

# Of the People, for the People, by the People. Can digital technology increase public trust in government?



# The Key to Public Confidence?

The Gettysburg Address is the most quoted political speech in history. It's powerful, succinct and short: just 272 words. That's why it has endured. Abraham Lincoln's phrase-making was legendary, but the ideas he expressed weren't new. His idea that government should be 'of the people, for the people, by the people' has been debated for centuries, especially during the English, American and French revolutions which gave birth to modern democracies. John Adams, the second President of the United States, summed up the spirit of those debates when he said, "As the happiness of the people is the sole end of government, so the consent of the people is the only foundation of it."



**Politics is all about trust. Not just for elected officials, but also for public servants. When it comes to technology, discussions shouldn't just start with how to make government more efficient and effective but should always start with these key principles:**

- How can we contribute to the health of the body politic?
- How can we ensure that citizens get what they need and are entitled to?
- And how can public servants be – and be seen to be – more effective as they seek to deliver their manifesto commitments?

If they can do that then governments will be better able to build trust.

History shows that governments cannot be effective if they are distrusted. And they lose trust when they are ineffective.

In this short paper we argue that digital technology, properly planned and deployed, from front to back, can not only increase the trust of citizens in their government (national, local and across all agencies) but also improve trust where it has been lost.



Digitally savvy citizens now expect their governments to keep pace with societal change and use the latest technology to deliver services and open up access to government. Life, for all of us, is increasingly moving online and channel driven. Citizens want their relationship with government to be increasingly digital.



Trust is vital to the legitimacy of government. The work of government has to be founded on clear principles agreed to by a majority of the electorate, but it must also actually work in practice, otherwise the public loses confidence in government as a whole. Confidence and trust are inextricably linked. If services are badly administered, and are difficult to obtain, then governments can't respond to the day-to-day needs of citizens.

**To discuss those important topics, we brought together three experts from Fujitsu who are actively engaged in the practice of modern government, and are also forging new ideas about how it can be delivered.**

#### Our Experts



**Sanjeev Kamboj**  
Head of Strategy & Digital  
Fujitsu UK and Ireland



**Peter Kelley**  
Architecture Director  
Fujitsu Oceania



**Helene Soucy**  
Director, Business Consulting Services  
Fujitsu North America



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# In Digital We Trust?

“The [UK] Government Digital Service is trying to bring to government the digital suppleness that occurs more naturally in the private sector. If companies have lousy websites – or ignore the digital world altogether they may find that customers go elsewhere. The State, as a monopoly supplier of services from welfare benefits to driving licences, many of which are administered online, must motivate itself from within.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Economist, August 16, 2014, Laboratory Conditions



# In Digital We Trust?

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Relatively low levels of trust in government is an urgent problem around the world. The 2015 OECD survey<sup>2</sup> shows that, on average, only 40% of citizens around the world trust their governments. Whilst trust has risen a little in countries like Germany and Britain, it is falling in the USA and, most significantly, in nations where economic problems are most severe. The link between the performance of the economy and attitudes to government is clear – and not surprisingly – it reflects the fact that citizens expect their governments to be effective and deliver solutions to both public and personal needs. The ‘Age of Austerity’ has challenged governments of all political hues to save money, deliver better value, but without neglecting their fundamental duty to each citizen.

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**“It’s a very fine balancing act,” says Sanjeev Kamboj. “Governments are working hard to make significant savings, and that can’t be done just by cutting costs, it’s got to be based on improving productivity, efficiency, and fundamentally changing the way citizens interact with government departments and agencies.”**

“I’m a tax payer and I always keep that in mind when I talk about digital technology and its role in government,” says Helene Soucy. “You have to start with the citizen, and your own experience of being one. We know that when citizens get the services they’re entitled to, they’re pretty happy with them. It’s the hassle they have to go through to find information and get the services that makes them unhappy, that drives them to lose trust.”

“The public are often ahead of their governments when it comes to the adoption of digital technology,” says Peter Kelley. “Most people live in a digital world, and are totally comfortable with digital technology. They want to engage digitally with their governments in the same way as they engage with Amazon or Facebook. If government can’t – or won’t do that, then that slow response undermines trust.”

