

Transcript | How to Scale Government Innovation Without Losing the Edge

00:00:32.780 --> 00:00:33.930

Nigel Smith: Fantastic.

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00:00:34.110 --> 00:00:51.310

Nigel Smith: So, welcome to today's event, an Edge of Government Masterclass on how to scale government innovation without losing the edge. My name is Nigel Smith, and I am the Learning Strategist here at Apolitical.

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00:00:51.410 --> 00:01:03.250

Nigel Smith: And today, we are going to look at what it takes to move a promising innovation beyond the pilot stage. We're going to hear how innovators have worked through

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00:01:03.250 --> 00:01:21.479

Nigel Smith: institutional barriers, brought different organizations on board, kept initiatives moving, when data challenges, bureaucracy, competing priorities threatened to slow them down. And I suspect those are all things that may resonate with many of you on the call today.

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00:01:21.760 --> 00:01:38.329

Nigel Smith: So, announced at the EDGE of Government exhibit at the World Government Summit in Dubai in February this year, the EDGE 50 list spotlights some of the most innovative and daring case studies in government from around the world.

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00:01:38.900 --> 00:01:50.500

Nigel Smith: Today's event, brought to you by Apolitical and UAE's Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Government Innovation, is going to take us behind some of these stories.

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00:01:50.500 --> 00:02:02.779

Nigel Smith: We're going to be exploring what they can teach us about bold experimentation at the edge of government, and how ideas from the margins can help drive change at the center.

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00:02:03.030 --> 00:02:12.550

Nigel Smith: You can explore the EDGE 50 list on Apolitical. There, you will find the full range of innovations and case studies featured this year.

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00:02:12.590 --> 00:02:25.980

Nigel Smith: Including the examples that we will be discussing today. You'll also find the link in the resources tab at the bottom of your screen, and my colleague is sharing it in the chat, too.

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00:02:28.270 --> 00:02:46.120

Nigel Smith: For those of you who may be joining us for the first time, a very warm welcome. Apolitical is the world's largest online network for government. It's used by more than half a million public servants and policymakers across 170 countries.

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00:02:46.120 --> 00:03:02.370

Nigel Smith: Apolitical is a strategic partner to government, so we are very pleased to collaborate with the Mohammed bin Rashad center for Government Innovation for this event. The MBR CGI is dedicated to embedding innovation in the heart of the UAE government.

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00:03:02.370 --> 00:03:17.800

Nigel Smith: Aligned with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashad Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, ruler of Dubai, the center aims to develop the necessary capabilities for innovation, inspire possibilities, celebrate wins and lessons.

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00:03:17.800 --> 00:03:22.740

Nigel Smith: Ultimately, establishing the UAE government as one of the most innovative in the world.

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00:03:22.950 --> 00:03:35.599

Nigel Smith: So we've got speakers from around the world joining us today, and it would be great to hear from you too, so do post in the chat where you are joining us from.

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00:03:36.560 --> 00:03:54.349

Nigel Smith: I'm also going to get a few bits of housekeeping out of the way before we get into today's session. First, just let me mention that this event is recorded for on-demand viewing on Apolitical's website, so please do not record it yourself.

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00:03:54.510 --> 00:04:02.299

Nigel Smith: We'll also be using the recording to generate event insights, including with AI-powered software.

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00:04:02.530 --> 00:04:12.740

Nigel Smith: As this session is running on a Zoom webinar, we won't collect your video and audio data, but personal data that you chair in the chat may be captured.

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00:04:12.960 --> 00:04:17.289

Nigel Smith: If you want to see the contact details for privacy concerns, you will find them

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00:04:17.420 --> 00:04:20.669

Nigel Smith: in the Apolitical homepage footer.

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00:04:21.410 --> 00:04:35.129

Nigel Smith: Secondly, closed captions are available in your own language, and they can be toggled on or off in your screen settings, and my colleague is posting those instructions in the chat.

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00:04:35.250 --> 00:04:36.030

Nigel Smith: Now.

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00:04:38.090 --> 00:04:51.649

Nigel Smith: Okay, before we introduce our speakers, we are going to run just a few quick polls, just to get a little bit of a sense of where you are all coming to today's discussion from. The first poll is...

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00:04:52.400 --> 00:04:54.519

Nigel Smith: What most often stops?

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00:04:54.750 --> 00:05:05.519

Nigel Smith: promising edge innovations from becoming part of core government work. So you should be able to see the questions now on your screen.

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00:05:06.860 --> 00:05:12.269

Nigel Smith: It is dismissed because it does not come from an expert, does not align clearly with senior priorities.

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00:05:12.530 --> 00:05:23.519

Nigel Smith: Struggles to secure long-term funding, gets slowed down by procurement or audit, depends too much on one committed individual, or is opposed to by those who feel threatened by it.

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00:05:23.880 --> 00:05:29.050

Nigel Smith: We're getting a very, diverse!

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00:05:30.480 --> 00:05:31.680

Nigel Smith: responses.

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00:05:32.940 --> 00:05:36.730

Nigel Smith: I'm not sure we've got... An absolute clear.

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00:05:37.280 --> 00:05:37.990

Nigel Smith: Buena.

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00:05:39.040 --> 00:05:41.280

Nigel Smith: Struggles to get secure long-term funding?

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00:05:41.500 --> 00:05:42.370

Nigel Smith: One of them?

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00:05:43.880 --> 00:05:47.280

Nigel Smith: These might be questions, things, topics that we come back to.

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00:05:47.900 --> 00:05:51.400

Nigel Smith: in the, Q&A later.

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00:05:52.710 --> 00:05:54.060

Nigel Smith: Senior alignment.

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00:06:11.660 --> 00:06:18.450

Nigel Smith: So, variety of responses. I'm not sure we've got an absolute Straight ahead, winner.

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00:06:27.250 --> 00:06:28.260

Nigel Smith: Okay.

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00:06:33.580 --> 00:06:38.270

Nigel Smith: We'll move on to a, another poll.

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00:06:41.570 --> 00:06:44.710

Nigel Smith: The second question... Is...

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00:06:46.600 --> 00:06:57.949

Nigel Smith: What would most help make the transition from the edge of government to the center of government? Culture of curiosity, open-mindedness?

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00:06:58.390 --> 00:07:00.139

Nigel Smith: Stronger leadership support?

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00:07:00.430 --> 00:07:04.110

Nigel Smith: Stronger alignment with political priorities, Crisis?

48

00:07:04.500 --> 00:07:09.770

Nigel Smith: Clearer routes from pilot to permanent delivery, or more confidence in managing?

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00:07:09.870 --> 00:07:10.750

Nigel Smith: Risk.

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00:07:14.970 --> 00:07:16.450

Nigel Smith: Again, sana.

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00:07:17.260 --> 00:07:19.010

Nigel Smith: wide variety.

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00:07:20.410 --> 00:07:22.250

Nigel Smith: of responses?

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00:07:28.890 --> 00:07:32.890

Nigel Smith: Well, it's fascinating to hear how people's... Context as can be.

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00:07:33.790 --> 00:07:34.900

Nigel Smith: So different?

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00:07:55.310 --> 00:07:58.999

Nigel Smith: Well, currently, just by an edge, clearer route from Pilot to...

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00:07:59.270 --> 00:08:01.890

Nigel Smith: Permanence, but stronger leadership support there.

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00:08:01.990 --> 00:08:03.670

Nigel Smith: As well, and a crisis.

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00:08:04.880 --> 00:08:05.840

Nigel Smith: Okay.

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00:08:09.060 --> 00:08:14.820

Nigel Smith: Well, thank you so much for taking part in those, polls.

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00:08:15.210 --> 00:08:24.600

Nigel Smith: It is with great pleasure that I welcome Abeer Tahlak, the Executive Director of the Mohammed bin Rashad Center for Government Innovation.

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00:08:24.600 --> 00:08:35.740

Nigel Smith: Abeer supports the vision and agenda set in the center to promote innovation throughout the UAE government and beyond. So, Abeer, thank you for joining us today. Over to you.

