

Common Knowledge Network RCC

"Rede Comum de Conhecimento"

Published On: 17 June 2014

Organisation: Agência para a Modernização Administrativa IP (Agency for the Administrative Modernisation)

Country: Portugal

Level of government: Central government

Sector: General public services

Type: Digital, Organisational Design

Launched in: 2008

Overall development time:

15 months

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

The Common Knowledge Network RCC is a collaborative platform to promote the sharing of best-practices and information about modernisation, innovation, and simplification of public administration. It's a network of knowledge sharing based on open membership by public bodies, central and local administrations, private entities and any citizen who wishes to participate.

The participation consists in presenting and describing a best practice and its results. The network thus seeks to assert itself as a reference device to support the dissemination of good practices and knowledge construction.

The RCC provides debate on public policies and their implementation at local, regional and national levels, and participatory decision-making with interest groups or communities of practice. It strengthens the relationships between the various stakeholders and coordinates information sharing.

It's an instrument that helps provide a common perspective on the activities of public administration to help create standardisation of service and similar quality standards in different services. Therefore, it is a useful instrument to provide a common perspective on the activities of public administration in order to create standardisation and similar quality standards in different services.

Why the innovation was developed

The Common Knowledge Network RCC was created in order to support the dissemination of good practices and the construction of knowledge within public administration and civil society. It is a platform based on active participation and collaborative involvement of public bodies, central and local, private entities and citizens, from Portugal but also from other Portuguese speaking countries who wish to participate, especially on issues like modernisation, innovation and administrative simplification. RCC was designed to leverage and develop the knowledge society, by allowing organisations to share knowledge, experiences and best practices within the public administration, in the common network, for a more effective public service, with more efficient solutions and with a greater ability for cooperation between different ministries and the citizens.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement

- Enable public sector officials and other stakeholders to share best practices and learn from each other.
- Create Communities of Practice (COPs) that help each other in developing and implementing new cost-efficient and effective solutions.
- Stimulate innovation through collaborative networks.
- Enable public officials, citizens, private sector and academia to easily access information on best practices.
- Inform users on new initiatives from the Portuguese government, thus adding to transparency.
- Aim to be a platform to help establish a regular practice of knowledge sharing in regional and national public institutions, so that they can create, access and disseminate relevant knowledge that leads to a public administration with higher standards of excellence.
- Stimulate debate on public policies and ways of their implementation at local, regional and national levels.
- Introduce participatory decision making with groups of interest or communities of practice.
- Contribute to the strengthening of relationships between the various stakeholders.
- Coordinate information sharing.

Main beneficiaries

Academia, Civil Society, General population, Government bodies, Government staff

- Portuguese citizens.
- Portuguese public administration.
- Private sector.
- University researchers and academia.
- Civil Society.
- These practices were developed by the Portuguese public institutions and also by public institutions from countries like Cape Verde, Angola and Brazil, all being shared by through RCC.

Existing similar practices

Epractice

In other countries' public administrations

European Union

Join Up

In other countries' public administrations

European Union

These two European platforms have the same objective as the RCC Platform – sharing best practices.

<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/>

Results

Efficiency

- Provide a platform to share best practices and connect communities of practice in order to increase efficiency in public services.
 - Contribute to the widespread use of new information and communication technologies, and brings together relevant actors by creating and facilitating communities of practice (COPs) that help each other to implement cost-efficiency and productive solutions that lead to cost reduction regarding IT and services development and implementation.
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Effectiveness

The sharing of good practices between organisations creates dynamic learning, curiosity and commitment to replicate what the other members of the network did. This mirror effect creates greater effectiveness in public administration because it potentiates the commitment of public bodies to implement practices that they see shared in RCC.

Service quality

Accessibility:

Best practices are easily accessible for those who need access to them.

Other:

Several stakeholders benefit from the creation of the Common Knowledge Network:

- The citizens, private sector and universities are given easy access to relevant information about projects and initiatives from the Portuguese government.
 - The Portuguese public administration now has a common platform to share best-practices and compare its needs and solutions.
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User satisfaction

The RCC platform stimulates innovation and change in public administration through the collaborative work and the growing participation of all citizens and organisations identifying new public services and improving the existing ones.

Other improvements

Currently there are around 395 best practices, published in the RCC and around 200 entities involved, including public institutions from countries like Cape Verde, Angola and Brazil.

