Chapter VII

Privacy and Trust in E-Government

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Abstract

This chapter explores the challenges, issues, and solutions associated with satisfying requirements for privacy and trust in e-government. Accordingly, the first section presents the background, context, and challenges. The second section delves into the requirements for privacy and trust as seen in legislation and policy. The third section examines available technologies for satisfying these requirements. In particular, as examples, we describe and analyze two solutions being implemented in Canada: the Secure Channel and the Privacy Impact Assessment. We describe some new technologies for privacy policy negotiation and ensuring privacy policy compliance. The fourth section presents two case studies, e-census and e-voting, and shows how these e-government activities can be equipped to protect privacy and engender trust. Finally, the chapter ends with conclusions and suggestions for future research.
Introduction

Background and Context

The Internet has brought about profound changes in society, enabling users to access almost any information they desire. One effect is that Internet users are becoming better informed than those who do not use the Internet. At the same time, merchants have taken advantage of the Internet to sell their wares to Internet-connected buyers with the proliferation of e-commerce. This combination of receiving knowledge online together with the experience of receiving goods online is leading to user expectations of receiving government services online. This is a good result, because on the supply side, governments want to take advantage of the economies to be gained by supplying services online. To the user or consumer, receiving services online means convenience and timeliness. Governments supplying their services online receive savings in the cost of staffing requirements and information distribution. These benefits will multiply as more and more citizens use online government services. For example, once a government online service is established, the government’s savings will increase as more people use the online service, instead of using the traditional more labor-intensive form of the service. However, a major factor in whether or not an online service is used is the user’s level of trust in the ability of the service to protect personal information supplied by the user to the service. In the case of Canada, research has shown that Canadians expect more from their government than they do from the private sector in terms of privacy and security. This is due in large part to the fact that the government holds so much sensitive personal information about them, spanning their health, educational attainment, job history, utilization of social benefits, and marital and financial status. Their perceptions about how seriously the government views its stewardship responsibilities for safeguarding their personal data and respecting their privacy will have a tremendous impact on their adoption of online services. This is probably true of other countries as well.

The focus of this chapter is on privacy and trust issues of e-government: the requirements for privacy, the issues faced in providing for privacy, the standards and technologies available (e.g., security safeguards) for ensuring that privacy preferences are followed, and the technologies available (e.g., human factors design techniques) that promote trust.

Definition of E-Government

We define e-government as the application of information and Internet technology to provide electronic access to government information and services. It is similar to using the Internet to access various Web sites for information or services such as buying and selling goods (e.g., eBay). Here are some typical e-government scenarios:

- Job seekers can go online to a government employment center and search for opportunities or submit a skills profile that automatically matches them with interested employers.
Smart Cities and Their Roles in City Competition: A Classification
www.igi-global.com/article/smart-cities-and-their-roles-in-city-competition/110957?camid=4v1a