



Embracing Digital Government: An Agency's Guide to Transforming the Citizen Experience

The need to embrace digital transformation in order to engage constituents has taken on new urgency. Here's how agencies can get started.

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Government agencies are no different than any other service-oriented, commercial business in one respect: To thrive, they must be customer centric. Population centers and business expansions that drive tax revenues gravitate towards locales with engaged, easy-to-work-with government organizations. As a result, public sector agencies must look for ways to provide round-the-clock availability for routine transactions, like vehicle registrations or permit applications, and provide self-service tools and customer portals that simplify and ease communications.

Moreover, the need to embrace digital transformation in order to engage constituents has taken on new urgency in the past couple of months as they've needed to adjust to their 'new normal'. Government agencies are seeing a critical need to be nimble and serve their constituents effectively — wherever they are.

To meet this demand, agencies will need to offer higher-value digital capabilities and provide secure access to data and applications for a remote workforce. When it comes to embracing the digital transformation needed to enable these capabilities, agencies must find a way to design a scalable network that provides redundancies and automation within a secure environment. While this can be a challenge at the best of times, the realities of tighter budgets on the horizon add an extra layer of complexity.

So, how do agencies push citizen-centric improvements with limited resources? By combining managed services and efficient underlying network services that many can tap into.

Managed Services Offer a Scalable, Sustainable Way Forward

As the public sector looks to balance budgets in the face of lower tax revenue, many agencies are looking to streamline their operations by cutting redundant and non-essential IT programs. That might mean, for example, minimizing the number of servers or network devices an IT department relies on.

But eliminating these types of programs can leave them without the backup needed for disaster recovery and business continuity efforts, leading to downtime that could be potentially devastating in the face of a cybersecurity breach or other disaster.

There's an answer that doesn't require cutting valuable services: Agencies can extend the expertise, innovation and commitment of their government IT teams, amid limited internal resources, by partnering with a managed services provider. By contracting for managed services, agencies gain the experience of a team of experts, ultimately maximizing IT resources and making it possible for agencies to modernize infrastructure while maintaining essential operations, enhancing online citizen services and reducing expenses. They can also help agencies identify and eliminate waste and streamline workflows.

For example, by migrating to a managed

software-defined wide area networking (SD-WAN) architecture, agencies can cost-effectively maximize bandwidth network-wide and strengthen government cybersecurity postures. This ensures IT teams have the resources available to intelligently prioritize critical applications — like a WAN outage that will affect hundreds of thousands of users or result in financial hardships—and reroute or even block other non-mission critical applications that might have a more minimal impact on your overall operation.

Further, as agencies look to improve communications and interactions with constituents, a unified communications solution can answer increasing work-from-anywhere demands efficiently, converging disparate applications under a single enterprise architecture to lower operational expenses and strengthen network-wide security.

Additionally, agencies should think about integrating financial and administrative systems, migrating and backing up the combined data with a cloud-managed solution.

As turnkey services with no CapEx, managed services allow agencies to upgrade and deploy new technologies, locations, and applications quickly, ultimately expanding citizen services

network-wide with new conveniences and online capabilities, even in the face of tighter budgets.

Automate, Virtualize and Centralize

Partnering with a trusted vendor to enable efficient underlying services and migrating to a managed SD-WAN architecture can offer agencies complete network visibility and, in turn, improve cost-efficiency.

This IT efficiency begins with automation: Using predefined processes to handle network traffic policies not only helps to shorten troubleshooting timelines, but also reduces errors in times of high stress. SD-WAN routing policies can detect and automatically reroute network traffic during circuit failures. They can also automatically reroute mission critical data to alternate transport circuits when a primary circuit is exhibiting a service degradation.

What's more, managed SD-WAN helps automate your expansion efforts, as new devices are deployed with the same rulesets previously identified within your network. No need to visit the new location and program from scratch or ship a newly configured gateway device and rely on a non-IT professional to get it right. Managing your entire network from a single pane of glass means changes can be made enterprise-wide with a single click.

From provisioning and deployment to maintenance and upgrades, automation through software-defined technology saves time and labor over manual processes, freeing your IT team to innovate ways to enhance citizen services through AI, IoT, chatbot and other emerging technologies.



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Virtualization is also a valuable capability. It uses government IT assets more efficiently by distributing capabilities to other users and environments. For example, if an IT team has separate devices at each location for firewalls, encryption and troubleshooting, they can combine and virtualize their functions with SD-WAN.

By centralizing infrastructure, virtualization allows state and local government IT teams to control their entire network from a remote location. So, an agency can maintain, upgrade and deploy WAN-wide applications in minutes, without travel or hardware expenses. With less drain on resources, governments can redirect their focus to higher-level strategic initiatives.

A Citizen-Centric Future

Every agency has different requirements and challenges, be it cloud automation, security assessment, collaborative voice solutions or network architecture. All of these technologies require a great deal of specialization from IT staff as well as significant investment: a tall order for today's resource-strained state and local governments. But with a managed services partner, you can sleep at night and so can your IT team, because you will have a team of experts monitoring and managing your network and servers 24/7/365. They will proactively optimize performance and constantly defend against cyberthreats: detecting, identifying, notifying and shutting down vulnerabilities before they escalate.

Frontier's suite of managed IT services not only offers the benefits of deploying services as an operational expense, but also provides the resident expertise needed to define, validate and deploy the various components required to achieve digital transformation goals.

Frontier's managed services also include 24/7/365 performance and security monitoring along with expert guidance. With a government IT partner optimizing your network and keeping you future-ready, your agency can maximize its resources to achieve more with less.

Learn more about how Frontier provides the managed services and expertise necessary to modernize your agency's IT and improve the citizen experience.

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