Evaluation

- The evaluation is very positive; the project grew gradually based on effort and dedication of the entities involved. The outlined action plan of the project is being implemented with very significant results. The results lead us to believe that even if growth can be a little time consuming, the investment that is made daily in this area always returns.
- The indicators to monitor the project are:
 - Total number of good practices shared.
 - Number of new international best practices shared.
 - Average daily unique visitors from the public site RCC.
 - Number of entities involved.

Development

Design

A team of the AMA developed the conceptual model and the management solution of the RCC.

Design time: 7 months

Testing

- At the beginning of 2008 the team of the Agency for the Public Services Reform developed the conceptual model and the management solution of the RCC.
- December 2008, the Agency launched the first RCC-event to make the first assessment of its results and to involve everyone in the improvement of the network. It was attended by many public authorities.
- January 2009, the management model of the collaborative aspect of the RCC was defined. With the launch of the collaborative platform, we promoted workshops and user manuals.
- Since the beginning of 2010, several collaborative networks were created. In the beginning of November 2011, a new platform with a new modern layout and with more automated capabilities for RCC was developed.
- A new design and more advanced features are now being implemented in RCC. This renewal is ongoing and should be completed by March 2014.

Testing time: 2 months

Implementation

Tools used:

- Building of the platform with SharePoint.
- Launch of the platform in 2008.
- Dissemination of the platform and encouraging officials to contribute through mailings, flyers, OECD launch event in Lisbon, newsletter etc.
- Launch of the collaborative section in 2009, accompanied by workshops and dissemination activities.
- Creation of collaborative networks.
- A new portal is now being implemented in RCC. This renewal is ongoing and should be completed by March 2014.

Resources used:

- Development of technical solution by Microsoft.
- A Content Manager Service was hired.
- For the new platform, AMA spent EUR 50 000 with an outsourcing company.

Implementation time: 5 months

Diffusion

Diffusion of our network and best practices in other European portals for sharing our knowledge and best practices, e.g. portals such as ePractice, join up. Promote RCC meetings and annual event. Promotion on social networks. Fostering partnerships with the media. Internal sessions to share knowledge. Signing agreements with other Portuguese speaking countries.

Diffusion time: Ongoing

Challenges and solutions

- To boost the network and make it known required a lot of time, effort and commitment.
 - To motivate public entities to share information publicly was difficult.
 - The AMA team is until today committed to the daily promotion of RCC in sensibilising the public administration to the importance of sharing best practices and knowledge through such instruments as the RCC. The promotion of meetings to address the issue and promote good practices is also a form found by the AMA to pursue this goal.
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Partnerships

Foundations

Civil Society

Microsoft

Private sector

This firm developed the technical solution.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Find reliable partners for the technological implementation proved difficult. This was solved through the partnership between AMA, Microsoft Corporation, Create IT and Évora Distrito Digital.
 - Involvement of partners in all RCC activities and, most important, in the creation and sustainability of communities of practice, is a big challenge. We are trying to define strategies to increase institutions' and members' participation.
 - The identification and involvement of key persons in the public institutions at higher levels, but also at operational levels is important.
 - Dissemination of the project through a strong marketing strategy was necessary to accomplish the involvement of the national, regional and local agencies.
 - AMA is still working to reach universities and private organisations to another level of development.
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Conditions for success

Success of RCC depends on your dynamism and fulfilment of expectations in a timely manner.

Other information

- The main obstacles that emerged from the implementation of RCC can be categorised into two major areas: technological and related to the involvement of partners who helped to kick-off the project. These two types of obstacles are related as to overcome the technological issues of developing the RCC technological system, it was necessary to create a partnership allowing the construction of a technological platform to support the activities of the network.
- The obstacles related to the involvement of partners in all RCC activities and, most important, in the creation and sustainability of the communities of practice, is a big challenge that the 'Innovation and Knowledge Management team' had, and still has, in mind all the time, trying to define strategies to increase institutions' and members' participation. The identification and involvement of key persons in the public institutions at a high level of decision, but also at operational level is the key factor to overcome these obstacles.
- Another obstacle was the dissemination of the project. A strong marketing strategy was necessary to accomplish the involvement of the national, regional and local agencies, not only as beneficiaries but mainly as RCC active agents developing processes of sharing knowledge and practices.