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- By GCN Staff
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### 1. Government 2.0

#### a. Sponsored social media

Currently, President-elect Barack Obama and a number of federal agencies are using third-party sites like Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and others to keep the public informed. At the same time, interagency collaboration and discussion is occurring in available social media spaces such as GovLoop. In 2009, I believe we will see the emergence of other government-sponsored media networks, akin to the president-elect's Change.gov. This is not to say that the daily Obama "tweet" will go away, but there will be a shift toward a growing official social media presence hosted by the government that is supplemented by private social media.

#### b. Use of Wikis for information sharing

With Wikipedia, the concept of a collaborative "community of knowledge" went mainstream in the public arena, paralleled by Intellipedia within the intelligence community and Diplopedia for the State Department. Next year, I foresee more use of wiki technology by the government, eventually to enable public-private collaboration in the area of information sharing across a wide range of subjects. Of course, like government-hosted social media networks, this will require significant investment in creating policies and frameworks that work. For example, if the government hosts a wiki that the public can modify, obviously there needs to be a process for discussion and clarification about whether the content on that wiki is considered official or not. But if we get it right, we could have some extremely rich content as well as save the taxpayer money by working collaboratively, iteratively for the good of all.

### 2. Mobile computing

Our government agencies are supplying services to our citizens across the country as well as globally. We need to support our workforce with robust computing and telecommunications to enable them to stay in touch and be productive. Further, in the current economic environment we are in today, everyone, including our agencies, is expected to do more with less. One thing that we are doing is cutting facility costs and encouraging alternate work arrangements for staff such as teleworking, hoteling and so forth. In the coming year, there will be greater emphasis on providing technologies such as laptops, cell phones, mobile e-mail devices

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high-speed Internet to overcome both the geographical distance as well the psychological distance of working out in the field away from the traditional office workspace.

### **3. Cloud computing**

Today, we are seeing rapid forward movement towards IT capabilities provided to the government as a service — hosted by party vendors — rather than done by the agency itself. No longer do agencies need to build, host and maintain many application platforms in-house, but instead they can consume these as a paid for service, on-demand from a provider. I believe agencies increasingly turn to these flexible, modular, externally hosted IT solutions, or cloud computing, to meet their needs in a cost way. Vendors will continue to address the security and privacy concerns, and the trend toward getting utility computing services outside the agency will accelerate.

### **4. Enterprise solutions and virtualization**

A common problem with distributed computing is that we have stood up IT solutions in silos that are not cost efficient and do not share information well. In these stovepiped solutions, we have redundant applications doing similar functions — such as many financial systems, document management systems and so forth—but not talking to each other. Further, we have hardware, servers, that are minimally utilized, while the rest of the platform remains essentially dormant. This is truly a waste of taxpayer money and agencies will increasingly move to break down the stovepipes and build enterprise or common solutions. We will house solutions in virtualized computing environments, where servers and other technology resources are pooled by a variety of applications. We can learn to play together in the sandbox.

### **5. Enterprise search**

As citizens and consumers, we have all become accustomed to going online and being able to search literally any keyword and find information instantaneously. This is very useful as information junkies, and also very fulfilling to us as creatures who crave immediate gratification. However, at work, in our agencies, it is often a very different story—where structured and unstructured information is housed across the enterprise and is not easy to find or access. Often, government workers have to access many applications and search many databases in a laborious fashion, only to come up with half answers to their questions. I recall somewhere that we are spending as much as 40 percent of our time at work searching for information, instead of actually doing jobs. So, enterprise search will be a top priority in the coming year, as we seek to make information more discoverable and for our people and our agencies more productive for taxpayers.

Some other general comments:

1. In 2009 we will see IT take center stage as a government priority as the new administration appoints a chief technology officer.
2. In 2009 we will see an increased emphasis on enterprise architecture and IT governance as a way to plan, manage, and the rapid forward movement of advanced technologies.



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