Universal Acceptance Case Study: Government of Rajasthan (Rajmail)

Presentor:
Bibek Silwal
Nextgen@ICANN75
IGF Youth Ambassador 2022
Founder Member, Youth IGF Nepal

About Rajmail Case Study

- Case Study Report published on February 2019
- Performed by UASG (Universal Acceptance Steering Group) (https://uasg.tech/)
- The Government of the State of Rajasthan in India's RajMail project
  - North Western State of India
  - Launched in 2017
  - Realization by the Government the Need To ease government services and communication with the citizens
  - Digital Transformation

Raj Mail (Raj Vernacular Email Service)

- Government of Rajasthan provided all its citizens with a free email address in either Hindi or English
- Secure email platform provided by local company XgenPlus
- Important step in the state's e-Governance project.
- Worldwide leader in helping its 69 million residents reap the social, cultural and economic benefits of the Internet

Overview

- 69 Million Linguistically Diverse Population
- The government of Rajasthan recognized that there was a need to make it easier for residents to engage with government services, and wanted to be able to better communicate with its citizens
- Embarked on an ambitious project to provide every resident with a free email address in Hindi or English, and in doing so blazed a trail toward UA in India – which has 22 official languages and is one of the most linguistically and demographically diverse countries on Earth.

7.3 Million

Internet Users in Rajasthan

4 Million

Signed up soon

- “India is a country that is very divided by language. Giving people a way to experience the Internet in their native language opens up a world of opportunities for each citizen of India as well as the country’s economy as a whole. It is our hope that the RajMail project will inspire other government leaders to follow suit and bring the benefits of the Internet to all the people of India.”

— Vasundhara Raje
Former Chief Minister, Rajasthan State

Universal Acceptance Approach

- 2015, Rajasthan introduced Policy, outlining the next chapter for e-Governance and defining a common framework for the state's online architecture and services.
- Goal was to create an incentive and a mechanism for bringing its residents online
- Crucial component of this policy was working with Rajasthan-based firm XgenPlus to create a RajMail email account, in either Hindi or English, for every resident. In late 2017, RajMail was made available to all of Rajasthan's 69 million residents, a majority of whom own and access the Internet through smartphones.

Challenges

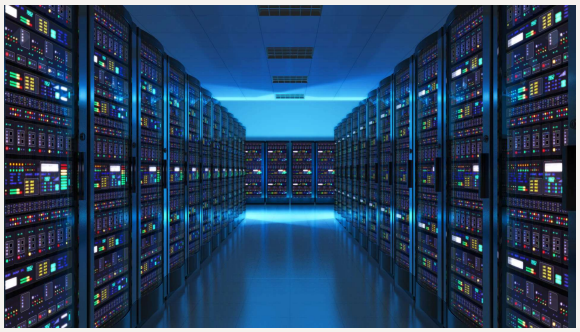
Executing a project of this scale meant addressing two key obstacles. :

- The government needed the ability to authenticate each user uniquely, without discriminating, by providing equal access to every resident. To address this issue, XgenPlus – which handled the installation, configuration and integration – integrated each user's account with their government-issued unique identity number (UID), thus providing identity confirmation for each account.

- The second issue was one of the technology itself, which is not widely commercially available. XgenPlus is one of the few operators that supports hosting non-English email addresses

The Infrastructure

- RajMail is hosted on the Rajasthan State Data Center run by the Department of Information Technology and Communications (DoITC) and is managed by the state's own IT team, with at least initial support from XgenPlus.



- Because the project was based on existing products, it took only 30 days from set-up to configuration to integration. The only significant development effort was to integrate the email accounts with each citizen's UID and Rajasthan State Single Sign-On infrastructure.

Promotion of Rajmail

- Promoting RajMail via banners, events, multi-media visual displays on major highways, and also as a default footer on all official government email communications. Residents can also find information about RajMail at information kiosks located throughout the state..

- fRajasthan has also made its own email set-up EAI-ready. Prior to this e-Governance initiative, Rajasthan government departments were largely fragmented. In order to speed up implementation and unify under a common vision and strategy, Rajasthan’s government introduced a holistic e-Governance architecture spanning the state and departments