“That’s why, in the UK, the move to digitizing functions like HMRC and DVLA [tax and licensing of vehicles] was a priority under the coalition government,” says Sanjeev. Their approach was to become ‘digital by default,’<sup>3</sup> and feedback quoted in a recent government survey shows that 95% of people who used the online tax credits service were satisfied with it. “So, positive action can quickly lead to positive results,” says Sanjeev.

» 65% of American citizens have used the Internet to find data or access government services. 66% believe that more open data will improve government accountability.

Pew Internet and American Life Project, April 21, 2015

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-2015/trust-in-government\\_gov\\_glance-2015-50-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-2015/trust-in-government_gov_glance-2015-50-en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-by-default-hmrc-pioneering-the-way-in-digital-public-services>



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# Are Citizens 'Customers'?

“In Australia the myGov.au portal enables millions of citizens to access their private government tax, health and other records, and now uses two-factor authentication to overcome worries about security.”<sup>4</sup>

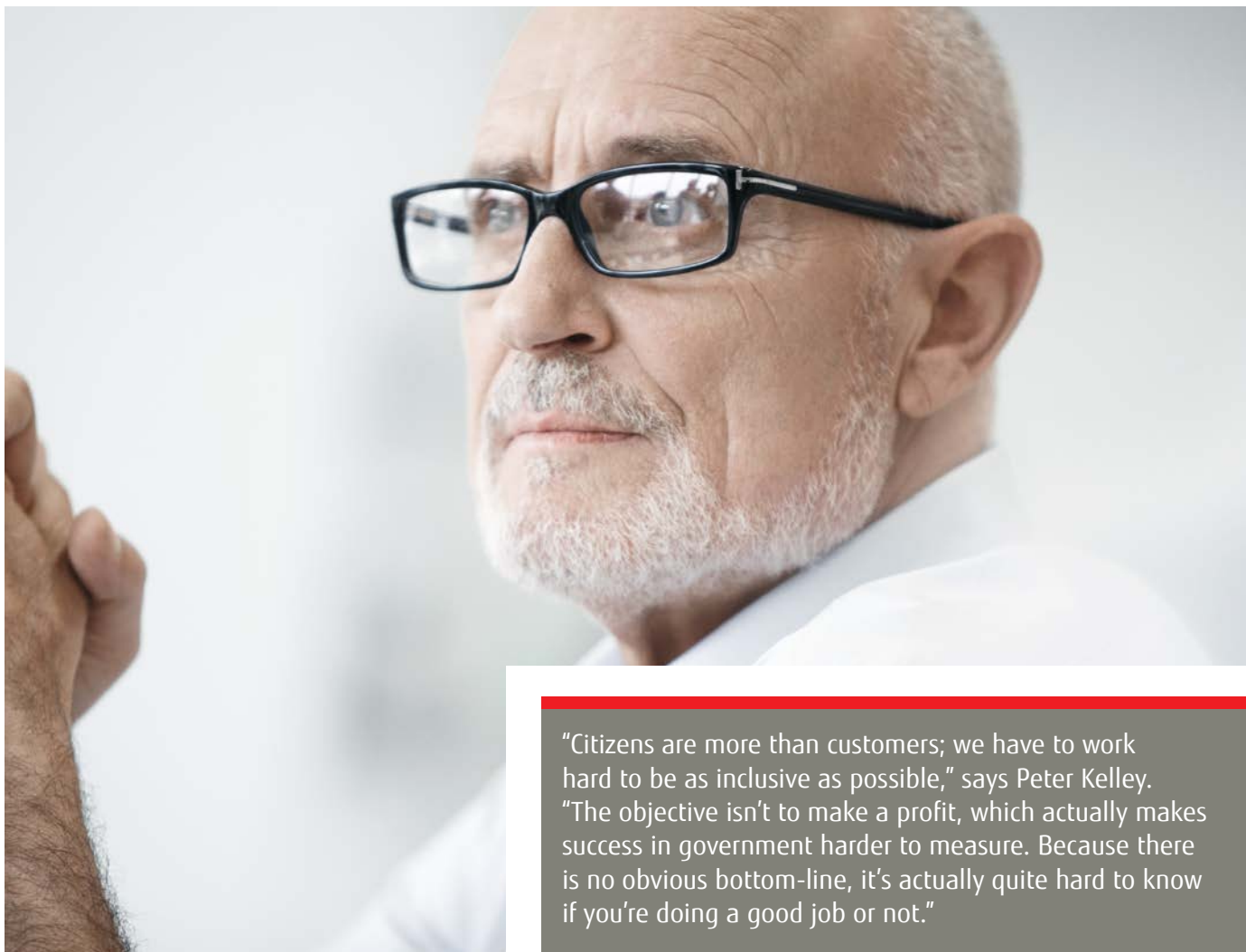
<sup>4</sup> myGov.au



# Are Citizens 'Customers'?

**"You have to get the balance right in terms of the way you think about how to transform government activities," stresses Sanjeev. "Citizens want the same kind of experience that they get in the private sector, so public bodies have to start thinking and acting like private businesses in many ways. That's happening in the UK, where a lot of talent is moving from private to public sector departments."**

"What sets us apart at Fujitsu is the fact that we balance that view with a citizen-centric approach," says Helene. "In Canada we call it 'citizen at the center': Getting digital right in government demands a more nuanced approach than in the private sector. There, it's okay to satisfy, say, 60% of people; in the public sector we have to include everyone, even the people who don't like what we're doing, or who can't easily access digital services. That's why a human-centric approach to technology is so important."



"Citizens are more than customers; we have to work hard to be as inclusive as possible," says Peter Kelley. "The objective isn't to make a profit, which actually makes success in government harder to measure. Because there is no obvious bottom-line, it's actually quite hard to know if you're doing a good job or not."





**"We know that many citizens want to be able to self-serve their interactions with government," states Sanjeev. "That helps citizens help themselves. But, everything we do has to be designed to help those who can't – either because they don't have the technology or access to the Internet, can't speak the language, or just don't understand what to do. Right now, there isn't a definitive answer, but most governments are working hard to address digital inclusion as they design their services."**

So, should citizens be treated as 'customers'? Helene is clear about the starting point to any governmental digital project: "We are doing a public service, which means we have to treat them as citizens. They have a stake in what we're doing. So, we start with their needs."

