

THE GOVLOOP GUIDE

CRAFTING A COMPREHENSIVE DIGITAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

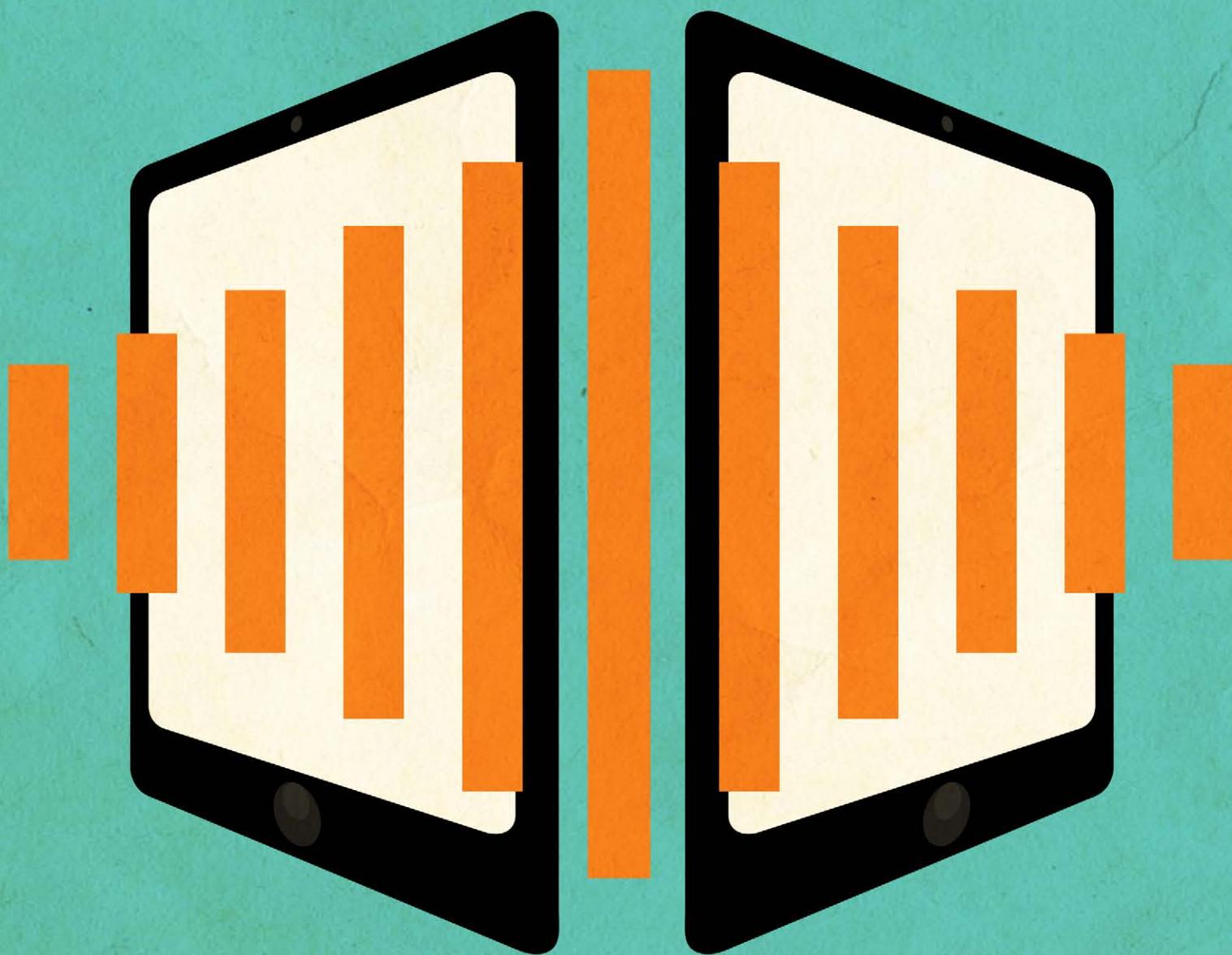


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the ages, technology has played an essential role for government to craft a better society for citizens. In the Roman Empire, the aqueducts revolutionized services provided to Roman citizens. Leveraging gravity alone, the Romans were able to transform communities, providing water to distant cities and towns, and create an engineering marvel that would lead to years of economic dominance and influence society for years to come.

Today, governments are leveraging much more than just gravity. With the same ingenuity once used by the Romans, governments are implementing dozens of emerging technologies to innovate and work towards solving large-scale problems. With public sector resources dwindling and demand increasing from citizens, government has little choice but to innovate and reform service delivery. Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, this report will provide a snapshot of what a digital government truly is and the path agencies can take to craft a comprehensive digital strategy.

In an era driven by technology adoption in consumer markets, government has been attempting to leverage new kinds of technology. GovLoop's research defines a digital government as "the tools, applications, resources and methodologies allowing government to leverage new and emerging technology to serve the most mission-centric goals of the agency." Additionally, a digital government is one that builds a foundation that is device-agnostic, information- and customer-focused, and highly scalable to meet increasing resource demands. This definition aligns with the Digital Government Strategy that has been driving technology adoption at the federal level of government.

The Digital Strategy includes three core strategy objectives:

1. Enable the American people and an increasingly mobile workforce to access high-quality digital government information and services anywhere, anytime, on any device.
2. Ensure that as the government adjusts to this new digital world, we seize the opportunity to procure and manage devices, applications, and data in smart, secure and affordable ways.
3. Unlock the power of government data to spur innovation across our Nation and improve the quality of services for the American people.

The strategy provides many milestone dates to reach, with the final milestone date arriving on May 23, 2013. According to [HowTo.Gov](#) agencies must:

- Ensure all new IT systems follow the open data, content, and Web API policy and operationalize agency.gov/developer pages.
- Make high-value data and content in at least two existing, major customer-facing systems available through Web APIs, apply metadata tagging, and publish a plan to transition additional high-value systems.
- Evaluate the government-wide contract vehicles in the alternatives analysis for all new mobile-related procurements.
- Ensure all new digital services follow digital services and customer experience improvement guidelines.
- Optimize at least two existing priority customer-facing services for mobile use and publish a plan for improving additional existing services.



This report draws upon a survey of 94 members of the GovLoop community who are currently adopting emerging technology at the state, local and federal level of government. This report also includes insights based on interviews with government leaders and experts from our industry partners, including:

- > **TODD AKERS**, *Vice President, Public Sector, Acquia*
- > **TERESA BOZZELLI**, *President, Sapient Government Services*
- > **LANCE HORNE**, *General Manager, GovDelivery Federal Services*

> **CLAY JOHNSON**, *Presidential Innovation Fellow, Executive Office of the President*

> **TERRI JONES**, *Industry Marketing Manager, Government, Hyland Software*

> **DR. ROBERT POST**, *Associate Executive Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion*

Undoubtedly, government is challenged to quickly modernize and turn once rigid institutions into agile, lean and efficient organizations. While many agencies have plans for technology upgrades, GovLoop's research reveals that agencies rarely focus on developing a proactive, integrated,

and comprehensive digital strategy. Technology adoption to craft a digital government is not just a phenomenon occurring at the federal level. In addition to the federal government, public sector agencies at the state, local, and global level have recognized the need for service transformation through a digital government strategy. Digital has become a necessity for organizations to improve service delivery and outcomes for citizens.

