – radio, TV etc.
- On-the-go – personal digital assistants (PDAs), short messaging service (SMS), video messaging.

Overview of channel delivery

From horse and cart to Interactive Voice Response (IVR), the delivery of services has been transformed with the growth of Australia’s population and government. Traditionally government services were delivered by post, telephone and shop-front interaction using minimal technology in day-to-day operations.

Today, Australian Government agencies deliver a wide range of services to a diverse range of customers across numerous channels. The use of multiple channels is commonplace within both government and industry environments.

Recently, Government agencies have added new channels, such as SMS and IVR options to their channel portfolios, providing customers with a wider variety of ways in which to interact with government. The rapidity of technological advance has allowed agencies to effectively deliver services through the Internet, IVR and by SMS. Examples of innovative channel use by government agencies include:

- SMS notification of employment vacancies for Job Network users
- ‘e-tax’ online tax lodgement, offering faster rebates to customers
- ETA – Electronic Travel Authority for Australian Holiday visas
- YARN – the Young Australian Rural Network designed for Australian youth employed in the rural industry.
For Government agencies, maximising the usage of channels requires an alignment of channel capabilities with service and customer strategies. That is, agencies should base their choice of channel on the needs of the customer, the best fit with the service and the effectiveness and efficiency of each channel.

Studies measuring citizens’ satisfaction with government services, and government’s use of information technology confirm this assertion.

Considerations for government

The Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) Australianians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services Survey highlighted the use of multiple channels by Australian Government clients. Respondents to the survey used the following channels to contact the Government in the preceding 12 months:

- in person (46%)
- by telephone (28%)
- by Internet (19%)
- by mail (13%)
- other (1%).

The National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE) e-Government Benefits Study identified the following key benefits of e-government (the online channel):

- **Improved service delivery** – approximately 80% of e-government users noted an improvement in service delivery of significant or moderate social benefit to them.
- **Reduced consumer costs** – approximately 45% of survey respondents stated that they had saved money by using e-government services.
- **Social benefits** – approximately 86% of users felt that the overall benefits of e-government services were either significant (36%), or moderate (50%).

These figures emphasise the need for Government agencies to continue to adopt a portfolio approach to the management of their service delivery channels, emphasising a mix of traditional and electronic channels, in keeping with the Australian Government Services Delivery Principles, outlined in the Australian Government Access and Distribution Strategy.

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1 Conductor by Roy Morgan Research, dandalopartners & BDO for AGIMO, January 2005.
2 The percentages add up to more than 100% as some respondents reported using multiple channels for the same government service.
3 Conducted by NOIE & DMR consulting, 2003.
The NOIE e-Government Benefits Study (2003) identified the following actual and potential benefits to agencies:

- Financial benefits are expected to accrue to government with a reduction in costs. Lower cost of delivery channels and resource efficiencies are reported to be the main contributing factors.

- Cost reductions are expected to come from:
  - improved business processes (67%)
  - reducing costs of servicing (advertising, printed material, staff costs) (64%)
  - cross agency collaboration (17%).

- The aggregate benefit/cost ratio across agencies expecting a financial benefit was 92.5%. The aggregate benefit/cost ratio across all programs, including those for which fiscal savings were not the primary consideration, was 61%.

- Benefits to users of e-government services are estimated to be $1.1 billion in 2002.

The e-Government Benefits Study also identified the following factors for agency consideration:

- identifying and quantifying target audience and market segment demand, and developing an integrated access and distribution strategy
- undertaking appropriate market research to estimate the markets for information, downloadable forms and transaction services
- being responsive in addressing customers’ needs
- continuing to measure and monitor demand, adoption and take-up of e-government services within the agency’s strategy for service delivery.

