nintex

The automation + AI playbook for government

Applying the power of on-prem workflow orchestration to drive AI adoption in the public sector

The path to AI-powered services starts with automation

As with adoption of many new technologies, public sector agencies lag behind private enterprise in AI adoption. While overall, 54% of industries have deployed AI, only 44% of government organizations are currently using it. But even though it may be slowed by regulatory and bureaucratic processes, the public sector is making progress: 84% of decision makers report that their organizations are planning to invest in AI within the next financial year1; a major leap for the public sector. This creates a dual challenge for government agencies: improving service delivery for constituents while maintaining strict control over data, policy, and execution.

What many of these agencies aren't considering is the criticality of automation to their AI plans. As it stands, according to a recent MIT study, 95% of organizations across sectors report that they are getting no value from their AI initiatives. However, **research by Nintex** shows how to dramatically boost AI value. We found that 98% of public sector decision-makers say their AI initiatives are effective or very effective when they are supported by automation. Our study also shows that 89% of those decision-makers believe automation is a necessary first step *before* applying AI to business processes. With this broad consensus, these leaders see automation as the first step to achieving success with their agency or department's AI initiatives.

89%

OF PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION-MAKERS SAY AUTOMATION MUST COME BEFORE AI

1 *"Your journey to a GenAI future: A strategic path to success in banking,"* SAS Global Research Study, 2024

AI success in government requires control over execution

The challenge with AI in government isn't adoption — it's control.

Public sector organizations operate in some of the most highly regulated environments, where data sovereignty, privacy, and accountability are not optional. Every decision, every action, and every outcome must be explainable, auditable, and aligned with policy.

As agencies introduce AI into public services, they must ensure:

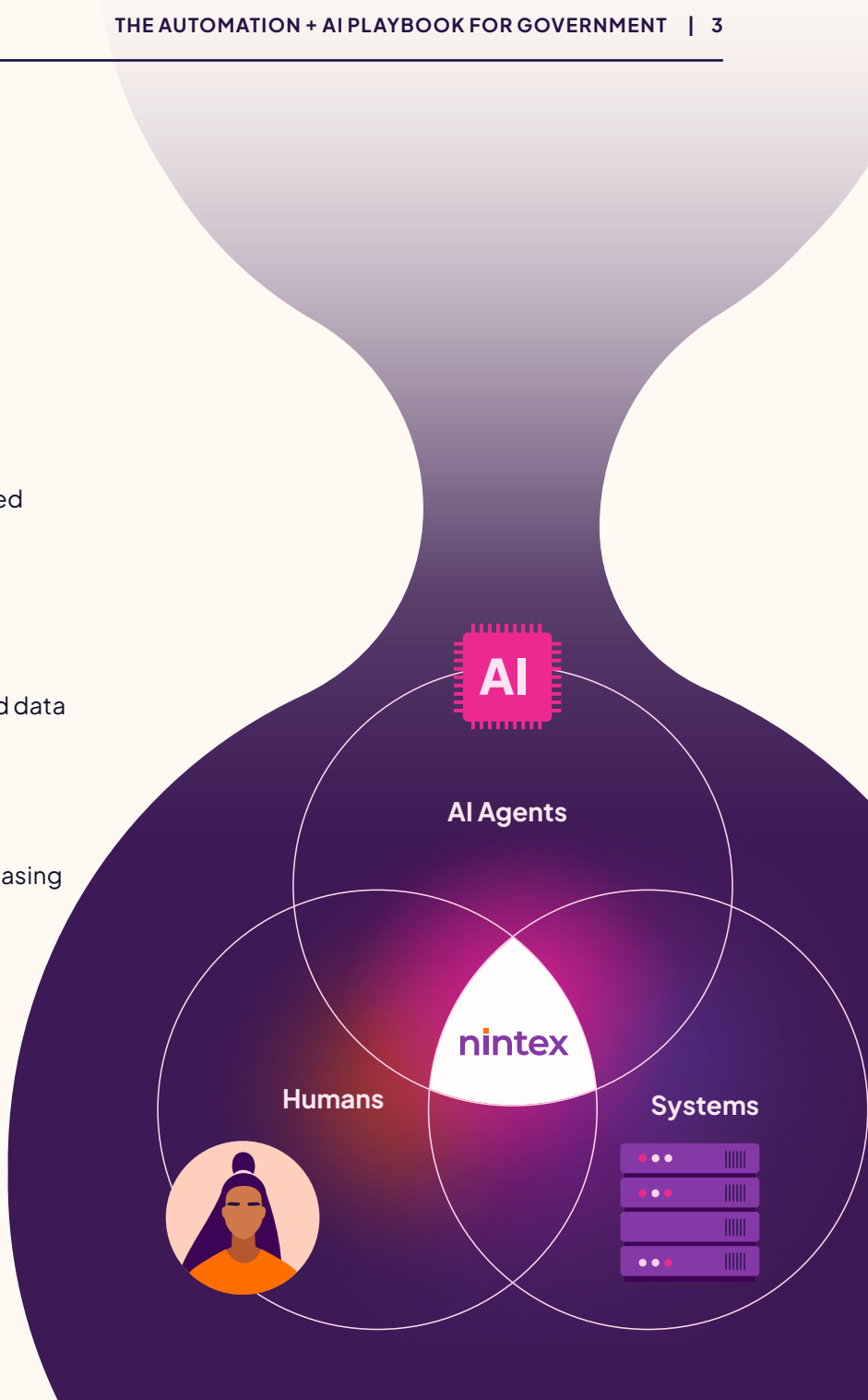
- Sensitive data remains within controlled environments and jurisdictional boundaries
- Decisions are transparent, explainable, and defensible
- Processes execute consistently across departments and programs
- Compliance, security, and policy enforcement are embedded into how work runs