Now is the time for public sector innovation and capitalizing on emerging technology. By taking a strategic approach to innovation and technology, agencies can begin to craft a 21st century government.

DEFINING A DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

"We have seen urgency on doing more with less, being driven by the seemingly constant budgetary issues facing the Administration and Congress."

Lance Horne, GovDelivery General Manager

This section explores our definition of "digital government" and provides insights from recent GovLoop interviews with industry and government thought leaders, along with results from a recent GovLoop survey from our community.

In the current political, economic, and social environment, the way government operates is changing. In essence, there is a new modality that is emerging for government to citizen engagement. Citizens are increasingly expecting a higher quality of service from government, along with a government that is more responsive, transparent, and agile to meet the complex demands of delivering services for the public sector. Technology such as cloud computing, enterprise content management (ECM), and mobile device management services has not only transformed citizen facing services, but is also shaping how organizations conduct internal operations as they implement a digital government philosophy. Although a digital government is clearly in

demand by citizens, institutionalizing an innovative culture through a comprehensive strategy may not be occurring within agencies. In the GovLoop survey, 80% of respondents claimed to not have a digital strategy within their agency. Although it is highly unlikely that agencies are not implementing some component of digital within their agency, the data is an indication that innovation and "digital government" are not part of the culture within an agency. In other words, agencies are not taking a structured approach to technology adoption and innovation. Further, seventy-seven percent (77%) of respondents indicate that their agencies have yet to name a "Chief Digital Officer," or a related position within their agency.

Digital government is certainly not confined to just the federal level of government in the United States. Digital initiatives have been implemented by governments at the state, local and international level.

One great example comes from the United Kingdom. Like in the US, the UK's digital government strategy was developed out of the need to accommodate a society increasingly dependent on technology, especially as technology continues to permeate deeper into our lives. Citizens interact with government on the web to request services, pay bills, and engage with government. This trend has led to many agencies developing more transactions through self-service platforms.

Overall, both the US and UK are taking the right approach to improving technology in government and fully leveraging emerging tools to transform and redefine the customer experience for citizens. The UK's 14 goals can be found below.

1. Ensure there is an active digital leader on departmental and transactional agency boards
2. Empower skilled and experienced Service Managers to direct the redesign and operation of services
3. Ensure that appropriate digital capability exists in-house across departments
4. Support improved digital capability across departments
5. Redesign services with over 100,000 transactions each year
6. Ensure all new or redesigned transactional services meet the digital by default service standard from April 2014
7. Move the publishing activities of central government departments onto GOV.UK by March 2013, with agency and arm's length bodies' to follow by March 2014
8. Raise awareness of digital services so that more people know about, and use, them
9. Take a cross-government approach to assisted digital, and help people who have rarely or never been online to access and use services
10. Offer leaner and more lightweight tendering processes
11. Lead in the definition and delivery of a suite of common technology platforms to underpin the new services
12. Remove legislative barriers which unnecessarily prevent the development of straightforward and convenient digital services
13. Define and supply consistent management information for transactional services
14. Use digital tools and techniques to engage with and consult the public

The UK is a fantastic example of how a digital strategy is impacting governments across the globe. In the United States, the Digital Strategy at the federal level has led the charge toward technology adoption at the federal level. Since the strategy was released in 2012, federal agencies have been forced to meet significant milestones outlined in the Digital Government Strategy. To see the deadlines and milestones, be sure to view GovLoop's infographic, [The Digital Strategy Timeline](#).

Numerous cities are starting to make a push into digital government. Cities such as New York City have named digital officers, Philadelphia and Chicago have named Chief Data Officers, while over 10 cities including San Francisco have named Chief Innovation Officers. Further, new divisions have been created in Philadelphia and Boston, called New Urban Mechanics focused on innovative digital solutions to common problems. Some links to explore can be found below:

- [Federal Government US Digital Strategy](#)
- [Federal Government Digital Strategy Milestones](#)
- [UK Digital Government Strategy Information](#)
- [Listing of Chief Innovation Officers](#)
- [City of Philadelphia: New Urban Mechanics](#)
- [New York City Digital Roadmap](#)

"The more you can do online, the more efficiency you bring to the process, you are not losing paperwork, so there is a roadmap established, and agencies will make incremental advancements and enhancements to the point they can do hopefully virtually everything online in a secure fashion, that's the vision going forward."

Todd Akers, Vice President, Acquia

5 COMPONENTS OF A DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

"First and foremost, the government has to find what is necessary, not just interesting. We tend to complicate, we tend to saturate, and with that comes a lot of investment of money and time, and to get the most results out of a digital strategy we really must focus on finding the necessary and not just serving what's interesting,"

Teresa Bozzelli, President, Sapient Government Services

Beyond improved decision-making, efficiencies and transforming the public sector, the move to digital has led to a philosophical change in government. With the complexity faced by the public sector, government cannot solve all its problems alone. To start to tackle society's most pressing challenges, government must continue to take a collaborative approach, and bring all the stakeholders to the table.

1. ACCESSIBLE – INFORMATION ANYWHERE AND ANYTIME

Throughout our research, a theme that emerged was the desire for internal and exter-

nal stakeholders to exchange information anywhere and anytime with citizens. No longer is our workplace defined by a physical location. We work remote, on the go, in coffee shops, on planes, and in our homes. A truly digital government leverages emerging technology to facilitate this kind of environment. As one survey respondent states:

"[We need] a government where people can access the forms and information they need easily at any time day or night, can submit their questions and have them responded to on a timely basis, and who have people on staff that are willing to examine new forms of communication."

2. SELF-SERVICE

Self-service platforms are changing the way government does business. In many cases, self-service is removing the burden of paper felt by many agencies. As one survey respondent states, agencies are moving toward an environment marked by “Less paper, portal for customers to obtain information, single web page for many services (such as name changes).” Through self-service platforms, government can become more efficient and effective in how services are delivered, leaving the monotonous tasks to technology, and allowing managers to adequately manage staff and place employees on the highest value, mission-centric tasks.

3. DATA-DRIVEN

With all the different kinds of technology the public sector is adopting, more data has been created. For an agency to truly be “digital,” this means fully unlocking the power of government data. Agencies must continue to explore the value, volume, and variety of data, and leverage information to improve decision-making. Although data is imperative, there are two trends that are essential: real-time data and predictive analytics. Both trends are key ingredients in creating a digital government.