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4 The percentages add up to more than 100% because cost reductions can come from more than one area.
MANAGING MULTIPLE CHANNELS
Managing multiple channels

Channel evolution

The changing service delivery landscape and rapid proliferation of communication channels requires government agencies to consider the following in their service delivery design:

• understanding the strategic significance of channel decision making (i.e. cross- functional impact and long-term implications)
• analysing channel economics in order to estimate current and future channel costs
• ensuring back-end channel processes are adequately resourced
• recognising customers needs and preferences
• implementing a robust plan to integrate new channels into existing channel operations
• implementing a robust change management plan to influence customer behaviour and assist customers to migrate from one channel to another
• constantly monitoring customer satisfaction, changes in service expectations, environmental development (i.e. policy changes), channel usage patterns and overall channel performance
• providing consistent content and a consistent message across all channels
• encouraging information flow and customer feedback through each channel
• ensuring that agencies continually forecast and assess channel development.

Developing a channel strategy

A ‘channel strategy’ is a set of business driven decisions aimed at delivering services to customers efficiently and effectively using the most appropriate mix of channels for the customer and the agency.

The channel strategy can enable an agency to manage service delivery to customers through the most appropriate channel. It can illustrate the best method for customer interaction, the most appropriate type of interaction and the method of interaction best supported by different channels. Research by Gartner Pty Ltd\(^1\) recommends that a channel strategy focuses on ensuring:

• **Information and experience consistency** – although customers may want to continue to use a variety of channels, they expect consistency in their experiences when interacting with government, no matter which channel they use.

• **Cross channel insight** – customers expect each channel to be attuned to recent interactions and transactions that were initiated through alternate channels.

Benefits of a channel strategy include:

• the alignment of customer needs, services, channels and agency priorities
• improved cost efficiency of service delivery across multiple channels
• seamless, integrated and consistent delivery of services across channels
• informed and prudent future channel investments.

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\(^{1}\) Gartner Research 2002, *Channel management in financial services: best practices.*
Channel strategy

The following elements are the foundation for a channel strategy; they also detail possible considerations for the agency in relation to business objectives and priorities:

Phase One: Situation analysis

**Purpose:** To understand and process information an agency currently possesses regarding services, channels and customers.

Phase Two: Channel design

**Purpose:** To align channels with customer needs, service characteristics and agency priorities.

Phase Three: Measurement design

**Purpose:** To determine the measures of success.

Phase Four: Implementation

**Purpose:** To develop a plan for implementation of a channel strategy.

Phase Five: Refinement

**Purpose:** To evaluate and refine the channel strategy.
PHASE ONE: SITUATION ANALYSIS
Phase One: Situation Analysis

Purpose: To understand and process the information an agency currently possesses regarding services, channels and customers.

Questions to consider:

- What are the agency’s current priorities?
- What services does it offer?
- Who are the customers?
- What services do the customers access?
- What channel(s) does the agency deliver services through?
- What is the current usage of each channel?
- What is the level of customer satisfaction with each channel?
- What are the costs of delivering services through each channel (channel economics)?
- Are there any additional forces impacting upon the agency’s current channel strategy?

Key aspects of these considerations are explored below.

Services

Agencies will deliver a range of services that can be grouped into one of the following three services groups:

- **Information** – includes the provision of information such as performance data, financial reports, press releases, policies etc.

- **Interaction** – two-way communication between an agency and a customer that does not result in a change of account details or status (e.g. enquiries, technical advice, feedback).

- **Transaction** – results in a change of a customer’s account details or status (e.g. payment of benefits, submission of tax returns, registration).
Channels

A ‘channel’ is the access mechanism used by government to interact with customers and for customers to interact with government. Agencies can define their channel mix in several ways; the most useful is by type.

Channels by type:

- **On-site** – shop fronts, trade shows, appointments etc.
- **On-paper** – letters, brochures, books, fax etc.
- **On-call** – call centres, IVR etc.
- **On-line** – websites, portals, e-mail etc.
- **On-air** – radio, TV etc.
- **On-the-go** – mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs) etc.

Each channel and device has a unique set of attributes that make it suited to delivering particular services.

