

a K2 Advisory press release



Technology-driven innovation key to reducing Government expenditure and improving public services

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K2 Advisory, a UK analyst company focussed on CIOs, has released new research that argues IT departments in the public sector should play a key role in enabling innovation to reduce organisational costs and improve public services.

The study, entitled: "The CIO's role in enabling innovation" looks at what CIOs can be doing to help their organisations be more innovative. It also aims to help CIOs understand more about their organisation in order to ascertain IT's best approach to innovation.

The study's lead author, Kate Hanaghan, said: "It is critical that Government thinks not just about what can be cut, but what can be done differently and better. And it is here that there is huge potential for CIOs and their departments to contribute."

Findings from the study show that:

- ▶▶ The vast majority of professionals in the public sector (89%) believe innovation is more important now because of the need to deliver improved services while undergoing budget cuts. However, K2's view is that leaders need to have a full understanding of what they want to achieve, a commitment to funding for this, and acceptance of what IT can realistically achieve. One Central Government CIO told K2 Advisory: "It's a good time for innovation but we need to ensure that innovation is not confused with magic!"
- ▶▶ Within UK public sector organisations the majority rely on the IT department to help foster innovation internally: 77% of organisations say IT is either "increasingly" or "heavily" involved with cross-organisational projects to foster innovation. However, K2 research reveals that CIOs could do more to put their organisation's objectives at the heart of what they do.
- ▶▶ There is not a resounding confidence in the ability of the public sector to create the kind of innovation required without the help of third party experts. While 42% think it is possible, they are not in the majority. Government CIO, John Suffolk, yesterday told an audience of Government CIOs* that smaller suppliers should be used more so in aiding technology-led innovation. He added: "If I could change anything from over the last 10 years it would be having more innovation in Government and using SMEs more so to help achieve that."

Charles, Leadbetter, Government advisor and leading authority on innovation, today told an audience of public sector professionals*: "Cash is flat but expectations for (public services) are not flat. Social problems will not be changed by more efficient versions of what we already have. We need more transformational innovation and less of an efficiency focus."