"Private companies do the same, they engage with their customers," says Sanjeev. "But you have to be far clearer about being citizen-centric. Each project has to have a societal benefit. That's at the core of our way of working at Fujitsu, our human-centric approach, which stems from our roots in Japan, where the benefit to each individual drives all technological thinking."

**"It is important because most of us – as individuals – want to use digital technology more and more, and don't want to have to make a phone call to a real person," comments Peter. "In Australia the launch of myGov, a portal that allows Australians to do everything from paying taxes, to consulting their medical records, is quite popular." Then Peter cautions, "but, the teething problems it experienced became big political issues, so, you have to be very careful about getting the design right, and the back office systems right."**





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# Aren't Public Servants Digital Citizens too?

“We need to give civil servants the power and self-confidence to drive continuous improvement.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, Minister for Cabinet Office, 2015



# Aren't Public Servants Digital Citizens too?

**"We work with public servants and elected officials on behalf of citizens," says Sanjeev. "We have to be above politics and understand that, in truth, digital technology is the thread that joins our world together, so it's above party conflicts."**

"Public servants are truly committed to improving the services their department is charged with delivering," adds Peter. "They want to increase the capability of their department, and deliver efficiencies whilst at the same time improve public services. That's their goal. We buy into that 100%."

"Whatever side of the political spectrum an elected official is from, they're interested in digital; that's my experience," says Helene. "At Fujitsu we're used to working in both the private and public sectors. For instance, in Canada we do a lot with publically funded healthcare, while in the United States we work with individual hospitals, insurance groups, as well as federal and state bodies that provide healthcare funding. The bottom-line in this kind of arena is the services needed by the citizen. It's ensuring that they are delivered efficiently and effectively."

"What the officials want is an organization that can bring together the right technologies, and have a global view of what needs to be achieved," outlines Peter. Sanjeev agrees, "That's exactly right. What we bring is a broad view and a commitment to an open society based on digital technologies which boost access and inclusion. Of course, we also understand the ebb and flow of advantages and dangers, which is why we balance freedom with security."