### Unique attributes and inhibitors of channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>On-site</th>
<th>On-paper</th>
<th>On-call</th>
<th>On-line</th>
<th>On-air</th>
<th>On-the-go</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General attributes</td>
<td>• Custom</td>
<td>• Tradition</td>
<td>• Habits</td>
<td>• temporary</td>
<td>• Routine</td>
<td>• Prospect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High touch</td>
<td>• Record keeping</td>
<td>• TV may be temporary</td>
<td>• Speed</td>
<td>• Reach</td>
<td>• Immediacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification</td>
<td>• Reach</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• 24x7 access</td>
<td>• Speed</td>
<td>• Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assurance of outcome</td>
<td>• Convenience</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reach</td>
<td>• Low tech</td>
<td>• Reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhibitors</td>
<td>• Location</td>
<td>• Slow</td>
<td>• Going costs</td>
<td>• High set-up cost</td>
<td>• General message</td>
<td>• Limited scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Time constraint</td>
<td>• Low</td>
<td>• Backlash</td>
<td>• Perceived security risk</td>
<td>• Language barrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High ongoing cost</td>
<td>• enment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best fit services</td>
<td>• Queries</td>
<td>• Correspondence</td>
<td>• Queries</td>
<td>• Media releases</td>
<td>• Emergency Service bulletins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Authenticatio.</td>
<td>• Referrals</td>
<td>• Payments</td>
<td>• Payments</td>
<td>• General information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Special needs</td>
<td>• Publications</td>
<td>• Feedback</td>
<td>• Publications</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Phase One: Situation Analysis
Customers

Customers of government include any users of the information or services provided by government. They include individuals, businesses, intermediaries, other government agencies and international stakeholders.

Customer segmentation may provide a simple way to gain a clear picture of an agency’s customer base. Customers can be divided into segments that have distinct characteristics. Through the identification of these characteristics, the needs of a particular segment of customer can be determined, and then services can be tailored, to meet those needs. There are a number of different criteria available to segment customers including the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Desired outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic</td>
<td>Stage in life-cycle, age, gender, income, occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychographic</td>
<td>Lifestyle, personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>Usage, familiarity, loyalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Size, territory, region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred mode of interaction</td>
<td>Digital, human-preferred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability</td>
<td>Skills, abilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each segment will have unique needs and preferences. Agencies hold significant amounts of information about their customers through information collected from other services, feedback, stakeholder interaction and correspondence. By collating this information, agencies have a resource of information about their customers and their characteristics.

Examples of customer segmentation

**Demographic:** It may be useful to segment customers based on their stage in the life cycle. The *Intergenerational Report 2002–03* highlights the changing demographics of Australians over the next 40 years and provides an insight into changing societal needs:

> By 2042, Australia’s population is projected to increase by around 30 per cent, to over 25 million people. The number of people aged 55 and over will grow faster than the number aged under 55.\(^6\)

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Preferred mode of interaction: Another example is segmentation based on customers’ current and likely future use of electronic channels for receiving government services. Forrester\(^7\) has categorised electronic use into four distinct categories:

![Electronic Use Categorisation]

Channel usage

Agencies can use the information about their services, channels and customers to chart their channel usage information.

Channel usage information can assist government agencies in choosing the most appropriate channel to deliver their services. Understanding the channels that customers have used in the past will help agencies to determine the channels that are best suited for the various types of customer interactions. It is important to analyse channel data from a number of different angles, including:

- service (information, interaction, transaction)
- customer segment (e.g. student, new parents, seniors, citizens etc.)
- service by customer segment (e.g. student transactions with government agencies).

Examples of charting channel usage:

![Channel Usage Charts]

Channel economics

The best way to develop an understanding of an agency’s channel economics is to develop an understanding of the costs associated with serving similar customers through each channel. Agencies can use their existing knowledge about their services, customers and costs to build an indicative picture of the associated costs of each channel for each type of service and/or each customer group.

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)\(^8\) suggested that to improve management of e-government, and the measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of Internet service delivery, agencies should:

- establish coherent arrangements for management of their websites to increase efficiency of use
- develop internal policies and guidelines for the internet and encourage agency staff to use them
- quantify the benefits and costs of their websites
- consider using AGIMO’s *Demand and value assessment methodology*\(^9\) to assess websites and online service delivery
- identify the audience for their website and online services, and consult potential users about their needs
- assess demand for the delivery of services via the Internet and specify targets for achievements against objectives
- compare the performance of their websites with that of other agencies or sites, to assist in assessing whether the website is efficient and effective.