4. AGILE AND SCALABLE

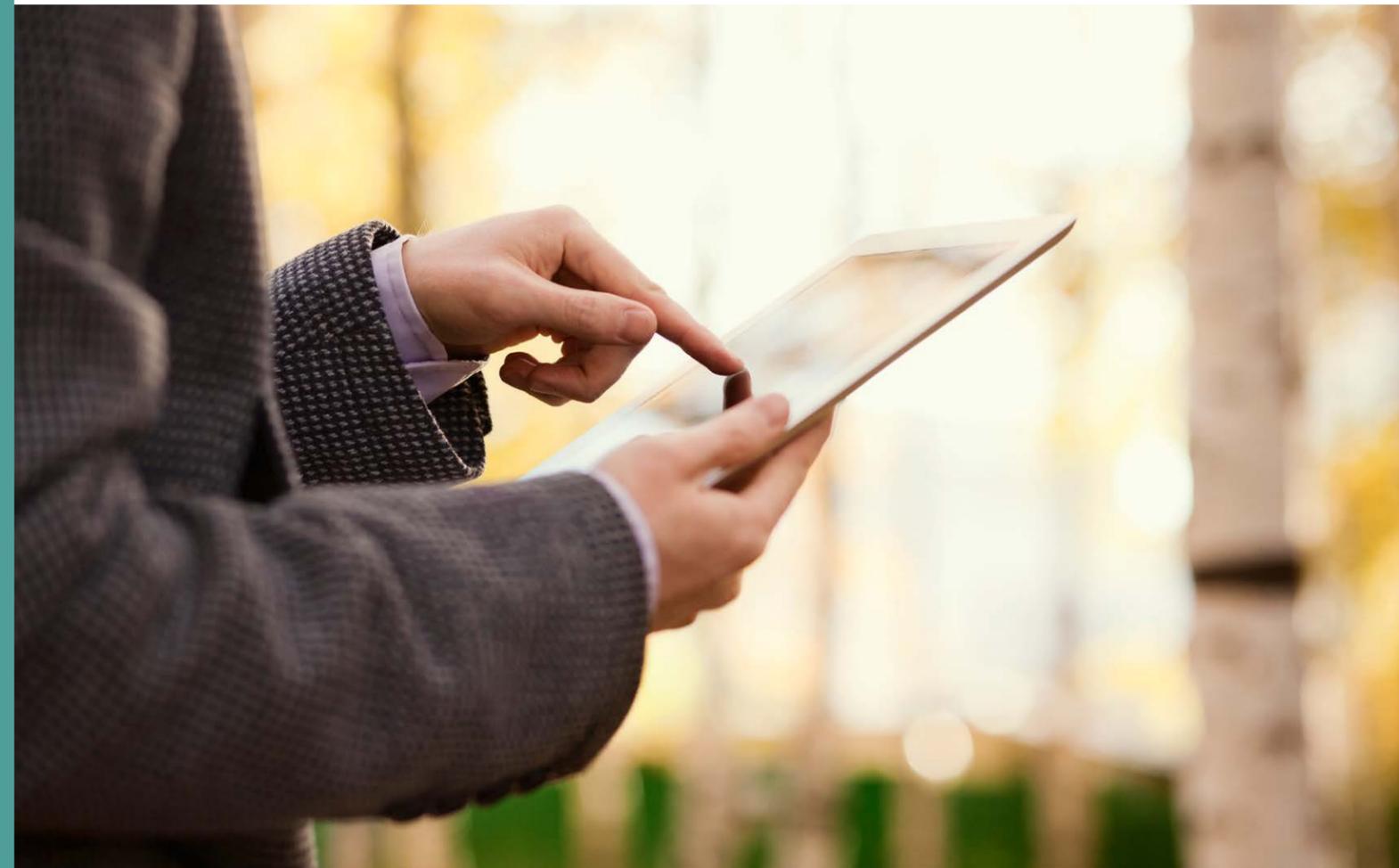
The technology that is being implemented today will be antiquated within the next five years. Knowing this reality is critical for government to create a digital government. Agencies must adopt scalable solutions and leverage current investments in new ways. By adopting a more agile approach to technology, agencies can periodically adopt and change initiatives. This philosophy will be essential to meeting increasing demand.

5. REMOVING THE BURDEN OF PAPER

By providing services digitally, consumers are able to efficiently receive information on the platform of their choice. Also, the government employee is freed from the burden of mundane and monotonous tasks such as filing, searching and organizing large volumes of information. Leveraging a digital strategy to relieve the burden of paper allows employees to be placed in the most high value tasks, leaving the burden of monotonous tasks to technology.

“[WE NEED] A GOVERNMENT WHERE PEOPLE CAN ACCESS THE FORMS AND INFORMATION THEY NEED EASILY AT ANY TIME DAY OR NIGHT, CAN SUBMIT THEIR QUESTIONS AND HAVE THEM RESPONDED TO ON A TIMELY BASIS, AND WHO HAVE PEOPLE ON STAFF THAT ARE WILLING TO EXAMINE NEW FORMS OF COMMUNICATION.”

-GovLoop Survey Respondent



THE DIGITAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY — A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

"There is a whole component of technology to improving the life of a government worker and turn it back into public service, to make sure their time is used for things that reward the human mind, that is really important to me, that you put the time into human tasks, that only humans can do."

Terri Jones, Industry Marketing Manager, Government, Hyland Software

One aspect of a digital government involves a keen understanding of the philosophy that drove the creation of the federal government's Digital Government Strategy, released in May 2012. The aggressive campaign by the Obama Administration focused on strategies to implement technology across the federal government to create a more transparent, participatory and collaborative style of governance, including initiatives that will create a 21st century government. The Digital Government Strategy sets out to accomplish three things:

- CAPITALIZE ON THE MOBILE REVOLUTION
- BECOME MORE AGILE IN TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION IN A SAFE AND SECURE WAY
- UNLOCK THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT DATA

With the mobile revolution, it is essential that government retain a sense of openness and interoperability, to allow and deliver higher quality services to citizens. By becoming more agile, government can build a stronger government structure, able to adapt more effectively to changes in technology. By taking an agile approach to government, and especially in terms of mobile, government can build a sound infrastructure able to scale and meet future demands. Although the first two priorities are important, leveraging data is becoming imperative for the public sector. Agencies are creating more data than ever before and government is increasingly relying on using data to make sound decisions. With government data, the public sector, entrepreneurs, private sector, and all stakeholders can be empowered to develop mobile applications, im-

prove a program, or work collaboratively to solve problems faced by the public sector. Further, the federal government's digital government strategy revolves around four overarching principles:

- > INFORMATION-CENTRIC
- > SHARED PLATFORM
- > CUSTOMER CENTRIC
- > SECURITY AND PRIVACY

These principles are being infused within the federal government. Although the Administration's objectives were to articulate a vision to the federal government, local and state governments have certainly been adopting new technology to transform government, with a very similar approach as the federal government. The information centric approach is used broadly to de-

fine a way for citizens to easily access and consume data in a format that is most useful to them. A shared platform approach means that agencies can work both within and across agencies to reduce costs, streamline activities, develop consistent standards and, most importantly, deliver information efficiently and effectively. A customer-centric approach is defined as keeping pace with

current market trends to deliver services in models that is desired by citizens. This means providing access to information through websites, mobile applications, and data to allow users to consume information in the right form, and models they want to consume. The final philosophy is one of security and privacy, as agencies are sharing, collaborating and creating more data, there must be a way to retain security and protect information.

