

Many agencies are transforming delivery of services by placing citizens at the center and designing services to holistically meet recipients' needs, with shorter time frames, better accuracy, and higher satisfaction.

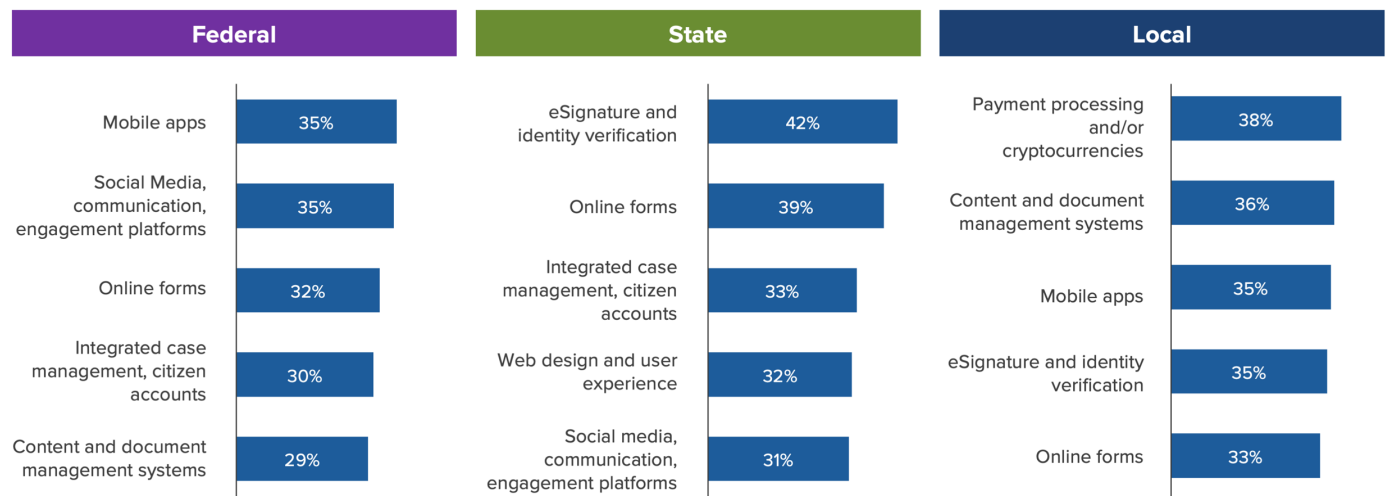
Government's Deployment of Technology to Enhance Digital Customer Experience

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Top 5 Key Technologies for U.S. Government Digital Customer Experience Services Initiatives



Source: IDC, 2022

Introduction

Citizens as consumers: Governments are the world's largest service providers. But when it comes to digital service delivery, the public sector consistently ranks below almost every other sector for customer satisfaction. As the private sector makes massive digitalization strides, widening the gap between private and public service delivery, many governments are embracing a citizen-centric approach to digital public service delivery. Using new technologies to enhance employee and customer experience can improve customer satisfaction and build trust in government.

Compliance drivers: Recent U.S. administrations have set an ambitious bar with new initiatives, and government leaders are building a solid foundation of customer experience policy, practices, and guidance in their efforts to better understand customers and build services with a customer focus. Agency leaders should investigate what is required to reverse the public trust deficit and make lasting improvements.

Citizen satisfaction: U.S. federal government services continued a four-year drop to an all-time low score of 63.4%, according to an *American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) 2022 report*. The report showed satisfaction declining 2.6% throughout 2021, while satisfaction in efficiency and ease of government processes fell most sharply, dipping to 63% from 68% in 2019. The UN eGovernment 2022 survey noticed a clear trend toward the full digitalization of government services, which would give users the ability to complete all types of transactions online, with the most notable expansion provisioning in social services. The number of countries providing at least one of the 22 online services assessed in the 2022 survey increased by 16.7% globally, and 61% of the member states offer more than 16 services.

