

Digital Transformation in Government

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Executive Summary

Digital transformation ranks among the hottest topics in government. Daily, the buzz around it grows as agencies at every level explore how it might help them. Whether it touches citizens, workforces or IT, this phrase casts a wide net.

But “digital transformation” is also an increasingly loaded term. The more the public sector discusses it, the further agencies get from its original meaning. Now, confusion about this concept is rising as it grows more important than ever.

Fortunately, conversations about this topic are gradually producing consensus. First, digital transformation concerns how people, processes and technology function digitally. Second, many agencies have realized it is a marathon rather than a sprint. Third, agencies nationwide have discovered this process doesn’t progress smoothly unless its long-term costs are considered first.

“Digital Transformation in Government: A GovLoop E-Book” will explore every facet this subject covers. We’ll also describe the latest building blocks and best practices that can fuel your agency’s unique digital makeover. Additionally, we asked several federal, state and local thought leaders about what this phrase means to them.

Ultimately, digital transformation isn’t just a catchy slogan – it’s a state of mind. By approaching it as a philosophy, agencies can upgrade their employees, their missions and their tools. No matter your agency’s purpose, the following pages will help it find its footing in the years ahead.

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In the News

COVID-19 has upended most governments worldwide. The U.S. isn't immune, and agencies have spent much of 2020 dramatically changing because of the pandemic.

Take remote work, which was once a distant fantasy for many people. Now, scores of agencies are currently operating remotely while the coronavirus persists.

Next, you'll hear about how COVID-19 inspired digital transformation in this and other areas. While there is no denying COVID-19 is an unprecedented emergency, it is prompting equally groundbreaking solutions from agencies.



Shifting Services for COVID-19

IRS Starts COVID-19 Stimulus Payments

Digital transformation often pushes agencies to imagine fresh products and services that are delivered entirely online. Consider the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which responded to the coronavirus outbreak with a trailblazing program.

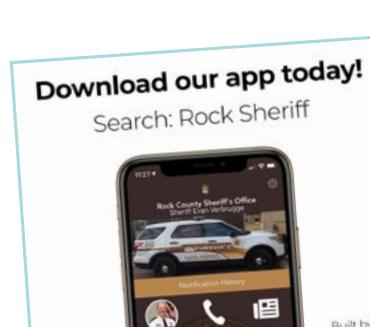
In March 2020, the IRS announced it would distribute economic impact payments to citizens suffering economically as a result of COVID-19. By June 2020, hundreds of millions of these stimulus checks were automatically delivered to Americans.

Rather than mail every recipient checks, the IRS deposited many payments directly into citizens' bank accounts. By leveraging its tax data, the IRS served the public quicker and more efficiently.

VA Telehealth Calls Soar 1000%

In June 2020, the Veterans Affairs Department (VA) reported a 1,000% increase in video appointments using its digital health platform. VA Video Connect allows military veterans and their caregivers to meet virtually on any computer, tablet or mobile device with an internet connection. By May 2020, users had booked about 120,000 appointments through the service, up from roughly 10,000 two months before.

VA attributed the dramatic rise in VA Video Connect use to COVID-19 precautions. Overall, the platform allowed citizens to engage with the VA using the tools they preferred when they needed them most.



Arizona Courts Accept Offsite Payments

In March 2020, Arizona's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) launched a new system for citizens to make cash payments outside of its offices. Using the network, citizens can now satisfy court fines, fees and other outstanding costs at 27,000 retail locations nationwide.

By accepting payments offsite, AOC has made accessing its services more convenient for citizens. Currently, citizens can make payments at such participating vendors as 7-Eleven and Family Dollar. And, although the network was conceived before the COVID-19 crisis, it is now helping AOC and its customers practice social distancing.

Minnesota Sheriff's Office Launches Smartphone App

In June 2020, the Rock County, Minnesota Sheriff's Office released a new smartphone app to better connect the community. Through the app, officers can now provide information to residents and visitors quicker and more efficiently than before. Meanwhile, smartphone users can now access many of the office's services using a free program on their favorite device.