**Example:** Costs associated with collecting information from a student for an assistance loan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Costs to consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-line</td>
<td>Technology set up, maintenance, associated help lines (for customer and staff), content preparation, verifying details, staffing etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site</td>
<td>Building facilities and equipment, staffing, content preparation, printing, verifying details etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-paper</td>
<td>Building facilities and equipment, staffing, content preparation, printing, postage, verifying details etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANAO noted that agencies could demonstrate their achievements against the government’s aims for e-government by providing improved services to their clients, business and the broader community. However, the agencies were generally unable to determine whether their investments in e-government were delivering tangible returns, including cost reductions or increased efficiency and productivity.

Overall, the ANAO concluded that agencies’ methods were inadequate to assess whether their delivery of government services and programmes through the Internet was efficient and effective. However, there was evidence that agencies included in the audit were making considerable efforts to improve, and there had been significant progress made in the past year. Consideration of the factors outlined in this guide will assist agencies in their improvement efforts.

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PHASES TWO: CHANNEL DESIGN &
THREE: MEASUREMENT DESIGN
Phase Two: Channel Design

Purpose: To align channels with customer needs, service characteristics and agency priorities.

Questions to consider:
- What are the characteristics of the service(s)?
- What customer segment(s) access this service(s)?
- Which channel(s) are more effective in delivering service(s)?
- Are there any agency/government policies or procedures surrounding channels that may impact current channel arrangements?
- Is the channel mix accessible to all customers?

Deciding which channel(s) to deploy for a particular service is a complex task. Agencies can take the information they collected in Phase 1: Situation analysis to determine the best channel mix for their service portfolio. The best channel mix will be the one that supports the alignment of the needs of their customer(s) with their agency’s priorities, the service characteristics and the capability of the channel to support each service.

Who are our customers and what are their needs?

Each customer will have an individual set of needs. There are some needs that will be universal and that should be considered when determining the channels to deliver a service:
- **Assurance of outcome** – customers must be assured that their desired outcome will be met.
- **Choice and flexibility** – government services should be readily available to all customers. Agencies should maximise technology and offer services wherever possible. Some services by nature can only be delivered through certain channels. Regardless of their mode of interaction, an agency’s communication with its customers must be clear and consistent.
- **Ease of use** – government must provide customers with support to assist them in using channels.
- **Security and trust** – customers must feel assured that any information they provide to government will be protected against misuse.
- **Quick and knowledgeable responses** – customers should be able to quickly locate information about products and services.

What are the service characteristics?

Agencies will need to understand the following characteristics of each service:
- What is its purpose?
- What are the time constraints?
- What is the level of complexity of the interaction or transaction?
Phase Three: Measurement Design

Purpose: To determine the measures of success.

Questions to consider:

• How will success be measured – e.g. number of customers accessing the service(s) through each channel, percentage of customers accessing the service(s) through each channel?
• Are the targets/measures reasonable?
• How will customer satisfaction be measured?

Agencies will need to align their channel performance measurements with their agency performance systems. Some agencies will already have key performance indicators for service delivery in their Client Service Charters.

Agencies may use customer focussed criteria to measure their performance. Examples include:

• access – the accessibility of the service
• timeliness – the time required to receive a service or product
• ease of use – the useability of the service
• outcome – the assurance of outcome
• satisfaction – overall client satisfaction with the service.

Agencies may use channel responsiveness as a measurement. Examples include:

• call centre – first call resolution, the degree to which the client needs are met without further referral or call-back within a designated interval
• IVR – a call that terminates at the IVR tree at a success marker
• websites – visitor sessions, number of users who come to the site, how often they visit and how long the visit lasted.
PHASES FOUR: IMPLEMENTATION & FIVE: REFINEMENT
Phase Four: Implementation

Purpose: To develop a plan for implementation of a channel strategy.

Questions to consider:

• What needs to be put into the plan to make the transition from existing arrangements smooth and effective for both staff and customers?
• Has a communications strategy been developed to inform both customers and staff of the changes?
• Have the proper procedures been implemented to ensure that staff are trained to deal with the new arrangements?

