

# e-Marketing of Egovernment Initiatives

## A Case Study of Pakistan

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**Keywords:** e-Marketing, Government, Public, Technology.

**Abstract:** The research study examines the role of electronic (e)-marketing to improve the citizen satisfaction about government initiatives. E-marketing is a new emerging concept and recognized internationally as an enabler towards achieving good governance while improving the citizens' satisfaction. Government initiated many projects for improving the infrastructure and living standard of its citizens but there is inertia in these projects and government has achieved milestone on papers. However, government can improve its progress and bring transparency in its projects through e-marketing. In this way, citizens can play important role in the progress of government projects. This research presented the SWOT analysis and found that e-marketing of government initiatives is critical in twenty first century, it can help the public sector to take all stakeholders on board, which improve citizens satisfaction level about government initiatives. This research study concluded that federal government of Pakistan should focus on e-marketing in order to achieve its objectives effectively and improve the public sector services to its citizens.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Electronic (e)-marketing can be considered as most effective marketing tool not only for private sector but also for all government projects, which focus on online government services, infrastructure and public health. E-marketing is the use of internet or mobile to reach its citizens. E-marketing has many advantages over other conventional methods of marketing. This study will provide the guidelines to develop the framework for e-marketing of government projects based on the Vriens et al (1998) e-marketing process model. E-Marketing can provide transparency of government projects and public can up-to-date about the government progress.

Nowadays, government can improve its services through e-marketing of its initiatives and provide complete detail of its projects through online services (IDeA Knowledge, 2005; eMarketer, 2000). Furthermore, it added that the government is less interested to take on board public and taking government initiative on political basis in developing countries. As such, e-marketing of government initiatives is not necessary for political leadership but today's environments have made e-marketing best option and no longer a luxury choice. According to

Mulgan and Albury (2003) e-marketing is very vital for improving the citizens satisfaction level with government initiatives.

In the last ten years or so, demand for e-marketing of government initiatives increasing and public wants correct information about government initiative. What this study would like to point out is that, e-marketing in the public sector has not yet been perceived and explained largely using the academic field of e-marketing, but rather by using different theories and models such as e-government, public sector reform, public policy, and public management theories. Now, government needs to look on this new perspective, i.e. e-marketing of Government initiatives to recognize the importance of citizens' feedback.

### 1.1 Problem Statement

“To what extent and in what manner can e-marketing streamline and improve the citizens' satisfaction level about government initiative in Pakistan through use of Information and Communication Technologies?”

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

With modernization of government and e-government services, public sector can provide maximum its services through its websites. Now, government can do e-marketing of its initiative through government portal. In this way, government role is changing and government need to define what are e-marketing of government initiatives means and what are the requirements for improving the citizen satisfaction about the public policies and implementation of its strategies. E-marketing of public sector projects is required online services and highly educated government employees who can provide all information online and open door polices because public has rights for information.

Citizens want government initiatives to be result oriented: they want access to correct and often detail information about government projects. They want correct information of government development initiatives. E-marketing can be considered new concept for the developing countries where government can reach to its people through electronic means.

### 2.1 Justification and Need for Research

Nowadays, this is a burning issue and the government of Pakistan is losing millions of rupees due to inefficiency of the public sector and poor quality of work. This sector still based on minimum research and has become outdated after new development like public sector innovation.

Government is taking many initiatives without considering citizens concerns about these projects. E-marketing can help the government to reach its citizens and take their feedback which will help the government to improve its performance. Public sector innovation make easy for government to reach its citizens and provide them all information through online services (Arfeen, 2009; OECD, 2009; DFID, 2007; InfoDev, 2007; Microsoft, 2007a).

Nowadays, many developed countries have provided all information online about their projects to its citizens. However, it is still in its nascent stage in developing countries (Jaeger, 2003; Leith et al, 2004). E-marketing of public sector projects has just started to be investigated in developing countries like Pakistan.

According to the United Nations e-Government Survey, measured for 193 countries, in e-Government Development Index (EGDI) Pakistan's ranking was 137 in 2003, which improved to 136 in 2005 and to 131 in 2008. However, in 2010 its ranking dropped

drastically by 15 ranks to 146. In same way, in 2012 its ranking further dropped by 10 ranks to 156. Recently, its ranking further dropped to 159 (Figure 1). In e-Participation (EPART) Pakistan's ranking dropped from 63 to 114. Nevertheless, Pakistan can improve its ranking by focusing onto find out ways to improve citizen participation through e-marketing such as Pakistan government portal [www.pakistan.gov.pk](http://www.pakistan.gov.pk) should provide all projects detail on its website and take citizens feedback on government initiatives as well as provide services in the Urdu and other local languages.

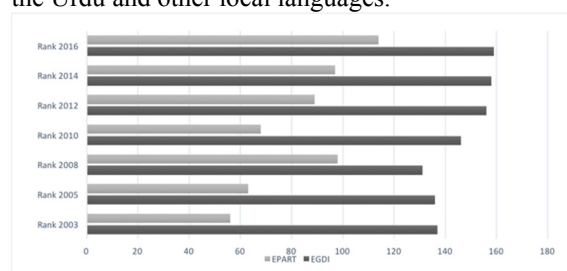


Figure 1: United Nations e-Government Development Index for Pakistan. Source: <http://www.unpan.org/egovkb>.

