



State Procurement of I&IT Services from Micro and Small Vendors: Survey Results and Discussion

Public Management

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Within the Ontario Public Service, the process of procurement for Information Technology professional services and goods is stuck in legacy practices. Despite many improvements, it still impairs the creativity, adaptability and the agility of the public service to respond to changing needs in this field. The decision/approval-chain is long and budget processes with vastly different timeframes hamstring the process and negatively affect the development of digital governance. However, there is anecdotal evidence that alternative approaches are being developed in this area to take advantage of agile procurement, and to engage SMEs in the area. No systematic effort has been undertaken to map and analyze the premises, operation and outcomes of these alternative approaches.

In this paper we present the results of a series of interviews and primary research conducted within the Ontario Public Service, which focused on successful I&IT procurement practices that have broken the above-noted legacy approach. We focus our analysis on the structural and process elements uncovered during the research to highlight a potential set of best practices in the area, which might represent a new model that could better respond to the challenges and opportunities for governments in a world of rapidly evolving technology disruption.