



AITORO'S ANGLE



What makes [these events] important for this list is what came afterward — for what they inspired or enabled, what they set in motion.



CHECK OUT

Ten agencies younger than Federal Times.
federaltimes.com/50

The big reveal

It's the big reveal. To honor our own 50-year anniversary, we have unveiled our list of the 10 historic events of the last five decades that most shaped how government operates.

At first glance, the list looks like a lot of lists of important moments in U.S. history. But what makes them important for this list is what came afterward — for what they inspired or enabled, what they set in motion.

Consider Vietnam. It traumatized America in a sense, filtering troubling images into living rooms, spurring nationwide protest and inspiring decades' long debates about what constitutes a justified war. All of that is important. But for government, it also redefined combat for the Pentagon and forced the administration to provide the public with rationalization for military operations, after decades of owning the message.

The moon landing was a much needed moment of patriotism for America during a troubling time. But it also cemented the U.S. government as supreme in science and technology, and served as vindication for all those in government that ever wanted to pursue a big idea. The success of that audacious goal, in the words of the Partnership for Public Service's Max Stier, set the groundwork for the success of many more audacious goals in the years since.

To come up with the list, we put together an advisory board, who developed a much longer list, then whittled it down in one of the most fascinating roundtable discussions I've ever participated in. (See who was on the advisory board on page 20).

I encourage you to read the stories, and go to federaltimes.com/50 to watch the accompanying films. They'll likely strike an emotional chord for many, but they might also expand how you view the significance of these events to our collective history.

And through December and into 2016, return to the website for more content showcasing 50 years of government. We have much more to share.

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COVER STORY

50TH ANNIVERSARY



50 years of government change

Time brings much change for all institutions. Sometimes those changes, spurred by events or societal shifts, or both, are historic and transformative. In the pages that follow, and at federaltimes.com/50, we at Federal Times showcase some of the most transformative moments of the last five decades for federal government — our way of honoring our own 50-year anniversary.

*But amid change, **President Barack Obama** reminds us in this contributed commentary that some things, often some of the most crucial to ensuring transformation is progressive rather than debilitating, hold constant.*

I couldn't be prouder of the work America's civil servants are doing every day. With more than 2 million civilian workers and more than 1 million active-duty service members, the men and women who serve this country in government and our military continue to raise the bar for America at home and overseas.

They are our scientists and social workers. They guard our borders, respond to disasters and protect our civil rights. They defend our country abroad and deliver the benefits our troops have earned when they come home. They help businesses expand and enter new markets. They push the very boundaries of science and space, and guide hundreds of thousands of people each day through the glory of our natural wonders here on Earth. And by ensuring that Americans can count on quality, affordable health insurance; by protecting consumers in new ways and helping our nation bounce back from the worst

economic disaster since the Great Depression, they're creating lasting change in the very way that government operates.

What's even more telling, this work is often done with little acknowledgement or fanfare — and as we've experienced in recent years, it too often happens in a world of sequestration and mindless budget cuts. Yet despite these challenges, our public servants have stayed focused on serving this country and opening new opportunities to all Americans.

We'll need this grit and determination as we confront the challenges that lie ahead — challenges to our economy, our security, even the planet we all call home. But I have seen the commitment and dedication of those who serve this country. I know that our greatest resource is the strength and resilience of the American people. And that's why I know that no challenge is too great for America. And it's why I'm more optimistic than ever that our brightest days are in front of us.



10 events that transformed government
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The IT (R)evolution
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ON THE WEB

50 years of tech. Our gallery takes you from the UNIVAC to the BlackBerry. federaltimes.com/50

Signed,
President Barack Obama
December 2015





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COVER STORY: 50TH ANNIVERSARY

1. Vietnam War: Dawning of government transparency

The Vietnam War provided Americans the ability to see war's horrors from their living rooms. That raw exposure brewed skepticism and a demand for answers. Today, news travels even faster — instantly, ghastly images and first-hand accounts post to Twitter and YouTube. The struggle of transparency and messaging endures.

“Congress and the White House now are trying to navigate in a more informed world about the reality of what’s going on around them,” said Rob Carey, former deputy Defense Department CIO and now vice president of Navy and Marine Corps programs at Vencore.

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/Vietnam

**2. Moon landing: U.S. cements S&T domination**

When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, he vindicated anyone who ever believed the government was capable of accomplishing great, innovative feats. Miniaturized electronics, microsensors and handheld devices emerged because of work done for spacecraft. And GPS and weather satellites can be traced to the space program's success.

