

Acquia
EXPERIENCE DIGITAL FREEDOM

TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TODAY

**CATCHING UP WITH
CONSTITUENT EXPECTATIONS**



From the outset, the emergence of a global pandemic put government in the spotlight like never before. As the gravity of the situation took hold, anxious constituents looked to local and national governments to provide information, economic relief and an expansive range of services. As Deloitte explained in [Government Trends 2021](#), “As citizens ‘rallied around the flag,’ government became the most trusted institution globally for the first time in two decades.”

The unprecedented demand for digital services has accelerated government agencies’ efforts to continually improve how they serve and engage with constituents online. Effective planning and implementation are essential to delivering the experiences that meet today’s extraordinary — and constantly increasing — demands.



FACING TRENDS IN GOVERNMENT

Leaders of government agencies are racing to transform their digital experiences to meet an entirely new level of expectations. The urgency of the pandemic, combined with several concurrent trends, will determine the form those transformations must take and the processes required to implement them.

TREND 1: THE FOCUS IS SHIFTING TO CITIZENS

Government agencies are increasingly adopting a “customer-first” mindset that aligns closely with the private sector’s approach. The Deloitte trend report describes the goal as providing “seamless service delivery that is personalized, frictionless and anticipatory.”

Government agencies of all types and sizes are working to develop experiences that match the ease and effectiveness of the best private sector offerings. But there is work to be done. A full 80% of federal agencies scored “poor” or “very poor” on Forrester’s [2019 U.S. Federal Customer Experience Index](#), compared with just 14% of private sector brands. Governments are working to narrow that sizable gap.

TREND 2: TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS ARE EXPANDING WHAT’S POSSIBLE

Even a pandemic can’t slow the pace of technological innovation. The constant flow of new developments continues and is serving as a catalyst for transforming digital constituent services in government.

Forward-thinking government agencies are tapping innovations such as 5G, cloud-native technologies and edge computing to improve the constituent experience. Additionally, government agencies are beginning to look to artificial intelligence (AI) to quickly generate actionable insights, and to the Internet of Things (IoT) to create smarter cities and improve digital service delivery.

TREND 3: THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS ONGOING

Clearly, the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation in government agencies at all levels. And that transformation is still far from complete. As both constituents and government agencies adjust to conducting more business digitally, transformation efforts continue.

The government agencies that were already digitally advanced before the crisis hit proved most resilient to the sudden increase in demand. Agencies that lagged behind have learned the lesson and clearly see the value in doing the work now to ensure that when the next crisis hits, they’re not caught unprepared.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN GOVERNMENT AROUND THE WORLD

UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Remote working technology, IT modernization and cybersecurity all became vital, with research showing that 60% of U.S. government officials felt the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation in their organization.

The U.S. established the **National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force**, a multiagency cyber center that coordinates, shares and integrates information to support cyberthreat investigations.

U.S. STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Several U.S. states have utilized funds from the **CARES Act** to expand broadband infrastructure. Vermont has allocated \$17.4 million USD, and Tennessee has spent \$61 million to improve digital connectivity.

EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND AFRICA

The **United Kingdom's** 2020 Spending Review allocates £600 million to upgrade government IT with the goals of improving security, efficiency and administration.

Saudi Arabia has launched the Universal Service Fund with the equivalent of \$2.4 billion USD in government funds and \$1.6 billion USD from telecom companies to improve digital infrastructure and expand to remote areas.

Egypt's Ministry of Communication and Information Technology has allocated the equivalent of \$375 million USD to supply fiber-optic cable to all government entities.

ASIA PACIFIC, JAPAN, AND AUSTRALIA

The government of **South Korea** plans to dedicate ₩58.2 trillion to upgrading public infrastructure and expediting the adoption of data and AI throughout the economy.

Australia's Digital Business Plan has dedicated nearly \$800 million AUD that, among other things, will support the development of whole-of-government capabilities such as digital identity, e-invoicing and the creation of a single source of business data.