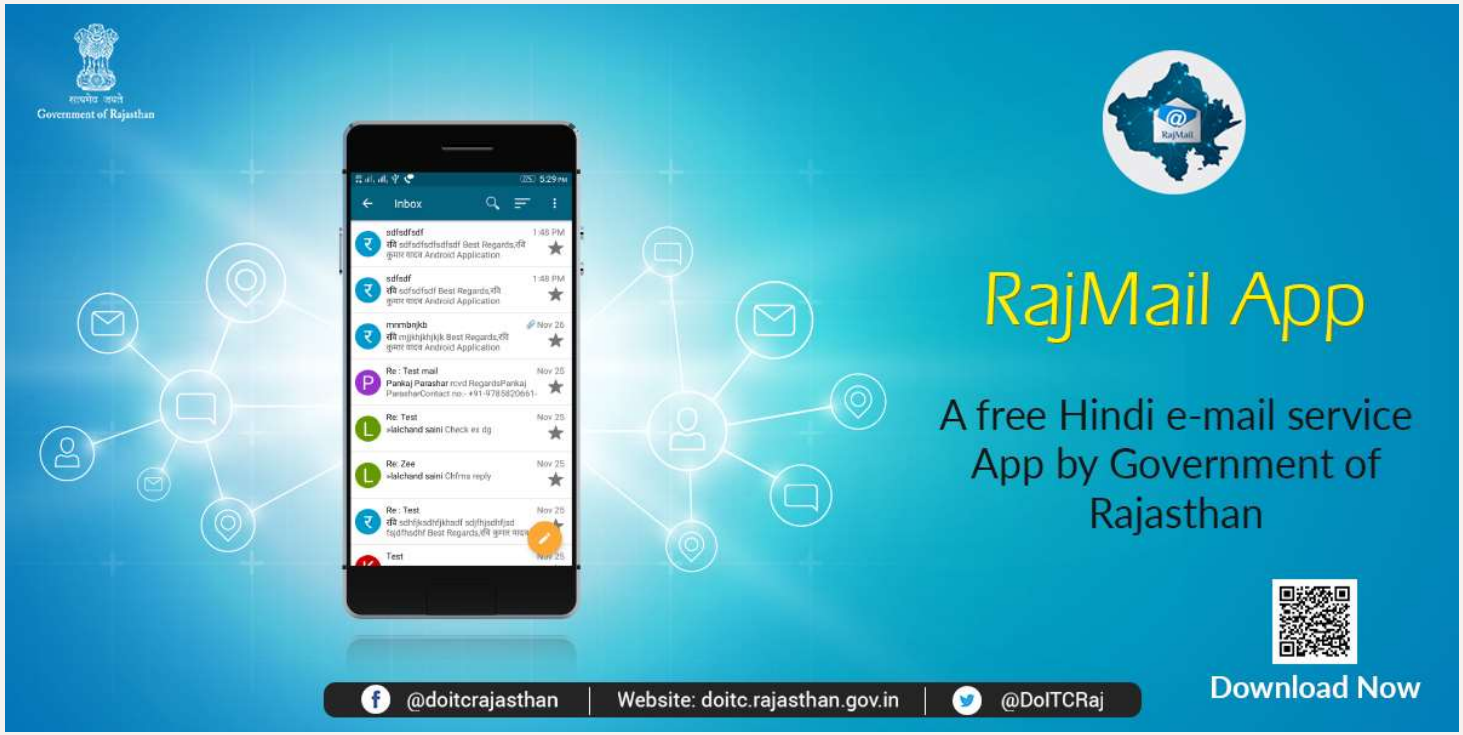
Promotion of Rajmail

- In order for the government to spread awareness of the RajMail program and larger e-Governance initiatives, they introduced incentives for local businesses making investments to help push this IT policy forward, such as reduced land taxes, reduced VAT on goods and services like electricity, and subsidies for private sector ISPs1

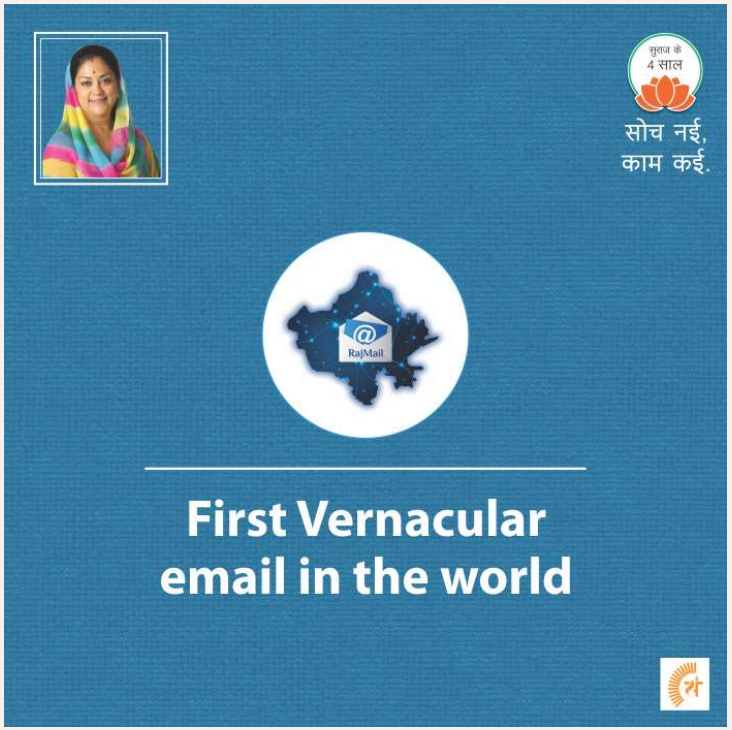
- Another core component of the digitization of Rajasthan government was the automation of services, making it easier for citizens to access public services.