But the moon landing also delivered a clear message, said Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service: “Government is really our only tool for collective action against our most significant problems.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/MoonLanding

3. Watergate scandal: Public distrust of government accelerates

There's a reason we tack on ‘-gate’ to the end of words to imply scandal. America was rocked by the botched attempted burglary at the Democratic National Committee headquarters and subsequent resignation of President Richard Nixon.

But Watergate also redefined government's relationship with media, as a naïveté about politics was lost and government realized that press might not be so easily contained. It also led to widespread distrust of government,

said Dan Blair, president and CEO of the National Academy of Public Administration and former deputy director of the Office of Personnel Management. Thanks to Watergate, he said, “the trust that America had in its government after World War II dissipated,” and never returned.

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/Watergate

4. Invention of World Wide Web: Digital revolution kicks off

The federal government developed the protocols that underpin the Internet, but it was the invention of the World Wide Web — available to anyone with a connection — that transformed processes and citizen engagement. It would take government time to grab hold of the potential. But without the World Wide Web, there would be no mobility, no cloud computing — no digital revolu-

10 events that transformed government

To honor our own 50-year heritage, we showcase the most historic moments of the last five decades

tion.

“That was when it all changed, when we recognized two key things: that costs could be dramatically reduced by taking advantage of technology and that information could be shared in ways that were never dreamed possible,” said Dave Wennergren, senior vice president for the Professional Services Council and former Defense Department official.

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/WWW

5. Cold War Ends: Military reshaped, redefined

The Cold War may not have been a direct war between powers, but its end still brought a deep retrenchment in defense spending and military structure. It also was, by many accounts, the end of an age where enemies were singular,

well-defined and limited to a particular region.

“Most of us at a leadership level were hired at a time when it was us versus them, U.S. versus Soviet Union, our proxies versus their proxies,” said Keith Masback, Army duty officer in Berlin the night the wall fell, now CEO of the U.S. Geospatial Intelligence Foundation. “People, process and technology — all of that had to change in the intelligence community as the result of the end of the Cold War.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/ColdWar

6. Oklahoma City bombing: Barriers to government hardened

The attack on the Alfred P. Murrah building killed 168 people, including federal employees, private citizens and

**A THANK YOU...**

Federal Times would like to extend our appreciation to the following members of our editorial advisory board:

» **Dan Blair**, president and CEO of the National Academy of Public

Administration, former deputy director of the Office of Personnel Management

» **Robert Carey**, vice president of Navy and Marine Corps Programs at Vencore,

former principal deputy CIO at the Department of Defense

» **Karen Evans**, national director of the U.S. Cyber Challenge, former administrator of the Office of Electronic Government and IT, Office of Management and Budget

» **Beth McGrath**, director of federal sector at Deloitte Consulting, former deputy chief management officer at the Department of Defense

» **Paul Posner**, director of the graduate public administration program at George Mason University, former Government





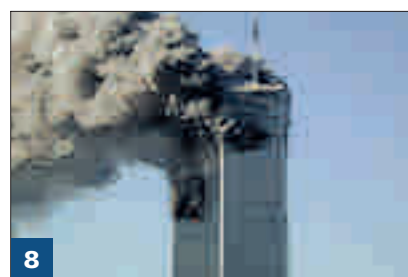
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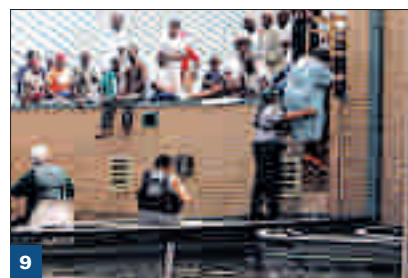
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children. It also had two major effects on the federal workforce: It highlighted the reality that federal employees could be targets simply due to the nature of their jobs, and it ushered in a wave of security enhancements.

After the Oklahoma City bombing, “Jersey barriers began to appear, individuals could no longer enter a building without an appointment and very often couldn’t go even to their destination without being escorted,” said Franklin Reeder, a former long-serving Office of Management and Budget official. “While no one factor can explain the extent of public alienation from government, certainly this contributed to it.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/OklahomaCity

7. 1990s shutdowns: Partisan politics dysfunction heightened

The government shutdowns of the



10

NATIONAL ARCHIVES, AFP AND GETTY IMAGES

mid-1990s were a calculated gamble by then-Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich to win a legislative battle. But the plan backfired. The closure of national parks, denial of federal services, and furloughing of federal employees caused frustration. The public accused Congress of failing to perform its duties, and a decline in the morale of the civil service emerged, lingering still. And then in 2013, it happened again.