Definitions

Digital customer experience (CX) services support value creation based on the use of digital technologies for both internal and external processes, including stakeholder engagement, employee commitment, and product and service experiences.

Digital CX services enable an immersive citizen experience and facilitate delivery of government services via multiple channels, such as websites and mobile apps, using a variety of tools such as online forms, video collaboration tools, digital assistants, and/or online payment processing. The total citizen experience includes not only the front end but also the back end (i.e., the employee experience), enabling agency employees to process claims and provide services and information effectively. Digital CX services are not only transactional; they can include accessing digital data and information, such as eligibility requirements or instructions for filling out forms.

Digital CX services are becoming more important as a way to provide improved user experiences as well as expand access to services. IDC believes that effective digital services expand the public trust in government because these services:

- Enable the public to access the services they need when they need them
- Provide multiple options for access to services and information
- Help government employees be more responsive to public needs
- Enable easier transactions with government due to clear instructions for processes and actions, verification of requests, and alerts

Trends

- **U.S. federal government:** Strides are being made to improve services and reduce the administrative and “time-tax” burden, using technology and human-centric design for services to simplify both public-facing and internal processes and to deliver better customer experience equitably and efficiently.

A lengthy line of executive orders since 1993 (#12862) has been complemented by the latest president's Management Agenda and Executive Order 14058 ("Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government"), TMF funds that include \$100 million tagged for CX projects, Section 280 of OMB Circular A-11 ("Managing Customer Experience and Improving Service Delivery"), and other government acts.

- **UN eGovernment survey:** The survey supports UN initiatives and assesses the government digitalization landscape across all 193 UN member states, outlining trends and developments related to the future of digital government.
- **International and national standardization:** Collaboration is increasing at all levels of state and local government, including the EU identification and trust services (eIDAS) initiative; the EU-US Trillium Bridge project, aiming to establish an interoperability standard; the World Bank initiative "GovTech: Putting people first"; and China's national Smart Cities standards.
- **EU Commission:** Its policy funds large-scale eprojects, ensuring that European platforms can work together and interact with one another and encouraging sharing and standardization of electronic records.
- **Designing for Europe:** This design and innovation program has a toolkit for policymakers and those who deliver public services, co-funded by the European Commission.
- **EU eGovernment Benchmark and DESI index:** These evaluate the provision and delivery of e-government services in 35 countries across Europe, prioritizing user-centric design, delivery rationalization across all services, and interoperability between the different layers and departments.
- **"Once only":** This describes an approach in which persons contacting a government need to provide information only one time, because various departments can verify information and communicate behind the scenes. Most (24 out of 27) EU nations have begun implementing the once-only principle, which is expected to save 855,000 hours for EU citizens and 11 billion euros for businesses annually.
- **Customer expectations:** Citizens' demand for increased participation in decision making and for more and better digital services is imposing a mindset shift from government-centric to citizen-centric. A more digitally skilled population expects government services to be on par with the private sector. Digitalization champions such as Singapore and Estonia indicate that individualized and targeted public services can be designed around the life events of the citizen, enabling the services' intuitive and automated delivery.
- **DevOps and low code/no code:** Across government (58% of U.S. federal respondents, 47% of state respondents, and 50% of local respondents; source: IDC, 2022), software dev teams are turning to DevOps and continuous integration as a leading approach to technology implementation.
- **Remote or distributed workforce:** Across government, U.S. agencies are centering their technology implementation strategies for digital services around enabling a remote/distributed workforce.

Digitized public services save Estonia more than 1,400 years of working time since these projects have begun.

Benefits of a Holistic Citizen Experience and Why It's Needed

Governments at all levels see value in investment in digital CX services. Estonia reports that 99% of its public services — including voting, filing taxes, and accessing health care records — can be completed online in minutes. According to the Estonian government, digitized public services have saved the country more than 1,400 years of working time since these projects began, and 2% of its GDP annually.

