



Accelerating Program Delivery

Challenges and Solutions for Public Sector Leaders

2023



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The public sector faces shifting community expectations and demands for new services and support, while navigating rapidly changing circumstances. Recent major events and natural disasters, such as Bush Fire Response, Flood Response, and COVID community support initiatives, have highlighted the importance of rapid innovation and accelerated program delivery.

Speed of implementation and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances are now critical. Nevertheless, many public sector organisations still struggle to turn data and insights into action and outcomes. This is a crucial capability that public sector organisations need to build to enable quality decision-making and speed up the pace of delivery of business improvements and new services.

Australia's Public Sector is one of the largest providers of services within the southern hemisphere, with an enormous workforce employed both directly and indirectly via labour hire arrangements.

At June 2022, the Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that across all levels of government in Australia, approximately 2.1 million people were employed, with approximately \$193 billion in direct annual wages costs paid for FY2021-2022. ¹

¹ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Employment and Earnings, Public Sector, Australia 2021-22 financial year



The scale of the public sector workforce means that it contributes very significantly to overall economic performance, and heavily influences the outcomes for Australia’s overall workforce productivity.

Recent figures from the Productivity Commission, demonstrate that productivity rates across the Australian workforce have been steadily declining for several decades. This has occurred during a period of rapid digitisation and automation in many areas of the private sector and can be attributed in part to the broader economic shift towards a services-oriented economy.

In a nutshell, many services are more labour and skills intensive than traditional manufacturing, resource extraction, and primary industries.



As Australia’s economy has progressively shifted away from manufacturing, towards a services focus, workforce productivity improvements have not kept pace.

This is particularly true for many parts of the public sector, which are heavily focused on services. Further compounding the issue is the “hyper acceleration” of customer expectations.

Uptake and usage of new service delivery methods and channels, and the focus on the use of personal phones as access devices for services, has also rapidly changed expectations.

This trend was cemented as the new baseline during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New delivery methods and service channels are likely to continue to be a source of transformation and innovation. The public sector will, for the most part, still be expected to continue to provide traditional modes of interactions.

“The design of some government services is being constrained by outdated policy development frameworks that are not keeping pace with citizen expectations.”

*Public Sector Leader,
Kofax Gov Round Table
2023*

While some community members value being able to physically walk into a branch during standard business hours to interact with a government service, many, if not most, Australians prefer to interact with those services from their personal phone, at the time of their choosing.

As a result, public sector leaders now need to continually reassess and recalibrate services

“Some parts of the sector are not keeping pace with contemporary digitisation and security protocols.

This is resulting in potentially sub optimal service delivery and security outcomes across the sector”.

Commonwealth Public Sector Leader - 2023

and service delivery against changing demographic, societal, economic, and technological circumstances. Amidst these complex challenges, government and policy makers are also facing considerable pressure to find new ways to reduce

operational costs, lift productivity, and accelerate the introduction of new services.

In the short term, the public sector is expected to face significant budgetary pressures. Leaders will be expected to find ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. This means reducing the costs involved in providing services, while improving quality of service,

delivering in an inclusive and accessible manner, with satisfactory customer experiences and outcomes.

In addition, the public sector has consistently faced serious challenges relating to workforce recruitment, and workforce capability.

“Government leaders need to focus on redesigning services around the need of the users and avoid the temptation to simply digitise existing service delivery processes.”

Commonwealth Public Sector Leader - 2023

In combination, these factors point to a strong case for investment in workforce capability and technology tools, to enable a lift in productivity, and help address the challenges ahead.

Service Redesign Considerations

It is important to consider that customer needs and behaviours will inevitably change over time. Flexibility and adaptability are critical elements of any new program or service design. While these considerations are consistent across many industries, the ways that they are addressed can vary dramatically.

Cost Effectiveness

Ensuring the delivery of high value services at low cost, while also improving the customer experience.

Service Quality and Efficiency

Strengthening service delivery oversight to ensure high quality and speedy decision making while increasing visibility of end-to-end service delivery to continually improve service efficiencies.

Technology Enabled Service Delivery

Accelerating service delivery safely and ethically through the use of technology, while realising productivity gains through faster digitisation and connection with citizens.