The app's users can submit tips, search for inmates and more. They can also receive news about COVID-19, upcoming events and other concerns. Collectively, these features are bringing officers and the public closer together.

NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court

Administrative Office of the Courts

Contact: Aaron Nash
Phone: 602-452-3656
Email: anash@courts.az.gov

March 26, 2020



Arizona Courts Accept Cash Payments Through Retailers

PHOENIX – The Administrative Office of the Courts, in partnership with the Fines, Fees, and Restitution Enforcement program (FARE) have arranged for court customers to pay through the PayNearMe network with cash at locations throughout the state and nation. Although the program

Amid COVID-19, People and Processes Evolve

Arkansas Creates COVID-19 Advisory Board

As COVID-19 spread, many public health experts suggested contact tracing as a potential solution. Contact tracing involves identifying people who have interacted with infected individuals and examining their activities.

In May 2020, Gov. Asa Hutchinson announced the creation of Arkansas' COVID-19 Technical Advisory Board. Hutchinson said the board would vet technologies for testing and contact tracing COVID-19 infections.

While focused on technology, the board also helped improve collaboration among many of Arkansas' agencies. By placing scores of public servants under the same umbrella, Arkansas demonstrated how digital transformation requires people.

DC Turns to Virtual Townhalls

As the coronavirus lingers, many cities are plotting returns to normalcy. Washington, D.C. is no exception, and in April 2020 it conducted widespread virtual outreach about reopening.

The results illustrate the power of communications technology during disasters such as COVID-19. For instance, more than 10,000 people participated in an April 2020 virtual townhall about D.C.'s reopening. Separately, an online survey during the same period gained more than 17,000 responses about the District's reopening strategy.

Together, virtual tools such as these bring together employers, residents and workers while aiding quarantine efforts.



Army Realigns CIO Role

Chief information officers (CIOs) are pivotal for managing data. In June 2020, the Army determined its data required two people to manage efficiently.

First, the Army's CIO will create its information policies. The CIO will also be the Secretary's principal adviser on information resource management, IT and their effects on warfighting.

In contrast, the Army's new Deputy Chief of Staff of the G-6 (DCS G-6) will become the principal military adviser on network communications and their warfighting impact. The DCS G-6 will also implement the CIO's policies while advising the Secretary and Chief of Staff (CSA).

Combined, these two executives will help guide the Army's digital transformation into the future.

GSA Begins Modernization Pilot

The General Services Administration (GSA) seeks to provide efficient and effective acquisition solutions to other agencies. In June 2020, that goal became one step closer to reality when GSA embarked on a modernization pilot program.

The pilot will last for 100 days and explore modernizing GSA's Federal Acquisition Service's (FAS) component. FAS handles \$60 billion in annual revenue, so the successful solution must upgrade its internal acquisition processes and systems. Gradually, GSA's goal is to simplify, standardize and streamline the numerous programs generating FAS's large amount of annual revenue.

Emerging Tech: The Future is Now

Today, many agencies face two increasingly firm barriers to digital transformation: legacy technology and tightening budgets. Cloud's versatility, however, can help agencies bypass both obstacles.

With cloud, agencies can upgrade their technology and operate more cheaply and efficiently. Even better, cloud's scalability means it can help agencies keep pace with rising daily work.

As a platform, cloud can become a game-changer for agencies because of the capabilities it can host. Here are three promising emerging technologies cloud can support.

Automation

Automation happens when machines perform manual processes with little to no human involvement. When correctly applied to their people and processes, automation can transform agencies for the better.

From an organizational perspective, automation can drastically reduce human error. As a bonus, automation can save agencies attention, money and time they once spent on their talent.

Automation, however, can also improve work for most employees. Agencies that automate unexciting manual chores can free their workers from performing them. Instead, these individuals can focus on more stimulating efforts and engaging with the public.

Artificial Intelligence

Perhaps no emerging technology is as promising as artificial intelligence (AI). AI features machines performing cognitive feats like humans. Whether it is learning or another ability, AI would make people and technology more indistinguishable.

Potentially, AI could upend government activities including cybersecurity and collecting taxes. No matter its focus, AI is a tool that could save agencies exponentially larger investments in time and money.