**"Another vital point, which we mustn't overlook, is that civil servants are users too," says Sanjeev. "They need a better experience within their departments. So, it's not just the recipients of government services that we need to think of, we have to improve the day-to-day work of the public servants themselves. That, in turn, saves money, improves efficiency and boosts productivity."**



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Helene Soucy



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# Can Government Become a Platform?

“In the UK: The Government Digital Service (GDS) is being funded to the tune of £450m between 2015 – 2020 to deliver Government as a Platform (GaaP) and create Gov.uk Pay, a digital payments platform, as well as an identity assurance programme.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> IT Pro, Government Digital Service gets £450m mega-budget, November 2015



# Can Government Become a Platform?

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“All governments are facing the same challenge: how can they save money whilst not only maintaining public services, but improving their delivery? Actually, they need to see it as a chance to transform services, and create what the UK Government is calling ‘Government as a Platform (GaaP),’ says Sanjeev. “It’s not the only approach, but it’s a very promising one.”

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**“The days when a government department would initiate large IT projects in partnership with one or two large suppliers are gone,” says Peter.**

“We have to design agility into the way government works, and we need to start by being agile at the design stage. That means being open to a world of possibilities and suppliers,” says Helene. “Now projects are being designed so that smaller suppliers, who often have the really bright ideas, are brought into the digital ecosystem of suppliers and vendors, talent and technology that’s focused on delivering services that not only save money but also build trust.”

“GaaP has been seen as a long-term goal, but I believe it’s achievable now,” says Sanjeev.

A recent McKinsey report<sup>7</sup> stated that, globally, value worth a trillion dollars could be freed up by governments if they embraced the power of digital technology. But it had to be done properly. It had to be based on open source technology, make clever use of cloud services, and be totally interoperable. “Interoperability is the key,” stresses Sanjeev. “You can’t create a broad platform if there are silos – technological, departmental, or even regional. Everything has to work together.”

<sup>7</sup> ‘Public sector digitalization’ McKinsey Business Technology Office December 2014





“Governments have to build the right systems, and they know that,” says Peter. “They need to break down departmental silos to be successful. You need to start with what the citizen wants, and then build an open system that delivers it simply.”

“That’s where analytics are important. Data flows into government departments all the time – and there is an opportunity for government departments to gain value from analytics”, says Helene. “That’s true,” adds Sanjeev, “here in the UK Fujitsu has detected over £400m fraud and error in tax credit claims since 2012.”

“And we’re not talking about throwing out all the legacy systems,” outlines Sanjeev. “There’s a lot of value locked away in what’s already in place. What we need to do is redesign a government’s IT infrastructure and architecture to create core, cross-departmental digital platform(s) for central and local government. That’s how we can promote digital interoperability between IT systems and the departments which run them. We can also fix the vacuum that exists between central and local (or state) government departments so that data can be shared at the center and the periphery for the benefit of efficiency, productivity and value for money.”

» “Here in the UK Fujitsu has detected over £400m fraud and error in tax credit claims since 2012.”

Sanjeev Kamboj





**"That's why Fujitsu is so keen to be in at the start," says Helene. "We understand that the project will be an open one, that there will be a range of suppliers – and that's good, it fosters innovation and creativity and costs less – but it has to be founded on a design that's based on the real needs of users. We need to bring everyone into the process, and do that more rigorously and openly than you would in the private sector. If you don't, then you risk failure."**

"Joined up thinking is vital," agrees Sanjeev. "And it's the only way to achieve joined up government, joined up justice and welfare, and to ensure that governments catch up with their digital native citizenry. We're all becoming 'digital natives' now by default, but most governments aren't. We must relentlessly focus on creating an end-to-end digital transformation. That means extending a common framework for delivery of digital projects; a set of IT architectures, based on open systems, standards and APIs, or 'Application Programming Interfaces.'"

"I'm an architect, and I know how important the right architecture is," says Peter. "Your back-end systems are the foundations. They've got to work really well so the front-end works smoothly."

