

Improving access to government through better use of the Web



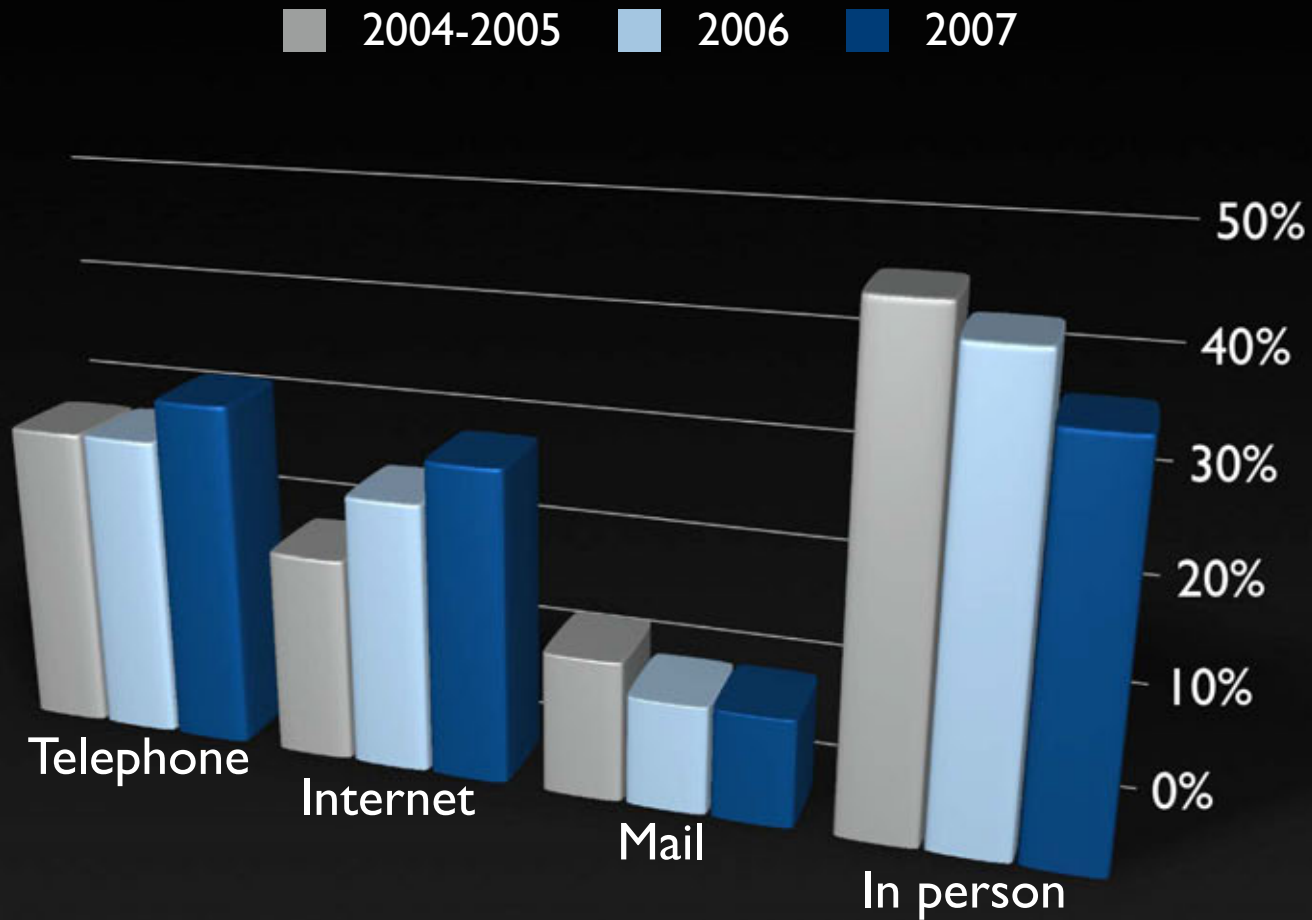
Monterrey, Mexico, 6 Nov 2008

José M. Alonso
eGovernment Lead
W3C/CTIC

Instant Poll

- How many times do you interact with the government in one-year's time?
 - Don't know
 - One
 - A couple?
 - Many!

Role of the Web



Source: Australians' Use of and Satisfaction with e-Government Services – 2007

Some Challenges

- 29% people would now prefer to contact government by internet, but more needs to be done...
 - Improve content and design of websites
 - Strategies to make government services easier to find
 - Security is a fundamental condition