Data is widely regarded as the fuel for the coming AI revolution. Agencies excited by AI's promise should carefully consider how they will collect, store and secure their data.

Robotic Process Automation

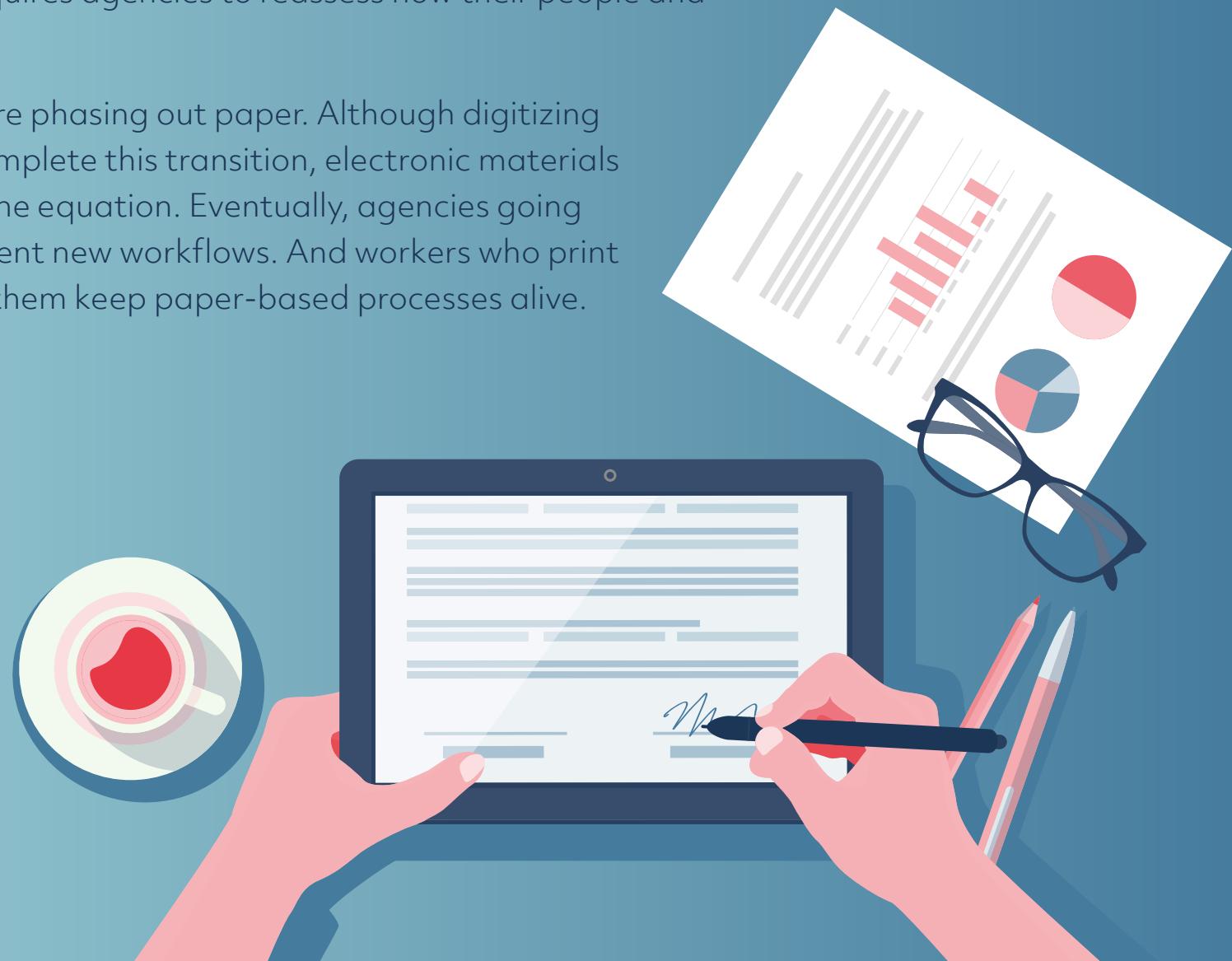
Robotic process automation (RPA) starts with software creating digital bots for agencies. Next, agencies assign these bots simple and repetitive tasks they once gave to humans. Lastly, this new freedom lets people apply their energy and talent elsewhere.