Without this level of control, AI introduces real risk:

- Decisions that cannot be explained or justified
- Inconsistent service delivery across constituents
- Exposure of sensitive or regulated data
- Increased scrutiny, audit burden, and loss of public trust

At the same time, agencies face increasing pressure to reduce service backlogs, improve response times, and deliver more efficient constituent experiences — often with limited staff and resources.

This is why automation alone is not enough.



Control execution without compromising data sovereignty

Nintex K2 is an orchestration platform that gives government agencies control over how work executes across systems, people, and data — allowing agencies to operate entirely within their own environment without reliance on external or public cloud services.

It embeds governance, auditability, and policy enforcement directly into workflows, ensuring every action is traceable and every decision aligns with regulatory and jurisdictional requirements.

By uniting workflows, systems, and AI within a single execution layer, K2 enables agencies to modernize service delivery while maintaining full control over data, security, and compliance. This ensures agencies can modernize while maintaining full control over infrastructure, data residency, and execution.

Government agencies don't just need faster processes; they need controlled execution.

They need a system of execution: an orchestration layer that defines how work runs across systems, people, and AI, while enforcing governance at every step.

In this model:

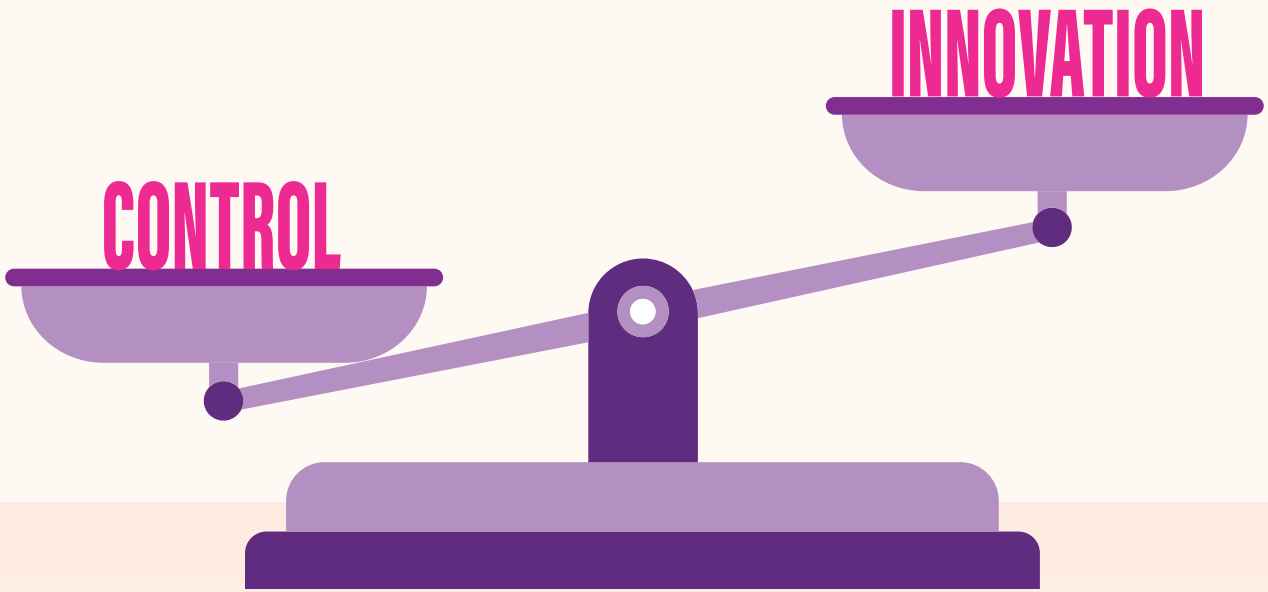
- Data stays protected and within policy boundaries
- Every action is traceable and auditable
- AI operates within defined guardrails, not outside them