“There wasn’t really a consideration

for the adverse impact on the public or federal employees,” said Robert Tobias, director of business development for American University’s Key Executive Leadership Programs, and former president of the National Treasury Employees Union. To Congress, “my interests’ was greater.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/90sShutdown

8. 9/11 terrorist attacks: Information sharing fast-tracked

The morning of Sept. 11, 2001, then-Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge got a phone call informing him that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center. He turned on the TV, and watched as an interview at the Pentagon ended abruptly because of a loud explosion. He called the moment chilling. But it was also transformative.

The 9/11 attacks resulted in formation of the Homeland Security Department led by Ridge, newfound reliance on and skepticism about contractors, and rethinking about information sharing. Ridge called the latter the biggest challenge at the outset — “to go from a Cold War strategy of need to know, to a strategy of need to share.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/9-11

9. Hurricane Katrina: Cross-government collaboration prioritized

Hurricane Katrina spotlighted the harm that can come from communicative breakdowns. The imagery of people stranded and helpless, broadcast for the country and world to see, also showed that the government might not always be capable of immediate rescue. Squarely on everyone’s agenda became not only the continuity of government, but the intergovernmental dimensions of it.

“At the end of the day, there are opportunities to say, what we did wasn’t enough,” McGrath said. “The people wanted and needed the government’s help immediately and it wasn’t prepared to execute.”

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/Katrina

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Intrigued by the list? There’s plenty more.

Go to federaltimes.com/50 for multimedia content about these 10 events, and why they were named the most significant to federal operations and management during the last five decades.

Each event features a documentary-style film, with historic footage from the time and insights from a former federal leader explaining the event’s importance and lasting impact for agencies.



LARS SCHWETJE/STAFF

Beth McGrath, director of federal sector at Deloitte Consulting, talks about the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

10. Manning/Snowden leaks: The threat from within emerges

The insider threat was personified in Chelsea Manning, known as U.S. Army soldier Bradley Manning at the time, and government contractor Edward Snowden. With just a single credential, Manning released documents about U.S. military actions, illustrating the importance of role-based system access, while Snowden used administrator access to surgically take documents from a classified network and expose government surveillance programs.

For both, “the effect [was to damage] the public’s trust in the government,” said Karen Evans, national director of the U.S. Cyber Challenge and former administrator of OMB’s Office of E-Gov.

Read and watch more online:
federaltimes.com/Snowden

Accountability Office director of intergovernmental programs

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» **Stan Soloway**, Professional Services Council CEO, former deputy undersecretary,

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» **Linda Springer**, former Office of Personnel Management director
» **Max Stier**, president and CEO of Partnership for Public Service, former deputy general counsel for litigation at the Department of Housing and Urban Development

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» **Steve Watkins**, founder and president of

Watkins Communications, former editor of Federal Times

» **Dave Wennergren**, senior vice president of the Professional Services Council, former assistant deputy chief management officer at the Department of Defense





COVER STORY: 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The digital government (r)evolution

BY TONY SCOTT
Federal CIO

Imagine for a moment a government where one doesn't have to know how government is organized to find the services, capabilities and information one needs or wants. Imagine a world where government services are exposed and provided on a just-in-time basis. Imagine a world where the real cost and the real benefit and beneficiary of every government function can be measured through transparent real-time and historic metrics. And imagine a world where — especially in this age of privacy concerns — every citizen could securely and instantly view the personal information the government has captured and is maintaining.

I believe we are in the early stages of one of the most significant and profound periods of change the world has ever seen as it relates to the way we govern and manage our civil society — ultimately propelling those aspirations into reality. Just as our government had to transform itself to both embrace and respond to the industrial revolution, we are now challenged as a nation and as a government to embrace and respond to the digital revolution. This new era for government is propelled by a global digital tidal wave that has already produced remarkable changes in the lives of consumers and has impacted the way we work, play, associate and communicate.

Today's digital revolution had its initial spark in the form of a government-sponsored initiative that created the Internet. A steady flow of private- and public-sector innovations and broad market adoption of standards-based technologies in both the government and the private sector have strengthened its foundations. Government-based organizations like the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Department of Energy have a long history of contributions to the digital revolution, among many others too numerous to name. The federal government and its employees have long been both a customer and a large market opportunity for technology companies, and have had a significant impact on long-term trends. From aiding our capabilities during wartime, to researching new vaccines and cures, to controlling air



ALAN LESSIG/STAFF

traffic in our nation's skies, technology has time and time again changed the game and enabled the federal government to be more effective.

But, there is now broad, nonpartisan consensus that much of the technology that powers the federal government has become too old and slow, too expensive to change, too hard to fully secure, too inefficient to operate, and too hard to use. In short, it lacks the functionality to meet today's mission. We now face a challenge that's bigger than Y2K — the only difference is there is no 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31, 1999, and we are grossly underestimating the potential impact. This time around, we just get a little more out of date every day, and the costs continue to rise. Further, there is a growing shortage of people with the skills to manage these legacy technologies. To break out of this pattern, we have to begin a new cycle of strategic investment to replace and modernize our infrastructure and core government applications. And when we do, it will cost a lot less and serve the American people better as we

leverage the lessons already learned from the digital pioneers who've led the way in the commercial sector and in forward-thinking governmental organizations.