Once entrenched, RPA can elevate productivity and employee satisfaction for agencies. RPA bots are tireless, and they can perform their duties with fewer breaks or errors than humans. Workforces with fewer manual burdens, meanwhile, can pursue more fulfilling labors. They can also serve citizens with renewed purpose and vitality, making the experience more pleasant for all involved.

Building Blocks

Digital transformation has many steps. Although bright, shiny objects can aid agencies, technology can't solve all their problems. To succeed, digital transformation also requires agencies to reassess how their people and processes work.

Picture agencies that are phasing out paper. Although digitizing documents can help complete this transition, electronic materials aren't the only part of the equation. Eventually, agencies going paperless must implement new workflows. And workers who print out documents to sign them keep paper-based processes alive.



The following ideas show some ways agencies can digitally transform.

1

Imitate the Private Sector

Top private-sector companies have long provided customers with pleasing digital experiences. To follow suit, agencies can embrace tools that give citizens information and allow them to make requests on the devices they prefer. From there, agencies can automate the work associated with citizens' most frequent concerns. By automating tasks such as resetting passwords, agencies can help their employees exercise their expertise more frequently. The resulting customer experience (CX) isn't just more satisfying for citizens, but the workers who serve them too.

2

Heighten Transparency

Digital transformation can expand transparency. For example, agencies can construct portals for citizens to file public records requests. By making these portals easy to use, agencies can become more accessible and engaging to citizens. Internally, tools such as automation can increase accuracy by curbing human mistakes. They can also streamline efficiencies, helping agencies reach their goals and resolve citizens' cases faster. Best of all, the more transparent agencies are, the more trust they earn from citizens.

3

Reach Farther

In the past, agencies were confined to physical locations. Now, telework's rising popularity means agencies can operate without material boundaries. With the right mobile interfaces, employees can work easily anywhere in the field. Using dashboards with real-time analytics, they can track their assignments or collect citizen data. Simultaneously, leaders

can better place their agencies' employees and resources where they are most needed. Capabilities such as automation are the icing on top, helping agencies operate faster and more efficiently no matter the distances involved.

4

Optimize Workflows

From the top level down, agencies are always doing more with less. Agencies must compete with the private sector for talent; citizens also expect their agencies to be wise stewards of their resources and tax dollars. Together, these forces pressure agencies to optimize all their workflows.

Cloud can help agencies optimize their limited assets. First, cloud-based automation can reduce manual workflows, freeing up employees for work that requires more thinking. Cloud can also support intelligent interfaces that can accelerate agencies' agility. By empowering AI with relevant contextual information, cloud can additionally sharpen agencies' decision-making processes

5

Build Modernization Momentum

The roles people and processes play in digital transformation can't be overstated. With technology, however, modernization is key for digital transformation.

Luckily, the more agencies modernize their technology, the more progress becomes possible later. Combining cloud and data analytics, agencies can discover new insights into their digital services. Leaders can then execute IT consolidation and workflow optimization initiatives with the best information possible. While digital transformation can initially seem challenging, it can also become the fuel for further advances.

Shifting Digital Transformation into Hyperdrive

An interview with Bob Osborn, Chief Technology Officer, Global Government, ServiceNow

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated to agencies that resilience is more important than ever. Resilience involves providing products and services, no matter the circumstances. Now, many agencies are working towards resilience by digitally transforming their operations.

But fortifying agencies' resilience will require them to dramatically morph their people, processes and technology. Only after this change occurs can agencies weather tomorrow's emergencies and still serve citizens.

Fortunately, cloud computing's flexibility and simplicity can fuel the sturdiness agencies seek. Using cloud, agencies can improve their operations, boost their speed and make their workforces more agile.

Bob Osborn is Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Global Government, for ServiceNow. The ServiceNow platform is designed to help agencies create digital workflows that connect people, processes and systems. He explained how cloud can help agencies take three steps towards permanent resilience.