The **New Zealand** government will invest up to \$15 million NZD to upgrade rural broadband.

CHALLENGES FACING GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Advances in technology and changes in behavior undoubtedly assist government agencies in accelerating their digital transformations to meet constituent needs, build trust and increase satisfaction. But several challenges must be confronted in the process.

MANAGING TECHNICAL DEBT AND INEFFICIENCIES FROM LEGACY SYSTEMS

Even considering recent progress, many government agencies are still saddled with outdated technologies that barely function and often cannot be updated. Many processes are still heavily reliant on paperwork, particularly in the U.S. According to the June 2019 update of [The President's Management Agenda](#), the federal government's more than 23,000 different paper forms generate 11.4 billion hours of paperwork annually, contributing to a poor user experience. Transitioning American government agencies to paperless processes continues to be a substantial — and necessary — undertaking.

To further complicate the situation, legacy systems must be kept running while new initiatives are in progress, consuming funding and resources needed for modernization. But change is coming. [In their report](#) identifying the top 10 global government technology trends for 2021, Gartner predicts that by 2025, over 50% of government agencies will have modernized critical core legacy applications to improve resilience and agility.



DATA CONSTRAINED IN SILOS OBSTRUCTS THE VIEW OF THE CONSTITUENT JOURNEY

As government agencies increase the volume of digital services they offer, the volume of data they gather is expanding, as well. While potentially useful, that data often remains locked within departments, agencies or third-party providers, hampering efforts to use the information to improve experiences. As the Deloitte trend report explains, “Governments need to maximize the value of the data they hold, including sharing it appropriately. They can use data to identify citizen needs and tailor government processes around citizen needs vs. government silos, to deliver a consistent and personalized experience.”

The Gartner trend report predicts that by 2023, 50% of government organizations will establish formal accountability structures for data sharing, including standards for data structure, quality and timeliness. That development is particularly important at a time when constituents are as concerned about the security of their private data when interacting with government agencies as they are when interacting with private sector companies.



These statistics from the [Acquia 2019](#) and [2020 CX Trends Reports](#) provide helpful specifics on current perceptions of data management:

Just 13% of respondents reported they were very comfortable giving brands data for a personalized experience, and 46% were not comfortable doing so. (2020)

83% said they wish there were stronger consumer data privacy laws in their country. (2019)

61% were not confident that brands had their best interests in mind when they use, share and/or store their personal data. (2019)



CYBERATTACKS ARE ON THE INCREASE

While government agencies have been working to increase the volume of digital services they offer constituents, the quantity of cyberattacks has kept pace. Shifting people, processes and technology to a more remote structure during the pandemic gave hackers even more opportunities to take advantage of security gaps.

The types of attacks range from ransomware to data breaches and from election security to unemployment fraud. The most infamous attack was launched by a group backed by the Russian government. The effort penetrated thousands of organizations globally, including parts of the U.S. federal government, and endured for as long as nine months.

TO GROW AND THRIVE

Government and Government Agencies Must Prioritize:

1
SECURITY

2
CLOUD SOLUTIONS

3
CONTINUITY AND AVAILABILITY

4
ONGOING INNOVATION



1

SECURITY

Because government agencies work with the most sensitive types of personal data, security is even more vital than in private sector industries. Security considerations come from multiple angles: insider threats, stolen credentials and compliance with a growing roster of regulations — including GDPR in the EU, and FISMA, Common Criteria and many others in the U.S.

Forward-thinking agencies should take advantage of the advanced security protections available through cloud environments and enterprise identity and access management (IAM) platforms to protect constituent data, secure government information and comply with legislation. However, these solutions must be able to encompass partners and contractors to protect against attacks at every step of the digital journey.





Acquia offers several important credentials that help ensure government agencies' digital efforts can meet the highest security demands. They include:

FedRAMP:

Acquia has been granted an Authority to Operate (ATO) by a number of U.S. Executive Departments under the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP). FedRAMP provides assurance to agencies that the appropriate security and risk management practices are in place for their cloud properties. Only cloud providers that meet the strict provisions of FedRAMP gain this certification. FedRAMP granted Acquia's ATO at the moderate impact level, which the agency describes as, "appropriate for Cloud Service Offerings (CSOs) where the loss of confidentiality, integrity and availability would result in serious adverse effects on an agency's operations, assets or individuals."