Critical success factors

There are a number of critical success factors that assist with the implementation of a channel strategy:

• a structured approach to managing the strategic channel mix/portfolio
• support and leadership from executive management
• strong lines of communication between channel management groups
• a good understanding of the costs associated with channel changes
• a commitment to integrating new channels into existing channel operations
• a commitment to adapting and changing business models and channels
• a commitment to adapting internal systems to implement new channel strategies
• education of customers about the various channel options.
Phase Five: Refinement

Purpose: To evaluate and refine the channel strategy.

Questions to consider:

- What are customers saying? Are they satisfied with the arrangements – i.e. new services and their delivery?
- How could the current channel strategy be improved?
- Could new/different channels be implemented to provide better customer services?
- Have government priorities shifted? How does this change impact on current channel strategy?
- When new services are introduced, are procedures in place to align them with the current channel strategy?

Future channel usage patterns

It is important that government agencies forecast future channel usage patterns to ensure efficiency of service delivery. Forrester has created a 'channel momentum' index to estimate how customers' channel usage will evolve over time. The index is determined by plotting the customers' likelihood to use a channel in the future against their current use of that channel.

As an example, paper based delivery is presently the preferred channel for notification while the internet and email represent the most preferred channels in the future. But combining future and current use with the channel momentum index clearly sets the internet as the future leader for the provision of notification.

Conclusion

A Channel Management Strategy is one component of an agency's overall access and distribution strategy. It can help agencies align the attributes of the channel and the service with customer needs to promote a positive and consistent experience across the channels. Agencies can use the strategy to assess the merits of introducing a new channel.
Channel strategy – A set of business driven choices aimed at delivering services to customers efficiently and effectively using the most appropriate mix of channels for the customer and the agency. The strategy aligns service characteristics with agency priorities and customer needs.

Customers – Customers of government include any users of the information and services provided by government. Customers of each agency can be segmented into these key groups:

• individuals/citizens
• business, industry, industry peak groups and associations
• intermediaries, community organisations
• other tiers of government
• international stakeholders.

Services – Information, transactions or interactions between government and customers.

Information – Includes the provision of information such as performance data, financial reports, press releases, policies etc.

Interaction – Two-way communication between an agency and a customer that does not result in a change of account details or status (e.g. enquiries, technical advice, feedback).

Transaction – Results in a change of a customer’s account details or status (e.g. payment of benefits, submission of tax returns, registration).
Frameworks

Delivering Australian Government Services – Access and Distribution Strategy

Multi-channel service delivery opens up a complex array of possibilities for interconnections both within and between agencies. This challenges traditional service delivery approaches, organisational paradigms, existing business process and information management practices. In order to achieve change, agencies can no longer always act unilaterally. They need frameworks and tools to assess, plan and coordinate their efforts for those services that are more effectively delivered by collaborative multi-channel networks. The Access and Distribution Strategy provides these frameworks and tools.

Australian Government Technical Interoperability Framework

An important step to achieve seamless delivery of services across government is making sure that the tools we use to do business are compatible. Interoperability, or enabling seamless connections, is fundamental to reducing the cost of government and improving service outcomes to citizens. The technical interoperability framework provides this foundation of common standards to support collaboration across government agencies, the community and business sectors.

Australian Government e-Authentication Framework (AGAF) for Business

Australian businesses conduct a wide range of transactions with Australian Government agencies using various delivery channels including the internet. To manage the risks associated with online transactions, the Australian Government has developed the AGAF for Business. The AGAF for Business is based on a set of principles for e-authentication for the whole of government: these include transparency in government, cost-effectiveness, risk management, consistency, trust and improved privacy for citizens. The AGAF for Business recognises that different types of transactions need different authentication mechanisms, depending on the level of risk involved. As such, it is based on four assurance levels that are matched to the risk associated with a transaction.

National Service Improvement Framework

Government is continuously striving to improve and provide seamless service delivery to citizens. The National Service Improvement Framework aims to facilitate projects requiring collaboration within and between government at all levels. The National Service Improvement Framework website provides a knowledge base that will assist Local, State/Territory and Australian government departments and agencies in the effective implementation of cross-jurisdictional projects.
Appendix B: Resources

Case Studies

**Transforming Government Volume 1: Achievements in e-Government**

Transforming Government: Achievements in e-government reviews particularly successful and innovative uses of new technologies by the Australian Government and highlights how this has transformed the way in which government transacts with customers, provides information, and organises its internal processes.