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00:08:36.309 --> 00:08:53.609

Abeer Tahlak: Thank you, Nigel, and good afternoon, everyone, from Dubai. Welcome back to the Edge of Government Masterclass series, where in this series, we reflect on what the edge is, and what is EDGE in innovation and public sector. So, over the past two sessions, we have

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00:08:53.609 --> 00:09:00.319

Abeer Tahlak: Explored why transformative innovation often emerges at the edges of government, and

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00:09:00.419 --> 00:09:15.149

Abeer Tahlak: what it takes to create environments where established practices can be challenged. So, today we turn our attention to what is perhaps the greatest challenge of all, when a new solution emerges from the edges, and especially,

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00:09:15.279 --> 00:09:26.719

Abeer Tahlak: when a counterintuitive, and the immediate instinct is to reject it, or to limit it to, oh, that's interesting, and that's an interesting experiment, so...

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00:09:28.259 --> 00:09:41.929

Abeer Tahlak: how, you know, the overall nature of public sector, and how is it easy to even dismiss the expertise of people behind it, because we just say, they don't know. They're not experts about it, so...

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00:09:42.039 --> 00:10:00.649

Abeer Tahlak: even if the solution works, and we see it working, so there's a lot of resistance there. So, at the Mahmood Barashit Center for Government Innovation, we encounter this issue over and over again. So, it's easy for public sector to say, oh, it's interesting, but it's much more difficult to seriously engage with an edge...

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00:10:00.649 --> 00:10:13.159

Abeer Tahlak: innovator, to explore how might their solution, or the logic behind it, can be repurposed to reimagine how things are done or could be done in government. So.

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00:10:13.609 --> 00:10:27.919

Abeer Tahlak: as a general rule of thumb, we learned the hard way. The more radical the solution, the higher the level of organizational resistance. So, we even worked on a project that surfaced the top 10 defensive routines in public sector, so...

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00:10:28.339 --> 00:10:39.689

Abeer Tahlak: Here, we have, two speakers today that have successfully navigated this challenge. I am personally here, and hopefully you guys too.

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00:10:39.919 --> 00:10:51.379

Abeer Tahlak: We want to know, and we want to learn about their story, and how they managed, as outsiders, to successfully engage with government and introduce this radical shift and departure from

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00:10:51.489 --> 00:11:08.629

Abeer Tahlak: business as usual. We want to steal their tricks to win over the blockers. We want to follow their trajectory as they move from the edges into core of government to understand what it takes. So, at the Mahmood Barashit Center for Government Innovation, we remain convinced that future of government depends

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00:11:08.699 --> 00:11:14.749

Abeer Tahlak: Not only on bold solutions and great ideas, but ensuring they become embedded

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00:11:14.829 --> 00:11:20.179

Abeer Tahlak: In the way governments operate, deliver services, or create lasting

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00:11:20.219 --> 00:11:26.009

Abeer Tahlak: public value, so we remain... we need to remain curious about the edges.

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00:11:26.009 --> 00:11:31.469

Abeer Tahlak: Continuously scanning the world around us for early-stage innovations, particularly

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00:11:31.469 --> 00:11:46.119

Abeer Tahlak: If they challenge the status quo. So, as usual, if you're working on an edge innovation, any of the people attending, we want to hear from you. Please get in touch, tell us more, we would love to know more. And thank you, and I look forward to today's discussions.

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00:11:46.400 --> 00:11:59.409

Nigel Smith: Wonderful. Thank you, Abeer. And yes, everybody here, I'm sure your curiosity has been piqued, that's why you're joining us, and I'm delighted to introduce our speakers, who are gonna share their tricks, with you.

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00:11:59.410 --> 00:12:07.809

Nigel Smith: That you're all gonna, learn from. So, we are fortunate to have two brilliant guests, Angus and Fabio, joining us today.

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00:12:08.400 --> 00:12:27.440

Nigel Smith: Angus Barge is the founder of Open Plan, which develops and manages an ecosystem of open, federated geospatial tools on behalf of the charitable foundation, Digital-built Arte Aurora. We were talking about this earlier, and I would struggle to pronounce this. Arte Aurora.

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00:12:28.000 --> 00:12:31.820

Nigel Smith: Angus is based in Christchurch in New Zealand.

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00:12:31.820 --> 00:12:50.660

Nigel Smith: This project includes the National Forward Works Viewer and the New Zealand Underground Asset Register. These are national platforms designed to shift the infrastructure sector from siloed information to shared visibility of planned works and underground assets.

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00:12:50.660 --> 00:13:00.520

Nigel Smith: A chartered professional engineer, Angus previously paid senior leadership roles in delivering the horizontal rebuild following the Canterbury earthquakes.

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00:13:01.000 --> 00:13:11.589

Nigel Smith: That time shaped his conviction that open data, knowledge sharing, and purpose-built technology are essential to building future-ready communities.

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00:13:11.610 --> 00:13:30.400

Nigel Smith: And Fabio Zaffagnini is an Italian entrepreneur, creative mind, best known as the founder of Rock in a Thousand, a global community that brings together a thousand musicians from large-scale stadium concerts around the world. He is based in Cezana in Italy.

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00:13:31.100 --> 00:13:43.309

Nigel Smith: His career spans science, technology, and creativity, including research roles at Italy's National Research Council and the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change.

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00:13:43.310 --> 00:13:53.159

Nigel Smith: as well as founding an immersive technology startup. Fabio is also an international speaker, a Tribeca Disruptive Innovation Award honoree.

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00:13:53.160 --> 00:13:57.300

Nigel Smith: and a European Commission expert in product design.

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00:13:57.300 --> 00:14:04.659

Nigel Smith: His work is driven by creativity, innovation, and bringing people together in meaningful ways.

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00:14:04.660 --> 00:14:21.650

Nigel Smith: So before we launch into these two case studies, I just thought I'd start with a very quick icebreaker question, just to get us warmed up. Not an easy question, but hopefully, I'm sure you can have some pithy responses. Angus and Fabio, you're both great innovators, entrepreneurs.

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00:14:22.020 --> 00:14:23.240

Nigel Smith: Succinctly.

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00:14:23.620 --> 00:14:35.120

Nigel Smith: What is the biggest risk when moving quickly? Acting too soon, or waiting too long? And let's go in alphabetical order and start with you, Angus. Great to have you here.

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00:14:36.020 --> 00:14:45.720

Angus Bargh: Thanks, Nigel. I think there's a big risk in going too fast, but there's also a big risk in waiting too long, and I'll talk more on that later.

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00:14:46.130 --> 00:14:46.800

Nigel Smith: Great.

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00:14:46.930 --> 00:14:47.720

Nigel Smith: Fabio.

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00:14:52.110 --> 00:15:03.520

Fabio Zaffagnini: Tough question, tough question. I'd say acting too soon, because then you have to, like, recover if you start in a bad way, then it's really tough.

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00:15:04.060 --> 00:15:06.879

Fabio Zaffagnini: To, to, to bring back things together.

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00:15:08.490 --> 00:15:19.550

Nigel Smith: Great, thank you. Well, do... those of you joining us, do by all means, post your responses to that question in the chat. Love to see your thoughts on that.

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00:15:20.690 --> 00:15:28.540

Nigel Smith: Okay, so, without further ado, I'm going to hand over to Angus for the next 15 minutes.

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00:15:29.970 --> 00:15:35.880

Angus Bargh: Thank you, Nigel. I'm just gonna share my presentation, so you bear with me for 2 seconds.

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00:15:39.130 --> 00:15:41.140

Angus Bargh: Can you confirm that that's showing for you, Nigel?

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00:15:42.300 --> 00:15:45.110

Nigel Smith: I can see it if you just want to pop it into presentation mode.

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00:15:45.830 --> 00:15:47.559

Angus Bargh: That should be in presentation mode.

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00:15:47.560 --> 00:15:48.480

Nigel Smith: Here we go, perfect.

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00:15:48.850 --> 00:15:49.740

Angus Bargh: Awesome.

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00:15:50.410 --> 00:15:55.679

Angus Bargh: Everyone, it's great to be here, and thank you for the opportunity to present.

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00:15:55.880 --> 00:16:03.559

Angus Bargh: Firstly, I'm just going to present for the next 15 minutes, take you through the technology, what we built, why we built it.

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00:16:04.040 --> 00:16:09.609

Angus Bargh: And then talk about 3 challenges we had in moving this as an innovative

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00:16:10.260 --> 00:16:19.180

Angus Bargh: product or initiative from the edge to the center of the way that New Zealand does business in terms of its delivery of critical infrastructure.

