
***Stories not stats:
Service development efforts in the
Meteorological Service of Canada***

CMOS May 29, 2008

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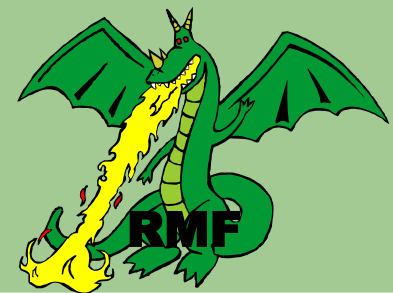
Social Science 101

- The branch of science that deals with the sociocultural aspects of human behaviour.
- Qualitative research = patterns of human experience.
- Builds relationships
- Uses practices that are credible, transferable and confirmable

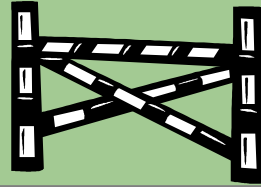


Once Upon a Time

There was a small team of highly educated public servants including both a social scientist and a fearless leader, but no budget. They were all faced with a daunting task – achieving at least a single result under the dreaded departmental “results management framework.”



MSC Mandate



1. Weather and environmental predictions and services reduce risks and contribute to the well-being of Canadians through:
2. Improved knowledge and information on weather and environmental conditions influences decision-making; and
3. Canadians are informed of, and respond appropriately to, current and predicted environmental conditions.



Rethinking our approach

1. Canadians are informed of, and respond appropriately to, current and predicted environmental conditions; and
2. Improved knowledge and information on weather and environmental conditions influences decision-making will lead to...
3. Weather and environmental predictions and services that reduce risks and contribute to the well-being of Canadians.



The Project Goal

- Learn about the various weather-related decisions that are made by municipalities and the process that leads to those decisions



Project Method

- Focus on a reasonable, accessible subset of decision-makers
- Arrange for in-person meetings
- Make a brief presentation on existing MSC products and services
- Listen, observe, record



Key Questions

- What weather information do you use in your decision making?
- What weather related decisions do you make?
- What types of weather conditions present the greatest challenge in your decision making?
- Tell me about a time when you have to make a decision based on weather but you wished you had had more information.



What we heard...

- All but one use WxOffice as webservice
- Majority were aware of satellite and radar
- Interest in climate change

Main issues:

- Precipitation, Precipitation Rate
- Snowfall start time and duration
- Weather and water station information



A happy ending

- Important to maintain relationships and build trust with user groups
- Promote and educate about weather information and availability (e.g. WxRadio)
- Our efforts and successes were submitted as short paragraph stories all the way to the Deputy Minister
- We're using similar methodology across Canada for our Warning Modernization project



Thank you!



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