**Transforming Government Volume 2: Enhancing Productivity**

Australian Government departments and agencies are using new technologies to increase productivity, build internal capability and improve customer focus. The case studies featured in this publication highlight the approaches to the development of applications that have been particularly successful as well as challenges encountered and lessons learned. This publication is the second volume of Transforming Government.

**The TIGERS Report**

The TIGERS Program was an innovative e-government trial program undertaken by the Australian Government in collaboration with the Tasmanian state and local governments between 2000 and 2003. The sponsors of the program were the Commonwealth Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts and the Premier of Tasmania.

TIGERS was a unique program in the way it explored the opportunities and issues that arise in the more advanced stages of e-government: the provision of integrated services involving multiple agencies and multiple jurisdictions.
Appendix B: Resources

Studies

**E-government Benefits Study**

The current e-government initiatives provide a strong foundation for meeting the government’s objectives of increased reach and impact of e-government. Achieving the next step will require increased demand for and maturity of e-government, supported by improved management practices. This study identifies many examples of significant benefit to citizens, businesses and intermediaries through the government’s adoption of online delivery of services.

**Australians’ Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services**

When people contact government they can use a variety of channels. That is, they can go in person to an office, use a telephone service, access information via the Internet, send a letter, or use a third party. When people contact government they may be contacting the Australian, state/territory or local government services.

This report outlines how people are using these different channels to contact the three levels of government in Australia. It also examines the level of satisfaction they have with these services and their preferences and expectations. By better understanding what’s happening across the three levels of government, agencies will be better placed to design services to meet future demands and expectations.

**Measuring the Efficiency and Effectiveness of E-Government**

Australian Government policy is that agencies use the Internet to deliver all appropriate programs and services. This has led to considerable agency investment in Internet-based service delivery. In this report, The Australian National Audit Office examines whether agencies are measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the services and programs they deliver through the Internet.

**Future Challenges for E-government**

This series of papers on e-government was commissioned by the Australian Government Information Management Office through the Institute of Public Administration of Australia (ACT Division). The topics covered are community collaboration; multi-channel delivery; collective accountability; privacy and legal issues; accessibility; value and evaluation; and organisational and management issues. The views expressed in the papers indicate the depth of debate surrounding e-government in Australia.
Tools

Delivering Australian Government Services – Service Delivery Capability Model

For effective service delivery, agencies need to understand their own service delivery capabilities as well as the capabilities of the agencies they seek to collaborate with. Agencies need to utilise this capability effectively and collaboratively to improve service levels to customers and/or reduce costs to government. This means knowing what neighbouring agencies are doing and what their capabilities are, and using that knowledge to drive collaborative policy development and service delivery options.

The Capability Model provides a common framework within which policy developers and implementation planners can identify and describe the capability required to deliver customer-centric services.

Demand and Value Assessment Methodology

The Demand and Value Assessment Methodology assists agencies in developing transparent and auditable assessments of demand and value propositions for online-government programs. These propositions underpin the business case and assist in substantiating the viability of the initiative in justifying resource investment and in demonstrating transparency and accountability. The methodology provides for a consistent approach across agencies.

Better Practice Checklists

These checklists have been created to help web managers, business unit owners, and others quickly enhance their understanding of a range of issues associated with the provision of services online. The checklists are short documents which provide information in a simple, non-technical manner. Further information can generally be obtained from documentation and contacts referred to in the checklists.

Guide to ICT Sourcing

The Guide to ICT Sourcing for Australian Government Agencies was released in May 2004. This is a document for Australian Government agencies that are dealing with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sourcing issues. The Guide was developed in response to a growing need among agencies for clear and objective information about ICT sourcing. This is not a policy document or rule book, but presents options for strategic decision-making about ICT sourcing. It describes how agencies manage ICT sourcing based on a four-phase lifecycle, which starts with a decision about whether to change the current sourcing strategy and concludes with an approach for transitioning to, and managing, a new sourcing solution.