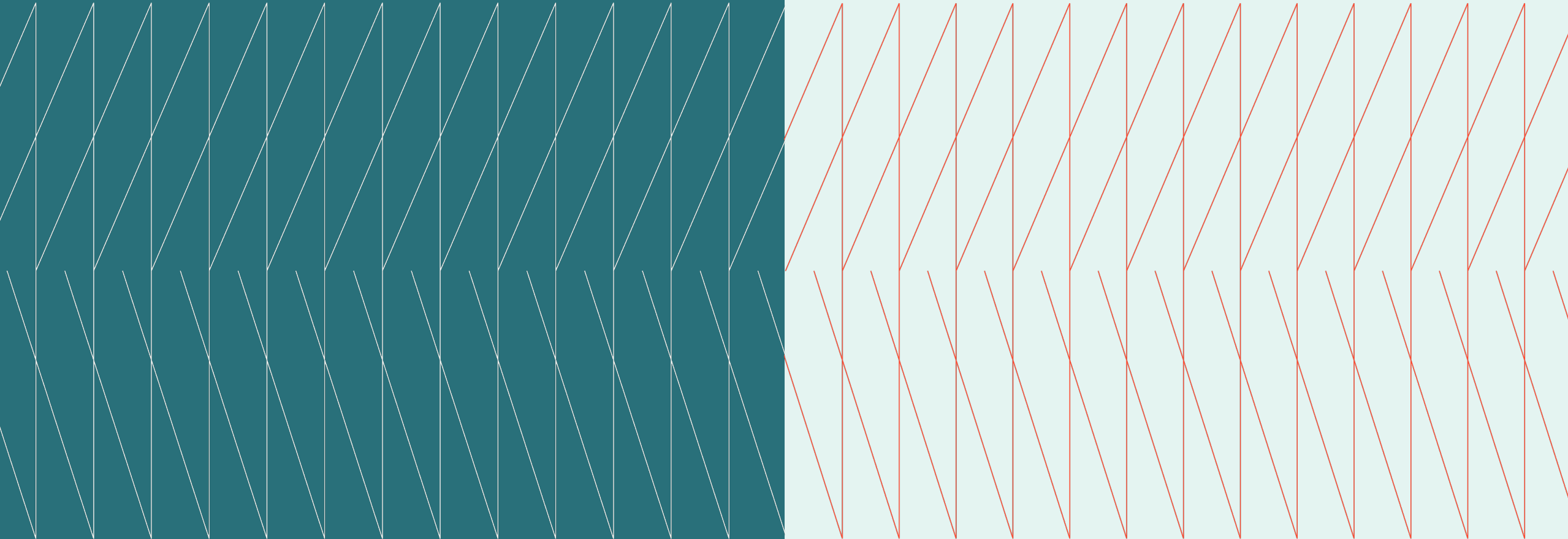# CIO Government
Expert Exchange

Q4 Executive summary
November 7, 2024

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Overview

In this Expert Exchange session, several CIOs convened to discuss the impacts of elections on IT roadmaps, continuity planning, and disaster recovery. The agenda was created based on advance interviews with participants.

Host

Anita Mikus - Kyndryl – Vice President, Government

Jeff Pany– Kyndryl –Enterprise Artichect

Key topics

US Election Cycles and the Impact on IT Roadmaps

- With the recent election so top-of-mind, the leaders were interested in discussing how the election cycles affect their IT roadmaps. The four-year cycle for governors can cause a lot of discontinuity, with states getting a "new CEO" every four years. In addition, when a new administration comes in, they often want to make their mark and can bring in appointees from the private sector, who may not understand how the government sector works. A member observed that Democrats have one set of priorities for IT, and Republicans have a different one concerning how agencies prioritize their IT initiatives.

- ·While many companies and state agencies used to create five-year strategic plans for IT, advancements in technology have sped up in the past few years, and the members agreed that now even a three-year strategic plan may be too long. The plan should be a guideline, but executives need to remain flexible to new technologies and tools that may arise. However, it isn't easy to plan for three years because many states budget on the biennium, and initiatives must be funded for three years and beyond.

> "It wasn't too long ago folks at states or large entities would author a five-year strategic plan, but I think it's pretty clear that the technology is now changing so much, and the adoption cycle is changing so much more quickly than that."
>
> — CIO Government Expert Exchange Member

Continuity Planning

- Many state CIOs have put continuity plans in place for incoming administrations. Even states that are continually controlled by one party or the other need ongoing change management. The CIOs discussed how they are working to codify systems and processes to ensure that services continue to run uninterrupted while systems and tools are upgraded.

- Several leaders highlighted the key role communication plays in what they do and how they get their initiatives resourced and implemented. Much of their work involves communicating the importance of modernization to their state governors and state legislatures. In one example, a member's state DMV had never been at the front of the line for modernization because people get their license renewals in person. However, during COVID, the necessity for better online services became evident, and people needed their vehicles and state-issued IDs. In response, their Governor issued an executive order to upgrade the DMV IT in an expedited fashion.

"When I think about transition, fortunately, we're not dealing with issues that are political lightning rods, so what I think any governor wants to see is how we can serve people better. And there's a lot of opportunity through modernization efforts and digital transformation efforts that allow us to do that."

— CIO Government Expert Exchange Member

Blueprint: 12 Steps Organizations can take to manage IT continuity

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State Disaster Recovery

- The participants discussed how they prepare for natural disaster response and recovery. Several members are in states that have recently been hit by hurricanes along the Eastern seaboard. They underscored how critical it is to have communications between different agencies and services functioning. For example, in the case of a hurricane taking out buildings, roads and power in a local area, communications may need to be dispatched among firefighters, people repairing the power grid, and state services for people who have lost everything.

- Members shared their responses to recent disasters, with several leaders encouraging others to "never let a crisis go to waste" since much can be learned from these experiences. One lesson is to sequence the communications among different agencies; many states start with the first responder and DOT systems because they have the infrastructure and systems to work together on emergencies in real-time. Other disasters like the CrowdStrike incident last July have made leaders rethink their ability to respond to natural disasters in concert with different partners and entities.

- The leaders discussed how many states have responded to natural disasters by procuring and deploying mobile power units that include generators and mobile Internet for areas with poor broadband or where the Internet is out. Most are contracting to use Starlink, which has "cornered the market." However, some states are exploring other options as well.

"In the wake of CrowdStrike and its impact on eight and a half million Windows machines, we're revising our business continuity plan to make sure that it's up to date and to bake into it what we call the 'line departments.'"

— CIO Governemnt Expert Exchange Member

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The CIO Government Expert Exchange is hosted by Kyndryl. Please contact Anita Mikus with any questions about Kyndryl or this Exchange.