### 2.2 Requirements of e-Marketing

The government employee should be technically-savvy and open to public by providing all government information to them through online. Government employees should be familiar with the e-marketing tools. Only then will the e-marketing of government projects be truly effective and the Government can be said to be in an innovative position. Understanding the necessary e-marketing techniques required to be adapted for the effective utilization of government funds.

Government is not getting the desired results as it has not yet change in attitude also required apart from skilled manpower, and hardware. Developing countries need to use e-marketing technique to approach its citizens and improve the government efficiency and effectiveness. Implementation of government projects to improve public living standards still frequent occurring project failures. E-marketing of government projects have been useful in understanding and learning how to best use ICT for improving efficiency and effectiveness of public sector (Tschang et al, 2002). This problem is widely recognized in the community of Pakistan and common agreement exists on the need for sophisticated e-marketing of government projects.

Sustainable development and successful public sector initiatives require project implementers to understand the citizen needs. E-marketing provides

the project sponsors and stakeholders all the information through online mode about the level of accomplishment and success (Batchelor & Norrish, 2005). Pakistani government can achieve sustainable development through focusing on e-marketing technique to approach citizens about the government initiatives.

### 2.3 Gap Identification

E-marketing of government projects is new concept and it can provide real-time information about government projects to its citizens and help the government to overcome the failure rate of its development projects. However, low costs and digital processing allows government to approach huge number of population, e-marketing can help Pakistan to improve the public sector performance. E-marketing is relatively new way to approach citizens, in manual system government cannot reach people easily whereas through e-marketing government can improve its efficiency and effectiveness. In government projects, main focus on targets achievements without taking on board the citizens become the reason for projects failures. Nevertheless, many government projects fail because of gap between targets achieve by government in papers and in real ground story is totally different (Heeks, 2006). Thus, e-marketing is the only way by that government can provide all its information to people and get their feedback through emails or other electronic means. As a result of this, gap between traditional government and e-government can be identified (see figure 2). In this way, this research is to study the gap and to provide e-marketing model/framework for government initiative in Pakistan to improve public sector performance and citizens satisfaction.



Figure 2: e-Marketing of Government Initiatives for Citizens' Satisfaction.

e-Marketing is the way by use of that government can bridge gap between government and citizen and provide information to its people about government initiatives (Gupta et al. 2008; and Chen et al. 2006). Government projects absorb an increasing proportion of public sector budget to fulfill promises (possibly

over-promises) to provide solutions to many public problems. While many governments have recognized and taken initiatives to implement e-marketing of government projects and evidence has shown that most government projects fail that can be considered as partial or complete failures (Heeks, 2006). However, Pakistani government can overcome this problem by e-marketing of its projects.

Pakistani government has population with different cultures, religions and languages. E-marketing is the only way through that government can take on board all citizens about its projects. It will create transparency and make the government accountable. E-marketing of government initiative help the government to approach all citizens regardless of their distance (Sandberg & Pan, 2007) and culture; 24 hours a day and 7 days a week (Wang et al, Bretschneider, & Gant, 2005, Oostveen & Van de Besselaar, 2004; Becker, 2004).

The effectiveness of e-marketing depends on the access of government online services. Online services provided by the government can help the people to submit its feedback to government about the achievement of its milestones (Prybutok et al, 2008). The role of government is highlighted from a different perspective, mainly connected to its performance. Grindle (2004) noted that “when government performs poorly, the consequences are wasted resources, undelivered services and denial of social, legal and economic protection for citizens – especially the poor”. The public sector projects need to be effectively managed in developing countries in order to prepare for better future.

### 3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective is to study the e-marketing of government initiatives to improve the public satisfaction level about government projects in Pakistan. The researcher is using e-marketing techniques for measuring the impact on citizens satisfaction. Government projects can give the desire results by taking on board the citizens. Following are the sub-objectives of this study:

- 1) To select significant federal government agencies and analyze how ICT innovation has been specifically carried out and implemented through e-marketing of government initiatives.
- 2) To identify and analyse the important organizational and cultural factors that influence (or hinder and help) the effective use of ICT in e-marketing of these projects particularly in FGAs.

3) To develop e-marketing Model for government initiatives in Pakistan so that government organisations would be able to provide efficient and effective public services to its citizens.

### 3.1 Significance of the Study

The academic significance of the study is that it will provide new dimension to the Pakistan researchers to work on the impact of e-marketing of government initiatives and provides base for further studies.

This research is important to make e-government infrastructure more accountable, trustworthy, responsive, advance and transparent. The use of government websites is one of the growing activities. This study provides directions to the government to adopt the e-government in the department which are not using the information technology for the provision of services.

## 4 METHODS AND TOOLS

This section explains the methodology that will be designed for identification, investigation and analysis of variables that affect adoption of e-marketing of government initiatives taken by Federal Government Agencies (FGA) of Pakistan. For this purpose, FGAs will be the unit of observation and analysis. Thus this study will concentrate on the latest trend of e-marketing of public sector projects for improving the public satisfaction about the government initiatives in Pakistan.