This talk

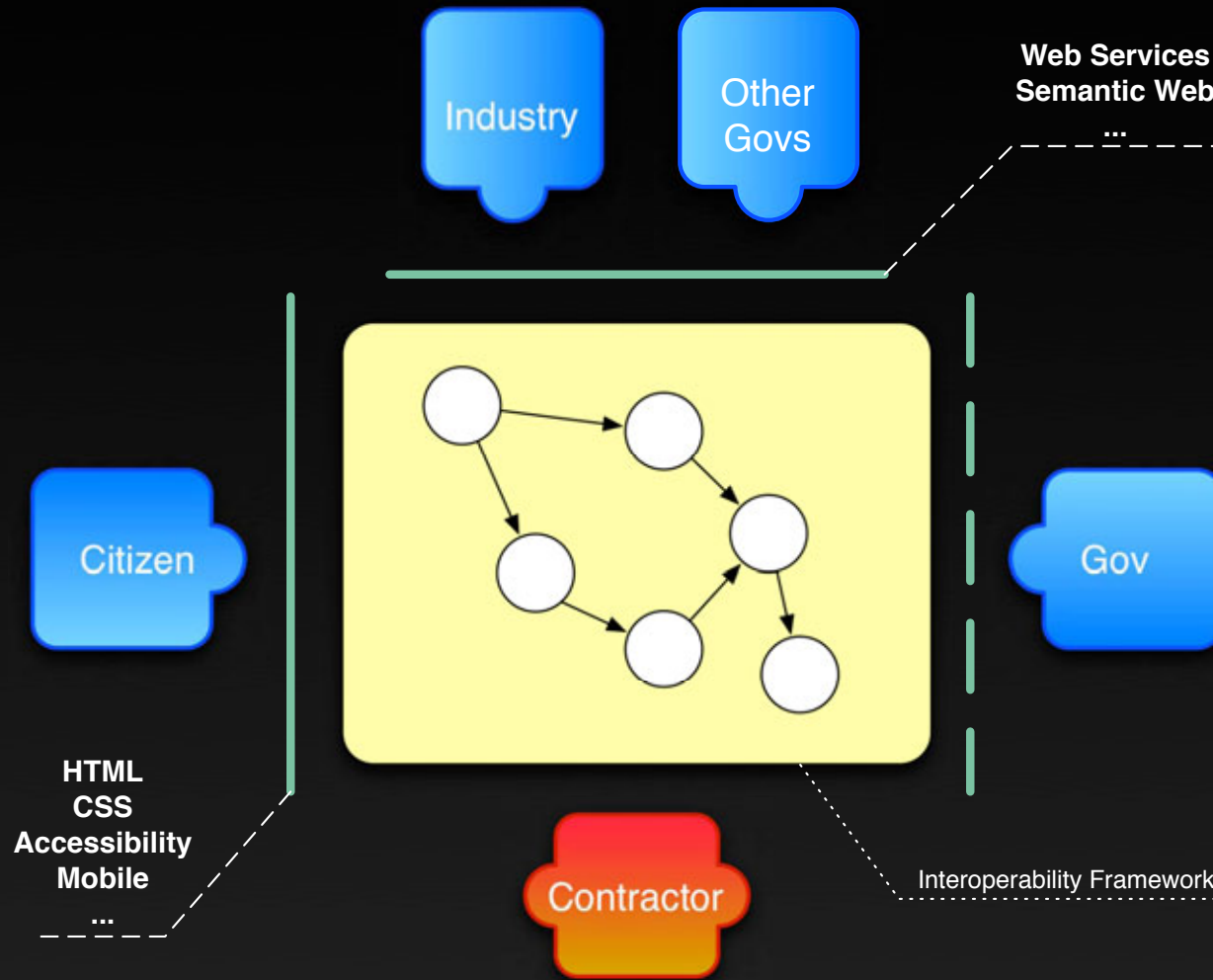
- Open Standards
- Participation
- Transparency
- Data Integration
- What else is coming?

Disclaimer

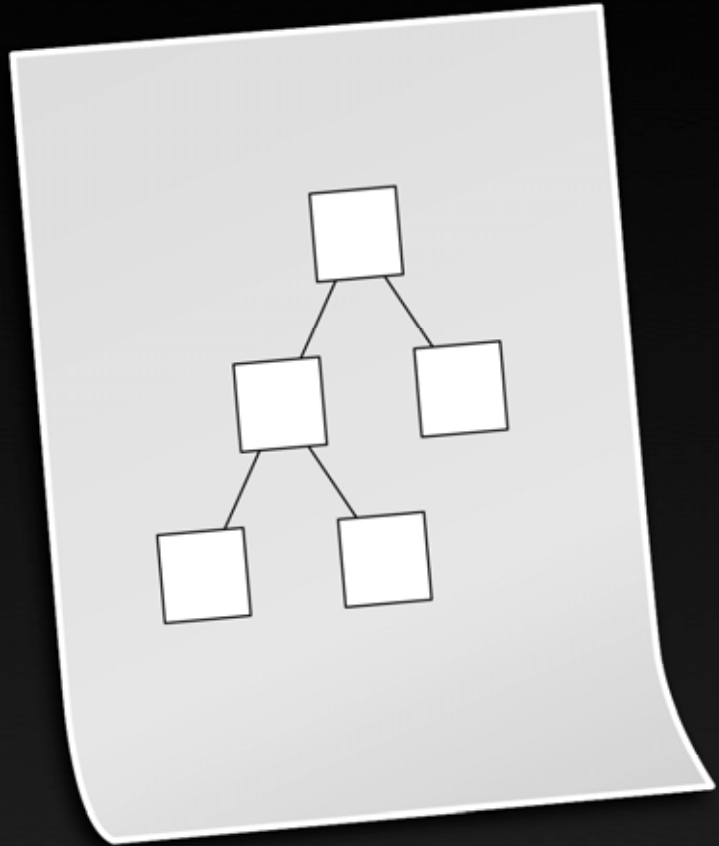
- Based on current Activity at W3C
- We don't have the solutions yet!
 - identifying the challenges
 - 13 topic areas so far (still a moving target)
 - I'm going review them grouped in 4

Open Standards

Big Picture



Organization vs User



One-stop shops



But...

- Example: get to a purchase order
 - Click 2 javascript: links
 - Go through 3 pop-up windows
 - Finally, get to a URI like this:
[https://www.example.com/PublicAccess/
PA_POCheck.aspx?
IdPurchase=YES&QS=ER4TEngVFRMXeBQ
SERIfHxQ=](https://www.example.com/PublicAccess/PA_POCheck.aspx?IdPurchase=YES&QS=ER4TEngVFRMXeBQSERIfHxQ=)

Replay

(with common sense)

- Example: get to a purchase order

- Click one regular link


- Get to a URI like this:

- <https://www.example.com/PurchaseOrders/2008/05/19/IDXXX>

or

- <https://www.example.com/PurchaseOrders/IDXXX>

Cool URIs don't change?


 > [Contact us](#) > [Help](#) > [A to Z index](#) > [Site search](#) > [Accessibility](#)

The National Archives [MyPage](#) | [Sign in](#) | [Register](#)

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- > Services for professionals
- ✓ **Electronic records management**
 - Advice & guidance
 - Digital Continuity project
 - Web Continuity project**
 - Information and records tools
 - Publications
 - Revised XML schema
 - XML schema documentation



Web Continuity project

The Web Continuity project, led by The National Archives, is developing a comprehensive programme of website archiving and web link management to ensure continued access to government information.



