

Understanding The Evolution of Social Media in Government

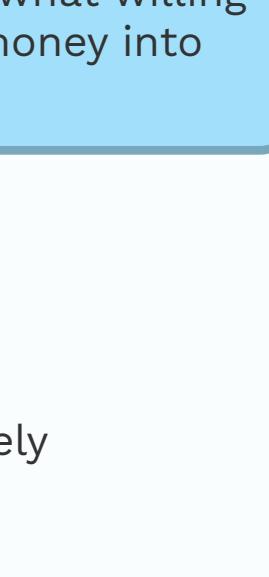
Social media, once seen as one of many communications channels available, has emerged as an essential tool for government agencies. A recent GovLoop survey of 289 federal, state and local employees found broad support for social across key government use cases—with indications that its importance will grow in the year ahead:



Social is being used to build trust with constituents, deliver more effective services, and gain new insights into the needs of their communities.



There is increasing support for social media from agency leadership, opening the door to greater investments in tools and resources.

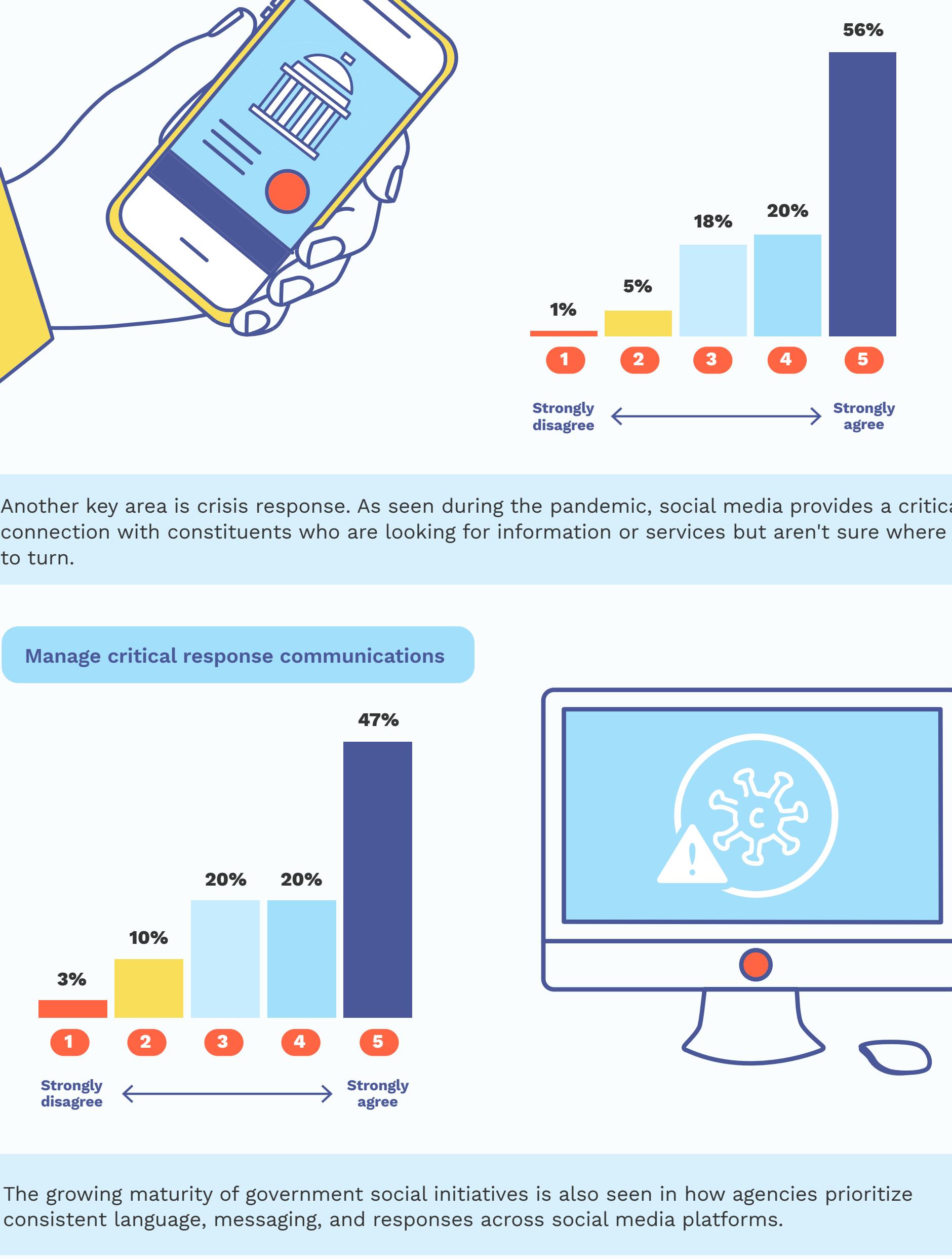


Citizens are expecting more from their governments and elected officials on social media, and agencies will have to adapt to keep pace.

