
A Call to Action for the Government

Michael Foley

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Through involvement in many public and private sector ICT initiatives over the past 8 years, Voco has observed market and sector dynamics that both government and the market has failed to address or leverage in a manner that is beneficial, either tactically or strategically, to *'New Zealand Inc.'*

The National-led government has a stated focus on both economic development through infrastructure investment and public spending that is more outcome-targeted.

Voco urges the government to inject fresh thinking and positive action into areas of opportunity. Based on our observations, the following areas would be a good start.

Wastage in the core public service

An unintended consequence of the style of public management system that prevails in NZ, founded as it is on principles of individual accountability of agencies, is significant duplication of ICT assets, particularly at the infrastructure and skills layers. Shared services initiatives are not new, and there are significant assets that have already been created at significant cost, but the 'each way bet' by the Labour government has resulted in the effective stranding of these assets as agencies continue to 'do their own thing'. This has been reinforced by the supplier community that naturally has a revenue protection interest in continuing to deal with silos of government.

Call to Action: Adopt a leadership stance from the centre to drive deliberate and focused leverage across public sector agency silos

Joining up the health sector

Successive attempts to join up elements of the vast health sector so as to better leverage scarce resources and direct them towards clinical outcomes have failed. This is due to both the governance structure of the sector (21 DHBs and the Ministry each separately accountable to the Minister who has limited directive powers) and the shortfall in infrastructure capability. There are sector participants who 'get it' and these can be harnessed to create much-needed beach heads of productivity.

Call to Action: Initiate a critical assessment of cross-sector leverage opportunities in both core ICT (removing duplication) and targeted health delivery processes that can be enabled by ICT (enabling better cross-sector access to scarce resources). Accelerate initiatives that demonstrate shared service/capability targeted at health outcomes.

Targeting of broadband infrastructure investment

FTTH across NZ (even 75% of homes) is a great aspirational vision and one that Voco fully supports, but tactically investment/deployment needs to accelerate in areas that will underpin economic growth both nationally and in the regions. This needs some urgent planning in respect of both where to target end-user connectivity (geographies, sectors, etc) and how to most effectively fill the gaps in the 'national grid'. This planning needs smart heads and not just the traditional vested interests.

Also, the mix of investors in infrastructure is changing – this is a worldwide shift. Broadband infrastructure is no longer the preserve of the telecommunications carriers. In NZ there are willing investors with well targeted initiatives that simply need a national strategy context and a level of certainty in the regulatory environment to push the 'GO' button.

Call to Action: Ensure that whatever process is undertaken to prioritise broadband infrastructure investment balances a critical assessment of regional and national economic development growth projections enabled by the investment, with ROI potential for the infrastructure investors.