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00:16:19.370 --> 00:16:24.209

Angus Bargh: And what I want to start with is... is the story. R is the... is the narrative.

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00:16:24.350 --> 00:16:34.310

Angus Bargh: So, I was the Chief Transport Engineer for government in the rebuild of Christchurch following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake. And during that time, we used that

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00:16:34.510 --> 00:16:40.860

Angus Bargh: a number of digital tools to help with the recovery and the coordination of that work. But when we zoomed out.

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00:16:40.860 --> 00:16:54.669

Angus Bargh: over the next, sort of, 10 years, we realized that New Zealand, because of its geographical situation and its geography as a seismically active country, it seemed to be in a constant state of recovery. And then add on top of that

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00:16:54.700 --> 00:17:05.820

Angus Bargh: One of the major challenges that are faced by most modern cities around the world is that the ever-present renewal of infrastructure, this infrastructure deficit or burden to renew infrastructure.

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00:17:06.000 --> 00:17:23.280

Angus Bargh: almost at unprecedented levels. And when you add those two things together, is that the renewal or delivery of infrastructure, essential civic infrastructure, over the coming decades, whether it be through recovery initiatives or business as usual, would be unprecedented.

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00:17:23.280 --> 00:17:28.099

Angus Bargh: And so that... that defined our burning platform. What we realized is that when engineers

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00:17:28.150 --> 00:17:36.460

Angus Bargh: Reach for data, either to build new or to recover infrastructure after a natural disaster, to keep reaching for the same types of data.

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00:17:36.750 --> 00:17:46.670

Angus Bargh: And in this case, they want to know what's under the ground, so when they excavate, when they dig, when they renew, when they replace, they want to know what they're going to be encountering. And that was our burning platform.

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00:17:46.790 --> 00:17:50.530

Angus Bargh: We looked at what happened if we... if we effectively did nothing.

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00:17:50.740 --> 00:17:56.269

Angus Bargh: And under business as usual, with any innovation in this space, we were able to quantify that there were

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00:17:56.340 --> 00:18:00.589

Angus Bargh: You know, 10,000 lost work days and 3,500

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00:18:00.610 --> 00:18:16.450

Angus Bargh: asset strikes per year due to the lack of good information of what lied beneath our city streets. And the cumulative effect with that was over a billion dollars, cost to the economy in just of reported, delays and asset strikes. There's a lot of unreported as well.

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00:18:17.430 --> 00:18:28.730

Angus Bargh: So, when we think about this and framing the innovation, the burning platform, and the cost of doing nothing are both important things to help fashion that story.

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00:18:28.890 --> 00:18:33.270

Angus Bargh: So what do we build? This is our New Zealand underground registry.

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00:18:33.460 --> 00:18:48.970

Angus Bargh: It takes information from utilities and data owners at a national level, and displays them in a federated portal where all participants in the civic infrastructure sector can get access to.

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00:18:49.590 --> 00:19:03.010

Angus Bargh: Not only that, it also includes workflows, so there's a continual improvement or feedback mechanism back into the system, so that over years and months to come, the quality of information in the system should improve.

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00:19:04.400 --> 00:19:15.419

Angus Bargh: The tool works by drawing an area of interest, and that displays your critical assets, and displays who owns those assets, and which assets are considered strategic, and where an elevated level of

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00:19:15.550 --> 00:19:18.330

Angus Bargh: Of care or working conditions are required.

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00:19:18.550 --> 00:19:32.789

Angus Bargh: And in terms of that feedback mechanism, the system also allows for the active reporting of what anybody finds when they excavate. So that's the ability to raise site observations, report that back into the system, so that each contributor of data to the system

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00:19:32.790 --> 00:19:40.270

Angus Bargh: can reap information back from it on the condition of their assets as every time the ground is open. And just as a quantifying

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00:19:40.270 --> 00:19:44.159

Angus Bargh: metric. Wellington City, the capital of New Zealand.

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00:19:44.540 --> 00:19:54.140

Angus Bargh: has about 3,500 excavations on it every year. So that's lots of missed opportunities if that information is not fed back into the system.

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00:19:55.030 --> 00:19:57.329

Angus Bargh: So, here is a fun fact.

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00:19:57.580 --> 00:20:04.760

Angus Bargh: More countries are space-capable than have a federated underground asset register of what lies beneath their cities.

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00:20:04.910 --> 00:20:10.250

Angus Bargh: But we promise it's not rocket science, so let's have a look at the challenges we faced, and

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00:20:11.060 --> 00:20:16.530

Angus Bargh: We effectively brought that innovation from the edge to the center.

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00:20:16.840 --> 00:20:29.989

Angus Bargh: So the challenge that we all face is how do you deliver quickly, especially in a public sector environment when the outcome wasn't certain, and it actually wasn't norm what the end result would look like. Long uncertainty of that.

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00:20:30.650 --> 00:20:43.049

Angus Bargh: Now, what I would say for us, before I jump into the next slide, there was two things. We've already talked about the burning platform, that creating or curating a narrative about why we need to act, why there needs to be done some... something needs to be done.

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00:20:43.090 --> 00:20:59.510

Angus Bargh: And the second thing is to define the innovation. What is it we were actually innovating? Was it just technology, or was it technology and a change in organizational structures? Was there policy change? Was regulatory change? So, what was the breadth of this innovation, having some idea of that?

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00:21:00.480 --> 00:21:07.139

Angus Bargh: Then, what we found with the sector, because this was delivering something for a sector which hadn't experienced much change for a number of decades.

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00:21:07.310 --> 00:21:21.090

Angus Bargh: was to actually colasking everybody behind a set of principles, and the principles that I'm sharing on the screen here belong to an organization called Digital Built Britain, a center of excellence from the University of Cambridge that now, unfortunately, is no longer, but they're,

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00:21:21.380 --> 00:21:32.099

Angus Bargh: Their advice still exists online. And we adopted these as a set of principles, again, that everybody could pull behind. The outcome may not be known, but the principles would endure throughout the program.

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00:21:32.740 --> 00:21:39.210

Angus Bargh: So that's another thing in terms of a principle-led approach, again, allowed us to, to move forward.

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00:21:39.830 --> 00:21:45.920

Angus Bargh: And then what allowed us to start a quick move, and this comes back to Nigel's question, is icebreaker.

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00:21:46.760 --> 00:22:00.680

Angus Bargh: we actually paused and surveyed what the existing baseline was. What did we have at our disposal? Because we only needed to innovate from this baseline. So we needed to understand what our existing powers and obligations allowed us to do with inside government.

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00:22:00.810 --> 00:22:19.849

Angus Bargh: We needed to find that community of interest or practice that we could build that feedback mechanism around as we built innovation to describe what was good and what was still challenging. And then, again, we had a mechanism to define what our priorities were, what

the steps needed, not necessarily to get us the endpoint, because the endpoint necessarily wasn't clear.

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00:22:19.960 --> 00:22:36.309

Angus Bargh: But what's the next best step? What's the next priority in this journey? And to establish that, and then to start moving. And once we start moving, then we move fast. Hence my answer before, you need to pause, get your story, get your principles, get your baseline set, and then you can move at speed for the rest.

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00:22:36.490 --> 00:22:39.549

Angus Bargh: So let's talk about the next two challenges. So.

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00:22:39.680 --> 00:22:50.569

Angus Bargh: Identifying institutional hurdles is our challenge too, but our challenge three is also about building trust, and these are kind of intertwined, and we'll explain how this is as we run through.

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00:22:50.760 --> 00:22:54.910

Angus Bargh: So the first thing I would say, and this is a little bit of a messy slide.

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00:22:55.350 --> 00:23:07.450

Angus Bargh: What this slide does is explain the composition of the different entities that were involved, but the important thing is, is because we classified this as a pilot, and there's already been a pilot in the chat.

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00:23:07.730 --> 00:23:08.470

Angus Bargh: that...

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00:23:08.490 --> 00:23:25.499

Angus Bargh: That communicates a lot. A pilot, by definition, is something that is time-bound, and pilot communicates the license to iterate, or the license to fail. So Mbuilt in there is saying we don't have to have all the answers to move forward. If this structure doesn't well, we can iterate and move again.

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00:23:25.500 --> 00:23:29.379

Angus Bargh: So I think when we're on the edge of innovation in public sector or government.

