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# Information, Technology, and Canadian Public Administration

## Chapter Summary

The importance of record-keeping systems for both the administration and management of public administration has been paramount to acknowledging, relaying, and distributing information. The essence of this information has changed considerably over time, from the scribes who worked to record the King's public announcements and laws to our present day e-government environment, which applies technology in the public sector. These information technology (IT) developments have moved government in a new direction, one that the author suggests is a new organizational model. This model has three windows: the first is direct service to the public; the second is the "middle room," which houses the traditional departmental model and has program development and implementation responsibilities; and the third is the "back room" that provides IT services to the public sector.

Additional initiatives and technology have also led to a new system of open government, with open data and open information that has provided further access for citizens to their politicians and government. This new network presents some opportunities for public administration, specifically for the related fields of IT and information management (IM). The IT field has emerged as a key resource for government, in addition to the traditional aspects of human and financial resources.

The passage of the *Access to Information and Privacy Act* in 1983 changed the way that government responded to citizen requests for information. Under these laws, government now has only 30 days to respond to an information request. IT and IM also introduced government concerns about information protection, specifically identified in *The Privacy Act* along with security issues related to government documents and reports, including websites, records, and other public documents.

The new skills required for IT and IM in the public sector relate to relationship management. This refers to the ability of public servants to interact and communicate with other government staff across and between offices, both internally and external to the traditional government enterprise. This new knowledge-based government has created challenges for government, while also offering new IT opportunities related to governmental accountability, partnerships with the private sector, and a more transparent public sector.

## Annotated Weblinks

1) https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/topics/information-technology-project-management/information-technology/strategic-plan-information-management-information-technology.html

   This strategic plan outlines a framework for the government of Canada on information management and information technology for 2017-2021. It also establishes a digital policy on data and technology for the future direction of the government of Canada.

2) https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/topic-sujet-eng.aspx?ta=27

   This provides strategic context for the Policy on Information Management and the Policy on the Management of Information Technology, and takes into consideration the Privacy and Data Protection Policy, the Access to Information Policy, and the Government Security Policy.

3) https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/02_05_d_15/

   This site identifies and provides a brief description of Canada's two federal privacy laws. The Privacy Act in Canada outlines how the federal government handles personal information and is enforced by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.