THE TOOLS TO GET THERE

"Each agency should have more online presence as we are now living in a highly visual audience that expects us to be where they are. The government needs to take steps to moving into the digital era." -GovLoop survey respondent

GovLoop's research has found that digital government is not just one tool or solution that will reimagine the public sector; it is the multitude of de-

vices and technology that will work seamlessly to transform the public sector. In our survey, we asked government employees what tools they are considering to create a digital strategy; the results can be found in Figure 1. Figure 2 highlights how federal agencies have responded to the current Digital Government Strategy.

Figure 1: What tools are you including in your Digital Strategy?

Survey respondents were asked to "select all that apply" to highlight the tools they were using to adopt a digital strategy within their agency. Survey respondents were also offered the opportunity to offer qualitative answers, in which one respondent stated, "We try and look at things from a user and public point of view. If there are things that they are doing or using to communicate, we try to use those same tools, such as social media and optimizing search."

Another user stated, "Mission (service) objectives drive the tools used. Who are the users? How will they access the "service?" What data or information is being provided to the users? What is the best way to access the data or information?" A final response was, "I'm looking for tools that streamline and improve our work and, in particular, ones that help us supply more and better information to the public faster and be able to track our efforts with metrics."

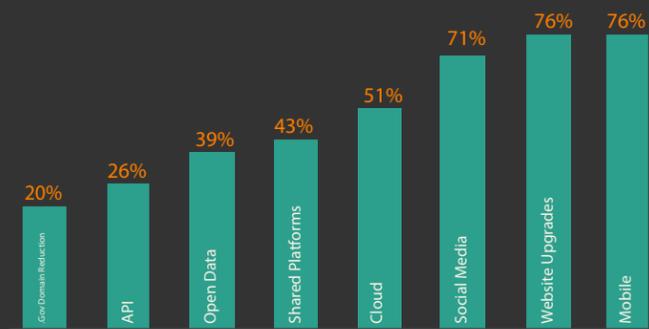


Figure 2: How have you responded to the Digital Government Strategy?

At the federal level, there are many ways that government can respond to the Digital Government Strategy. In addition to mandates and milestones, our survey finds the following ways that agencies are responding to the initiative

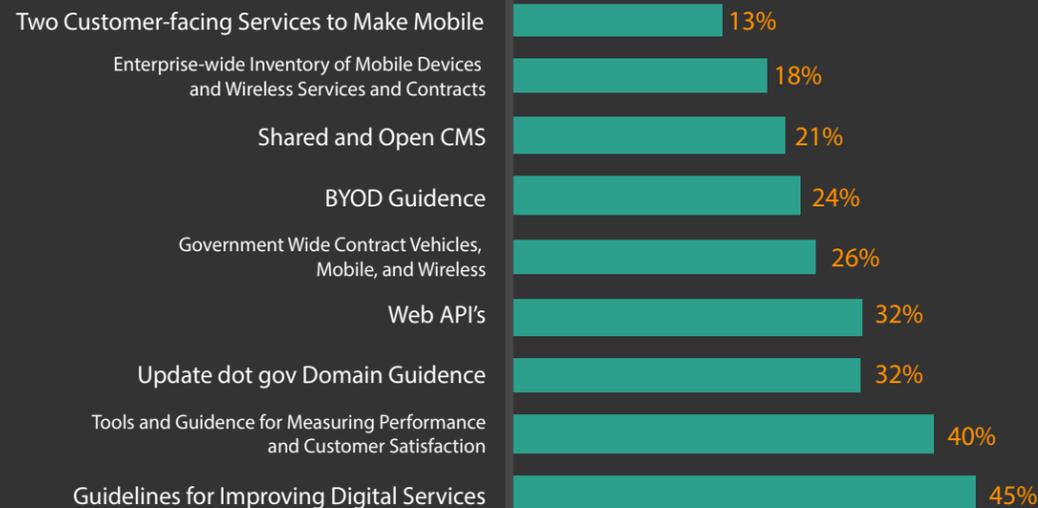


Figure 3: What are your challenges to Adopting Digital Strategy?

In the GovLoop survey, respondents were asked to rank their top challenges to adopt a digital strategy. Respondents were given the options of selecting leadership, budgets, staffing or education. The results can be found below.

Leadership (30%)

Leadership is essential to technology adoption and crafting a digital strategy. Leaders must craft a clear vision, consistent with the organizational mission, and work diligently to adopt technology and find new ways to leverage investments to transform processes within the agency.

Budgets (28%)

Budgets continue to plague the public sector. As resources diminish, adoption of technology becomes increasingly difficult. As agencies are trying to provide new services and catch up with technology, they also face a very difficult economic climate to purchase and modernize.

Staffing (22%)

Along with budgets, staffing continues to be an issue for government. With emerging technology, agencies should be able to put people on more high value tasks, and allow technology to perform the more automated tasks. This is always not possible, and with hiring freezes and fiscal uncertainty, the public sector is challenged to recruit and retain top IT talent.

Education (20%)

As many new kinds of technology emerge, they may not be applicable for government. With any kind of technology adoption, agencies need to develop a clear value proposition, making sure government technology is adopted the right way and solving the right problem, and ensuring that decision leaders, staff, and all stakeholders are all well educated on investments made.



5 BENEFITS OF A DIGITAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

Crafting a digital strategy for government entities presents many benefits. As government transforms and delivers services in new ways, it is important to identify the value add for digital government initiatives. This trend is readily clear to the government community, as one survey respondent states, "Citizen behavior is changing and we need to change our delivery method to meet that behavior."

The business case for a digital government strategy revolves on the necessity to provide services in new ways, drive cost-savings, and increase efficiencies and transparency within the agency. One survey respondent states the benefits as, "Efficiency at work, cost-savings, consumer-driven, transparency." Another respondent stated, "Defined process helps communicate movement to public and identify possible support digital can provide to nor-

mal operations." From our research and analysis, there are five benefits of a digital strategy:

1. COST SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCY

With the current state of government budgets, agencies need to not only leverage current investments, but also make new ones to find costs savings and efficiencies. One of the benefits of a digital strategy is that regardless of the tools being used, done correctly, there are enormous efficiencies and cost savings to be found. As one respondent states, digital strategies "reduce cost and [achieve] more transparency as well as serving the needs of citizens, stakeholders, and intra-agency councils." Another survey respondent indicated the top benefits as, "Efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, customer service (for both employees and external customers), enabling innovation."

“DIGITAL STRATEGIES REDUCE COST AND ACHIEVE MORE TRANSPARENCY AS WELL AS SERVING THE NEEDS OF CITIZENS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND INTRA-AGENCY COUNCILS.”

-GovLoop Survey Respondent

2. IMPROVES SERVICES

A clear example of an improved service is the use of self-service platforms. By allowing people to access information on the web and perform services, the agency can find new efficiencies and do more high-value, mission-critical work.

3. CREATES WORKFORCE EFFICIENCIES

Technology allows organizations to streamline efficiencies and place people on high value tasks. In multiple cases, technology is enabling people to work on high value tasks and work to improve the public sector.

4. SCALABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Scalable IT infrastructure is essential. In this context, scalability means the ability for software or applications to continue to function as the size and volume increases to meet citizen demand. This can mean increasing storage through the cloud, quickly adding more

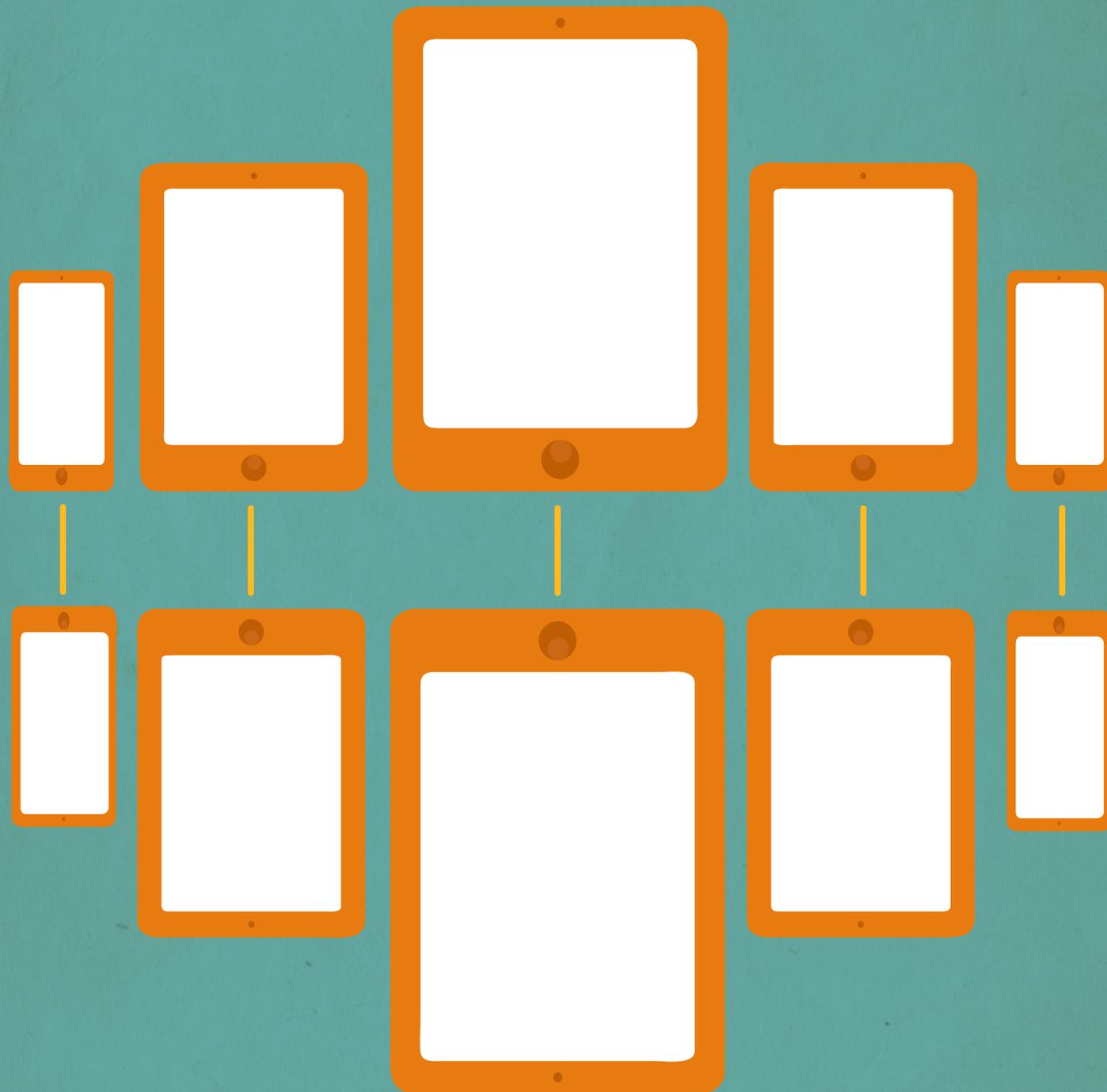
computing power, or easily migrating to new operating software. New technology, such as the cloud, can enable organizations to scale up as demand increases. As more citizens expect to access the web, scaling offerings is essential to meeting demand.

5. TRANSPARENCY

Technology allows government to facilitate an improved dialogue with citizens. Although transparency will always be a challenge for government, technology can instantly connect government to citizens more

than ever before. This means everything from providing information during emergencies, sharing data, and streamlining freedom of information act (FOIA) requests, can happen in a more transparent environment.

6 WAYS EMERGING TECHNOLOGY IS FACILITATING DIGITAL GOVERNMENT



As this report has shown, digital government can be defined and expressed in many different ways. At the state, local and federal level, agencies are adopting technology to work towards mission-centric goals, cut costs, streamline workflow and improve the way government engages with constituents.

The following vignettes highlight six ways that emerging technology is facilitating a digital government. For each vignette, GovLoop spoke with industry and government thought leaders to highlight technologies and best practices that are shaping digital government strategies. Whether it is through open source technology, enterprise content management software (ECM), self-service platforms, or advance communications strategies, agencies are improving the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of government through emerging technology. Below is a brief synopsis of each vignette:

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: HOW OPEN SOURCE CAN IMPROVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

An interview with Todd Akers, Vice President Public Sector, Acquia, discussing how open source technology has transformed the way agencies interact on the web.

GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY: RFP—EZ AND PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Presidential Innovation Fellow Clay Johnson highlights a project to help “streamline and modernize the federal procurement system,” known as RFP—EZ.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: REMOVING THE BURDEN OF PAPER FOR GOVERNMENT

In an interview with Terri Jones, Industry Marketing Manager, Government, Hyland Software, Jones describes how enterprise content management is relieving agencies of the burden of paper, and bringing new efficiencies to the workforce.

GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S SUPERTRACKER APP

Dr. Robert Post, Associate Executive Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, shares pertinent information on the agency's SuperTracker App, which they created in response to an increasingly health-conscious public.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: INCREASING EFFICIENCY WITH DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

In this section Lance Horne, General Manager, GovDelivery Federal Services, highlights the ways that a comprehensive digital communications strategy improves agencies' ability to connect, collaborate, and engage with citizens.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: REIMAGINING PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Teresa Bozzelli, President, Sapient Government Services, provides four trends on how government is adopting digital strategies.

These interviews and case studies provide expert insights on how government is adopting emerging technology trends. This section also reaffirms the importance of a strategic approach to adopting technology to improve government services. With increasing expectations from citizens, government must quickly adopt and modernize services to create an efficient and agile government.



2012 #1 Software Vendor and #8 Fastest Growing Overall

Infographic: **Drupal powers**

24% of all .gov sites.

What about yours?



