

# Artificial Intelligence – Very Human Decisions

How AI can deliver better insights to make the public sector more responsive to citizens



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**“The public service mission is what counts in the public sector,” says Thierry Kahane, Fujitsu America, Inc. AI & Analytics Practice Leader for North America, “To serve citizens, nationally and locally, so they get the services they’re entitled to fairly, quickly, efficiently, and accurately. Central to achieving that is great decision-making which takes all available data into account.”**

**The way governments at all levels have been making decisions has been under intense scrutiny over the last few, challenging, years. The flow of information has intensified while the judgment on outcomes is swift and often harsh. “Public servants are ambitious; they want to serve and deliver great outcomes for citizens,” says Thiery, “But cutting through the immense flows of data to find the critical information you need to get both short and long-term decisions right is extremely difficult. And that can inhibit action, slow progress, and give citizens the impression that government can’t be agile enough to serve them well.”**

Canadian author and specialist on risk, forecasting, and decision-making, Dan Gardner says, “The sincerity is there, and the desire is there... but we need a culture shift around the way we leverage information in [the public sector].” Ever growing data volumes from multiple public sector activities added to rising expectations of digital

savvy citizens, means that government is under pressure to make decisions quickly and as accurately as possible.

That’s why Artificial Intelligence is a game-changer. “Not just to organize data and make it more accessible, but also to understand it and yield insights from it,” says Thiery, “That is what can drive the public sector’s mission. AI can enable, for example, a city authority to target urgent problems. Learn, then act and move on. There’s no need to try and use AI to solve EVERYTHING.” AI isn’t a panacea for all public sector issues. At least not yet. It’s important to be deliberate in the way it’s applied; prove that it works, achieve a positive impact and then move on to more systemic needs.

As the non-profit Centre for Public Impact (based both in the UK and the USA) puts it, “Citizens and public servants need to work with other change-makers to shape a new future for government – one where

shaping tomorrow with you



power is shared, and government is effective and trusted to work for everyone?." AI can help reimagine the way the public sector functions.

In 2020, the City of Montreal worked with Fujitsu to leverage the power of AI to make the city's traffic flow more intelligently. How? By building an AI-driven solution to better manage 2,500 sets of traffic lights. It sounds mundane, but has a very positive impact: if people can't get around, their lives are blighted (by delays), businesses suffer (fewer people come into shop or work), and congestion pollutes the environment.

Traffic lights can either be the source of the problem, or its solution. If the lights stay in a rigid pattern throughout the day, then they can cause congestion when roads get busy – as they predictably do. If they respond to real-time data from the streets and AI-driven predictions, then they can vastly improve urban life for all.

Fujitsu leveraged technologies like CCTV and AI modeling to make smart decisions and predictions on how lights should change every 15 minutes – and for how long. That was based on volumes of traffic within each quarter-hour. So, when levels rose in one area and fell in another, traffic light sequences can be changed to ease the flow of vehicles. The effects on the efficiency of both roads and public transport, as well as the quality of life of both drivers and pedestrians is immediate.

Better decisions every fifteen minutes mean that mobility is enhanced, and citizens are given the opportunity to do more, spend more, and thrive. "They might not know that AI is making those decisions but they can feel the difference, and that's the key to leveraging the power of AI to yield great new insights from the immense amounts of data that government generates."

The possibilities are endless. The point is to choose the right aspects of what a government does so that AI can help fully understand the problem, find ways to deal with it, and then focus on immediate benefits to citizens' daily lives and the way they interact with the public sector.

## AI in the Public Sector: Better Decisions & Operations



Managing traffic, public transport, and public infrastructure with real-time information.



Managing people-flows in cities: watching for crowd build-up either for safety or security reasons.



Understanding the entirety of public sector data (locally, city-wide, or nationally) and enabling secure access which aids decision making while protecting data privacy.



Optimizing routes for garbage trucks, snow-plows, and inspection cruises.



Aiding police to prevent and investigate crime.



Providing data for more effective public health decision making in response to changing disease threat profiles.

Fujitsu works closely with North American public sector organizations to deploy and further develop our solutions to meet the urgent and ever-changing needs of government. The Fujitsu North America AI & Analytics practice develops and deploys **IP-based, innovative solutions** powered by emerging technologies such as AI/ML, Advanced Analytics, IoT and Quantum Computing.



<sup>1</sup><https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/wanted-system-better-governance/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/>

