True to the mobility they engender, tablets are taking flight. In academia, colleges and universities are turning to this technology at breakneck speed. Consumer sales have soared, too — Transparency Market Research predicts tablet sales are expected to reach nearly 250 million by 2015.1 The private sector is also embracing tablets; organizations are not only adopting consumer smartphones and tablets, but they are also allowing employees to use their own devices. According to recent studies, 90 percent of all organizations will support business applications on personal devices by 2014;2 and by 2013, 80 percent of businesses will support the use of tablets by employees.3

Considering this trend, it’s high time that decision-makers in government opt for tablets. But still only 67 percent of states responding to the Center for Digital Government’s 2010 Digital States Survey projected mobile computing would be high in importance for their governments in 2012. However, the Center for Digital Government’s Special Report on Mobility stated, “[N]ow may well be the turning point for the government adoption of all manner of consumer mobile devices — smartphones, tablets, netbooks, laptops and all the peripherals and accessories — that make it possible for anyone to work anywhere at any time.”4

Turning to Tablets — and Reaping the Benefits
Tablets can help governments increase the amount and quality of work employees can do in the field, reduce government task process time from weeks to days or hours, shorten response time to customers, cut travel time, decrease equipment expenses and eliminate occupancy costs.

For instance:

• **Government branches and agencies** with workforces who spend significant amounts of time on the move, such as inspectors or case workers, can benefit from tablets that support the full Microsoft Office suite. These tablets enable mobile use and act as a desktop replacement. Government employees in the field save time by not having to transcribe notes in the field and reducing the amount of trips back and forth from the office.

• **Instead of using notebook computers** often stashed in the passenger seat, a dash-mounted tablet is a more convenient, powerful solution for first responders that enable them to easily pull up records and access locational information.

• **Law enforcement agencies**, such as the Fort Worth Police Department in Texas and the Lake Havasu Police Department in Arizona, are using Android-powered tablets and compact media players to connect with TASER International’s wearable video camera to monitor and review events in the field. Officers can manage and tag events immediately using GPS technology, which reduces paperwork and enables smarter police work. The live video also helps prevent and resolve incidents before they escalate into the use of force or civil litigation.5

Tablets also help governments appeal to a younger workforce. According to a study from the Rockefeller Institute of Government, two-fifths of state and local government employees will be eligible to retire by 2014, “raising the specter of the most significant talent and brain drain ever experienced by government.”6 When government agencies incorporate leading-edge mobile devices, government jobs suddenly are more attractive than ever before to younger generations. Add to this the promise of telecommuting — the ability for government workers to dial in from home, access data via the cloud, and be just as productive outside the office as they usually are when they are working from their desks — and governments find themselves a new recruiting strategy.

Things to Consider Before Adopting Tablets
For the government niche, tablets are the perfect form-factor. They’re sleek. They’re fast. They connect wirelessly. And, perhaps most important, they don’t sacrifice computing power. But governments can’t embrace tablets overnight; first they must determine the right device for their needs and devise strategies to resolve challenges that the mobile environment presents. Some of these choices include:

• **Operating System (OS):** Knowing which OS best suits your agency’s needs will help you select which device...
is most appropriate. A Windows-based OS will be compatible with desktop programs and can run all of the familiar office software, whereas an Android-based OS would be more suited for purely mobile usage, but also has access to thousands of various apps.

- **Size:** The size of the device is also an important consideration. If employees will be toting tablets with them to various locations, a more compact size might be well suited, such as one with a 7-inch screen. If employees will be viewing video often, a larger screen may be more desirable such as an 11-inch to 12-inch screen. Even smaller form factors exist, such as media player devices that typically have screens that are 5 inches.
- **Input Method:** It is important to determine employee needs before moving to a tablet device and learning what types of job functions employees will use devices for. The input method will also be a determining factor in which device to choose. Do employees need a stylus or pen to use, or will they need access to a wireless keyboard? Will they need to hook up their tablets to a docking station when back at the office?
- **Security:** Data leakage, hack-attacks, network incompatibilities and the rigors of excessive traffic all could potentially weaken the basics of a mobile computing network. Before governments dive headfirst into a tablet environment, they must invest (both time and money) in good security practices to avoid these problems. Partnering with a reliable vendor can help ease some security concerns.

**Conclusion**
It’s clear that the time for mobility in government is now. Tablets are a smart approach, a perfect compromise between the functionality of the standard desktop and the benefit of the on-the-go capability. Tablets help position governments for a more mobile future and bring possibilities never before imagined with a stationary desktop.

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**Samsung and Mobility**
Samsung helps government agencies make the transition away from the familiar desktop by offering a range of tablets, both those powered by Windows and on the Android platform.

**Samsung ATIV Smart PCs:**
Samsung ATIV Smart PCs combine the power of a notebook PC and the convenience of a tablet in a unique convertible design. Created for Windows® 8, ATIV Smart PCs feature a responsive touch screen, precision handwriting recognition with the S Pen and an easily connected physical keyboard when you need it. With an advanced security platform to keep your information safe, the Samsung ATIV Smart PCs help boost employee productivity and reduce the need for paper forms.

**Samsung GALAXY Tablets:**
Samsung’s Android-powered GALAXY Note, Tab and Player devices offer effortless speed, easy connectivity via WiFi and all-day battery life. Available in a range of sizes, the GALAXY devices provide rear- and front-facing camera for video calls, and access to more than 450,000 apps on Google Play™. With the GALAXY Note’s revolutionary S Pen, you can take handwritten notes and view, create and edit everything from text documents and spreadsheets to presentations and PDFs. GALAXY tablets are a powerful mobile solution for governmental agencies on the go to innovate and generate efficiencies.

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**Endnotes**
3. www.gartner.com/t/page.jsp?id=1480514