155

00:23:29.420 --> 00:23:33.750

Angus Bargh: Framing things as pilots is useful because it communicates those things clearly.

156

00:23:35.560 --> 00:23:50.760

Angus Bargh: The next thing was to understand the hurdles at an institutional level to sharing data. That's what we are. We effectively create in this marketplace, but we have sector participants who, again, because of long-established traditions, are reluctant, somewhat reluctant to share data.

157

00:23:52.360 --> 00:24:12.169

Angus Bargh: And so what we did from the outset is we worked with each organization, and a lot of people on this webinar will be familiar with persona mapping. And what we did is we put ourselves in their shoes, and we described a future, a successful future of this innovation, what would be achieved for them, and what they would be able to do.

158

00:24:12.540 --> 00:24:22.739

Angus Bargh: If this was successful. And expressed it in terms that they could understand, and this is just a simple mapping of the personas that are involved, again, in work around the subsurface environment in any city.

159

00:24:23.070 --> 00:24:26.289

Angus Bargh: And that brought people along. They at least could extend that

160

00:24:26.750 --> 00:24:35.979

Angus Bargh: That there was a sort of freedom to innovate, freedom to take risks that may possibly fail, but effectively, we're trying to achieve benefits, ultimately, for them in the future.

161

00:24:37.280 --> 00:24:44.799

Angus Bargh: Obviously, we had to address concerns for utilities who were sharing their data, questions about their own data quality, data security, and commercial sensitivity.

162

00:24:45.010 --> 00:24:51.230

Angus Bargh: And so, Standard and listening to this, and being open about the fact that we couldn't necessarily

163

00:24:52.540 --> 00:25:12.459

Angus Bargh: answer these at the start, but we would work with them to figure this out as we went along. So we were open about the fact we wouldn't have all the answers, but we would be, be clear about when we were solving these problems. And indeed, by the end of the initiative, by the time we launched our product, these were all answered to the satisfaction of all the utilities that were participating.

164

00:25:13.440 --> 00:25:19.679

Angus Bargh: So let's just talk quickly about building trust around the data sharing, because creating a marketplace where data is shared.

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00:25:19.730 --> 00:25:22.219

Angus Bargh: This is... this is a trust... high-trust environment.

166

00:25:22.220 --> 00:25:44.600

Angus Bargh: So what I want to do is I want to talk about the different dimensions, and this really is about moving from the edge to the center, because the pilot allowed us to demonstrate that proof of concept, but now we need to embed it and bring it into the core of everyday use. And so these were the dimensions that we identified, not only to build trust, but to break down barriers. And we'll just talk through these really quickly, and then we'll come back to Nigel.

167

00:25:44.770 --> 00:25:46.520

Angus Bargh: So let's talk about the ownership model.

168

00:25:47.190 --> 00:25:54.339

Angus Bargh: So, of course, when we started, we thought the government would run this, and what we found along the journey is that actually a charitable trust, Digital-built Aotearoa.

169

00:25:54.420 --> 00:26:11.500

Angus Bargh: was the right mechanism, a neutral entity that wasn't commercial or for-profit, and wasn't government, so wasn't necessarily tied to the funding and regulatory mechanisms of government, but was someone that could work alongside government and alongside the private sector as well. So quite an innovative sort of approach to the ownership.

170

00:26:11.740 --> 00:26:13.170

Angus Bargh: And similarly.

171

00:26:13.530 --> 00:26:26.230

Angus Bargh: how that charity then worked with the commercial sector to make sure it had a good service posture and delivered good commercial outcomes for all subscribing entities. So Open Plan, which is the company that I'm chief executive for.

172

00:26:26.230 --> 00:26:35.089

Angus Bargh: We work with the tools which are owned by Digital Built Altero, which manages that, the tools and the data for the public good. So again, innovation at the ownership level.

173

00:26:35.330 --> 00:26:37.170

Angus Bargh: Technology we've talked about.

174

00:26:37.520 --> 00:26:48.329

Angus Bargh: So this is a simple slide explaining what we were doing with creating that single siloed view of that federated data for the public good. So we'll skip through there, but obviously, that

175

00:26:48.540 --> 00:26:53.849

Angus Bargh: what I wanted to communicate here, that it just wasn't about the technology, there are other dimensions, to solve.

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00:26:54.770 --> 00:27:08.959

Angus Bargh: Now, one of the things we... as we moved through a policy lens, is there was already existing policy in the New Zealand context that said, hey, every time the ground is open, you must report back what you find. But in a New Zealand context, there was no mechanism to do that, not in a formal way.

177

00:27:08.990 --> 00:27:26.879

Angus Bargh: And so in building the technology, what we do is leverage that policy setting and build the ability for that to happen in our technology base. And then we presented that back to the sector and said, you can now meet your policy or regulatory requirements using this technology. So again, it was a policy leverage.

178

00:27:26.880 --> 00:27:31.279

Angus Bargh: But we would only understand that by surveying the existing policies that were in place.

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00:27:31.300 --> 00:27:40.080

Angus Bargh: And similarly, examples of site records that are being created through the system now and fed back in, for that continual improvement of data leading into that policy edge.

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00:27:40.700 --> 00:27:50.999

Angus Bargh: And then, before I talk about security, the business model. So we saw in the poll before, you know, the long, enduring, in-perpetuity funding that normally comes from government. How do you build

181

00:27:51.050 --> 00:28:05.300

Angus Bargh: Again, we didn't know what the business model would be when we set out on this journey, but what became apparent as we built is that councils wanted the technology that we were offering, and there was a willingness to pay, so we established a subscription model.

182

00:28:05.380 --> 00:28:17.560

Angus Bargh: They on charge the costs of their subscriptions to any party that wants to access those corridors. So there's a user pays model, and everybody wins. The utilities win because, although they're paying to access the system.

183

00:28:17.610 --> 00:28:33.460

Angus Bargh: they are getting good information on what lies adjacent to their assets and under the ground. So the business model emerged again as we moved from the periphery to the center of this. And finally, we talk about security. So security, obviously, when we're talking about infrastructure of national significance.

184

00:28:33.990 --> 00:28:34.670

Angus Bargh: Had.

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00:28:34.800 --> 00:28:51.179

Angus Bargh: to be taken very seriously, and we've worked with government extensively on this. But again, this wasn't necessarily clear to us when we started on the journey, but as we matured, our security framework and profile matured with us. So again, moving and bringing things into the center. And finally, my last two slides.

186

00:28:51.330 --> 00:28:53.819

Angus Bargh: What we're finding now, we've built this, is that

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00:28:54.300 --> 00:29:02.950

Angus Bargh: we're getting very positive feedback about it's changing the nature of the conversation in city planning and delivery in our biggest cities in New Zealand.

188

00:29:02.980 --> 00:29:18.440

Angus Bargh: from that, very much reactive conversations to firmly into that proactive and planned approach. So the technology's been transformative in a way that we didn't anticipate when we embarked on building the... yeah, building the initiative.

189

00:29:19.090 --> 00:29:20.310

Angus Bargh: So let's recap.

190

00:29:20.510 --> 00:29:31.139

Angus Bargh: So, first of all, frame the narrative around the innovation, get your burning platform story, pilot it so you've got license to iterate and fail, and then pick up and run fast.

191

00:29:31.430 --> 00:29:38.439

Angus Bargh: Once you iterate, iterate with your experts, with your community of interest, and...

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00:29:38.500 --> 00:29:56.279

Angus Bargh: listen to them so you can build trust iteratively over time. And I just want to draw the attention that Singapore Land Authorities just produced a best practice playbook, it's listed at the bottom there, the What Lies Beneath, and we used it as a case study in that of the work, so don't take our word for it, you can talk to them as well.

193

00:29:56.660 --> 00:30:01.370

Angus Bargh: Nigel, that brings me to the end of my short presentation. I'll hand back to you, and thank you very much.

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00:30:01.550 --> 00:30:09.119

Nigel Smith: Fantastic. Thank you so much. I can see it's already prompted some, questions in the, chat.

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00:30:09.120 --> 00:30:22.049

Nigel Smith: Really, really, appreciate that. So, Fabio, I'm gonna hand over to you in a second, but just do want to just remind people, encourage everybody to get your questions submitted in time for the Q&A.