Web Continuity

This work builds on our collection of selected websites in the [UK Government Web Archive](#) which was launched in 2003.

Why web continuity matters

Government information is increasingly being made available via websites, and over half of all interaction between the government and the public now happens online. Websites are often the first port of call when looking for government information. They are used by politicians and civil servants, by business and professional communities and the general public.

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By the way: One Web

- <http://www.example.com/movil/>
- <http://www.example.com/mobile>
- <http://mobile.example.com/>
- <http://www.example.com/accesible/>
- ...

“application must be
conformant with W3C
standards”

What W3C offers



What governments need

- Suite of open standards to solve their Web-related issues
- No matter who does what
 - as far as it's “open”
- Which ones, in which way, how to combine them
- Best Practices

Open Standards Policies

- Make inventory
- Do not reinvent the wheel
- Make the simple things work for once
 - no more accessibility issues, please
 - permanent URIs, please
- Tackle high impact ones first

Open Standards Challenges

□ Best Practices

- Suite of open standards to solve their Web-related issues
- How to combine them
- Need to make standards organizations talking better in government terms

Participation

How do citizens search?

- They try going to the one-stop shop
 - (a few, and if known)
- To the given agency Web site if not
 - (even less ones)
- They often use a search engine
- They get a pointer to Wikipedia
- Happy with what they get

Bottom line

do it right...

or users go away...

Not convinced yet?

- In a Google search of five keywords or phrases representing the top five news stories of 2007, which will rank higher?
 - Weblogs
 - New York Times' Web site

Inversion of Authority

THE ARENA FOR ACCOUNTABLE PREDICTIONS

A LONG BET:

BET 2

DURATION 5 years (02002-02007)

“In a Google search of five keywords or phrases representing the top five news stories of 2007, weblogs will rank higher than the *New York Times'* Web site.”



PREDICTOR
Dave Winer

CHALLENGER
Martin Nisenholtz

STAKES \$2,000

Congratulations to Dave and his preferred charity,
The World Wide Web Consortium (www.w3.org), which will receive the stakes!

VOTE ON THIS BET

Here's how people voted on this bet:

side with predictor

216 people (66%)

side with challenger

109 people (34%)

[DETAILS »](#)

DISCUSS THIS BET

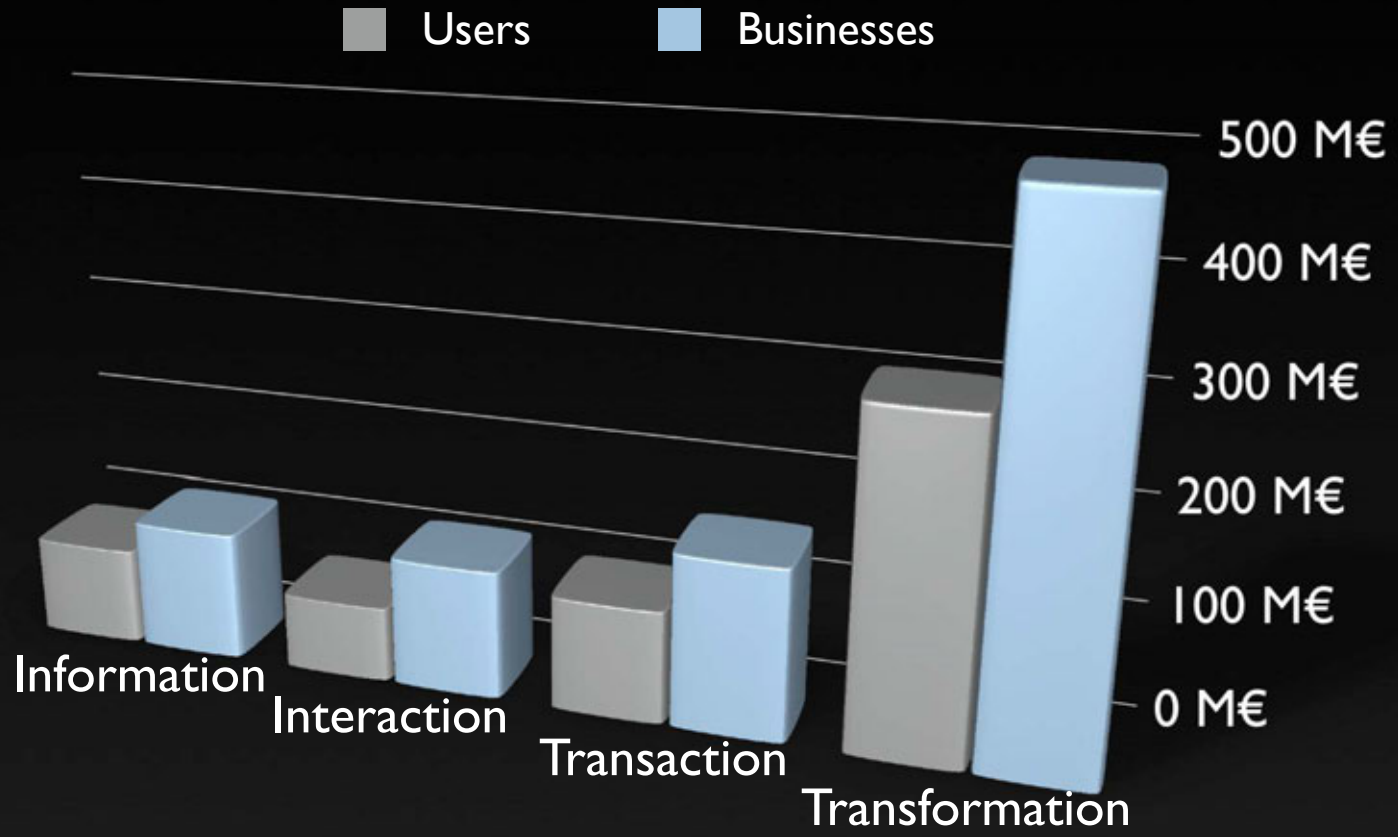
What do you think of this bet? Post your thoughts, and read what others have added to the conversation.