The question isn't just ***"Where can we apply AI?"***

It's: ***"Do we have control over how work executes today?"***

Before you can apply AI safely and effectively, you need to understand your current level of visibility, governance, and orchestration across workflows.

Start with a clear-eyed assessment of where you stand today.



STEP ONE

Assess your AI readiness

Clearly establish where you stand and what your key performance indicators (KPI) are
Answer each question by selecting the one statement that best reflects your reality today.

PROCESS VISIBILITY & GOVERNANCE

1. **How well documented are your agency's processes, supporting constituent services, data management, and regulatory mandates?**
   - ☐ A. Documentation is sparse or outdated
   - ☐ B. Core processes are documented, but inconsistently
   - ☐ C. Most processes are mapped, reviewed, and accessible
   - ☐ D. Processes are fully documented, version-controlled, and tied directly to compliance frameworks
2. **How consistently are compliance, audit requirements, and records management controls applied to automated workflows?**
   - ☐ A. Mostly manual or applied inconsistently
   - ☐ B. Some automated audit trails exist
   - ☐ C. Automated processes include embedded compliance checkpoints
   - ☐ D. Compliance and audit logging are fully integrated and continuous
3. **How effectively do program, IT, and compliance teams collaborate in deciding what to automate?**
   - ☐ A. Work is siloed, decisions are reactive
   - ☐ B. Consultation happens for major automations
   - ☐ C. Formal governance and prioritization frameworks guide decisions
   - ☐ D. Joint decision-making enables clear prioritization of high-volume/low-risk opportunities first

TECHNOLOGY & INTEGRATION

4. How integrated are your systems (case management, permitting, finance, licensing, etc.) with automation platforms?
   - ☐ A. Mostly disconnected; manual handoffs dominate
   - ☐ B. Pilot programs connect a few key systems
   - ☐ C. Shared platforms integrate major systems
   - ☐ D. End-to-end orchestration connects all core workflows

5. How effectively does your automation approach reinforce data privacy, cybersecurity, and zero-trust principles?
   - ☐ A. Security is handled separately from automation
   - ☐ B. Basic controls exist, but they are not standardized
   - ☐ C. Access, data handling, and security policies are embedded into automated processes
   - ☐ D. Security, compliance, and monitoring automatically apply across all automated workflows

6. How well do analytics or AI support operational efficiency, fraud detection, or constituent service delivery?
   - ☐ A. Not currently used
   - ☐ B. Used in isolated experiments
   - ☐ C. AI is applied to improve service quality and reduce risk
   - ☐ D. AI + automation work together to provide proactive, reliable, and equitable service delivery

PEOPLE & CULTURE

7. How aligned are agency leaders and program teams on automation priorities?
   - ☐ A. Decisions vary by department
   - ☐ B. Alignment improving around shared challenges
   - ☐ C. Formalized governance aligns priorities across functions
   - ☐ D. Unified roadmap with clear criteria for high-volume and low-risk automation focus

