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FROM E-INCLUSION TO E-SERVICES

BEYOND TECHNOLOGY

How do CIOs manage dual roles?



THE RETAIL JIGSAW

With brick and mortar retail chains setting foot in the online space as well, the boundaries between e-tailers and retailers are getting intertwined. Can technology solve the retail puzzle?

EGOV 2.0

Loaded with information about on-the-ground projects, the keynote kept the audience enthralled and left them wanting more



Rajesh Aggarwal

Rajesh Aggarwal, Principal Secretary - IT, Government of Maharashtra, definitely knows how to keep listeners glued. Last year he spoke about eGov 0.0, this year his presentation took a leap forward and focused on IT and the new trends in governance.

Hinting at the Aam Adami Party effect in the national capital, Aggarwal said that public opinion can never be ignored when it comes to matters of governance. "We encourage our staff to use social media, and open up these platforms for use one hour before and after the work hours."

Emphasizing the importance of social media, he said that the state government

had been working with police and other departments to keep a watch on citizen behavior.

Maharashtra, as a state, he said, understands the importance of leveraging IT for effective governance. It is important for an applicant to know the status of his application. "For this our departments are trying to provide more information online and through mobile. About 70 departments in the state are already using the mobile gateway of MahaOnline. Such efforts dramatically reduce citizen footfalls to the physical offices and boost employee efficiency," he reasoned.

The state government is also making efforts to bring in eKYC services

(electronic know your customer). "We are moving towards eKYC, it is already happening in about 1,000 branches of Axis Bank. A similar initiative will be launched at the press where around 500 to 600 people turn up daily to register the change of their names in the gazette," he said.

On the lines of Common Services Centers, the state has set up Sangram Kendras, which have tied up with the various banks and will act like banks for about 25,000 villages in the state.

He stressed that the next step for the state is to work on the analytics bit as these tools can help plug the loopholes in the system. NIC has recently developed a software to create data for PDS beneficiaries. "We are also analyzing payroll data bases. We have found potential cases of people getting salaries from two places. Correcting these could help the state potentially save Rs 1000 crore on salaries alone," he said, adding that another 20% of the state's spend could be saved by integrating analytics with the Aadhar database.

With all servers in the Maharashtra data center running on cloud, the state has set an apt example for others to take cues from. Aggarwal pointed out that over the past few years, by making an investment of Rs 5 crore (Rs 3 crore on software and Rs 2 crore on hardware) they have saved close to Rs 60 crore.

He said that at the moment, the state was working on its intranet and they were in talks with City Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) to plan Internet of things for smart cities.

A firm believer that the laborious work of data entry should not be done by the government, Aggarwal said, "Allow people to do the data entry and take the responsibility for it; this will improve data quality. We must propagate central standards for the databases to streamline processes."