[JOIN THE DISCUSSION »](#)

The Judgement: Dave Winer has won the bet!

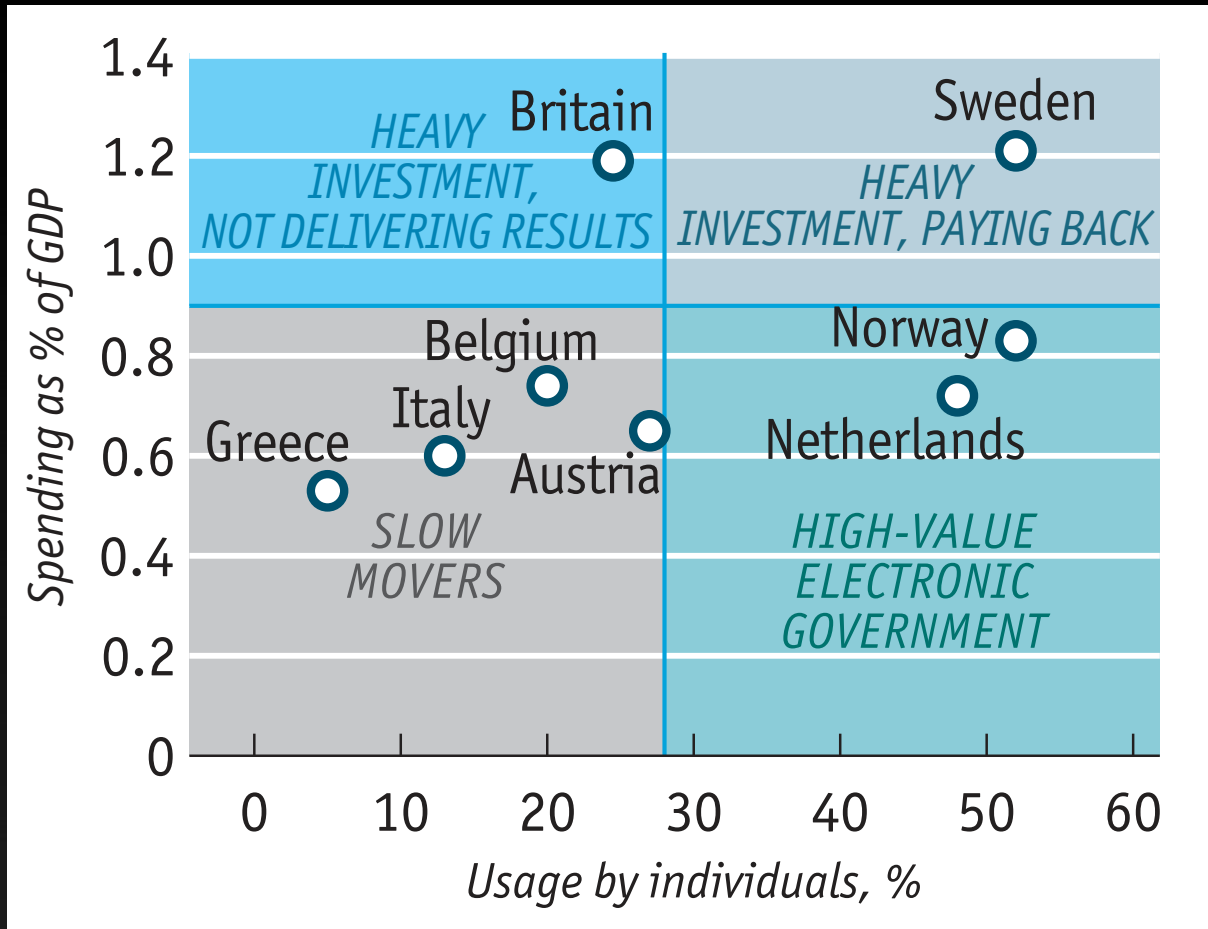
<http://www.longbets.org/2>

Sophistication is there...



Benefits from eGovernment projects at different levels of sophistication to a mid-size OECD country
Source: [OECD through The Economist](#)

... but it's not enough



Source: [Deloitte Research \(2005\)](#) through [The Economist](#)

“We can no longer afford to work at the speed of government.

We have responsibilities to the public to move the information as quickly as possible... so that they can make key decisions.”

Brian Humphrey and Ron Myers (LAFD)

PARTICIPATION

- Yes, in upper case!
- Find ways to engage the users
 - Collaborative Tools
- Change, Innovate
 - if not, others will do it for you
(e.g. third party services)

Example: Commons

flickr[®] Signed in as [josema](#) Help Sign Out

Home You Organize Contacts Groups Explore Search The Commons Search

Photo by George

The Commons

Your opportunity to contribute to describing the world's public photo collections.

Welcome!

The key goals of The Commons on Flickr are to firstly show you hidden treasures in the world's public photography archives, and secondly to show how your input and knowledge can help make these collections even richer.

You're invited to help describe the photographs you discover in The Commons on Flickr, either by adding tags or leaving comments.*

Participating Institutions so far...




[FAQ](#) | [Rights Statement](#)

Example: Peer to Patent

The screenshot shows the Peer to Patent website. At the top left is the logo with the text "PEERTO PATENT" and "in cooperation with USPTO". On the top right are links for "Sign Up", "Login", and "Contact Us". Below the logo is a navigation bar with "COMMUNITY PATENT REVIEW" highlighted, and other tabs for "MY PROFILE", "TUTORIALS", and "ABOUT P-TO-P". A secondary navigation bar includes "APPLICATION LIST", "ARCHIVED APPLICATIONS", and "US PATENT CLASSIFICATIONS". A search bar is located on the right side of the page.