8. How empowered are staff to identify and support automation efforts?
   - ☐ A. Staff have limited involvement
   - ☐ B. Staff can request improvements
   - ☐ C. Staff contribute feedback and help refine automations
   - ☐ D. Staff can safely build or modify low-risk automations within guardrails

9. How well do you communicate the role of automation in improving compliance, efficiency, and constituent outcomes?
   - ☐ A. Limited communication
   - ☐ B. Awareness growing across the agency
   - ☐ C. Case studies and metrics help demonstrate impact
   - ☐ D. Automation value is transparent and tied to measurable public-service outcomes

To score your responses, count how many A, B, C, and D boxes you checked.

Mostly A

1. Initiating

Automation is reactive, manual, and inconsistent across programs.

Mostly B

2. Ramping

Pilots are underway; governance and standardization are still forming.

Mostly C

3. Accelerating

Automation is expanding with defined KPIs and shared services delivering at scale.

Mostly D

4. Scaling

Automation is agency-wide with well-governed, data-driven self-service.

The next strategic steps for your stage of readiness

1. INITIATE

Identify and document processes and players

Begin by identifying and documenting critical processes and engaging the people who perform them. Reach a clear understanding of where data lives, how it moves, and where decisions happen. This provides clarity on where automation will deliver value and prevents automating broken or inefficient processes.

2. RAMP

Build capabilities and human infrastructure

To formalize automation, establish a lightweight automation Center of Excellence (CoE) or steering group that prioritizes opportunities, establishes governance, and selects your core automation platform. Consider running pilot projects to generate early wins, build momentum, and demonstrate business value. These success stories can help you secure stakeholder buy-in.

3. ACCELERATE

Broaden delivery and measure impact

Expand beyond pilot projects into cross-functional automation, using templates, reusable components, and shared services to deliver rapidly. Measure automation KPIs that tie work to outcomes such as time saved, cost reduced, or cycle time improved. AI can give you a useful tool to continually optimize processes.

4. SCALE

Democratize governed automation agency-wide

Enable self-service within guardrails. Empower internal users to create and modify automations within a governed framework. IT can help ensure compliance, security, and platform integrity, but your solutions should minimize impact on IT resources. While sustaining momentum through continuous improvement, you'll want to monitor performance and evolve processes to prevent automation from becoming "set and forget."

STEP TWO

Establish control through execution visibility

Before scaling automation or introducing AI, government agencies must establish control over how services execute and how data moves within those services.

In highly regulated environments, visibility is not just operational; it's foundational to compliance, security, and public trust.

That visibility must be:

- **Real-time**, not reconstructed after the fact
- **Auditable**, not inferred from logs or manual review
- **Tied to execution**, not static documentation