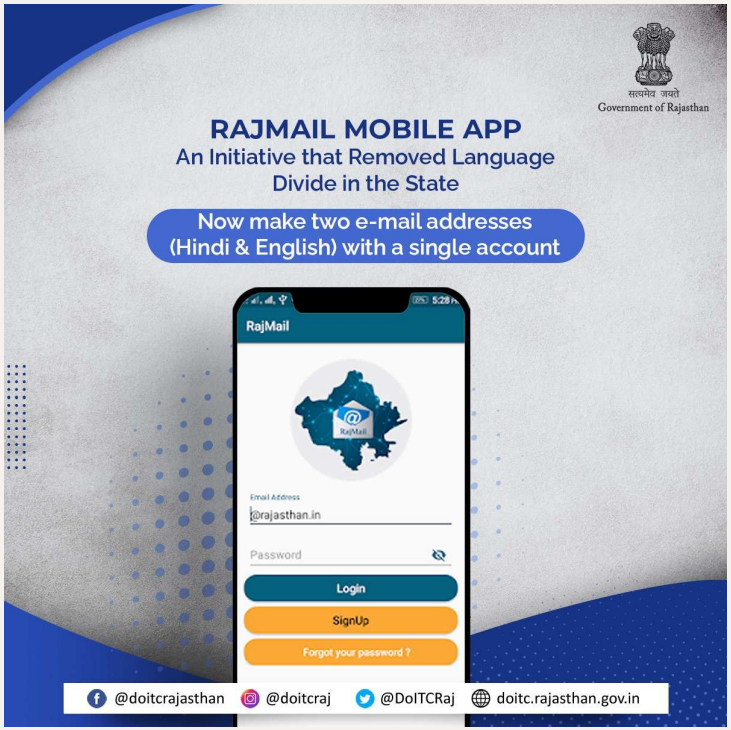
Promotion of Rajmail

Promotion of Rajmail



Promotion of Rajmail





Continuing The Rajmail

- Rajasthan’s government has not yet reached 100 percent UA compliance across its web properties; the process is ongoing. The state intends to continue making progress on UA and making sure that all their services can be accessed using an EAI address
- The government is also providing free email hosting to all start-ups based in Rajasthan, so that they can have their own EAI email addresses.
- Rajasthan’s government did not wait until all conditions were perfect before implementing RajMail and other UA initiatives. The state is taking incremental steps while planning its program of work over the next few years, all in service of its vision for a more linguistically diverse Internet.

Results and Implications

- 4 million people signed up for email accounts via RajMail in its first 10 months. With 7.3 million

- In addition to providing early adopter residents with a sense of digital identity and a means of accessing the Internet in their native language, Rajasthan's government has provided a blueprint for other government leaders in India and other countries who are grappling with similar challenges

- English speakers can and always have been able to access the Internet in a powerful way. But only 20 percent of the world's population speaks English. In order to bring the next billion Internet users online, these users and others around the globe will need to be able to navigate the Internet in their native languages.