196

00:30:22.050 --> 00:30:35.849

Nigel Smith: really two amazingly experienced innovators here with us, so don't hold back. No such thing as a bad question, just post your questions as they come to you in the Q&A tab at the bottom of your screens.

197

00:30:36.800 --> 00:30:40.230

Nigel Smith: Okay, over to you, Fabio.

198

00:30:41.990 --> 00:30:44.210

Fabio Zaffagnini: Hi. Hi, everyone.

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00:30:45.210 --> 00:30:51.809

Fabio Zaffagnini: So... First of all, my name is Fabio Zaffagnini, and I'm... I have

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00:30:51.980 --> 00:31:01.740

Fabio Zaffagnini: absolutely nothing to do with public administration. In my life, I organize rock concerts, and more precisely, as you can see here.

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00:31:01.740 --> 00:31:16.760

Fabio Zaffagnini: I'm the founder of a band called the Rocking 1000, and we organize shows in large stadiums around the world, where 1,000 musicians play together at the same time. The picture you see here is from a concert we gave at the Stade de France in Paris.

202

00:31:16.850 --> 00:31:24.729

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, in a very unusual way, my job is to manage and coordinate a large community of people.

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00:31:24.890 --> 00:31:38.109

Fabio Zaffagnini: And in 2023, this strange experience suddenly became useful for something that was completely different.

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00:31:38.650 --> 00:31:55.739

Fabio Zaffagnini: My hometown, Cezena, in Italy, was hit by a devastating flood. And after days of extremely heavy rain, the river overflowed, and large parts of the city went underwater.

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00:31:56.050 --> 00:32:12.529

Fabio Zaffagnini: You know, in Italy, when something like this happens, we already have highly trained and well-organized emergency services. So we have the civil protection, firefighters, the army, local authorities, but...

206

00:32:12.810 --> 00:32:31.439

Fabio Zaffagnini: I knew that something else was about to happen, because, like, thousands of ordinary citizens were going to leave their homes, pick up a shovel, and go out the street to help, like, spontaneous volunteers. And this is... and this is actually a beautiful thing.

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00:32:31.490 --> 00:32:38.350

Fabio Zaffagnini: But thousands of people needing to help without coordination can also become a huge problem, because

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00:32:38.350 --> 00:32:52.920

Fabio Zaffagnini: They can interfere with professional rescue teams, they can all converge on the same area while another area receives, like, no help at all. They can enter a dangerous lists, and in some cases, they can put themselves at risk... at risk.

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00:32:53.130 --> 00:33:12.209

Fabio Zaffagnini: So the problem was not a lack of volunteers. The problem was how to coordinate spontaneous volunteers quickly, safely, and at scale. And that was a problem I knew something about. I wanted to take what we had learned from the Rakuten 1000 and put it at the service of the community.

210

00:33:12.660 --> 00:33:17.630

Fabio Zaffagnini: When I contacted the municipality of Czechena, that city.

211

00:33:18.400 --> 00:33:33.740

Fabio Zaffagnini: they were already trying to organize volunteers, and the initiative was to collect application through a Google Form, and then contact people by email to assign them where they needed... where they were needed. So...

212

00:33:33.820 --> 00:33:45.009

Fabio Zaffagnini: That can... this system can basically work with 20 people, maybe 50 people, but when you have thousands of volunteers, like a manual coordination does not scale.

213

00:33:46.240 --> 00:33:47.710

Fabio Zaffagnini: So,

214

00:33:47.980 --> 00:34:07.829

Fabio Zaffagnini: someone had to read every application, check availability, fill every shift, replace people who cancel, move people from one area to another. So, and the larger the operation becomes, the more people you need just to manage the people you want to help.

215

00:34:08.070 --> 00:34:24.230

Fabio Zaffagnini: So... and at the same time, since what was happening, like, private telegram groups were appearing everywhere. Like, cities... citizens were organizing themselves independently, and going directly to flooded areas. And again.

216

00:34:24.460 --> 00:34:38.280

Fabio Zaffagnini: The intention was fantastic, but the model had... this model had the opposite problem, because it was fast, it was spontaneous, but there was no central overview.

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00:34:38.400 --> 00:34:40.600

Fabio Zaffagnini: So these groups...

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00:34:40.610 --> 00:34:56.130

Fabio Zaffagnini: did not necessarily know which sites were dangerous. They did not know where firefighters or the civil protection were already operating. They could send 100 people to one street, and nobody to another.

219

00:34:56.130 --> 00:35:04.689

Fabio Zaffagnini: And they depended heavily on individual organizers who might be available today, but eventually not tomorrow.

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00:35:04.900 --> 00:35:08.360

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, we had two systems.

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00:35:08.710 --> 00:35:18.080

Fabio Zaffagnini: One had control, but it was slow, and the other one had speed and freedom, but very little coordination, so we needed

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00:35:18.310 --> 00:35:26.499

Fabio Zaffagnini: something that was in between. A system with a central control, but a decentralized action.

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00:35:27.110 --> 00:35:46.010

Fabio Zaffagnini: And this is essentially the same principle we use with Rakuten 1000. We do not personally tell 1,000 musicians exactly what to do every minute. We create a structure, and then it's the people who operate inside the structure.

224

00:35:46.590 --> 00:35:58.319

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, we designed a very simple system. The municipality would create work shifts, and each shift contained only the essential information. Where to go?

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00:35:58.370 --> 00:36:08.749

Fabio Zaffagnini: when to be there, what needed to be done, and how many volunteers were required. So, musicians would choose the shifts themselves.

226

00:36:08.980 --> 00:36:13.069

Fabio Zaffagnini: And if a shift needed 20 people, 20 people could sign up.

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00:36:13.190 --> 00:36:25.639

Fabio Zaffagnini: When it was full, it disappeared as an available option, and volunteers choose another location. So, this basically changed the logic completely.

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00:36:26.830 --> 00:36:38.360

Fabio Zaffagnini: The administration, in this case, did not have to manage new people. They had to manage just the needs, and the volunteers managed themselves.

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00:36:38.470 --> 00:36:57.640

Fabio Zaffagnini: And at the same time, the municipality kept control over where people were being sent, and that meant we could avoid dangerous areas, we could avoid interfering with professional emergency teams, and we could distribute people across the city according to actual needs.

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00:36:57.980 --> 00:37:04.419

Fabio Zaffagnini: And, we could actually react very quickly when priorities changed.

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00:37:04.650 --> 00:37:18.499

Fabio Zaffagnini: The first challenge, I have to say, was actually designing the system. The second challenge was convincing the public administration in the middle of the emergency to do it.

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00:37:18.600 --> 00:37:34.059

Fabio Zaffagnini: Because, you know, when a city is underwater, even getting 5 minutes of someone's attention is complicated and difficult. And so, asking them to change the way they were working is even harder, but luckily.

233

00:37:34.060 --> 00:37:44.669

Fabio Zaffagnini: And finally, because of Rakuten 1000, people in TaZena knew me, so, there was, like, already some sort of degree of trust. So they listened.

234

00:37:44.840 --> 00:37:46.840

Fabio Zaffagnini: And they decided to try it.

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00:37:48.410 --> 00:37:59.440

Fabio Zaffagnini: And then we had another problem. We actually... we needed the actual technology, like, immediately. Like, not in 3 months, not in 3 weeks, but basically overnight.

236

00:37:59.610 --> 00:38:09.820

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, this is where artificial intelligence became extremely useful, because using, pipe coding, I'm a coder, I'm a coder myself.

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00:38:09.820 --> 00:38:22.310

Fabio Zaffagnini: And by coding, I was able to build both the public-facing website and the administrative system in one night. So, the next morning, basically, the platform was operating.

238

00:38:22.310 --> 00:38:30.520

Fabio Zaffagnini: But technology was just one part of the problem. There was also, like, a psychological issue to deal with.

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00:38:30.520 --> 00:38:38.129

Fabio Zaffagnini: You know, during an emergency, we noticed that spontaneous volunteers roughly fell into groups.

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00:38:38.370 --> 00:38:51.889

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, the first group was... is the one who trusts institutions. They want an official channel, they want to know, that what they're doing is authorized, useful, and safe.

241

00:38:52.080 --> 00:39:04.440

Fabio Zaffagnini: And then there's a second group, which is all the opposite. They don't want an institution telling them what to do. They believe that acting independently is faster and more effective.