WELCOME TO PEER TO PATENT

Peer-to-Patent opens the patent examination process to public participation for the first time. Become part of this historic program. Help the USPTO find the information relevant to assessing the claims of pending patent applications. Become a community reviewer and improve the quality of patents.

- [Click here to see a list of all applications.](#)
- [Click here to be notified of any new applications via RSS](#) 
- [Click here to be notified about any new applications via email \(requires login\)](#)

New Applications | **Most Active Teams** | **Applications In Need** | **News**

•	1	New! System and method for optimizing query access t...
•	1	New! Preserving privacy of data streams using dynami...
•	4	Temporally relevant data placement
•	4	Gesture-based communications

PEER TO PATENT VIDEOS
Manny Schecter
Associate General Counsel, Intellectual Property Law, IBM
[More Videos](#)



..and many more

- Many more agencies using YouTube, Second Life, Twitter...
- And also: blogs, wikis...
- Third Party Services:
 - FixMyStreet, Follow the Money, MapLight, OpenCongress, GovTrack, TheyWorkForYou

Risky? Challenging... Fun!

- Reliable source of information?
- To mix or not mix
- What happens to the authoritative source of information that the government is?
- ...

Participation Challenges

- Use collaborative tools
- Put the info where needed
- Engage in the conversation
- Balance risks
- Create policies

Transparency

Transparency has many faces

- Accessible Web site
- Open Government Information

WCAG 2.0 is coming

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 is a Proposed Recommendation
 - (announced last Monday!)

WCAG 2.0

- Easier to read, understand, and implement
- Has more testable criteria that can be measured objectively
- Applies to all Web technologies beyond W3C standards (i.e. PDF)
- Addresses Web applications and scripting (i.e. AJAX applications)
- ...is the current state of the art!

Government Data

- Granularity
- Avoid Obscurity by Default
- Provenance

Transparency Challenges

- Identify provenance of information
 - “Google as authoritative source”
 - or Wikipedia or... you name it...
 - DRM, IPR (more later)
- Release as much as possible
 - balance with restrictions
 - let people mash it up! (more later, too)

Data Integration

Information Silos

- Long standing issue
- Serious consequences
- Needs solution now!

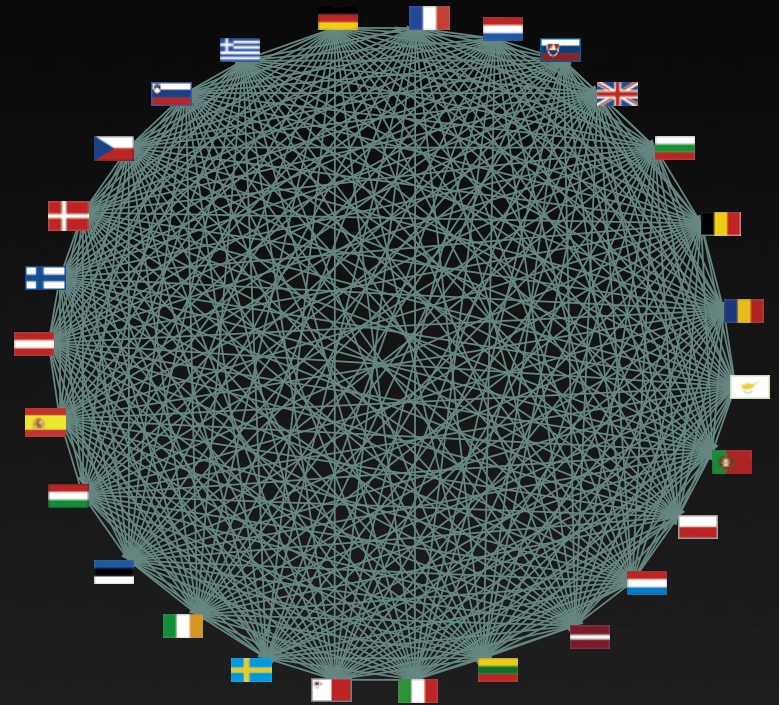
Data Integration

- Why XML is not always enough?



Ex. EU Network of Judicial Registers

- Potential number of bilateral interfaces between 27 member states: 702
 - for just one administrative procedure



What's happening?

- HTML scrapping
 - high cost, difficult maintenance
- Usually by the third sector
 - providing added value

Ex. Sunlight Labs API

Sunlight Labs API

About the Data

Our data comes from a variety of sources and updated regularly, a list of all sources with their update dates are listed below.

Source	Last Update
US Census Boundary Files	2007-03-01
Project Vote Smart	2008-06-19
Congresspedia	2008-06-20
Eventful	2008-06-20
GovTrack.us	2008-06-20
Congressional Biographical Directory	2008-06-20
FEC Disclosure Database	2008-06-20
Center for Responsive Politics	2008-06-20
Congressional Directory	2008-06-20

Congressional Directory	2008-06-20
Center for Responsive Politics	2008-06-20
FEC Disclosure Database	2008-06-20

But also...

METROPOLITAN POLICE Working together for a safer London

Search

home | recruitment | your right to information | crimes | contacts | ask the met | news | local info | about the met | young people | sitemap

Crime Mapping

Burglary, robbery & vehicle crime, September 2008

How to use this map: to view your local area in more detail, please use the map controls to zoom in to your neighbourhood or search for your postcode. Click on a shaded area to get more detailed information about crime in that area.