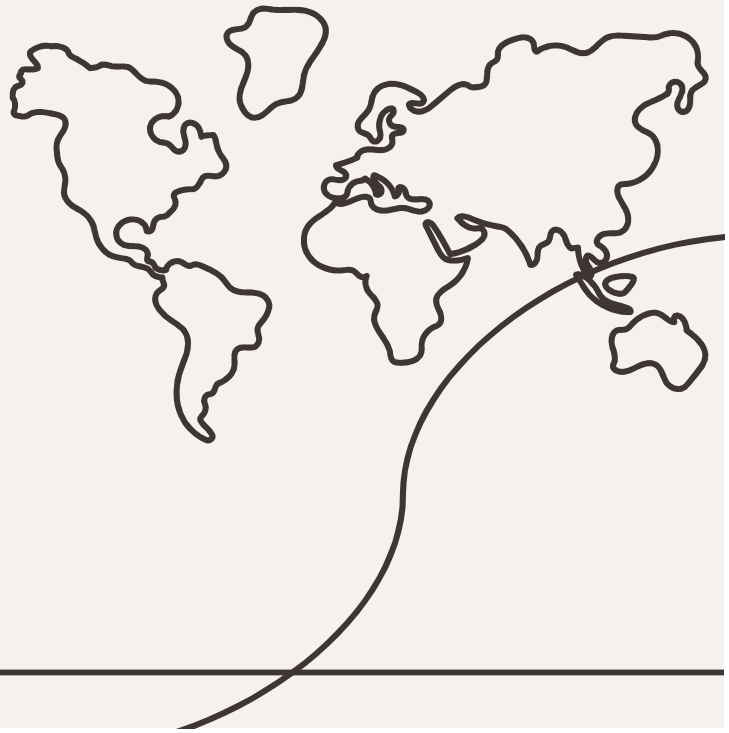
Results and Implications

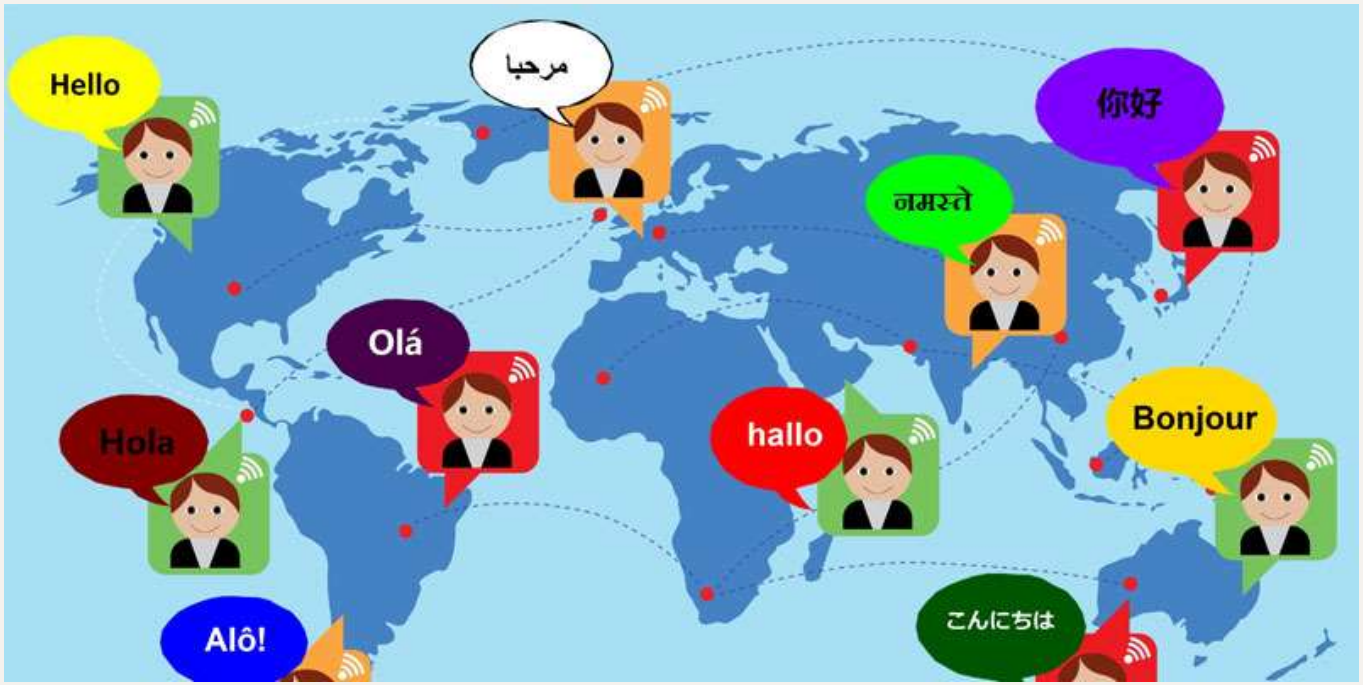
- With RajMail, Rajasthan residents have been equipped with a powerful tool for engaging with their government, with business and with society. Initial progress is good, but more remains to be done. Until Universal Acceptance is truly universal, some users with email addresses in non-English scripts (EAI addresses) will be locked out from online services

- In November 2018, the UASG recognized the former Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Vasundhara Raje, with a Universal Acceptance Thought Leader Award for her work on RajMail.

Reflection From The Case Study

- Promoting Inclusivity and multilingual internet and services at grassroots level
- Bridging The Digital Divide through the true email address internationalization.
- Easing of Government Service and Transparency
- Socio-Economic Impacts
- Public Private Partnership To Promote Universal Acceptance and IDNs
- Promotion of Local Technologies and Services
- Digital inclusion
- Reducing the barriers

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مرحبا
你好
नमस्ते
Olá
Hola
hallo
Bonjour
Alô!
こんにちは

Global and Multilingual Inclusive Internet

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#oneinternet
#internet4all

Thank You !

bsilwal123@gmail.com
+9779843220120
Youth IGF Nepal