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00:39:04.440 --> 00:39:14.780

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, the first group needs legitimacy, the second one needs freedom and speed. So, our system had to work for both.

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00:39:16.390 --> 00:39:25.030

Fabio Zaffagnini: And strangely, strangely enough, it did, because the platform was official, it was managed together with the municipality.

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00:39:25.030 --> 00:39:37.400

Fabio Zaffagnini: But when you opened the website, you immediately saw where your help was needed. So, you did not have to wait for an email, you didn't have to ask for permission, you simply chose a shift.

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00:39:37.420 --> 00:39:38.450

Fabio Zaffagnini: and went.

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00:39:40.550 --> 00:39:47.779

Fabio Zaffagnini: But even the BESH platform, you know, is useful. It's useless if nobody knows it exists.

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00:39:47.820 --> 00:40:01.539

Fabio Zaffagnini: So communication become another fundamental part of the project. Of course, we use the municipality social channels and other official channels. We contact the local newspapers.

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00:40:02.110 --> 00:40:14.680

Fabio Zaffagnini: But that was not enough. We also wanted to reach people who would never follow an institutional page. So we involved local creators and influencers.

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00:40:14.900 --> 00:40:28.720

Fabio Zaffagnini: One of them was a call... was a page called Romanoli Populoletto. It is a hugely popular local page, built around, you know, pride, jokes, food.

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00:40:28.720 --> 00:40:39.459

Fabio Zaffagnini: beaches, people, local culture, and dialects. Like, these guys, like, a bunch, are literally a bunch of freaks, you know?

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00:40:39.760 --> 00:40:45.159

Fabio Zaffagnini: But it was, like, basically the opposite of an institutional communication channel.

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00:40:45.280 --> 00:40:51.290

Fabio Zaffagnini: Which was exactly why we needed it. The municipality give us

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00:40:51.330 --> 00:41:06.450

Fabio Zaffagnini: give the product legitimacy, and local creators gave it reach and credibility with a completely different audience. And so this combination basically worked really, really well.

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00:41:06.560 --> 00:41:25.870

Fabio Zaffagnini: The system was originally designed for the city of Czeena, and other rivers overflowed, and 13 other cities in the region were affected. All these cities saw what was happening in Czeena, so they asked to use the same platform.

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00:41:27.100 --> 00:41:41.879

Fabio Zaffagnini: And in two weeks, this system that was called Voluntary SEOS coordinated around 25,000 volunteers and more than 2,000 work shifts across 14 municipalities.

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00:41:42.110 --> 00:41:58.750

Fabio Zaffagnini: And, all while working alongside the official emergency services and under the supervision of the local administration. So, it was, like, an extremely simple idea, but it worked, like, surprising, surprisingly well.

257

00:41:58.910 --> 00:42:12.079

Fabio Zaffagnini: And, unfortunately, a few months later, another major flood hit the region... in the region of Tuscany, and then came the devastating flood in Valencia, which you probably heard about.

258

00:42:12.080 --> 00:42:20.770

Fabio Zaffagnini: And personally, I really tried hard to contact local administration to offer the same system, but this time, I could not get their attention.

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00:42:20.770 --> 00:42:37.479

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, and just with this, I understood something. You know, during an emergency, it may be already too late to explain a new system. There is no time to build trust, there is no time to understand how it works, there's no time to decide who is responsible for what.

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00:42:37.580 --> 00:42:42.659

Fabio Zaffagnini: And this is why I keep talking about this project whenever I have the opportunity.

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00:42:42.810 --> 00:42:44.600

Fabio Zaffagnini: Because...

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00:42:44.790 --> 00:42:59.610

Fabio Zaffagnini: the real lesson of this service, which voluntary service, is not that we built a platform during the flood, the lesson is that systems like this should already exist before the flood.

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00:43:00.540 --> 00:43:17.540

Fabio Zaffagnini: Because volunteers will come, the energy will come, the willingness to help will come. The question is whether we will be ready to use it, because the best time to organize spontaneous volunteers is not during the emergency, it's before

264

00:43:17.540 --> 00:43:20.990

Fabio Zaffagnini: the emergency begins. So...

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00:43:21.450 --> 00:43:29.440

Fabio Zaffagnini: Thank you very much for your attention, and I hope that this presentation, like, you actually liked it.

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00:43:30.190 --> 00:43:34.020

Nigel Smith: Thank you so much, Fabio. Fantastic presentation, and

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00:43:34.040 --> 00:43:39.439

Nigel Smith: I mean, a very moving, in many ways, case study, as well.

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00:43:39.440 --> 00:43:54.050

Nigel Smith: Do, everybody, just remember to keep sharing any questions you have for today's speakers. There's quite a few questions, from you already, both pre-submitted and in the Zoom Q&A, but just to ensure your question gets seen and not lost in the chat.

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00:43:54.050 --> 00:44:12.779

Nigel Smith: do just please submit it in the Q&A, which you'll see at the bottom of your Zoom screen. And just before we get into the Q&A, just encourage you to visit the Edge of Government Hub after today's event, because you can explore more of the case studies, innovations, and insights that are connected to today's

270

00:44:12.800 --> 00:44:16.830

Nigel Smith: discussion, and that link is in the resources tab at the end of your screen.

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00:44:17.140 --> 00:44:19.549

Nigel Smith: And my colleague has posted it in the chat.

272

00:44:19.720 --> 00:44:38.959

Nigel Smith: as, as well. So yeah, if you've got specific questions, for Fabio's... in terms of Fabio's case studies, post those. There have been some very specific ones for you, Angus, which I'll come to in a second. But first, I thought I'd just sort of... there's a question, I think, some questions that...

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00:44:39.160 --> 00:44:42.229

Nigel Smith: I think both of you, can,

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00:44:42.580 --> 00:44:47.460

Nigel Smith: address, so let me start with this, this, this one.

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00:44:47.560 --> 00:45:04.040

Nigel Smith: I'd just like to understand how the panel measure innovation throughout the innovation lifecycle to ensure it will provide the value once it is delivered, or decide whether to stop partway through that life cycle.

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00:45:04.080 --> 00:45:08.509

Nigel Smith: Perhaps, Angus, do you want to tack that one first, and then let's hear from Fabio?

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00:45:09.560 --> 00:45:13.750

Angus Bargh: Yeah, it's a great question. It is a good question. I think...

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00:45:13.880 --> 00:45:22.460

Angus Bargh: For us, what we had is we built a program, and it had gateways, and there were success criterias that we had to hit at each,

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00:45:22.660 --> 00:45:33.930

Angus Bargh: At each gateway. Now, just because it's innovation doesn't mean you don't employ the normal rigors of good program and project management. You still adhere to that, so, you know, you set yourself targets and you aim for it.

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00:45:34.620 --> 00:45:40.109

Angus Bargh: But the truth is, if you're delivering true innovation, there's always that element of being uncertain.

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00:45:40.370 --> 00:45:57.059

Angus Bargh: And again, breaking it down and prioritizing things allows some level of certainty over the next task or set of tasks to deliver, while the ultimate outcome still remains uncertain. So yeah, program approach, gated, success criteria at each gate, that was kind of our control mechanism for that.

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00:45:58.020 --> 00:46:01.380

Nigel Smith: Great, thank you. And Fabio, did you have any thoughts on that question?

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00:46:01.930 --> 00:46:20.429

Fabio Zaffagnini: Well, in our case, like, the innovation of this system came before, because we basically used the same system applied in a completely different context. So we applied something that worked, and put a service of a new context. So, the innovation was just this kind of shift.

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00:46:20.430 --> 00:46:37.399

Fabio Zaffagnini: And I think that, under our point of view, the crucial part was made by the early adopters. So, like, a bunch of people inside an external organization that actually understood the value of the innovation, and were the ones actually convincing

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00:46:37.400 --> 00:46:41.199

Fabio Zaffagnini: The rest of their team to adopt it and make it work.

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00:46:41.200 --> 00:46:46.970

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, that's... that is... that was, in our case, like, cruel, to... to bring it.

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00:46:47.060 --> 00:46:48.540

Fabio Zaffagnini: To another level.