Investing in Digital Capability

Strengthening the quality of data assets, analytics and insights while using those insights to inform the design and delivery of programs, take purposeful action, and improve outcomes.

Robust Program Efficiency

Ensuring the effective delivery of programs and services while accelerating new program delivery and benefits realisation, without compromising on quality.

Future Focused Workforce Capabilities

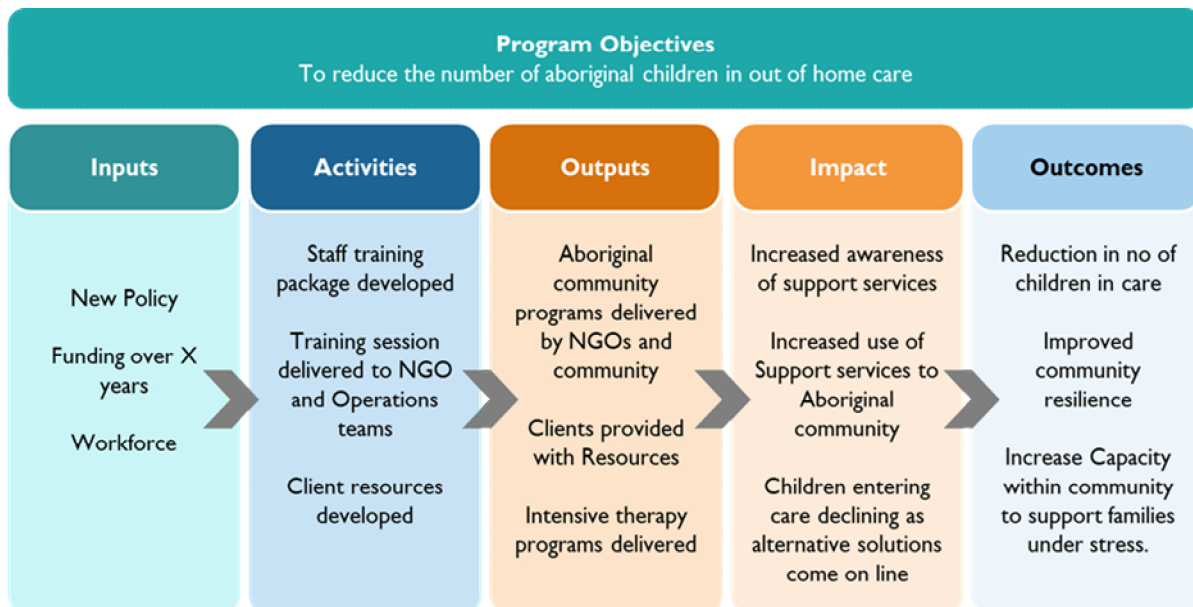
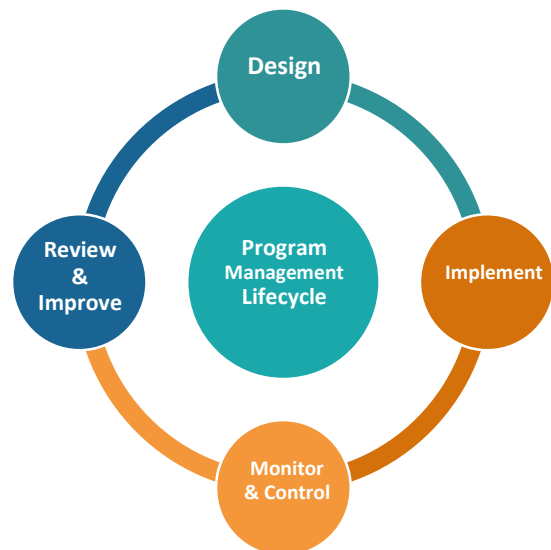
Building a capable workforce while ensuring they are future ready and empowered to develop higher value capabilities.

Program Management and Service Architecture

Public sector organisations often need to administer and measure the performance of a portfolio of programs. Those programs need to be implemented and managed, and frequently require the development and delivery of a suite of tailored services, business processes, and customer interactions.