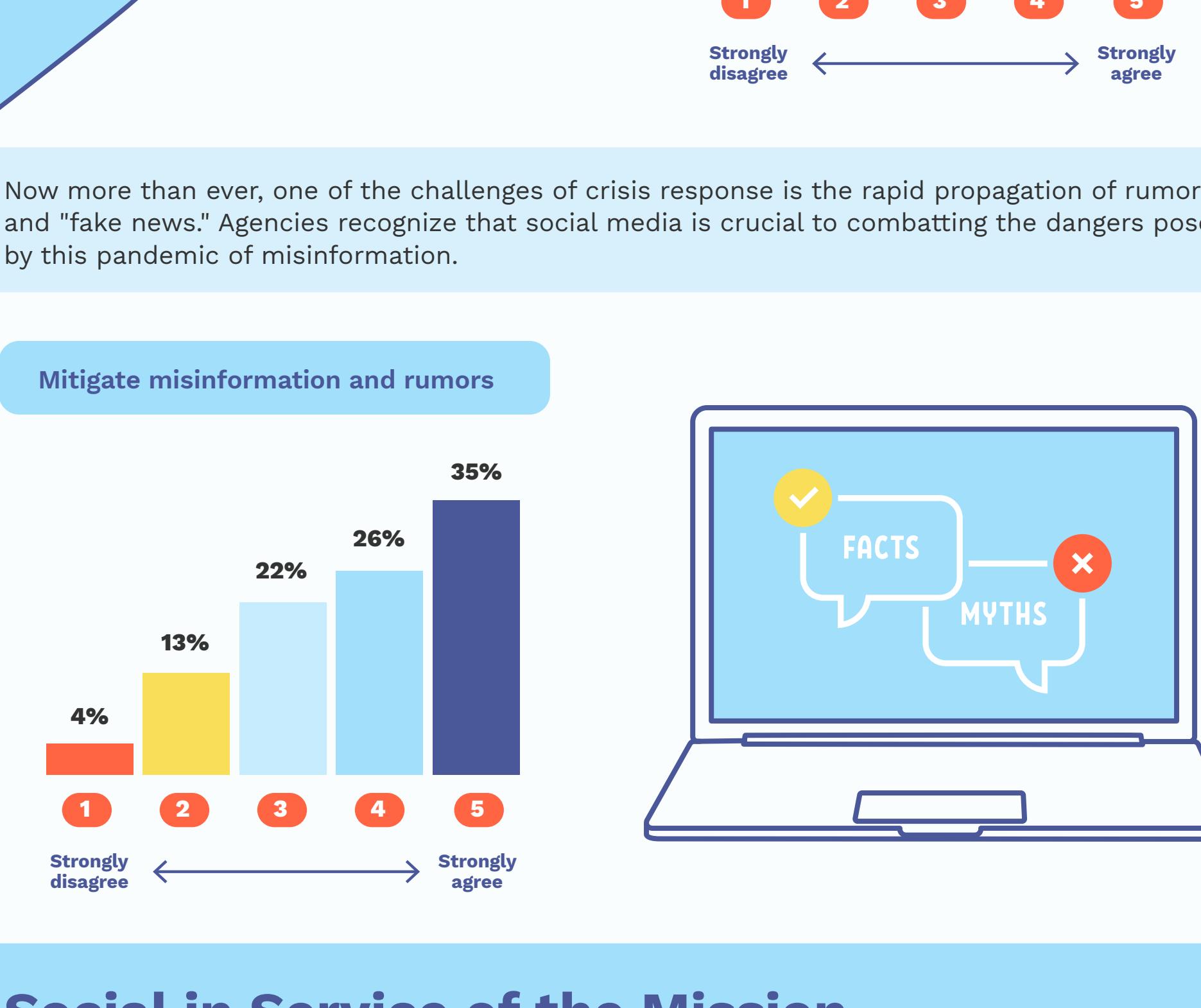
Here are key highlights from the survey, conducted in conjunction with Hootsuite, with comparisons to a similar survey from 2018.