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00:46:49.640 --> 00:46:55.639

Nigel Smith: Well, maybe you take this next question as well first, Fabio, because I think it sort of speaks a little bit to that sense of you having this sort of

289

00:46:55.850 --> 00:47:11.289

Nigel Smith: group of early adopters and really understanding how to, I suppose, capitalize on them. So this question, I'd like to understand the strategies, the processes that the panel have used to gather insights where innovation opportunities can or should be implemented

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00:47:11.340 --> 00:47:22.659

Nigel Smith: and how these opportunities are, prioritized. I mean, with you, Fabio, there must have been a lightbulb moment where you saw that this innovation that you'd seen in a completely different context had this...

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00:47:23.120 --> 00:47:24.529

Nigel Smith: Application in a very...

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00:47:24.760 --> 00:47:33.330

Fabio Zaffagnini: Well, I was seeing, how their... the problem was being, dealt with.

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00:47:33.510 --> 00:47:46.510

Fabio Zaffagnini: I mean, I was told that what they wanted to do, which was a very basic system, that in my experience, I was certain it wouldn't work at all. It would be, like, a mess in a day.

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00:47:46.620 --> 00:47:49.080

Fabio Zaffagnini: So... I mean...

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00:47:49.430 --> 00:47:57.089

Fabio Zaffagnini: it was, like, very clear to me, based on the experience that I had previously, that they had to change.

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00:47:57.130 --> 00:48:11.200

Fabio Zaffagnini: And, luckily enough, our system was very, very, very easy to explain and understand. So basically, in a couple of minutes, people would realize

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00:48:11.600 --> 00:48:16.360

Fabio Zaffagnini: That... that was, like, improvement to what they were already doing.

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00:48:16.660 --> 00:48:18.660

Fabio Zaffagnini: And that's basically what...

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00:48:19.250 --> 00:48:31.819

Fabio Zaffagnini: turn on that light bulb. It was like the simple... it was, like, a very simple solution, and that... that was actually the strength of that solution.

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00:48:32.400 --> 00:48:32.920

Nigel Smith: Yeah.

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00:48:33.350 --> 00:48:35.729

Nigel Smith: Angus, do you want to add anything, thinking about these, sort of.

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00:48:36.180 --> 00:48:41.749

Nigel Smith: Gathering insights where the opportunities can, should be implemented, and then how do you do the prioritization?

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00:48:42.480 --> 00:48:46.759

Angus Bargh: Yeah, it's a great question. I think the lightball analogy is exactly that, because

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00:48:47.450 --> 00:48:56.969

Angus Bargh: you need to know when you're in an innovation space versus a space where it's just change, or it's improvement around the edges, you know, what... and I think

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00:48:57.070 --> 00:49:03.000

Angus Bargh: Whereas, recognizing that we're in innovation spaces where there was a quantum of change that was required across the whole system.

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00:49:03.310 --> 00:49:22.060

Angus Bargh: And then, having recognized that, not often it's a light bulb moment, or it's a group of people coming together, it's... it's just recognizing that we just cannot do this under the existing regime, whatever that might be. So the current mode of delivery just won't work for this. And then, I think.

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00:49:22.450 --> 00:49:32.310

Angus Bargh: you get yourselves around a whiteboard, and priorities fall out of that, and understanding what the next best step, and getting good people who understand the problem. Yeah, innovation can be messy.

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00:49:32.570 --> 00:49:48.879

Nigel Smith: Or it is always messy. I'm gonna ask you some very specific questions, to your case study, Angus, and I'm gonna group them, all together. I think it'll be a little bit easier to get through.

309

00:49:49.700 --> 00:49:56.520

Nigel Smith: So, who perceived the burning platform from the New Zealand, kind of New Zealand-wide.

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00:49:56.730 --> 00:50:05.770

Nigel Smith: And which is the edge that created the first innovation push, like, towards the center, and how long did it take? There's a very specific question about the...

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00:50:06.100 --> 00:50:07.899

Nigel Smith: How open the data?

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00:50:08.060 --> 00:50:11.239

Nigel Smith: is, in terms of the commons.

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00:50:11.360 --> 00:50:27.229

Nigel Smith: And, and how do you make sure that the distributed maintenance is working, so the data is valid, and the only source of truth for all? So, interrelated, but I just wanted to package all those up, because I thought, well, it'd be just efficiency, easier for you to deal with, those.

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00:50:27.680 --> 00:50:31.480

Angus Bargh: Nice, you might have to prob me if I forget any of those. So,

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00:50:32.270 --> 00:50:51.790

Angus Bargh: in terms of, in terms of the burning platform, so there... there was a collective, I know after the earthquakes, there was a collective, an engineering fraternity that could see what the future would hold if we failed to act, if we didn't do anything. And so, effectively, that... that narrative around the burning platform kind of came together of a group of, sort of, concerned and...

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00:50:52.830 --> 00:50:57.479

Angus Bargh: experts, if you like. And that narrative was then fashioned over time.

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00:50:57.870 --> 00:51:11.579

Angus Bargh: But it still needed leadership, it needed someone to carry that narrative and put into words that the people who were holding the budgets could, you know, you could explain, and the people who... the kind of the permission holders would get them across the line.

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00:51:12.420 --> 00:51:28.239

Angus Bargh: And so, like I said in my presentation, there is a sales element to it. It's sales with integrity, it's sales, you know, towards a vision of the future being different than it currently is, but it is very sales-orientated in that sense. In terms of,

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00:51:28.530 --> 00:51:48.000

Angus Bargh: The gating, so can anybody get access to our solution? No, we only provide access to, organizations that have some sort of role in the built environment, design engineers, contractors, utilities, that kind of thing, so it's a vetting process, it's part of the security protocol, so it's not open, to the public. Nigel, remind me, sorry, what were the...

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00:51:48.000 --> 00:51:56.260

Nigel Smith: The, how do you make sure that the distributed, maintenance is working so the data is valid, and you've only got this sort of single source of truth? Always kind of perennial.

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00:51:56.440 --> 00:51:58.450

Nigel Smith: data charge.

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00:51:58.450 --> 00:52:07.250

Angus Bargh: Yeah, absolutely. And so, again, it comes back to policy. We have secondary legislation in a New Zealand context that allows the,

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00:52:07.250 --> 00:52:30.309

Angus Bargh: Corridor manager is a role that we have. There's very similar roles in other jurisdictions worldwide. The person responsible for managing the corridor, that's the space that the vehicles and the transport system runs on, but also the ground underneath which our lifeline utilities are situated. And we have secondary legislation that requires data from utilities, and requires them to keep that current and up-to-date. And similarly, there's legislation when people...

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00:52:30.310 --> 00:52:36.139

Angus Bargh: Now legislation that when people access the corridor, so they excavate, they have to report back what they... what they find.

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00:52:36.160 --> 00:52:37.420

Angus Bargh: But having said that.

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00:52:37.650 --> 00:52:51.530

Angus Bargh: all the participants that journeyed with us are actually quite happy to participate. They don't need regulation to force them, because they can see the benefits actually attributing back to them and their organizations through their participation.

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00:52:51.930 --> 00:52:58.159

Nigel Smith: Great, thank you. I'm gonna come to one of the questions that is pre-submitted, just sort of conscious of the time we've got left. I think this...

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00:52:58.310 --> 00:53:02.699

Nigel Smith: You've both spoken to this a little bit more, and I think it'd be valuable for people.

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00:53:02.840 --> 00:53:04.570

Nigel Smith: And maybe come to you first, Fabio.

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00:53:05.090 --> 00:53:18.340

Nigel Smith: how did you balance the need to move quickly with the need to work through the kind of governance data or any other institutional requirements? And I think it also might be, this reflects on some other questions we've had, in terms of that, sort of.

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00:53:18.470 --> 00:53:23.369

Nigel Smith: roll out? How do you try to get, sort of, buy-in from,

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00:53:23.840 --> 00:53:31.799

Nigel Smith: whether it's local, national, international, other government, that kind of... the sales element, I suppose, in your words, Angus.

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00:53:31.800 --> 00:53:32.470

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah.

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00:53:33.750 --> 00:53:40.500

Fabio Zaffagnini: So, I mean, the entity of the emergency was, like, huge, overwhelming.

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00:53:40.740 --> 00:53:57.190

Fabio Zaffagnini: And, I wouldn't say that the municipality were, like, desperate, but they were, like, almost desperate. So, when you're, like, when you're... when you see the tires flooded.