Building on the power of Drupal, Acquia helps government organizations transform how they deliver information and services to constituents and stakeholders:

- Collaborate and communicate more efficiently anywhere, on any device
- Lower costs while increasing productivity
- Meet and maintain the security requirements for an Approval to Operate (ATO)

Go to acquia.com/drupal-government to check out our *Drupal Rules Government* Infographic!

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: HOW OPEN SOURCE CAN IMPROVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

"There is a whole lot that can be done leveraging the Internet to help bring efficiency to the operation of the government, and we don't have a choice. It's got to be done. The money is not there and the public sector budgets are not growing the way they have in the past."

Todd Akers, Vice President Public Sector, Acquia

As budgets have become more restrictive in government, agencies are looking for new ways to leverage technology. The web has become an essential part of a communications strategy, and many organizations are looking to upgrade and consolidate web services. This means providing options for self-service, improving how content is delivered on the web, integrating social channels, and reducing .gov domains to streamline information.

To upgrade web services, many organizations have turned to open source technology as a solution to transform their websites. One open source technology that agencies have adopted is Drupal. At the federal level, many agencies have used Drupal to implement new websites, including Energy.gov at the Department of Energy and FCC.gov at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The FCC's Drupal-powered website has improved the way the agency shares information and engages with the public. FCC.gov includes a public affairs section, information on regulatory affairs, and a section for developers providing access tools and data. The site's clean design makes significant informational resources of the agency, including maps and data, easily accessible to citizens.

The federal government is not alone in its adoption of Drupal and implementing an open source

strategy. There clearly is an increasing recognition by government that constituents at federal, state and local levels should be empowered to find relevant information quickly, collaborate on issues, and have a two-way conversation with government on the web. There are many ways that open source can improve transparency initiatives for government, as Akers states:

"There is a cost associated with achieving ever-increasing transparency. Choosing an open source solution like Drupal means that, given the current budgetary environment, more of an agency's available resources can be invested in creating transparency and achieving the goal of citizen interaction. Innovation and agility in serving the needs of the public are enabled by the significant savings of open source technology."

THE FUTURE WEB: RESPONSIVE DESIGN

With the web, an emerging and important trend revolves around responsive design. Akers spent some time explaining the importance of ensuring that desktop, tablet and smartphone formats are all displayed well, stating, "Responsive design is a beautiful capability. Responsive design allows you to automatically format and adjust to the screen that the content is being viewed on, so that allows [agencies] to obviously minimize the number of environments they have to run." states Akers.

"The more you can do online, the more efficiency you bring to the process. You are not losing paperwork, so there is a roadmap established. Agencies will make incremental advancements and enhancements so that eventually they can do virtually everything online in a secure fashion. That's the vision going forward."

Todd Akers, Vice President Public Sector, Acquia.

GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY:

RFP-EZ AND THE PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

In August 2012, the Executive Office developed the Presidential Innovation Fellowship program to bring in some of our nation's smartest individuals to solve some of governments most pertinent problems. In the current program, Presidential Innovation Fellow, Clay Johnson is working on a project to help "streamline and modernize the federal procurement system". His system, called RFP-EZ, works to make the process of applying for a bid on a government job easier for contractors.

In the creation of RFP-EZ, Johnson and his colleagues have learned "the secret acknowledgement that nobody likes writing proposals. Small businesses don't like it because obviously it's the one thing that's 100% overhead (sales is not billable an hour)." Contractors do not favor applying for bids on jobs because it takes up time that can be used to spend time with their family or working to better their business. The government especially did not

like the previous system because the long, written proposals took time away from marketing research and price negotiations and hindered the potential to review more companies.

"Gone are the days of the 100 page proposal for a 100,000 dollar deal; the number of words in your proposal should not outnumber the dollar amount in the bid," says Johnson in an interview with DorobekINSIDER podcast show on GovLoop. Instead, the RFP-EZ is an online application the company can send a request to bid by answering four questions:

1. HOW WOULD YOU DO THE WORK?
2. WHAT IN THE PAST DEMONSTRATES YOU ARE GOOD AT THIS TYPE OF WORK?
3. WHO WOULD WORK ON IT?
4. HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST?

The answers to the questions are more direct and succinct, allowing government officials to review more applications and better identify which contractor is best for the job. Johnson and his colleagues also realized that the same contractors would be applying for bids multiple times. To address this, the RFP-EZ application allows contractors to register; creating an account that enables them to save their information so the application is shorter for repeat bidders.

Everything about RFP-EZ aims to modernize the government bidding process. In keeping with the goals of the Digital Government Strategy effort, the program eliminates unnecessary red tape, quickens the process and improves the quality of the experience on both ends. So far, contractors have "immediately seen the value," and 250 new small businesses submitted bid proposals in one week. RFP-EZ has proven to be a beacon of opportunity in the move towards Digital Government Strategy, including both big government and small business in its initiatives.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: REMOVING THE BURDEN OF PAPER FOR GOVERNMENT

"There are things that only humans can do, and there are things that humans should never have to do, and that's where ECM comes into play. So if I am working on a digital strategy for government, for once I am not just going to say that it has to be cheaper, I am going to say it has to be better for people and their daily tasks."

Terri Jones, Industry Marketing Manager, Government, Hyland Software

In our personal lives, society has grown increasingly reliant on technology. With smartphones and mobile devices, consumers have endless options to engage with friends, family and organizations over the web. Consumers can purchase coffee, order pizza, receive movie tickets, file customer service complaints, access personal email, and instantly connect or expand networks on personal devices. With these changes happening in citizens' private lives, there are now heightened expectations of how government engages with the public.

With the Internet so essential in our lives, web technology continues to impact how government interacts with constituents, as Hyland's Terri Jones, Industry Marketing Manager, Government, Hyland Software, states, "We now consider the Internet to be mission critical in our social lives, and we are bringing that back to our professional lives, so citizens expect certain things from government."

Enterprise Content Management software (ECM) allows employees to be more efficient and productive, focusing on high-value and mission-centric tasks. For instance, rather than performing low-value tasks such as manually entering organizational data, organizing files, and physically delivering materials to coworkers, ECM allows automation to liberate government from the burden of paper. This allows employees to use their time efficiently, focusing on high value tasks, such as helping customers meet

their objectives and spend more time to listen and engage, which ultimately provides a higher level of customer service. By focusing on high-value, mission centric tasks, government can provide improved services, and improve service delivery by increased attention to customer service.

Briefly, ECM systems allow organizations to:

- > CAPTURE DOCUMENTS
- > PROCESS CASE MANAGEMENT REQUESTS
- > ACCESS DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION ANYWHERE
- > INTEGRATE WITH OTHER TRANSACTIONAL APPLICATIONS IN AN AGENCY
- > MEASURE AND MONITOR CUSTOMIZED REPORTS, AND STORE DOCUMENTS

With the rapid changes as to how people use the web, government is in a transitional period as to how services are delivered. As paper is at the heart of many government programs, ECM software is absolutely part of the transition. With ECM technology, "organizations are once again putting their employees' time back into the place where they need the humans," states Jones.