Agency Leaders Find Value in Social Media

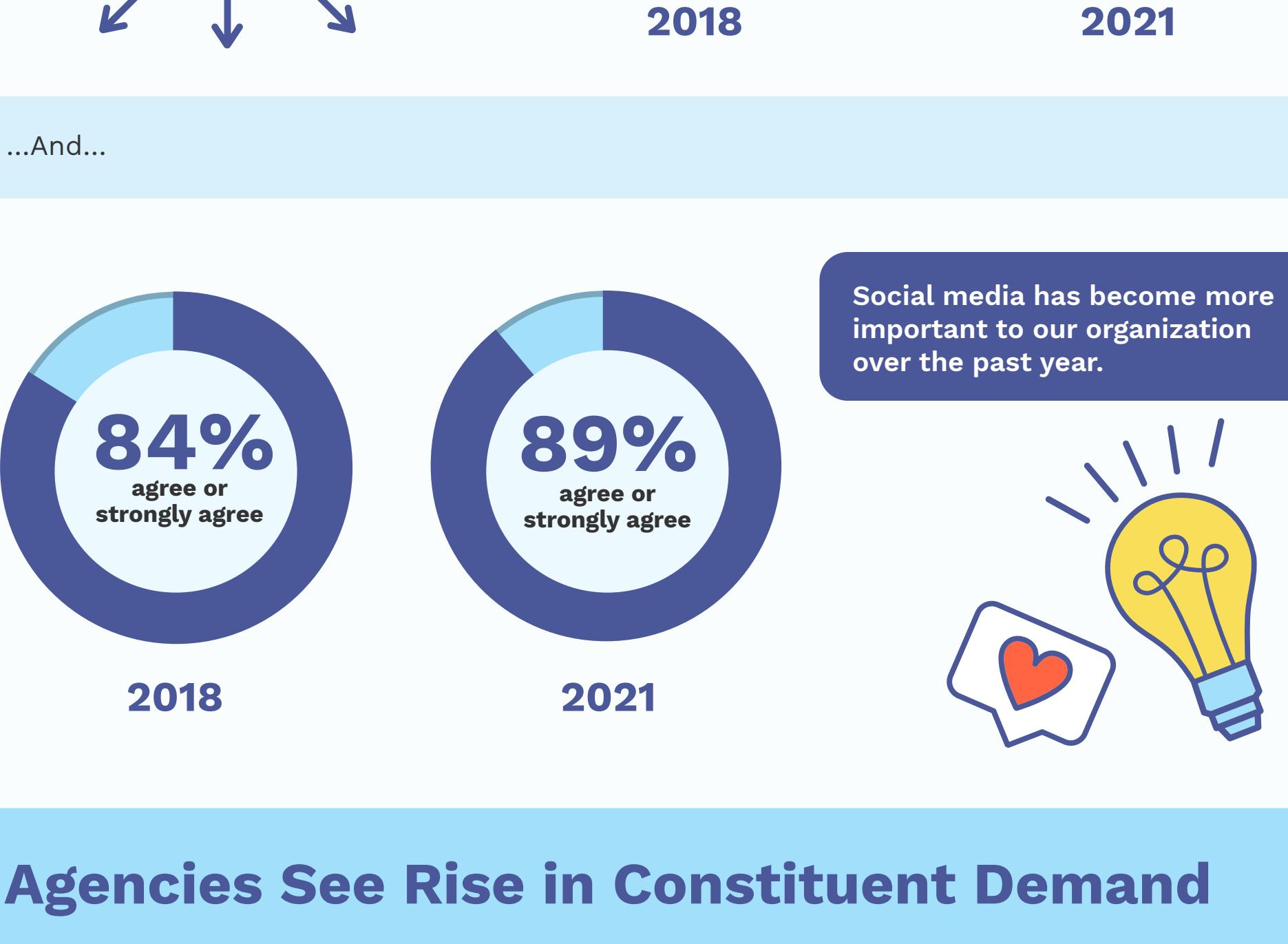
Here's the bottom line. Social initiatives can't go far if leaders don't see their value. In many ways, the pandemic might prove to be an ideal use case, demonstrating social's value both to agencies and constituents. So, it's not surprising that the vast majority of respondents said their leaders are now willing to invest in social media tools.