Map view Terms Help / FAQs

You are currently at: Borough level Ward level Sub-ward level

Map controls: ↑, ↓, ←, →, +, -

Map legend:

- High
- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- Low or no crime

Find your area

Postcode:

Borough:

Refine your results

Crime type:

Related links


- [Find your local police](#)
- [Safer Neighbourhoods](#)
- [Crime prevention](#)
- [Victim support](#)
- [Report a crime online](#)
- [Have your say](#)
- [Crimestoppers](#)
- [Ask the Met](#)
- [Detailed crime figures](#)

Open Formats

- Release in open raw formats
- No more scrapping
 - cost, maintenance
- Start simple
 - XML, RSS, Atom, Microformats, GRDDL, RDFa

Government APIs

Home About APP508 Sponsors App Directory Judges Collaborate Prizes Submit! Contact Us Blog Feed Apps Feed



Apps for Democracy

An Innovation Contest

for the
ADRIAN M. FENTY, MAYOR
VIVEK KUNDRA, CTO
District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Technology Officer

Got what it takes to mash-up DC's data to win some cash and tons of street cred?

Then sign-up for Apps for Democracy and start coding here!

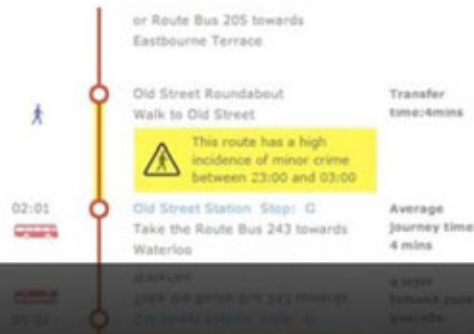
Show Us a Better Way

Tell us what you'd build with public information and we could help fund your idea!

What would you create with public information?

Ever been frustrated that you can't find out something that ought to be easy to find? Ever been baffled by league tables or 'performance indicators'? Do you think that better use of public information could improve health, education, justice or society at large?

The UK Government wants to hear your ideas for new products that could improve the way public information is communicated. The [Power of Information Taskforce](#) is running a competition on the



[Submit Your Idea](#)

[Home](#)

[All your ideas](#)

[About This Competition](#)

[Examples](#)

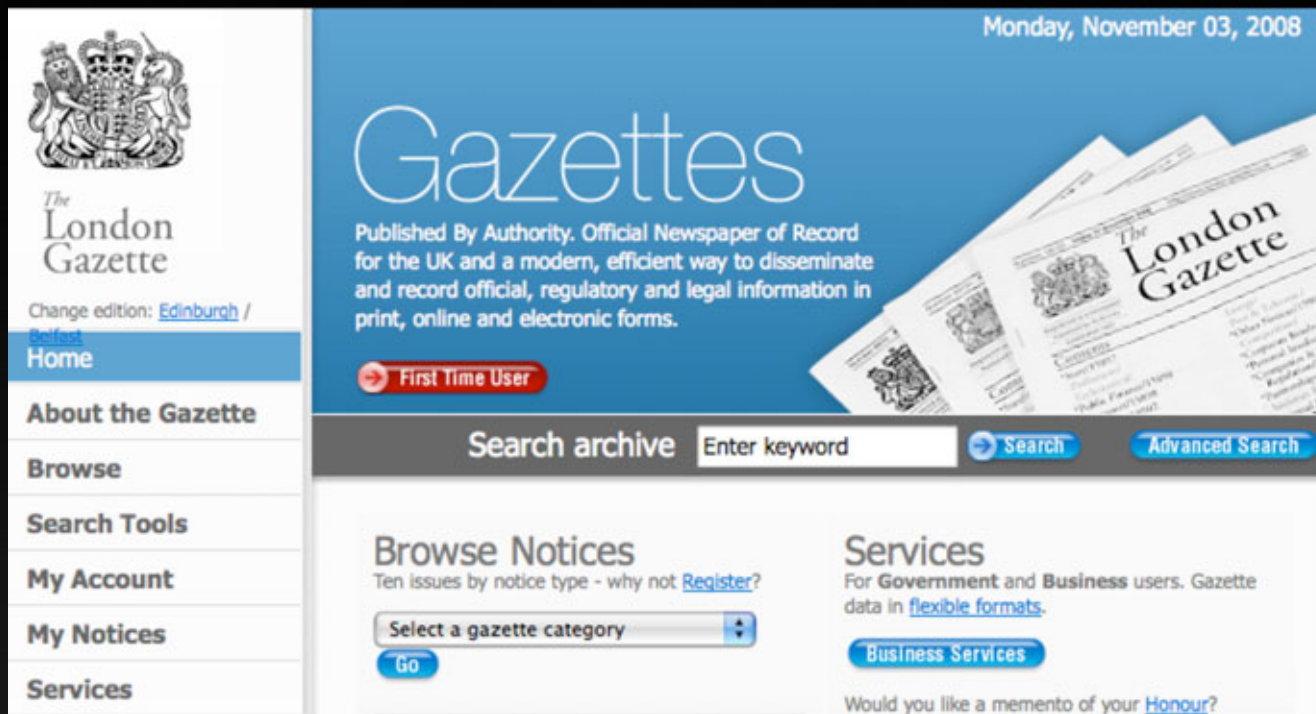
[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Information sources](#)

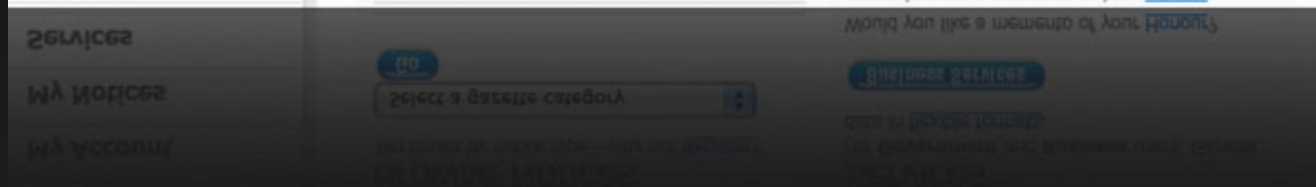
[House Rules](#)

[Contact Us](#)

RDFa



The screenshot shows the homepage of The London Gazette website. At the top right, the date "Monday, November 03, 2008" is displayed. The main header features the Royal Coat of Arms and the text "The London Gazette". Below this, it states: "Published By Authority. Official Newspaper of Record for the UK and a modern, efficient way to disseminate and record official, regulatory and legal information in print, online and electronic forms." A stack of newspaper pages is shown on the right. A red button labeled "First Time User" is visible. A search bar contains the text "Search archive" and "Enter keyword", with "Search" and "Advanced Search" buttons. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with items: "Home", "About the Gazette", "Browse", "Search Tools", "My Account", "My Notices", and "Services". The main content area has two columns: "Browse Notices" with a "Select a gazette category" dropdown and a "Go" button, and "Services" with a "Business Services" button and a link to "Honour?".