When implemented efficiently, ECM technology creates a solution to alleviate the mundane day-to-day tasks of employees. ECM technology shows that there are some tasks that computers and software systems can simply do faster, cheaper and more efficiently than human workers. By removing document management tasks, workers' morale and productivity will increase as they are placed into roles in which they can use their higher-level skills and work towards the most important goals of an agency.

"There is a whole component of technology to improving the life of a government worker and turn it back into public service, to make sure their time is used for things that reward the human mind, that is really important to me, that you put the time into human tasks, that only humans can do."

GOVERNMENT CASE STUDY:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S SUPERTRACKER APP

In the digital world, a food pyramid poster hanging up in a school cafeteria is no longer an effective method to relay nutritional information. In response to the increasingly health-conscious public in a growing technological world, the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has created the SuperTracker app.

The app combines the science behind nutritional guidelines and turns it into an interactive program that can be personalized. Users can determine what and how much to eat as well as how active they have to be by calculating intake versus activity.

In an interview on GovLoop's DorobekINSIDER podcast show, Dr. Robert Post, Deputy Director for the Center of Nutrition and Promotion, explained why an app was the chosen method of connecting USDA with the public. "We learned through personalized nutrition that consumers are looking for something that is easy to use, doesn't involve a de-

tailed information dump to get started and can build a deeper and more intense experience as you go," said Post. Government agencies are realizing that they can no longer depend on the traditional methods of outreach, such as posters, public service announcements, and the like. Instead they must create a "fan-base," and work on their agency brand as much as a company must work on a product brand.

One method of doing this is utilizing social media. "The big metric for us is the awareness factor," says Post, "The analytics give us a level of penetration in terms of social media. We know for example that the My Plate initiative [part of SuperTracker] created 2 billion media impressions. Overtime we will be measuring perception and the consumer's intent to change." By combining analytics with social media, the Post's team will be able to adapt the app to better serve the public.

What many agencies are finding is that the public wants transpar-

ency and access to information. The USDA recognized that today's public expects to have access to an unfathomable amount of information in an instant. To address this need, SuperTracker has a feature called Food-A-Pedia. Post explained, "you can look up nutritional information for over 8,000 foods and do a side-by-side comparison to determine which foods really fit your needs." All of the information and personalized metrics are available to the user "at a fingertip."

As with most Digital Government Strategy initiatives, the focus is on public satisfaction and streamlining the transfer of information from agencies to their constituents. In order to better serve the public, the Center of Nutrition and Promotion at the USDA has made great efforts to create a working digital strategy. SuperTracker bypasses the cumbersome methods of providing nutritional information (posters, books, ads, etc) and instead gives individuals access to the information available in simple, organized apps.

“ I want us to ask ourselves every day, how are we using technology to make a real difference in people’s lives. ”

– President Barack Obama



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SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: INCREASING EFFICIENCY WITH DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

“We have seen agencies across the federal, state, local and foreign governments recognize the need to focus on strengthening the efficiencies and effectiveness of their public facing communications,”

Lance Horne, General Manager, GovDelivery Federal

Technology in the public sector has transformed the way government does business. This report has shown that technology not only is redefining internal workflows, service delivery, and providing increased efficiencies, but technology is also advancing the way government communicates with citizens.

Recently, Lance Horne, General Manager of GovDelivery, shared his expert insights, gathered from more than 15 years of experience in the public sector, regarding how communications has been redefined in the digital era. With new ways to engage with constituents, government agencies need to understand the benefits and obligations they have to leverage technology to improve communications.

Currently, many agencies have separate contact lists among their various departments, though they may be trying to reach the same people. There also may be separate departments working on social media, while others worry about more traditional methods of communication such as phone calls and emails. By consolidating communication methods under one department or program, agencies will then be able to use analytics to see the larger picture of what efforts are successful and what needs adjustment. Agencies need to integrate all their digital communication efforts “to ensure that they can target any outlet to disseminate messaging and show subscriber growth without resorting to widely disparate systems and techniques,” states Horne.

Collaborating and consolidating digital communication efforts is not the only step that needs to be taken in order to be successful to advance communications strategies. Agencies also need to know that the information is valuable to citizens, and being consumed. “Whether there is a need to issue alert information in times of emergencies or natural disasters, informing the public of changes in tax policy or making available updated information on health care issues, agencies need to not only be able to distribute information, but know it has been consumed,” Horne notes.

Understanding how information is being consumed is essential to advancing government communications. One way of gauging how much information is consumed is by creating a two-way dialogue between government and the public. “At some level it gives the citizen the capability of participating, or becoming part of the government,” says Horne. This feedback can point to flaws in communication methods and lead agencies towards providing the information that the public wants.

With current belt-tightening measures in the public sector and the pressures to be more cost effective, government agencies need to “refocus resources and personnel to focus on core mission critical objects, leaving the heavy lifting to technology,” Horne states. That said, the traditional communication methodology like postal and packaging services, traditional advertising, and simple email distribution is now becoming increasingly non-viable given the current fiscal environment. In many cases, traditional methods of communication have proven to be more costly than efficient, forcing agencies to streamline communication efforts.

“We have seen urgency on doing more with less, being driven by the seemingly constant budgetary issues facing the Administration and Congress,”

Lance Horne, GovDelivery General Manager, Federal Services.



Enabling HUMAN POTENTIAL through INNOVATION



With digital expertise and citizen-centered design, Sapient is changing how our nation works, connects and responds.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW: REIMAGINING PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

"Most of our clients' digital strategy falls into four categories: real-time data for situational awareness, making large data available with more meaning, improving a service or transaction, or multiple platform design that is device independent."

Teresa Bozzelli, President, Sapient Government Services

In today's global economy, government agencies are seeking to redefine themselves in order to adapt to the needs of the public sector. Although technology connects us like never before, it also creates an additional layer of complexity as government programs are interconnected across state, local and federal levels of government. If agencies do not adjust to the changing digital culture, they will continue to suffer from outdated methods and technology and lose touch with the increasingly digital-focused public.

Teresa Bozzelli, President, Sapient Government Services, highlights four trends on how government is adopting digital strategies as enabling real-time data and situational updates, making big data widely available, improving digital transaction services, and experience driven multiple platform design.

ENABLING REAL-TIME DATA AND SITUATIONAL UPDATES

Government agencies are interested in providing information to their constituents, but efficiently communicating that information in a timely manner can be a challenge. The common theme that encourages agencies to develop a digital strategy is real-time data availability. Increasingly, agencies want to use real-time data to make informed decisions, spot frauds, and allocate resources quickly during emergencies.

MAKING BIG DATA WIDELY AVAILABLE

Bozzelli states that many agencies are not just looking to "take large data, highly complex data, and make it broadly available to citizens and stakeholders, but to do so with meaning." As Bozzelli identifies, the key is allowing agencies to unlock the power of government data. By providing access to data, citizens create value by building mobile applications, while agencies can increase

public awareness and transparency efforts that encourage citizen participation. Additionally, agencies can track trends, identify patterns, and predict events to combat waste, fraud and abuse.