**"In the UK we are starting to see the success of Gov.uk, which is the publishing layer that's popular with British citizens," says Sanjeev. "But there's more work to do behind that. That's a big priority for the British government, which sees digital as a significant way of enabling it to reduce public spending without impacting front-line services."**



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# How Can the Public Sector Digitalize with Confidence?

Fujitsu commissioned an independent study to find out how public sector organizations viewed their digital projects. 58% admitted that they lacked clear strategy and suffered from competing priorities. Consequently, they were viewed as a gamble.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Fujitsu: **Walking the digital tightrope**: study into the digital maturity of organizations across EMEA was carried out by independent research company, Censuswide, October 2015. Covered UK, Germany, Spain and Sweden



# How Can the Public Sector Digitalize with Confidence?

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» 36% say their organization has not mapped out a clear digital strategy.

» 58% admit it's difficult to make the right digital choices.

» 51% of organizations say they don't have the right skills to deliver digital projects.

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**Many public sector organizations are nervous about digital transformation. They see it as a gamble. Fujitsu wanted to know why, so we commissioned independent research to find out.**

Digital transformation requires communication and compromise. A successful approach to digitalization also requires a strategic approach, which is one thing that Fujitsu's study shows is not always implemented within the public sector. Without a clear and agreed plan, the simple fact is that digital projects run the risk of failure.

The results also highlighted a big digital skills gap. Over half of respondents said they weren't confident about taking projects forward because they don't have the skilled people they need to deliver them. That fact means they can't take decisions or even define and plan digitalization projects successfully.

So, what does this mean? In order to build a digital strategy and bridge the digital skills gap, there's got to be partnership between external expertise and public servants. And that dialogue and collaboration has to take place at the planning stage.

The public sector is constantly under pressure to be more efficient, whilst adapting to the increasing demand for digital services. It is vital that systems are well integrated, resilient, secure and represent excellent value for money, so that public sector organizations can continue to build trust with their customers - the citizens.

**By working in partnership digital transformation stops being a gamble, organizations can digitalize with confidence, and it becomes a far more focused exercise in delivering better public services.**





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# Why Fujitsu?

“Within the first year of the contract, we have built one of the strongest vendor relationships with Fujitsu. They are exactly what we expect from a vendor: flexible visionaries.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> A Canadian Regional Government department



# Why Fujitsu?

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At Fujitsu we believe that digitalization has to be holistic. It's got to be all encompassing. Organizations that only focus on single elements of the digital journey (a website, app, or individual process) can't reap the full benefits of digitalization. There will be a disconnect between the front-end and back-end systems.

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**"That's why Fujitsu always promotes an end-to-end approach," says Sanjeev. "It starts with the development of a cross-organization digital strategy, underpinned by a flexible, pragmatic and evolutionary approach to digital modernization. We support customers throughout their digital journey – from launching or improving a single citizen service, to delivering multiple solutions that, together, achieve transformation across government as a whole."**

**"Ours is a principled approach that doesn't merely import private sector practice to the governmental arena," says Helene, "We have a long tradition of public service, and we're proud of it. We start with the citizen, and we end with the citizen."**

"The point is to transform with confidence, faster and with less risk," says Peter. "We start by building a digital strategy, across the organization, to ensure a balance between fast and robust IT, to create an integrated end-to-end approach."

"Digital transformation will bring many challenges but collaboration is key. If you combine that to create the right strategy – success will surely follow," adds Sanjeev.

"We think differently," says Peter. "We are experienced in achieving digital inclusivity, dealing with the demands of legislation in different territories, and across them, and understanding the emerging field of data sovereignty. We also understand what motivates public servants. It is different to the private sector."

Fujitsu's credentials are extensive. With over 40 years of experience in supporting government, we're a trusted partner to the public sector and we understand the pressures and priorities facing these organizations. Fujitsu has helped many public sector organizations start their digital journey. We've worked on projects as diverse as improving how citizens submit their tax returns online, enabling real-time digital flood warnings to citizens, helped land registries strip out manual processes and replace with integrated digital solutions, amongst many others. And we've done it all over the world. Our services are based on experience deploying at scale on a resilient infrastructure with proper provision for the security of sensitive data and information.



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# We're ready to help you now, so you can serve your citizens better.

## Talk to us.

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