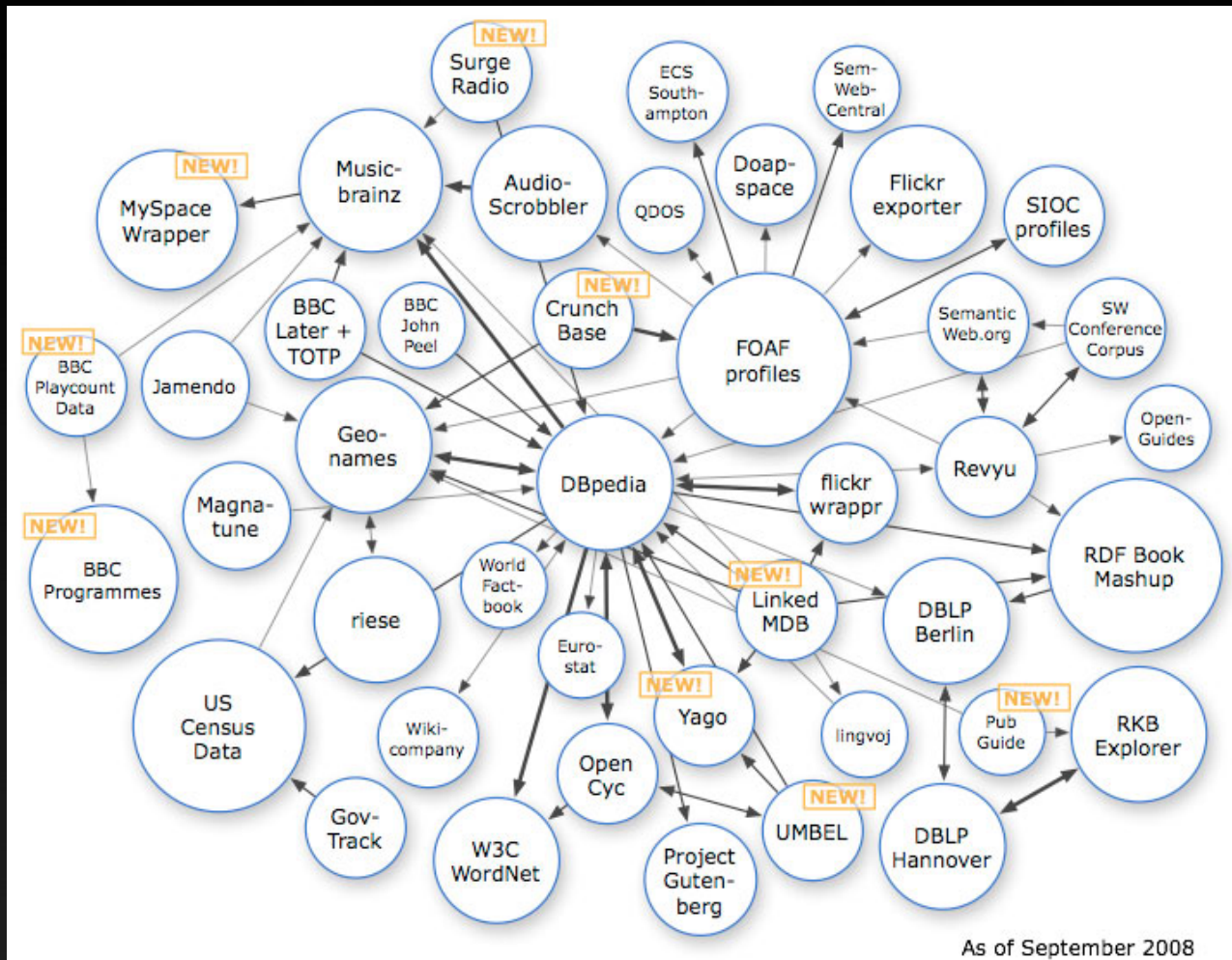


This block is a mirrored or duplicated version of the screenshot above, showing the same website interface elements in reverse or a different orientation.

Meet Linked Data

- Empowering Semantic Web
- No need to throw away your existing systems, just build on top
- Metadata are the goal (data mashups)
 - Linking Open Data project
- Open Government Data Principles

The “cloud”



Semantic Web use cases

- Search Services in Public Administration
- Ontology of Cultural Heritage
- Geographic Referencing Framework
- Expertise Location Service
- Public Health Situation Awareness

A word of advice

- Authoritative source
- Trust
- Provenance
- Security
- Integrity
- DRM, IPR

Data Integration Challenges

- Increase metadata
- Roadmap for transitioning from existing systems
 - Don't throw away, build on top
- Metadata use policies
- Trust-related challenges

What else is coming?
(or already here...)

Personalization

The screenshot displays the Redbridge i website interface. At the top left is the Redbridge i logo with a green leaf icon. To the right of the logo are navigation links: [Pay it](#), [Book it](#), [Forums](#), [A-Z contacts](#), [Contact Us](#), and [Help](#). Below the logo is a navigation bar with [Add content](#) and [i map](#) buttons. On the far right of this bar are [Log in](#) and [Sign up](#) buttons.