The public's expectations and trust are fragile, shaped by their needs and experiences in interacting with an array of services in the private and public sectors. In Denmark, 91% of citizens who accessed an authority's website or used self-service solutions were satisfied. The EU Commission rated Denmark's digital public services 87.1%, 19 points above the average of 68.1%, indicating that citizens who are satisfied with public services are much more likely to trust their government.

When considering the top key business outcomes driving digital CX service investments across all levels of U.S. government, a recent IDC survey, fielded in early 2022, discovered that:

- 21% of respondents overall saw value in:
 - Eliminating inter-departmental silos and increasing collaboration. This improves collaboration with ecosystem partners by proactively and securely sharing information with partner agencies and authorized external groups.
 - Increased citizen trust and satisfaction in public service and technology, by meeting or exceeding citizen expectations by delivering the right services at the right time.
 - Data-driven service optimization through improved analytics, more efficient employees, and reduced processing time. This helps deliver frictionless citizen experiences by removing complexity, increasing transparency, and reducing delays through omnichannel management.
- 20% of respondents saw value in adaptability and the ability to pivot and scale on demand. This enables adaptation to residents' changing needs and gaining a holistic view of the customer journey to better address citizen preferences and adapt services based on feedback.
- 16% of respondents saw value in:
 - Coordinated multichannel communications with constituents. This helps optimize communications, with the ability to send citizens proactive, personalized, and secure communications based on their unique government interactions.
 - More modern constituent self-service options. This enables speed and scale service reach while streamlining customer operations with improved accessibility and self-service options across agencies, platforms, and devices.

Considerations

Government entities should consider the following solution types when designing digital CX services:

- Mass communication engine capable of pulling content into personalized communications via email, mail, or text
- A media manager that organizes unstructured data to provide a comprehensive view of constituents

- Identity access management (IAM) solutions that provide validation and eligibility for multiple benefits/services
 - Denmark is excelling in digital public service delivery, having the highest number of citizens using digital services across the EU (92%), with a 91% satisfaction rate in 2021. NemID, a two-factor e-identification service, is the key to a digital Denmark. It enables Danish residents and businesses to identify themselves electronically for all digital services, both public and private, as well as sign documents and log in to digital banking, health services, taxes, and much more.
- Enterprise content management solutions that include employee engagement tools and applications, allowing for federated searches for information in any format (email, chat, Teams, etc.), creating a seamless employee experience anywhere (in office, hybrid, or remote), and leveraging low/no code, automated processes, and prebuilt connectors
- Security solutions to protect data, protect personally identifiable information (PII), and meet security requirements such as FedRAMP
- Secure multichannel self-serve solutions (i.e., call centers, chatbots, email) and Digital Post (mailboxes that let public sector institutions and private sector businesses securely communicate online with citizens, employees, partners, and customers)
 - Among the Danish population, 92% feel safe in communicating with authorities through the Digital Post platform using NemID.
- Solutions that capture customer feedback and social media to measure constituent sentiment
- Solutions that provide platform-agnostic deployment on premises, in public cloud, or as a managed service; fully integrate with existing customer systems of record; and support all communication types and digital channels

Conclusion

Experience with best-in-class commercial services has set a high bar for how customers interact with government, and the urgent needs and gaps exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have made the situation more acute. Governments should take a holistic view of their services and focus on the customer journey and feedback rather than on individual touchpoints or transactions. The same technologies that improve front-office customer experiences can make back-office employee experiences better, as there's a direct line between empowering government employees in their dealings with citizens and employees' motivation and ability to deliver great customer experiences. Integrated services and service channels not only enable seamless and equitable customer journeys but also strengthen organizational capability, technology, talent, and leadership while enabling accessible and customer-centered work. Achieving lasting change in services is a journey that requires governments to center their efforts on the customer's perspective, using human-centered design and continuously measuring the success of these efforts.

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