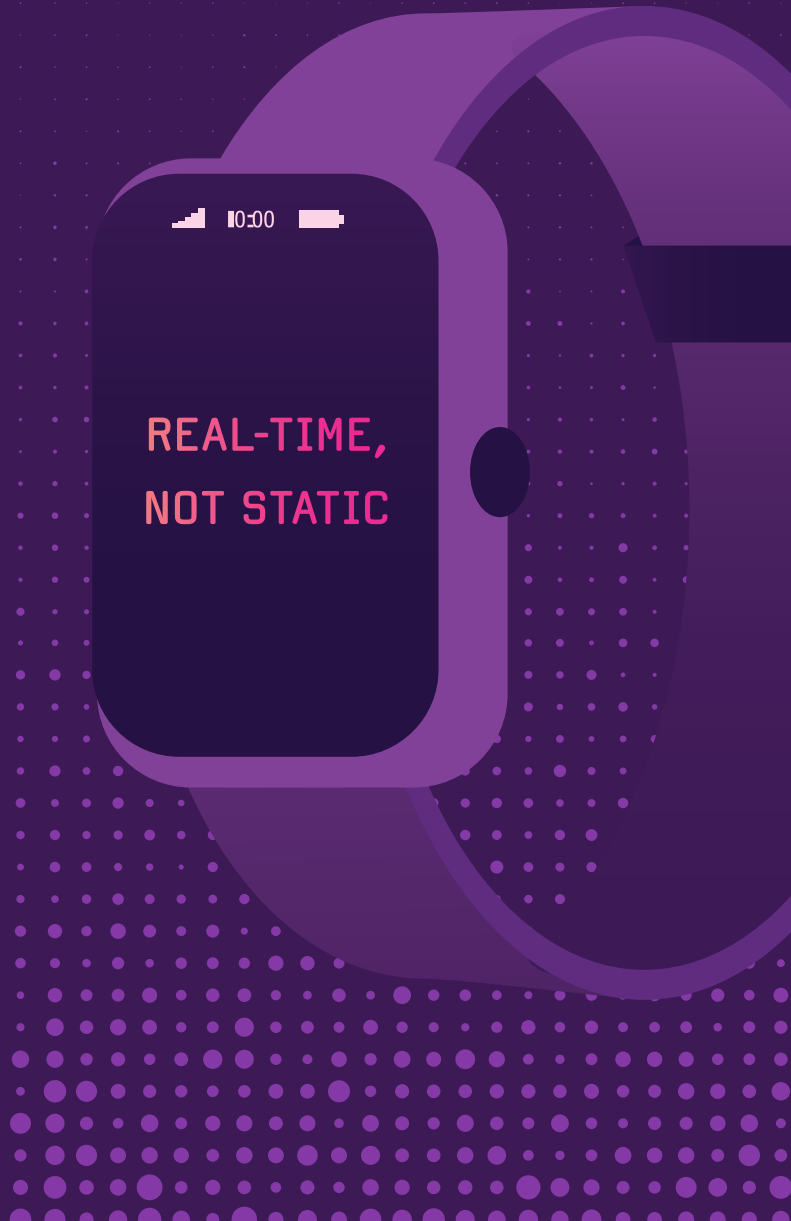
This means understanding:

- How services and workflows move across departments, agencies, and systems
- Where decisions are made — and by whom
- How data is accessed, shared, and transformed
- Where manual handoffs, delays, service backlogs, or compliance gaps occur

Without this level of visibility, agencies risk:

- Automating processes they don't fully understand
- Applying AI without sufficient oversight
- Exposing sensitive data or violating policy constraints
- Creating inconsistent or inequitable service outcomes

Before introducing intelligence, agencies must first establish **control over execution and data flow.**



Build a system of execution, not just documentation

Many agencies rely on process documentation, policy manuals, and disconnected systems to understand how work gets done.

But documentation alone doesn't reflect how services actually execute in real-world conditions.

Leading agencies are shifting toward a system of execution, where workflows themselves become the source of truth.

With a platform like Nintex K2, this includes:

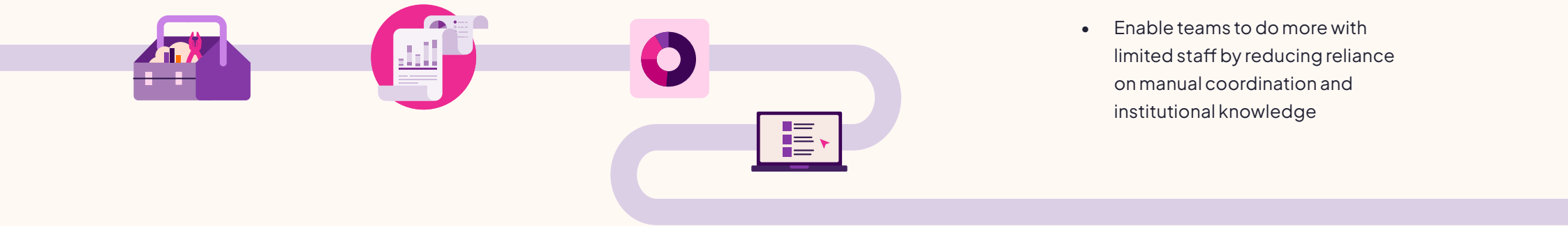
- End-to-end visibility into how services execute across departments
- Built-in audit trails for every action, decision, and data interaction
- Policy and compliance enforcement embedded directly into workflows
- Controlled data access aligned with security and jurisdictional requirements
- Clear ownership of how processes run and evolve

By capturing intelligence directly from execution, agencies gain:

- Accurate, real-time insight into service delivery performance
- Full traceability of decisions and outcomes
- Visibility into how systems, people, and data interact
- Greater confidence in compliance, reporting, and audit readiness

This enables agencies to:

- Standardize service delivery across departments and programs
- Reduce delays, errors, and manual handoffs
- Strengthen data protection and policy enforcement
- Improve transparency and accountability to stakeholders and constituents
- Reduce case backlogs and improve service turnaround times
- Enable teams to do more with limited staff by reducing reliance on manual coordination and institutional knowledge



You can’t apply AI responsibly without control over execution and data

If you can’t see how work runs

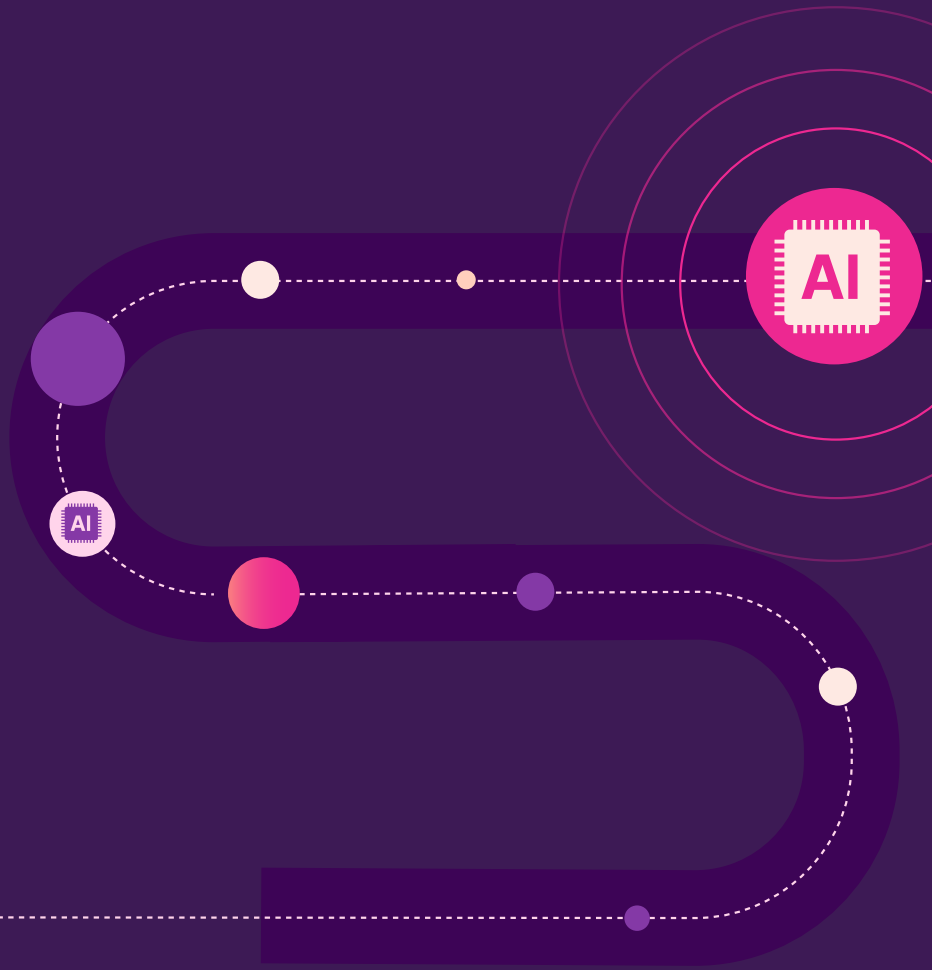
→ you can’t govern AI

If you can’t trace decisions

→ you can’t defend outcomes

If you can’t control data flow

→ you can’t ensure compliance or trust



STEP THREE

Apply AI within controlled, governed workflows

Once you have visibility and control over how services execute — and how data flows within them — you can begin to introduce AI deliberately and within defined boundaries.