The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains a 'Main menu' with a list of categories: [Advice & Benefits](#), [Business](#), [Community & Life Events](#), [Council & Democracy](#), [Education & Learning](#), [Environment & Planning](#), [Social Care & Health](#), [Housing](#), [Jobs & Careers](#), [Leisure & Culture](#), [News & Events](#), and [Policing & Public safety](#). The middle column features a 'Welcome to Redbridge i' section with a blue header and a close button. The text below reads: 'ਜੀ ਆਈਆਂ ਨੂੰ to Redbridge i' and 'This is Redbridge Council's award winning interactive website.' It explains that Redbridge i is a council website that reacts to user needs and preferences. Below this text are [Log in](#) and [Sign up](#) buttons. The bottom of the middle column has a 'Recycling and Refuse' section with a blue header and a close button. The right column contains a 'Redbridge Learning Disability meeting' section with a blue header and a close button. It includes a photo of a meeting and text: 'News about Welfare Benefits Advice Lines' and 'Cabinet to consider school and pool plan'. Below this is a larger blue box with the text: 'The Redbridge Learning Disability services will be holding a public meeting on 4 November to as part of the Care Quality Commission merger review'. At the bottom of the right column is a 'Latest new' section with a blue header.

Multi Channel Delivery

- Mainly Mobile Phones
 - Which services? How? Where?
- Especially relevant in Developing Countries
 - Mobile for Social Development
- But also back-end issues



Colophon

Removing the “e” from eGovernment

- Online services not just an alternative
- Becoming “the” public services
- More important than ever
to solve problems
- ...oh, and majority of apps now only
use Web interfaces

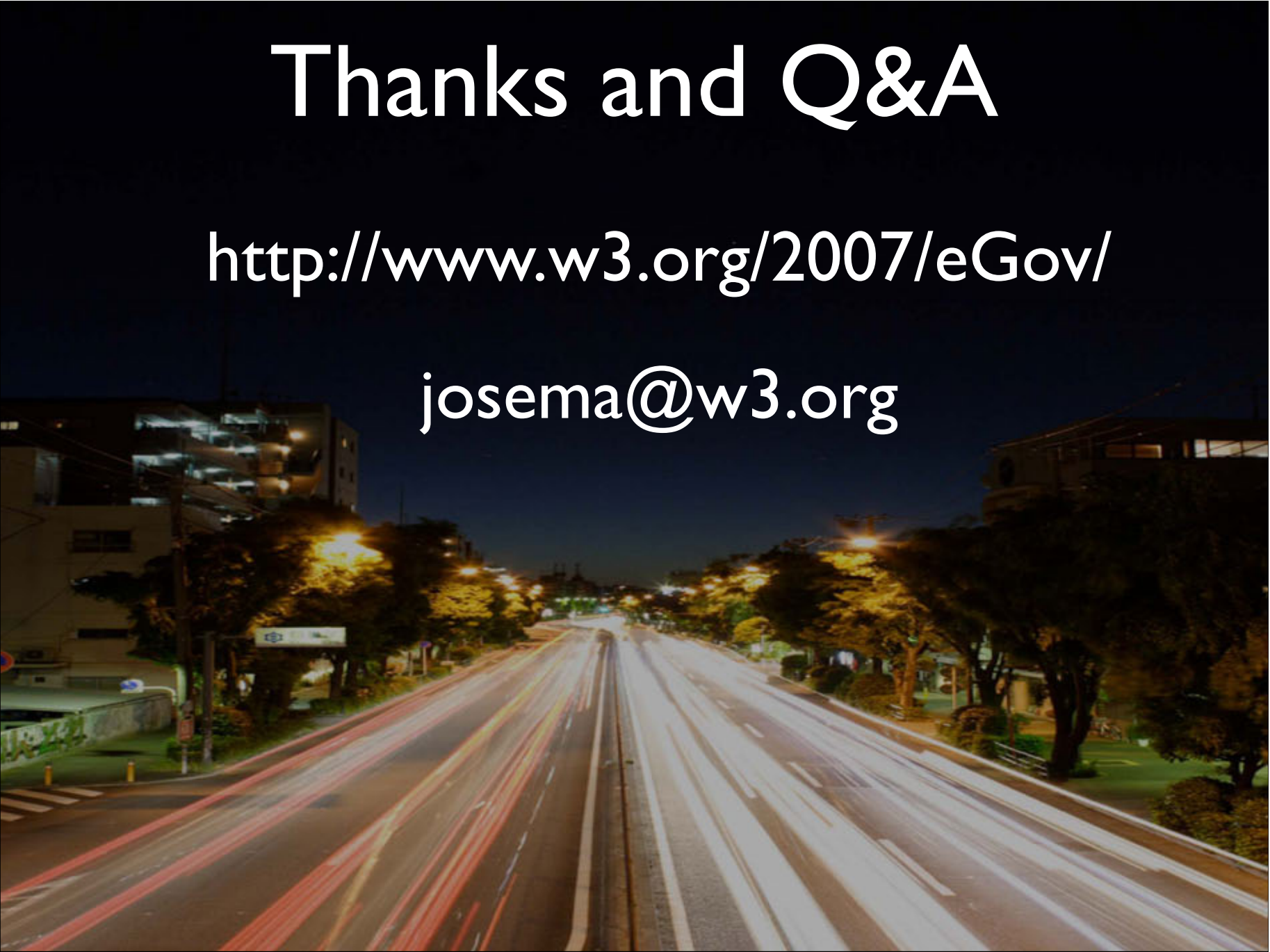
eGovernment IG at W3C

- Interest Group: forum for discussion
- Collective effort
 - Governments, Industry, Citizens, Civil Societies, other International Bodies
- Identification and Description of existing challenges
- Propose ways to address them

Thanks and Q&A

<http://www.w3.org/2007/eGov/>

josema@w3.org



Credits

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