IMPROVING DIGITAL TRANSACTION SERVICES

Agencies are moving to implement programs that meet citizens' expectations of accessibility to provide transactional services anytime, anywhere, and across multiple platforms, such as websites or mobile devices. Also, agencies are looking to understand citizen needs through the analysis of complex analytics for providing common transactions, such as disbursing benefits, paying bills and taxes. By making a thorough analysis of available data from transactions, agencies can meet citizens' needs and instill a high-level of customer service and satisfaction. To implement this functionality, secure data storage, as well as accurate records of transactions needs to be maintained.

EXPERIENCE DRIVEN MULTIPLE PLATFORM DESIGN

As Bozzelli mentions, many government websites and mobile experiences are designed and packed with information that does not easily translate into how audiences actually want to access information. Through research and analytics, agencies are looking to understand what information is the most useful, and how to make resources useable instead of just available. This includes knowing when and how to provide information quickly across multiple platforms to increase citizen satisfaction.

With the dawn of the digital era, government leaders are seeking new ways to match the pace of technology by fostering innovation and creativity through a digital government strategy. Today, the question is not if agencies should adopt a digital strategy, but how it can be done in the unique culture of government.

"First and foremost, the government has to find what is necessary, not just interesting. To maximize the government's investment in a digital strategy, we really must focus on finding areas to provide meaningful, measureable impact for moving the mission forward. This is centered on focusing on the necessary priorities in support of the mission. This is where we must positively connect, support and serve citizens."

Teresa Bozzelli, President, Sapient Government Services.

BEST PRACTICES TO CRAFT YOUR AGENCY'S DIGITAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

Our research identifies many different strategies to implement a digital strategy within government. One of the findings is that the current environment in which government operates makes innovation very difficult. With the political cycle, changing administrative mandates, and difficulty moving between sectors, innovation is a challenging task for agencies to institutionalize. With that in mind, it is clear that innovation that starts at a grass roots level can be sustained within an agency if it is embraced, discussed and encouraged by all levels of the agency. Below are six best practices to implement a digital government strategy:

1. COLLABORATE ACROSS THE AGENCY

Collaboration is the key to advancing a digital strategy, as one survey participant mentions: "Encourage a collaborative team approach to challenge responses, and permit unconstrained brainstorming." Encouraging a collaborative environment is essential to government and can help agencies better identify resources, exchange ideas, and work towards achieving mutually defined goals.



2. HAVE CLEAR PERFORMANCE METRICS

Having clear goals and performance metrics is essential to fully leveraging emerging technology, and finding value to measure importance. At the onset of any kind of technology adoption, “Having goals, knowing your media and audience, staying consistent with usage, and staying up-to-date with changes.”

3. SET A CLEAR VISION

Setting a clear vision is imperative to creating a digital government strategy. Agency leaders need to look to the future, identify the tools and strategies that need to be adopted, and then map to the agency’s mission. One survey participant states, “Figure out what people want/need. Why spend time on a digital initiative that no one will use? You can survey people or look at trends in terms of repeating tasks that might be streamlined or made available to the citizen directly.”

4. HAVE A TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP

Technology comes in cycles, the next big development is right around the corner – it may be gamification advancements, augmentation, or something completely new. Regardless, agencies must be agile to meet increasingly complex demands of the public sector. One survey respondent states, “[We] need to be nimble - technology will constantly be changing so [we] need to develop a strategy that covers new options without having to rethink and create a separate plan for how they could be used.”

Further, it is essential to develop a strategic plan to adopt tools, and running small pilots to gather quick wins and work through challenges. As another survey member identified, “Plan, generate options, test, collaborate, identify risks and unintended impacts, put policy in

place for support, communication.” Another respondent also stated, “Prototype - don’t waste time with hefty and outdated plans. Start small and test, ramp up if it’s effective.”

5. IDENTIFY THE MISSION CRITICAL INITIATIVES

“Recognize one solution might not be the best for every department in an agency - they have different customers and needs,”

GovLoop survey respondent.

No matter what tools the agency decides to implement, the new initiatives must work towards mission critical objectives, and help advance the cause and mission of the agency. As one survey participant states, “First, have a strategy and not just a selection of technology. Understand the purpose users want the technology for. Do not rely on a catalog of devices or components.” Further, a second respondent notes, “Understand the overall strategy, then determine whether and how to support it with digital approaches. Sometimes a fad is just a fad.”

6. INSTITUTIONALIZE A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

This was one of the core findings in our research, the importance of institutionalizing a culture of innovation. Our research finds that to truly create a culture of innovation, agencies need to take risks, share resources, develop small cross-functional collaborative teams, and reward and provide incentives for teams. One survey respondent states, “Find ways to allow people to do things in a limited-risk manner rather than always stopping things in case they don’t work.”

WHERE CAN GOVERNMENT BE IN 3-5 YEARS?

With each of our interviewees, GovLoop asked participants to share insights regarding where they think government will be in the next five years. Across the board, interviewees were confident that technology is truly going to transform government, and serve as a way to re-imagine and create a 21st century government. With budgetary pressures mounting, and agencies being forced to do more with less, now is the time when innovation should occur in government.

Further, Jones believes that self-service modules and programs will expand in the public sector. As Jones identifies, “People are going to have the tools they need to do the job and government is going to have gone a long way towards self service. Government has reached the perfect storm of not enough staff, not enough money and a generation shift in what we expect and are able to do online.”

Through emerging technology, Bozzelli is also confident that the way government does business will be transformed. Bozzelli states,

“There will be some cost-specific things that will continue to happen, including cloud for data and device independence; those are going to be two things that are not an option. In three years, if we think about what’s driven by the citizen, I think crowdsourcing of solutions will continue to drive the government to change how it does business. The ability to plan for change includes attracting the right digital innovation workforce and developing digital strategies that connect us across digital divides.”

Undoubtedly, the public sector is ripe for innovation, as Horne states, “In the next 3-5 years we are going to witness a sea-change in the way digital communications is managed from a public sector perspective.” Akers agreed with Horne’s sentiments, stating that: “The way to improve services is through incremental investments in technology. Agencies can leverage the web more, and generate cost savings by providing interaction and automatic submission of documents and forms online. And since this allows them to provide better ways to get access to that content, calls to the agency are minimized.”

ABOUT GOVLOOP

LOCATION

GovLoop is headquartered in Washington D.C with a team of dedicated professionals who share a commitment to connect and improve government.

GOVLOOP

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GovLoop's mission is to connect government to improve government. We aim to inspire public sector professionals by acting as the knowledge network for government. The GovLoop community has over 65,000 members working to foster collaboration, solve problems and share resources across government.

The GovLoop community has been widely recognized across multiple sectors. GovLoop members come from across the public sector. Our membership includes federal, state, and local public servants, industry experts and professionals grounded in academic

research. Today, GovLoop is the leading site for addressing public sector issues.

GovLoop works with top industry partners to provide resources and tools to the government community. GovLoop has developed a variety of guides, infographics, online training and educational events, all to help public sector professionals become more efficient Civil Servants.

GovLoop's report, Crafting a Comprehensive Digital Government Strategy is sponsored by Aquia, GovDelivery, Hyland, and Sapient.

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