Establishing a framework: A four-pillar strategic approach to a modern digital government in Canada

An ITAC-ICT Industry Commitment to Change

ITAC is committed to helping the Government of Canada digitally transform, modernize and migrate to the Cloud. As part of this commitment, ITAC has developed a four-pronged strategic approach ("four pillars") that are individually and collectively focused on bringing real and impactful change. ITAC will continue to work with its members and government leaders to address challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities this differentiated approach will bring.

Each pillar will be summarized in a report and shared with members through this newsletter. They will also be posted to our website under the "Government Relations" section of our website. Below is an overview of our approach, and each strategic pillar.

Background

Today's society is undergoing a significant digital transformation; the way Canadians work and live has changed exponentially through smart technologies.   All industries - including Canada's government departments and agencies - are directly impacted by a digitally-focused approach to engaging with customers, citizens and businesses. Innovative competitors, disruptive technologies, shifting regulatory frameworks and cyber security threats all have a direct and serious impact that cannot be ignored.

Although the federal government has long advocated for a more modern digitally-focused environment, as requested by businesses and citizens alike, progress on federal transformation has been slow and the ramifications are increasingly worrisome.

There's no doubt that the transformation and modernization of the Government of Canada is a massive undertaking, with fragmented custom-built systems spread out over numerous departments and agencies.   Historically, the Government of Canada has viewed digital as an opportunity to create a new platform for government-built products and services. The problem? This approach is in direct competition with private sector market participants, it is inefficient, and it is cost-prohibitive.

The Four Pillars for Change

ITAC, on behalf of its members, offers the Government of Canada a solution that would help provide immediate and long-term solutions to these issues – a focus on four key areas or "pillars" that are separate but have significant

overlap: Developing a Commercial First Approach; Establishing a National Govtech Citizen Accelerator at Bayview Yards; Migrating to the Cloud; and Re-Skilling and Up-Skilling the Federal Workforce.

Individually, and together, these four strategic pillars will help the Government of Canada to modernize, digitally transform, and migrate to the Cloud in a safe, effective manner that saves money, brings real solutions in a short timeframe, and would enable government, the ICT sector and other private sector participants to work together to bring real change.

Over the coming weeks, ITAC will release its strategic reports – individually-focused documents – that outline industry recommendations and next steps for a successful digital and modern approach to government. These four reports will be submitted on behalf of ITAC's membership, which is made up of ICT leaders from across the country, representative of all sectors, of all sizes.

A brief overview of each pillar is outlined below.

Developing a Commercial First Approach	Establishing a National Govtech Citizen Accelerator at Bayview Yards
➢ Addresses the "build in-house" tendency of the GOC. ➢ Enables Government to adopt new technologies to increase efficiencies and competition; leverage data and analytics; increase cyber security measures; support technology SMEs; support the socio-economic goals of the Government and enable the use of federal procurements to support economic growth. ➢ Allows Industry and Government to operate as collaborators and business partners, instead of competitors. ➢ Provides public servants access to cutting-edge technology, to enable the provision of digital services and better serve Canada and its citizens.	➢ Will fuel the development and adoption of impactful made-in-Canada digital solutions and increase the competitiveness of Canadian businesses. ➢ Attracts new talent, investment and companies to Canada. ➢ Establishes a physical and virtual centre for training, thought leadership and advanced tech partnerships that promote diversity and inclusion. ➢ Creates a secure environment for government, industry and academia to experiment, develop, test and validate digital solutions on public sector infrastructure and platforms, thereby reducing risk. ➢ Helps build significantly more modern digital federal, provincial and municipal governments.
Migrating to the Cloud	**Re-Skilling and Up-Skilling the Federal Workforce**
➢ Would enable government to leverage cloud strategies and cloud-based managed service delivery models, minimizing time to digital service delivery ➢ Increases internet connectivity/bandwidth to allow Government departments and agencies to leverage public Cloud services. ➢ Will allow government to innovate, collect insights and evolve. ➢ Government could tap into an already specialized market (off-premise, public and private Cloud – and combinations of these) which is becoming the default environment for businesses. ➢ Leverage existing security controls and accreditations that have driven innovation and delivered improved policy outcomes, enhanced efficiencies, higher levels of service quality, greater agility, security, and improved levels of trust with citizens and business.	➢ Would enable federal IT workers to update their skills to be able to leverage new technologies to deliver digital services ➢ Combined with *Commercial First*, would shift the focus from building technology in-house to applying the newest technology tools. ➢ Industry would deliver training to federal employees, often for free, so they may update their skills. ➢ Recommending two weeks of leave per year for technology training and certification. ➢ Recommending a maximum of 18-month term limits for federal contractors. ➢ Recommending nine-month to one-year interchanges for IT workers between industry and government.

Interested in learning more?

For additional information on any of these areas, or if you would like to get involved in ITAC's strategic government relations activities, please contact Vice President of Government Relations and Policy, Andre Leduc at aleduc@itac.ca.