Service Organization Control (SOC) 1:

This annual audit, conducted by an independent third-party firm, attests to the design and operating effectiveness of Acquia's business and security controls in safeguarding systems and data. The report aligns with international standards, allowing it to be recognized both in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Service Organization Control (SOC) 2:

Also conducted annually by a third party, this audit attests to the suitability of the design and operating effectiveness of Acquia's controls to meet the Security, Availability and Confidentiality Trust Services Principles.

Approved Vendor - United Kingdom:

Acquia is fully compliant with associated regulation and is committed to serving the UK's government agencies.

2

CLOUD SOLUTIONS

Cloud solutions help simplify and automate complex government infrastructures, leading to better access to information and processes for both citizens and employees. Government agencies can capitalize on cloud services to streamline increasingly complex and distributed infrastructures, while ensuring that resilience, continuity and security are prioritized.

Cloud solutions have already proven capable of rising to current challenges. As Deloitte explains, “Cloud proved critical for not just meeting surges in demand but doing so remotely. In general, governments with strong digital infrastructure were able to rapidly adapt to the new virtual world, while those still relying on manual processes struggled mightily.”

3

CONTINUITY AND AVAILABILITY

The pandemic has only increased constituent demands for their online experiences. Today, they expect their digital interactions with government agencies to be as reliable, seamless, transparent and successful as those with private sector companies. They want their time online to be time well spent, and to complete the task they set out to accomplish.

According to the Forrester U.S. Federal Customer Experience Index, in 2018, just 50% of digital-only federal customers were able to accomplish their goals for interacting with a government agency, while 63% of those using traditional physical channels were able to accomplish their goals. Traditional IT areas must remain a focus, including ensuring mission readiness through operational continuity and providing 24x7 availability. Quick, agile and consistent delivery is crucial.

4

ONGOING INNOVATION

To facilitate modernization and technology adoption, public sector organizations are increasingly looking to digital platforms that allow new systems to be quickly developed and information shared among employees, agencies and citizens. By embracing the transition to digital platforms in 2021 and beyond, government can deliver effective, connected public services in a time of heightened demand and shrinking budgets.

At the same time, government IT transformation must remain rooted in constituent needs and driven by insights. The goal must be to boost execution and adaptation speeds to understand what constituents need and want most. Gartner predicts that over 30% of governments will use engagement metrics to track quantity and quality of citizen participation in policy and budget decisions by 2024.

FINDING THE WAY: HOW ACQUIA CAN HELP

According to Gartner's [2018 CIO Agenda Survey](#), digital transformation was the most common response from government CIOs who were asked what their organization's top business priority would be over the next two years. The global pandemic has only accelerated that commitment.

Forward-thinking government IT professionals are seeking to ensure their organizations are prepared for the next crisis — whatever it might be. They're determining the level and source of funding they need to put into digital marketing platforms, personalization tools and better methods of engaging with constituents to ensure they're prepared.

Moving ahead, governments and their agencies must offer a more intuitive, personalized digital experience, while gaining better control of their digital assets and effectively using analytics and insights to develop an efficient journey for constituents that builds trust and delivers satisfaction. Digging for data and insights to understand the true effectiveness of each effort is key. Knowing what's working, what's not and where the gaps lie are all vitally important.

Acquia is the pioneering partner that can help build those experiences and relationships — on your own terms.

The security, reliability and agility of Acquia's platform enables government departments and agencies to properly align their resources and deliver on their mission.

Acquia

ACQUIA.COM

ABOUT ACQUIA

Acquia is the open digital experience platform that enables organizations to build, host, analyze and communicate with their customers at scale through websites and digital applications. As the trusted open source leader, we use adaptive intelligence to produce better business outcomes for CX leaders.