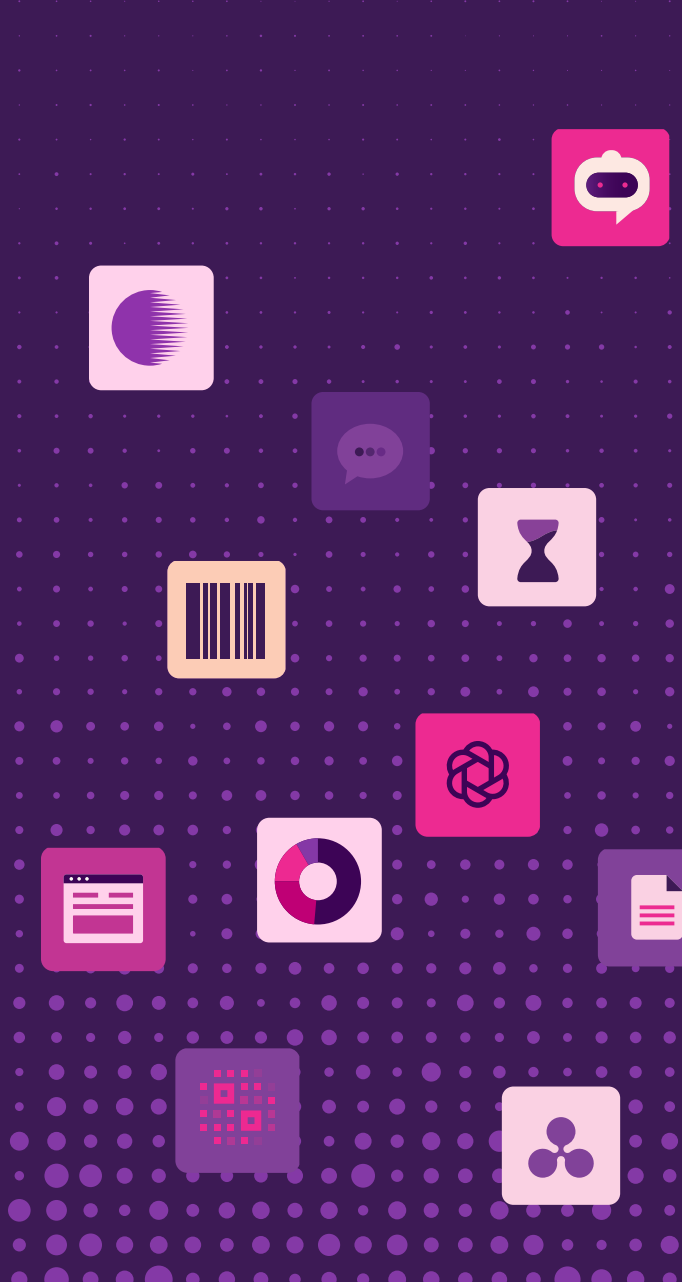
In government, the goal is not to apply AI broadly; it's to apply it responsibly, transparently, and in alignment with policy.

That means using AI where it adds value, while ensuring every action remains governed, auditable, and secure.

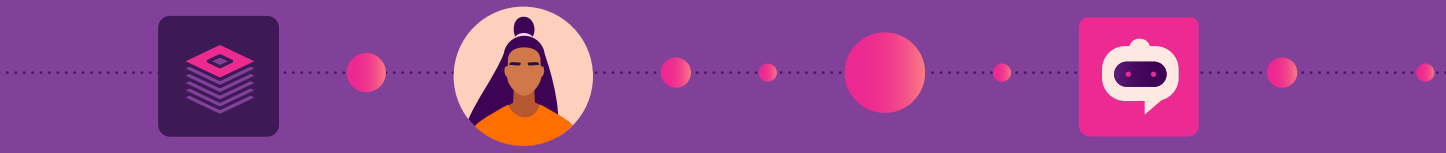
This includes:

- Applying AI to judgment-based tasks, such as classification, prioritization, and case routing
- Preserving deterministic workflows for compliance-driven, repeatable processes
- Ensuring all AI-driven decisions are traceable, explainable, and reviewable
- Keeping sensitive data within controlled, jurisdictional environments
- Confirming AI-driven decisions are applied consistently and fairly across constituents

In this model, AI enhances service delivery, but always within the boundaries of policy, governance, and public accountability.



Orchestrate systems, people, and AI — without losing control



Government environments are inherently complex, spanning legacy systems, modern applications, and increasing demands for digital service delivery.