To help drive this change, my team will continue to drive a whole-of-government approach to advance our capabilities — building on top of the great work being already done across the board by federal employees — including a focus on several key accelerators to move to the digital government of the future:

First, we will soon be asking agencies to rate their core information platforms in a risk- and opportunity-based manner based on both cybersecurity as well as technology obsolescence and functional utility factors. Based on that assessment, we will ask agencies to develop prioritized plans for the timely upgrade and replacement of these core systems, utilizing cloud-based shared capabilities and services. We'll also "open source" more of the custom-developed common capabilities that government requires to fully leverage the full ecosystem of capabilities available to us.

Second, over the next few months,

we'll develop and implement a comprehensive human resource strategy that will ensure the federal government has the right workforce to manage and implement this huge transformation. This strategy will leverage the best of the private sector along with the right mix of existing and new federal employees.

Third, we'll continue and expand our already promising work with our US Digital Service teams, GSA 18F resources and Agency Digital Services teams, who've made rapid and important improvements to critical public-facing websites and services, like moving the old Healthcare.gov operating system, which cost \$200 million to develop and \$70 million to maintain, to the new SLS system, which cost \$4 million to produce, with annual maintenance costs also at \$4 million.

More will be needed, of course, including strong bipartisan support from Congress and a commitment from the next administration to continue on the digital journey we are already on.

But this is a challenge we must meet. It is the right thing to do, the right time to do it and one of the most important things to do right. □

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YEARS





BY THE NUMBERS



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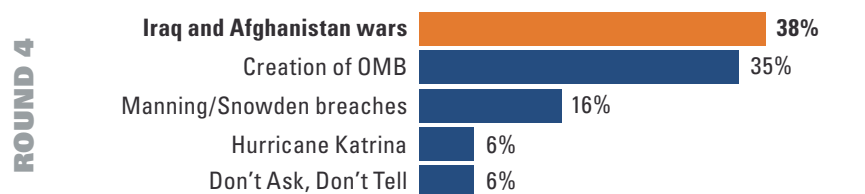
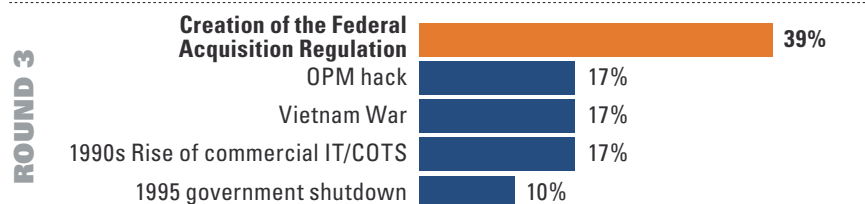
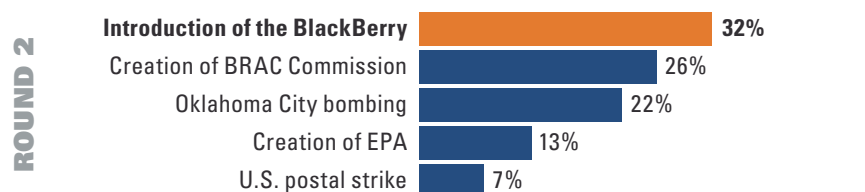
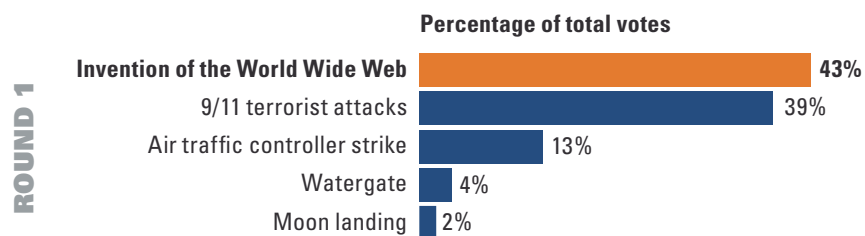
The people's choice

We asked our readers for their opinions on the events of the past 50 years that had the most transformative effect on the government. We offered a series of online polls, culminating in a final round pitting the previous four winning events against each other, with a wild card added. Here's how you voted.



POLL

Which event in history most significantly shaped federal government operations?



Which event among the winners from the prior polls most significantly shaped federal government operations?



SOURCE: FEDERALTIMES READER POLLS

MINDY JOHNSON/STAFF