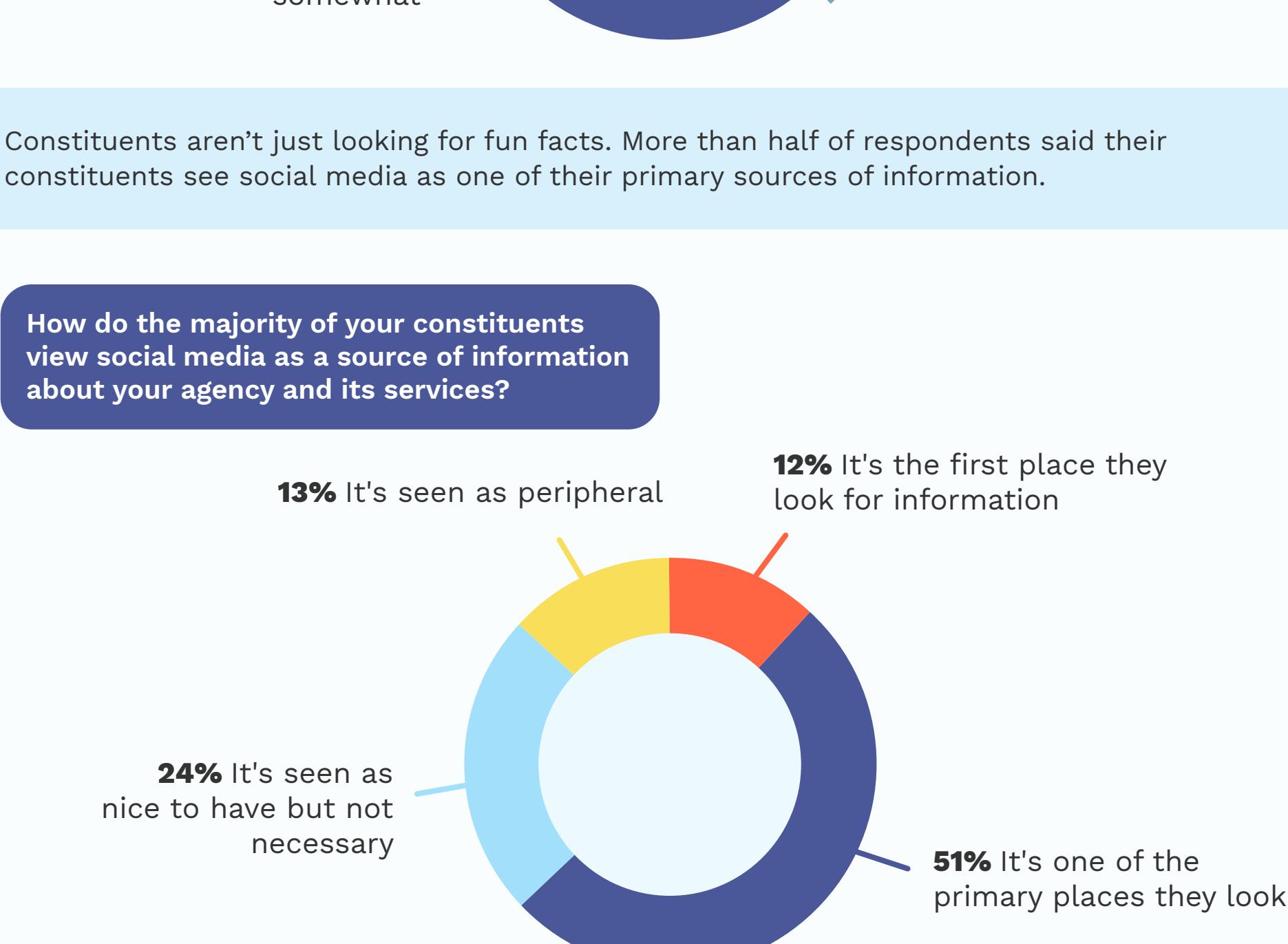
In the same vein, skepticism at the leadership level has waned, as leaders have realized that social can play a role in achieving the strategic goals of an agency's mission.



