Digital Government and E-Rulemaking

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Rulemaking: A Major Role for Government

“Over one hundred federal regulatory agencies and subagencies issue more than 4,500 new regulations each year….E-rulemaking offers the potential to overcome some of the informational burdens associated with developing regulations.”

Rules Affect all Sectors of the Economy

- Communications
- Energy
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Financial Services
- Transportation
- Health Care
Rulemaking is Complex & Interactive
E-Rulemaking Promises Improvement

- **Agency Management**
  - Reduced document management and storage costs
  - Increased productivity of agency staff
  - Better informed agency analysis
  - Improved regulatory compliance

- **Legitimacy and Public Engagement**
  - More informed, meaningful public participation
  - Broadened public participation
  - Increased transparency and trust
A “key goal of President’s e-government initiative [is] to make it easy for citizens to get service from their government. At the top of the list must be making it easier for citizens and businesses to participate in the regulatory process.”

Director of the OMB, May 2002
NSF-Harvard E-Rulemaking Workshops

NSF’s Digital Government Research Program sponsored two major research workshops, one held in Washington, D.C. and the other held at Harvard University. The workshops identified:

- Opportunities for regulatory problem-solving using IT in the rulemaking process
- Priorities for information science and social science research on IT and rulemaking
- Need for interdisciplinary collaboration
- E-rulemaking challenges faced by more than a dozen agencies and subagencies
A Research Agenda for E-Rulemaking

- **Information Technology**
  
  *Document linking; question-and-answer; information retrieval of comments; consistency checks; simulation software*

- **Agency Management**

  *Effects on agency decision making; costs and benefits of IT; organizational culture*

- **Public Involvement**

  *Effects on public awareness; who participates and how often; legitimacy and information exchange*

- **Regulatory Compliance**

  *Identification of applicable rules; human-computer interface; remote sensing*
“Researchers working across disciplines can help design information systems that better meet the institutional routines and requirements of the rulemaking process… Sustained cooperation between regulatory agencies and researchers will be essential to take e-rulemaking into its next generation.”
For Further Info: www.e-rulemaking.org

- Papers & Reports
- Government Documents
- Conferences & Events
- Useful Links
- E-Rulemaking Listserv