

# GOVERNMENT 2.0

## Key Messages from the Book

### *From Industrial Age to Information Age Government*

We are in the midst of an historic change similar to what we experienced a century ago when starry-eyed Progressives sought to remake government in the image of a private sector revolutionized by technology. The Progressive Era gave us the civil service system, the city manager, independent public authorities, administrative agencies, and the Federal Reserve. Our own Information Era requires similarly sweeping changes, many of which involve unmaking much of what the progressives wrought.

### *Change of Thinking Required*

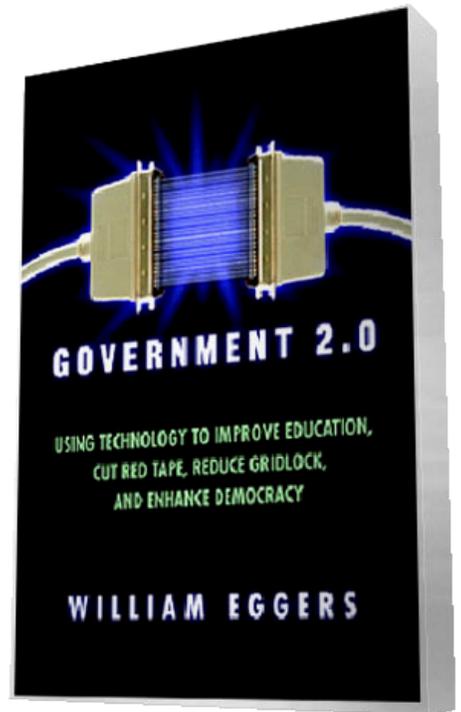
While existing technologies give us the power to transform everything from how businesses are regulated to how government protects citizens from terrorism our thinking hasn't yet caught up with our tools. We're still trapped in an industrial-age mindset. Government will never truly realize the transformative benefits of information technology until government systems, ways of delivering services, and bureaucratic structures are rethought and redesigned to reflect the realities of the Information Age.

### *Accountability*

Since governments have begun posting information online, the Internet has become one of the most important tools in the quest for achieving more transparent and accountable government. Citizens no longer need to feel like they cannot find out what their representatives are *really* up to; they can now hunt for corruption and monitor performance on the Web.

### *Transforming the Political Debate*

When you consider the two dominant American political parties' current stances on most big issues of our time it's hard not to get a sense of déjà vu about arguments that haven't changed much since the New Deal. What's more, on one issue after another the two sides can muster nearly even strength. That's a recipe for slow and ineffective change, even gridlock – and a sense of futility among voters. Digital government promises to change all that—not by shifting alliances along the Left/Right spectrum (though that will happen); or by helping one side finally win the Left/Right debate once and for all (that almost surely won't happen); or by offering mushy, technocratic “Third Way” answers to policy questions. On one issue after another, technology advancements will not so much help one side win over another—it will instead change the question that's asked in the first place.



*Government 2.0* is a great contribution to freedom and democracy."

- Colorado Governor Bill Owens

"Government 2.0 should be required reading for all policy makers; it showcases the power of harnessing new technologies in a readable fashion with wonderful, real-life anecdotes. The information is vital for anyone helping to chart the political, cultural and economic future of our country."

-Cathilea Robinett Executive Director, Center for Digital Government

## Government 2.0 on Today's Most Critical Issues:

### *On the Relationship between Citizens and Government...*

"Thanks to IT's ability to deliver customized services and information at relatively low cost, one-size-fits-all" government can be transformed into "government you design." Digital government can also help open up the public sector to greater participation and regular scrutiny by regular citizens, The result: a power shift from governments to citizens."

### *On the Decline of Civic Participation...*

"The Internet is no panacea for the well-documented decline in civic participation. However, by reducing the barriers to civic engagement and widening the opportunities for political debate in a myriad of ways, from e-advocacy and online consultation forums to electronic town hall meetings, political information sites, and other new electronic capabilities it can update the agora and the town meeting for the digital age."

### *On Education Reform...*

"By changing how teachers teach, how students learn, how schools are managed, even what schools are, online learning has the potential to alter the structure and system of public education in ways every bit as fundamental, if not more so, than vouchers, charters, national standards, smaller class sizes and other better-known public-school reforms."

### *On Traffic Congestion...*

"Technology can help convert roads from inert slabs of concrete into living, dynamic transport networks. Traffic control, for example, is ultimately a problem of turning data about congestion into usable knowledge for drivers and transportation planners. By linking transportation planners with emergency road crews and drivers, providing all of them with real-time information about congestion, drivers can make more informed travel decisions and transportation planners can get more out of existing roads."

### *On Privacy...*

"The dangers to privacy from some of today's technologies are real however we protect our liberties not by prohibiting government agencies from using the latest technologies, but through our system of checks and balances, our Constitution and our Bill of Rights."

### *On Security...*

"The more we rely on cyber-based systems to run our economy, operate our government, and organize our society, the more tempting a target they present to hackers, criminals, terrorists and others who would do us harm. Digital government will never realize its full potential until citizens have the utmost confidence that their personal information is secure from those who would use the information in malicious ways."