1. Extend workforces and workflows

As the coronavirus outbreak demonstrates, agencies sometimes need their employees to

collaborate effectively over large distances. And these workers also need to quickly and efficiently provide products and services to citizens. "When you separate people, it's like you explode the office," Osborn said. "And it illuminates the brittleness of the processes agencies have been using up to this point."

Osborn said agencies now realize they can't prioritize technology over people or processes. To digitally transform their resilience, agencies must upgrade all three areas equally.

Ultimately, cloud can juggle agencies' people, processes and technology no matter their location.

2. Keep serving customers

According to Osborn, agencies' resilience relies on constantly pursuing mission success. Whether it is viruses or other emergencies, agencies can't let surprises stop them from serving citizens. "To be able to provide services in the most trying circumstances is nirvana for agencies," Osborn said.

Cloud can strengthen agencies' resilience with its consistency and reliability. Even better, it can quickly and easily deliver products and services to the public. "Things that were done manually

are now potentially online capabilities," Osborn said. "It takes the pain away from citizens."

3. Stay up to speed

Agencies at every level have long struggled to keep up with private-sector innovation. Fortunately, cloud can help agencies keep up with new developments in technology. As a bonus, these new tools can also keep agencies operating despite internal and external pressures. "We're continually refreshing our suite of applications," Osborn said of ServiceNow. "It keeps the government on top of technology."

For instance, cloud can significantly reduce the time agencies spend developing applications for resilience or other concerns. "We can develop applications in hours, days or weeks rather than months or years," Osborn said.

Additionally, cloud providers such as ServiceNow can help agencies become more proactive. By digitally transforming their resilience, agencies are ready for any challenge. "We call this anticipatory government," Osborn said. "We're in the position to deliver services before citizens need them."



Accelerate your cloud journey

Government agencies are driven by the need for more speed and IT agility, which requires modernization, transformation, and re-platforming.

ServiceNow is committed to helping you identify which workloads work best in which environments, and determine the best fit of cloud services for your needs.

Remove the friction from your cloud journey and embrace the technology needed to accelerate your digital transformation.

Learn more at www.servicenow.com/gov

SBA Deputy CIO on Shifting Gears for COVID-19

COVID-19 has forced agencies to reinvent their operations. Look at the Small Business Administration (SBA), which supports entrepreneurs and small businesses. Since the pandemic began, SBA has juggled boosting the economy with improving public health.

Deputy CIO Guy Cavallo said SBA has weathered COVID-19 by approaching its routines from fresh angles. In an interview with GovLoop, Cavallo explained how SBA has evolved.

This interview has been lightly edited for clarity and length.



GOVLOOP: How has COVID-19 changed your role?

CAVALLO: I think every teleworking employee is now gaining a new level of respect and appreciation for the IT staff and the operations – everything works seamlessly for them.

Like most government agencies in the middle of the federal government's response to COVID-19, we've had a command center. We're able to manage SBA's critical role on getting money out to small businesses. While it was initially set up as a physical room like a traditional war-room operation, we recommended and quickly implemented making it a virtual command center using our collaboration tool.

So, instead of having our senior leadership all in the room together to be updated, now wherever our leadership is working from, they're able to connect and see everything in real time.



What obstacles has SBA encountered while teleworking, and how are you solving them?

I think the biggest significant change is not just turning out paper. As an agency, we'd already started to reduce our paper output and do more things digitally. In fact, our security policy does not allow for printing documents at home, which has been an adjustment for many of our staff. We have modified our policy to allow very specific exceptions for short periods of time, and certain documents do require printing.

We were surprised that there are still some government documents that do not have a digital signature but require a wet signature. I know that the CIO Council is working to change that. We've set up an exception where we can grant somebody an hour, four hours or a day to print on their home computer during that time. But we then take that away. So, for people that want to print out a 100-page document, they're learning that they've got to change and edit the document on their screen.

What long-term benefits could a more agile workforce create for SBA?

I would think the biggest impact is the realization across the board that we don't need to have everybody in the office at the same time to be effective. Especially in the IT workforce, where experienced professionals with cloud architecture, agile development and other in-demand skills are in such limited supply right now. It is being able to hire somebody across the country and not move them to Washington, D.C. I think is a long-term benefit.