This is new era, many citizens have access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), they have started to interact through internet so that internet is basic need for the online marketing. In addition, this research explores the impact of external and internal factors for improving the public satisfaction about government initiatives. This is an important first exploratory empirical study of e-marketing of government projects like Health Management Information System (HMIS) of Federal Government Hospital; Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS). This study focuses on the factors that have positive impact on citizens' satisfaction and public feedback play the very important role through e-marketing.

### 4.1 Theoretical Framework

In this research, there is only one dependent variable; and it is the outcome variable, that one is trying to predict and explain. For example, if a study is done

to determine how one know that citizens are more/less satisfied with the public sector than others, public satisfaction is the dependent variable. The independent variables, also known as the predictor or explanatory variables, are the factors that explain variation in the dependent variable. In other words, these are the causes. For example, citizen can be more satisfied with public sector if government agencies do e-marketing of government initiatives. So 'government initiatives' is the independent variables, and 'public satisfaction' is the dependent variable whereas e-marketing in the public sector can be considered as moderating variable (see figure 3).



Figure 3: Dependent, moderating and independent variables.

#### 4.1.1 Unit of Analysis

For this research, unit of analysis are following two FGAs' initiatives:

Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony

Project: According to PC-1 revised (2006) Hajj Process Automation was the government initiative taken by Electronic Government Directorate to make Hajj Process as a single point of access for all major Hajj related services.

Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination

Project: Islamabad Hospital HMIS (Hospital Management Information System) and Networking Facilities to Children Hospital (PIMS) have changed the nature of the work of the officers (MoIT, 2008). Now, they are spending more time in analyzing information than on collecting and processing it. The project has improved patient care services, overall efficiency of hospital processes and has inculcated great interest in Islamabad hospital staff for usage of IT Technology.

This study employs multiple methods of data collection in accordance with the latest research approach of triangulation. In addition, researchers used delphi method to collect data by means of surveys, visits, interviews, and literature study (Prescott & Soeken, 1989). Empirical studies form important complementary sources of secondary information.

The researcher would select the Delphi method to collect the judgments of experts in a group decision-making setting. Both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used in the 3-rounds Delphi process. The Delphi method may be only one component of the research study e.g. Delphi outputs may be verified and generalized with surveys and field visits.

#### 4.1.2 Sample Size

The sample is the population of Islamabad Capital Territory and senior government officials for the in-depth analysis of the outcomes of the Delphi Sessions (Collis and Hussey, 2003). This research provided an in-depth evaluation of the e-marketing of government initiatives especially with citizen-centric approach.

Table 2: External Strategic Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS).

Opportunities	Threats
Employment increases	Brain drain IT skilled people after training
Education system improve	Influence of other cultures
People get structural job	Resistance of people
Cheap manpower widely available	Digital divide
Promotion of Inte	Privacy
Higher cost efficiency	Bureaucracy
New business	Piracy, misuse
Raise external funding	Corruption
Show competitive edge	Maintaining disorder, no
Transparency causes natural change of processes	transparency
Reinvent government	Political instability
2 <sup>nd</sup> hand hardware available	Resistance
Use one stand	Dependency of technology

## 5 FINDINGS

### 5.1 SWOT Analysis

In this section, the challenges of e-government initiatives for Pakistan as a developing country is analyzed. SWOT-analyses are presented, with a focus on political, social, economic and technological aspects (see Table 1 & 2).

Table 1: Internal Strategic Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS).

Strengths	Weaknesses
People eager to learn IT skills	Basic education poor
Skilled people possible export product	Low literacy
E-governance argument for external funding	IT literacy
Transparency for businesses (procurement)	Different languages
Combination with democratisation reforms	Public acceptance of self-service models
Internet as pull factor	Skill shortage: competition with private sector
Modern image	Investors
Everything is new: no negative legacy	Budget control
Leapfrogging possible	Lack of cyber laws
Internet as pull factor	No problem owner within government
Lack of IT standards?	Slow decision making process
	Hierarchical structures
	Short term approach due to elections
	Integration and reform
	Shortage IT skills
	High cost of internet
	Heterogeneous data
	Lack of IT standards?
	Software licenses

## 6 CONCLUSION

If electronic technology is changing all aspects of society, from the levers of economic and social growth to citizens' expectations of government, governments have no choice but to respond and adapt in order to remain effective and relevant. Recognizing the power of information and communications technology (ICT), Pakistan can promote it as a way of helping businesses improve efficiency, create jobs and reduce poverty. ICT's has already shown its potency in increasing the productivity and effectiveness of organizations. Now it is necessary to manage it properly so that it can influence the competitive position of industry in all sectors of economy. The use of ICT is fundamental to linking organizational functions. It can form the base for managing in a technology environment. Government's anti-corruption drive will also be given boost through e-governance because it will bring openness and transparency in government affairs. Every ministry and division would be mandated to register information about their procurements and other affairs at the government portal by the use of e-governance. The ultimate test is whether governments can use e-governance as a technology to operate more efficiently, to design and implement better policies, and to provide programs and services more effectively.

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