

Global Innovation Competition

Transforming lives

Merging innovation and inspiration with government effectiveness

Old problems resolved through innovative solutions - that's the goal of the second annual Global Innovation Competition by Making All Voices Count, an initiative that asks for out-of-the-box ideas designed to engage people and increase government responsiveness. Launched on the International Day of Democracy, the campaign challenges innovators and entrepreneurs to find ways of stimulating rich relationships between governments and their people in Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Indonesia, the Philippines, Liberia,

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Tanzania, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mozambique, Uganda and Nigeria.

The campaign has already made an impact in South Africa where Yowzit, an internet startup based in Johannesburg, has partnered with Making All Voices Count to improve service delivery in the public sector.

The Yowzit solution was one of 28 selected by the Making All Voices Count initiative and uses both mobile and web technology to ensure a wider reach for all South African citizens.

"The Yowzit for Government initiative uses a private sector tool to increase public good," says Pramod Mohanlal, co-founder and managing director of Yowzit. "The National Development Plan calls for an active citizenry that holds public servants accountable. One way to achieve this is to give people the ability to communicate their needs, concerns, thoughts and opinions to

and about public service providers."

The Yowzit for Government platform allows people to rate, review and recommend government services on a public forum. Public servants can use these ratings and reviews to respond to issues promptly and effectively. The platform itself is technologically advanced, using complex algorithms and huge data troves, but the solution is easy to use and accessible to all.

"Users can visit the website to submit their experiences and reviews, or they can download apps for iOS, Android and BlackBerry," says Mohanlal. "People can review on the go and with just a few taps on their mobile device, tying in perfectly with our vision of enabling citizens and the government to interact in a meaningful way to improve the quality of service delivery in South Africa."



In the next few months, Yowzit will activate ratings and reviews on municipal services and will look for ways in which public servants can respond to citizens and act on the feedback they have been given. The success of the solution relies on the levels of citizen engagement and their willingness to share experience, and on the government being open to collaborating with the citizenry to improve the quality of their service, Mohanlal says.

"Yowzit will be addressing the issues of transparency and accountability of public service delivery," says Mohanlal. "Information is not easily accessible, nor is it of very good quality. Citizens often feel powerless to change or influence any aspect of the government and important needs often go unaddressed."

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that they need or draw attention to particularly weak or high quality service. Yowzit allows them to share their experiences easily and encourages them to become active participants in monitoring quality of service and holding public servants accountable. In addition, the solution also punches through the barrier experienced by government officials in benchmarking their performance, especially across widely dispersed geographic areas, by providing real-time analytics and feedback.

"Yowzit is not an abstract concept, it has already been built, tested and used by over 100 000 people monthly, with over 30000 ratings and reviews posted on the platform to date," says Mohanlal. "Yowzit has launched the public sector platform with over 1 000 ratings and reviews of localised services such as home affairs branches, the post offices and municipalities."

The Global Innovation Competition is accepting ideas until October 15, through the makingallvoicescount.org
gov.yowzit.com/za