Edmonton’s Citizen Dashboard

Leveraging Open Data for Transparency and Efficiency

Technology Advancements

Innovation Award

Rapid Fire Presentation

City of Edmonton

City Manager, Simon Farbrother

Population: 817,498

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**Intent of Project/Program/Service**

At the City of Edmonton, we have made a number of pioneering choices, putting new technologies to work to improve the lives of our citizens. In 2009, Edmonton’s City Council approved its strategic plan, The Way Ahead, following intensive citizen consultation. As part of the plan, we committed to defining and reporting performance measures to indicate how well the City is progressing towards the outcomes.

The Citizen Dashboard is a complement to the City’s OpenGov initiative as described at: <http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/open-data.aspx>. It reflects the City’s dedication to using technology to make municipal information more open, transparent and accessible.

**Innovation Characteristics**

At the start of 2010, we became one of the first cities to launch an open data portal. Within two years, we made an important step in accountability and transparency to share our performance data with citizens, and not just in a spreadsheet of columns and rows. The Citizen Dashboard was developed as a platform to showcase these indicators, starting with those defined by the Transportation Department.

**Obstacles**

We faced several challenges in determining the best solution for presenting this information. We needed a solution to provide the performance measure information to the public quickly and accurately in a simple manner. By leveraging existing infrastructure of the open data catalog, we were able to directly pull from and display the actual data source. As a result, citizens are able to drill down on a measure and see the actual raw data that produced that measure, in real-time. This provides further transparency and adds greater value to the results. Additionally, since the process has been automated, City employees are not burdened with additional work.

**Applicable Results and Real World Practicality**

The Citizen Dashboard has clear and definable benefits to the citizens and employees in the City of Edmonton. The Dashboard provides information on what citizens might frequently ask about, and creates a ‘one-stop shop’ for information about significant operational and other performance measures. Plus, citizens are able to interact by posting comments and questions.

Other cities and government organizations may benefit from seeing an example of efficient government performance management as they improve their service delivery. Edmonton has entered a new territory with the development and delivery of performance measures through an open data catalog.

Most importantly, the Citizen Dashboard is laid out in a format that makes it easy for citizens to quickly access and understand the information that they need. Further information is readily available as users can drill down into the underlying data. At this level, users can make comments or ask questions directly connecting them with the municipality. The data presented is automatically updated so that everyone viewing it is viewing the same data, which avoids confusion due to mismatched downloads and uploads of data. The information can be described as the single source of data. With the direct access to the data, internal teams are made more aware of efforts by other teams in other departments, or in the public, and can potentially come up with innovative solutions or ways to collaborate to improve current processes.

**Consultant Information**

The City worked with open data software company Socrata to build an attractive dashboard for citizens that shares transportation data.

**Presentation Style**

Our presentation will include a fast-paced Prezi and a real-time interactive demo of the Citizen Dashboard and its reporting tools. We will give concrete examples of how other municipalities can establish their own dashboard, creating a simple yet meaningful method of communication with its citizens, enhancing the transparency and accountability of government.