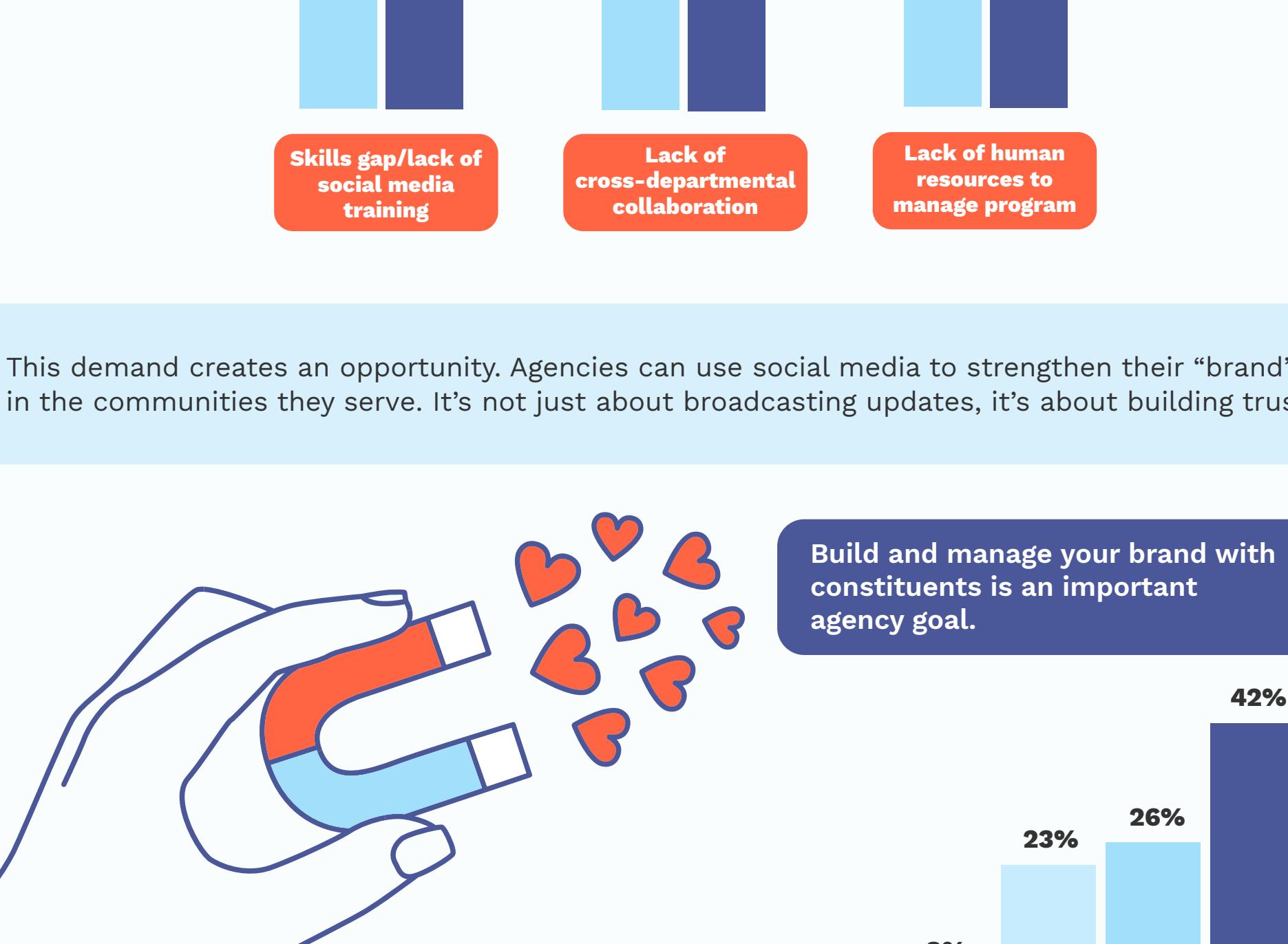
In fact, many agency chiefs and public officials are leading by example on social media, taking a personal stake in this digital transformation journey.



Another key area is crisis response. As seen during the pandemic, social media provides a critical connection with constituents who are looking for information or services but aren't sure where to turn.



The growing maturity of government social initiatives is also seen in how agencies prioritize consistent language, messaging, and responses across social media platforms.



Now more than ever, one of the challenges of crisis response is the rapid propagation of rumors and "fake news." Agencies recognize that social media is crucial to combatting the dangers posed by this pandemic of misinformation.



This demand creates an opportunity. Agencies can use social media to strengthen their "brand" in the communities they serve. It's not just about broadcasting updates, it's about building trust.

Constituents have made it clear that they expect government services through social media. Social media managers have risen to this challenge, but many struggle with a lack of resources and visibility across departments.

Leaders need to ensure that their agencies can respond to the digital needs of the community – supporting their teams in mitigating online misinformation, unlocking access to constituent services, and ensuring smooth communications, both in the midst of a crisis and in daily life.

To learn more about how to leverage social media to engage with your constituents, deliver more effective services and manage conversations across different channels seamlessly, visit www.hootsuite.com/industries/government.