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00:53:57.650 --> 00:54:04.719

Fabio Zaffagnini: In the beginning, you do what you have to do, and you don't... Stop that much.

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00:54:04.950 --> 00:54:18.499

Fabio Zaffagnini: in focusing in bureaucracy, you just do what you have to do. And, one, very, basic system was, made overnight.

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00:54:18.800 --> 00:54:19.790

Fabio Zaffagnini: But...

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00:54:20.010 --> 00:54:37.010

Fabio Zaffagnini: starting from day one, we started implementing and making everything, like, richer, safer, dealing with, like, the GDPR stuff, like privacy and insurance. So, basically, there was, like, a constant update.

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00:54:37.150 --> 00:54:44.930

Fabio Zaffagnini: to satisfy... The requests that were coming from the municipalities.

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00:54:45.090 --> 00:54:52.929

Fabio Zaffagnini: So we started in a rush, and then we started to, like, make things better and safer under

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00:54:53.100 --> 00:55:05.180

Fabio Zaffagnini: all points of view. But there was, like, a very high, faith in the system and trust in the people working, so it was, like, a very...

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00:55:05.360 --> 00:55:08.839

Fabio Zaffagnini: A strong spirit of collaboration, which is something

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00:55:08.980 --> 00:55:11.720

Fabio Zaffagnini: culturally typical from the place I'm from.

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00:55:12.470 --> 00:55:14.770

Nigel Smith: Wonderful. Angus, any thoughts on that?

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00:55:14.980 --> 00:55:25.919

Angus Bargh: Yeah, similar reflections to Fabio that, we, we delivered in tiers, and so we, over a three-year period, our program, and each year was split into,

347

00:55:26.030 --> 00:55:41.159

Angus Bargh: basically time-bound sections, and we were, delivered under an Agile framework. And we just iterated, delivered just incremental improvements over that time. And as Fabio's described, there was a new requirement came in, a particular party, then we built... that became our next priority, and we built that out.

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00:55:41.160 --> 00:55:47.240

Angus Bargh: And so, I think when you're in an innovation space, there's an expectancy that you continue to deliver. It can get quite exhausting.

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00:55:47.420 --> 00:55:56.920

Angus Bargh: But, but it is continual delivery. It's not wait till the end. There's no waterfall with this. You go, and you build as you go, and you improve over time.

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00:55:57.350 --> 00:56:05.730

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah, something that I would add that I... that I find it quite interesting is that along the way, people started asking, like,

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00:56:06.050 --> 00:56:12.109

Fabio Zaffagnini: like, dozens of new features. Let's add this, let's add that. And at some point.

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00:56:12.510 --> 00:56:23.569

Fabio Zaffagnini: this platform was, like, losing its focus, you know? When it was, like, offering too many opportunities if you could... because people can help, like, in... in a million ways. And,

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00:56:23.720 --> 00:56:36.089

Fabio Zaffagnini: we realized that we were, like, actually losing the focus of the app. We were creating confusion, so we decided to move back to the core and cut all the extra possibilities, because

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00:56:36.100 --> 00:56:46.679

Fabio Zaffagnini: Even if they were useful, they were, like, creating confusion in the usage of either administrators and the volunteers and the people.

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00:56:48.700 --> 00:56:58.059

Angus Bargh: Can I pick up on that, Nigel? Because I think that's a really good point. It was a challenge that we faced, is do we build an application, a piece of technology that is kind of very broad and very, very

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00:56:58.120 --> 00:57:12.860

Angus Bargh: very shallow, or do we build it sort of very narrow and very, very deep? And there's a question as well, which arose, is how do you go from a pilot to production? How do you productionize that? And so we recognized that early, and what we did, to Fabio's point, is we said, no, let's go... let's go

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00:57:13.010 --> 00:57:31.260

Angus Bargh: narrow and deep, and build enterprise-level sort of solutions around a very narrow problem, that that meant that once we were going from a pilot to a BAU, we weren't throwing it away and starting again. We'd already built this core system which was of a quality that we could actually put into production.

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00:57:32.050 --> 00:57:39.449

Nigel Smith: So we're running out of time, but just on that point, just a very quick... I thought it'd be just useful just to hear from you. In terms of that sort of scale-up, rollout.

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00:57:39.450 --> 00:57:52.819

Nigel Smith: wider engagement, whether you've just got each of you, sort of, like, one tip, or a lesson learned, something that might have gone well or less well, that, that you might advise on this. Maybe, Fabio quickly, and then Angus, and then we, unfortunately, will have to start wrapping up.

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00:57:53.740 --> 00:57:59.450

Fabio Zaffagnini: Well, the system itself is built to scale, so it's about...

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00:58:00.370 --> 00:58:07.210

Fabio Zaffagnini: adopted, you know? It's like, have something ready to be used. I mean.

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00:58:07.720 --> 00:58:14.059

Fabio Zaffagnini: I don't want to talk about other systems, because, you know, I do rock concerts, but...

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00:58:14.350 --> 00:58:26.890

Fabio Zaffagnini: But, I was contacted by the region, and they were asking to use this service, not just in case of emergency, but in case of, like, managed volunteers for whatever

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00:58:27.050 --> 00:58:42.809

Fabio Zaffagnini: is needed, you know? Not just, like, cleaning the streets after a flood, but also, like, I don't know, cleaning the beaches, cleaning the parks, with no emergency. So, I think that it's, like,

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00:58:44.090 --> 00:58:48.309

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah, always scale it up means,

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00:58:48.850 --> 00:58:54.020

Fabio Zaffagnini: Telling other institutions about the existence of the system?

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00:58:54.160 --> 00:58:55.740

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah. And,

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00:58:58.910 --> 00:59:04.889

Nigel Smith: I'm going to have to move on, because we've only... I'm really sorry, Fabio, because we've only got a couple of seconds, and I just want to give Angus just the final little...

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00:59:04.890 --> 00:59:05.440

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah.

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00:59:05.440 --> 00:59:06.520

Nigel Smith: A chance to comment.

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00:59:06.520 --> 00:59:07.070

Fabio Zaffagnini: Yeah.

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00:59:07.950 --> 00:59:13.289

Angus Bargh: Simply put, build something of value that people want to use, and communicate well, take them on the journey.

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00:59:13.610 --> 00:59:14.699

Angus Bargh: That's how you do it.

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00:59:14.880 --> 00:59:18.639

Nigel Smith: Great. Well, thank you so much. Fantastic wisdom, tricks.

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00:59:18.640 --> 00:59:36.010

Nigel Smith: In Abeer's phrase, from both of you. Let's give Abeer, Angus and Fabio a virtual round of applause, and most of all, thank you, all of you, for investing in your learning, being so engaged in this topic. We've just got time for a very quick poll, just to find out how you feel about today. It just helps us.

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00:59:36.010 --> 00:59:39.840

Nigel Smith: Continue to, improve how we do events.

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00:59:39.840 --> 00:59:42.530

Nigel Smith: like this, so if you could just answer this question.

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00:59:42.980 --> 00:59:48.199

Nigel Smith: On a scale of 1 to 10, how it was a valuable use of your time.

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00:59:49.280 --> 01:00:08.779

Nigel Smith: And before you go, while you're responding to that poll, just want to share our final Edge of Government Masterclass of 2026, so you can register to join us again soon. If you're not available to join live, remember you can always register for these events in order to get sent the recording to catch up whenever it, suits you.

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01:00:09.420 --> 01:00:18.339

Nigel Smith: And in December, we will have Turning Pushback Into Progress for New Ideas, and don't forget to check out the full range of

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01:00:18.340 --> 01:00:30.039

Nigel Smith: amazing innovations on the Edge of Government Hub. Okay, that is all we have time for today, closing on the hour. Hope you have found it helpful. Want to say a huge thank you to our speakers.

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01:00:30.040 --> 01:00:48.220

Nigel Smith: to the Mohammed bin Russia Center for Government Innovation, and to you, the attendees, for taking time out of your busy days. Keep an eye out on the email coming your way with today's recording and resources, and we hope to see you at the next Edge of Government Masterclass.

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01:00:48.220 --> 01:00:52.389

Nigel Smith: very, very soon. Have a great day, goodbye!