

# Direct Territories

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## **Summary**

*Territories as defined by government have become disconnected from the ecosystems in which people and business live and work. New ways of communicating have created an additional layer on top of these territories and ecosystems, ultimately defining new territories in which we have to coexist.*

*These new ways of communicating have also created a culture of participation.*

*As a result, governments need to reconsider their processes, they need to foster participation and learn to manage collaboration between multiple stakeholders from both the public and private sector. Rather than deregulation, this calls for a redefinition of the role of government, and of the culture we share.*

## **Findings**

*Material - our physical world has evolved:*

- For the longest time, territories were an administrative mapping of geographical regions.*
- More recently, business ecosystems have appeared in metropolitan areas, and they typically overlap several administrative areas, creating a layer on top of the original*

*mapping, and adding a level of complexity in the management of geographical communities.*

*- As a result, the administration of the physical space, and the power over what can be done where, is a conversation between multiple stakeholder that are a mix of private and public organizations.*

*- In addition people and companies are more mobile now than they used to be. This means that there is competition between various regions of the world through the ability of those involved to choose where they go. The conversation cannot be a one way conversation, it requires a participative process.*

***Immaterial - our life also happens online:***

*- The latest progress in telecommunication, with ubiquitous access to information enabling telecommuting, is redefining the concept of "community center". People can work from home, they can work while they are on the move (airports, hotels, cafes, etc...), the center is now a virtual place that does not necessarily map to a physical place. Yet another layer has been built on top of physical territories.*

*- the emergence of online communities, and of online tools to manage the collaboration between users, have created a culture of participation.*

***New territories - material***

*Where the material meets the immaterial at the most basic level is in the house, where it is now possible to navigate between the*

*physical and the virtual space, to be in many locations at once. And therefore this is where we should look to define new territories we live in, looking at the use of the space in the house and how it creates new infrastructure requirements to better serve individuals and the community around them.*

***New territories - immaterial:***

*To foster the participation that people have come to expect, we need to implement the following:*

- direct economy: involving the consumer in the value chain*
- direct knowledge: involving the student in the learning process*
- direct content: involving the user in the production of content*
- e-government: online access to public document and online transactions*
- ubiquitous connectivity: wifi or wimax everywhere*
- geotags: virtual tags for physical places*
- digital spaces: internet cafes, creative corners*
- techno-squares: technology in public spaces*
- new services: for example digital books allowing shared comments and notes*
- Thinktanks open to citizens*
- Digital governance: joint efforts involving multiple stakeholders from the public and private sector, managed in total transparency*

***Meeting these new requirements create challenges on the government side:***

- *grassroot power vs hierarchy*
- *bridging the digital gap*
- *government as a process rather than a solution*
- *from enforcement to engagement*
- *re-defining the role of politicians*
- *measuring intangibles*
- *re-emphasizing culture*

***More specifically government must foster participation through the following:***

- *manage change*
- *map the various existing layers on top of the new territories*
- *establish common values*
- *push for results*
- *get stakeholders buy-in*
- *establish a core group before allowing others interested players into the conversation*
- *favor a pragmatic approach rather than a decision process based on ideology*
- *share best practices across the various new territories*
- *measure progress and results*

***To conclude:***

*The emergence of new territories creates the need for and evolution from democracy as we know it to participative democracy, with an unavoidable overlap between the 2 systems while they coexist, which will create tensions. But rather than deregulation, it calls for a redefinition of the role of government and of the culture we share.*

*A lot of work still remains to be done and we should be ready for exciting times to come...*