One of my top cloud developers lives in Texas full time. For the last year and a half, we'd fly him in for meetings a couple of times a year, but we'd otherwise only see him in teleconferences. When he was going to move to Texas, we had the choice of keeping him remotely or letting him go and hopefully trying to find somebody else. We decided to keep him as part of our team.

I'm hoping other senior leaders across government will see that if there's somebody in Oregon who wants to work for you but doesn't want to move, the tools and capabilities are available so you can trust and have them be part of your team without ever living in Washington, D.C.

Sacramento, California Dreams of Digital Transformation

Necessity is the mother of invention, and the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted Sacramento, California, to dream up creative answers to its problems. Whether it is delivering Wi-Fi via buses or launching digital innovation platforms, Sacramento is creating surprising solutions to its challenges.

According to Chief Innovation Officer (CINO) Louis Stewart, Sacramento's recent initiatives embody such city principles as creativity and collaboration. Speaking with GovLoop, Stewart detailed how digital transformation can become a state of mind for agencies.

This interview has been lightly edited for clarity and length.

GOVLOOP: How has COVID-19 changed Sacramento's CX, products and services?

STEWART: We need to find a way to reach citizens who are trying to pay fines, get permits or do other business the city does. We're trying to meet people where they are. Our IT team has done a fabulous job transferring most of our services to a digital platform.

This has also brought to light the digital divide. We're at the beginning stages of the conversation. We're starting to look at what partnerships we can bring to the table to get digital equity as a fundamental element of citizen life here.

The pandemic has dispelled the myth that teleworking is not a thing. There are studies showing people are more productive working from home. Management has less of a reason to worry about people working from home.

Sacramento is probably forever changed, like everyone else. For us, it's going to be necessary to look at what markets can operate in this system. We need to start rethinking attraction mechanisms. What kind of life are we trying to build for our citizens?

Sacramento began using buses to provide Wi-Fi access during the pandemic. How has that helped citizens?

Wi-Fi buses came about from the state looking at how transit agencies might take a bigger role in recovery during fire season, earthquakes and other disasters. We got hit by the pandemic and we needed to deal with the digital homework gap with all the students. There was a mad rush for laptops. All the schools took time to figure out how to put their educational platforms online. We rolled that out as an educational tool.

It's also a job tool. If people are looking for work or need to do work at home, they can go to the bus. It is a proof of concept we think has merit.

I would go out to the sites and use the service myself. You couldn't really tell any difference. It was better speed than I had at home. It is super easy to log in. We decided not to enable too many tracking features. We could tell if people were watching Netflix.

What are some best practices for digital transformation you'd recommend?

The first best practice is starting from yes. Try not to start from a place where you're scared to try new things.

Look at how to reduce rollout times. You remove all the barriers to rolling out a quality product or service to citizens.

Examine how to evolve with change. You just start stacking changes on and making the services better.

Be open to some of the startups out there that are vying for your attention. It's OK to work with some startups.

Take a second and see how agile you need to be during this moment in time. The pandemic is offering the world the greatest opportunity in a decade or more to reimagine itself. We can restart the listening process. What is the best thing for our ultimate customer? What is the easiest way to close the gap on how we deliver services?



Conclusion

Digital transformation isn't just the next big thing – it is here. Today's citizens expect agencies to provide them with innovative, engaging and rewarding products and services. Fundamentally, agencies that can't meet citizens on their terms may never fully accomplish their missions.

But agencies don't need to wait for the future. By carefully considering the long-term impact on their people, processes and technology, any agency can digitally transform. Whether federal, state or local, all that starting the adventure takes is that first step.



Thank you to ServiceNow for their support of this valuable resource for public sector professionals.

To learn more, please visit www.servicenow.com/gov



About GovLoop

GovLoop's mission is to inspire public sector professionals by serving as the knowledge network for government. GovLoop connects more than 300,000 members, fostering cross-government collaboration, solving common problems and advancing government careers. GovLoop is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a team of dedicated professionals who share a commitment to the public sector.

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