The state of the art literature about e-administration adoption (e.g Layne and Lee (2001), ***) claims that there is a process of adoption of IT, unfolded along several stages. More recent observation (**) Our hypothesis is that IT adoption, as much as any strong organizational and cognitive process, looks very much like a diffusion process with threshold(s) instead of a linear one. Although the usage of computer is already well established, connectivity (such as e.g; the management of a website) requires competences that are not acquired progressively. A trigger factor has to be present, because the variety of missions and tasks of a local government, the organizational layout, the transitory position of decision makers (the elected council) make it difficult to progressively introduce more and more complex usages of IT. Instead, this triggering factor provokes rather quickly a cognitive and organizational alignment which can be very spectacular in small municipalities and make the variegated usages of IT mutually reinforcing.

We verify our theoretical hypothesis through a statistical analysis of an enquiry addressing the 1400 municipalities or so of Brittany, carried out by the M@rsouin breton network. The 452 responses enable us to confirm our “cognitive alignment” hypothesis, while giving a broader picture of usage by municipalities, at three levels:

- At the communication level, to inform and exchange with the citizen
- At the internal level, to improve the administrative processes, stimulate collaborative work, and help the decision making process of the Council.
- At the transaction level, with other administrations and/or citizens and firms.

We end up with a typology which summarizes the pattern of usages by municipalities and synthesizes the “cognitive alignment” hypothesis.