

Yes, government *is* working smart

 By [Tess Sulaman](#)

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All around the world, the public's view of governments is more often than not associated with incompetence, inefficiency, corruption and a waste of taxpayers' funds.

Government officials do not always cover themselves in glory, making it even harder to change this perception. The recently released report on municipal audits shows that a very low percentage of municipalities (17%) have managed to obtain an unqualified audit, in other words a clean set of books. This suggests that the public purse is not being well managed.

More and more we hear sad stories of mismanagement by public sector institutions. Perhaps the private sector is better at hiding its mess, or perhaps it pumps so much good news out that it overshadows the occasional mishaps. I am not a reputation management expert, so I have no answers to all these issues.

Overshadowed by bad news

What is clear is that there are far too few good news stories coming from the public sector. This is not because there are no good stories to tell; they are simply being overshadowed by the avalanche of bad news.

After several years working with government departments and agencies, however, I have noted that they are, in some instances, head and shoulders above the private sector when it comes to embracing new technology and trends. And they're able to do this without wasting public money. Efficiency and effectiveness have to go hand in hand, after all.

For example, many public organisations make use of a communication platform called email media to deliver messages effectively, without blowing the budget. The tool uses "clickable" email signatures and banners to drive engagement and increase revenue. Many government organisations - and some private sector companies - have come to view email media as the most cost-effective channel for driving communication campaigns.

This platform has also moved a step further towards enabling organisations to augment HR solutions, manage organisational risk and cut costs, while delivering best practice internal marketing campaigns - an issue that some organisations tend to neglect from time to time.

The reason for email media's success is that it is non-invasive. The content sits in an email signature or banner that goes out with every email you send.

So what does all this have to do with governments being smart?

In the past five years we have noticed an increase in the uptake of email media solutions by government departments and agencies. These solutions are being used successfully as platforms for effective messaging, which means the government is spending less public money on above-the-line advertising, such as billboards, TV and radio adverts, but still getting its messages across.

So the next time you hear about misappropriation of taxpayers' money, take comfort in the fact that there are also areas where government is spending money wisely.

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