At the same time, agencies must uphold strict requirements around data protection, privacy, and accountability.

Orchestration provides a way to unify these elements into a single, governed execution layer.

With a platform like Nintex K2:

- Workflows coordinate activity across systems, departments, and agencies
- Policy enforcement and compliance controls are embedded directly into execution
- Every action, decision, and data interaction is captured in a complete audit trail
- AI capabilities operate within defined guardrails, ensuring consistency and fairness in service delivery
- Break down silos between programs to enable end-to-end service delivery

Rather than introducing AI as a separate layer, it becomes part of a controlled execution model — operating within workflows, not outside of them.

FINAL THOUGHT

The 3 biggest regrets public sector leaders shared, and how to avoid them

As you consider how to improve processes, productivity, and constituent outcomes with workflow orchestration — all while operating under strict regulatory, budgetary, and accountability constraints — consider these insights from public sector leaders. We asked them to name the top things they would say to others looking to get more value from AI.

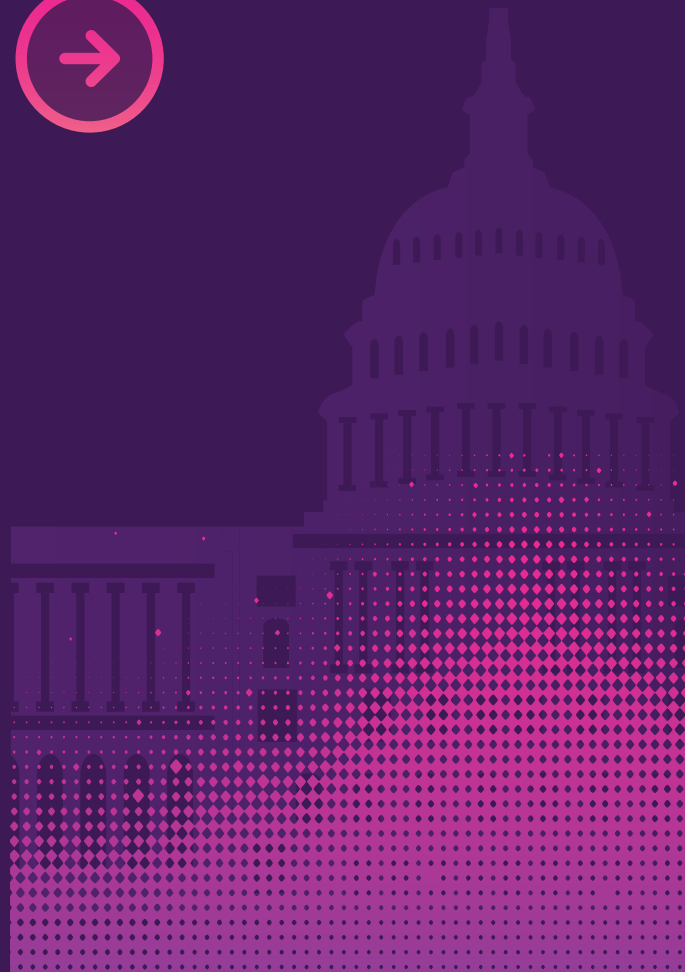
Here's what they said:

Address the foundational requirements of automation before launching AI initiatives, including consistent data handling, clearly defined workflows, and the ability to enforce policy and compliance across processes.

Don't move too quickly. While agencies face pressure to modernize services and adopt AI, moving too fast without governance can introduce compliance risk, inconsistent outcomes, and increased audit scrutiny.

Choose the right tools and partners to support you from planning through continuous optimization, prioritizing solutions that maintain control over data, operate within your environment, and align with your regulatory and security requirements. Naturally, Nintex is ready with a powerful orchestration platform to meet your needs.

Explore Nintex K2 now



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Nintex, the possibility engine™, helps organizations unlock the power of agentic business orchestration by combining process intelligence, workflow orchestration, low-code development, and agentic AI to build solutions designed for their unique business challenges. Today, more than 7,000 public and private sector organizations across more than 100 countries rely on Nintex and its global partner network to supercharge business process orchestration, create purpose-built solutions, and unlock the full potential of their people.

Learn more about how Nintex and its global partner network are propelling people, work, and business forward at **nintex.com**.