Many government entities are expected to interact with and offer their services to a very diverse range of customers and businesses. While it may not always seem to be the case, Government programs are often designed to operate for a fixed period, within a defined period of available funding.

Nevertheless, many government programs are adjusted significantly beyond their original design, which can lead to new services being required, or adjustments to existing services. In each case, considerable redesign and further implementation may be required. These redesign efforts sometimes require significant stakeholder interactions with other Government entities, the community, and businesses.

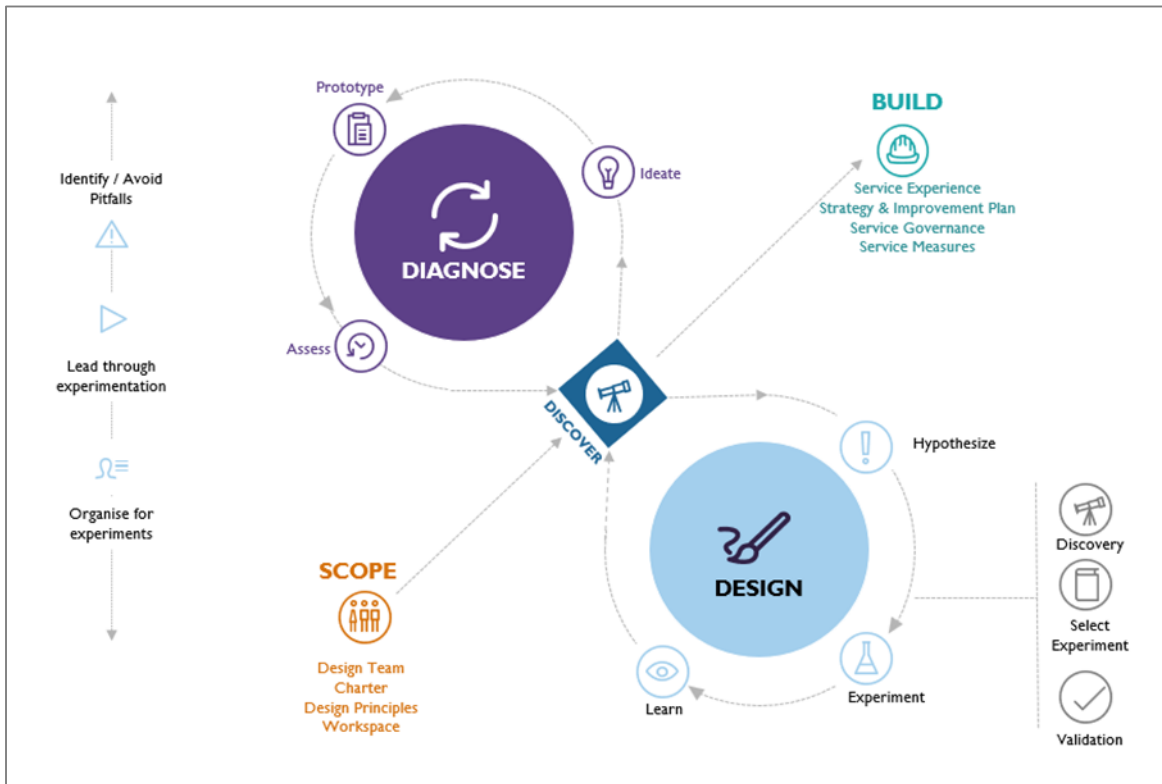


Example of Program / Impact Logic

Starting the Journey to Program Acceleration

Service redesign programs require a multi-disciplinary approach to identification, validation, prototyping, and mobilisation.

Scope & Discover	Diagnose & Design	Build & Improve
<p>The strongest design starts from first having a deep understanding of who government and leaders are designing for.</p> <p>Designers and participants need to have a clear understanding of the problem that needs to be overcome and what the key motivators are. This should be done using empathy and research.</p> <p>Key considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the ecosystem in which we operate? ▪ What do we know about the customer or user? ▪ What can we learn from our customers and users? ▪ What observations can we make about being in the environment? 	<p>Once leaders have clearly understood the challenges customers or users face, leaders and government can start to prioritise and make choices about what they want to design and decide what needs to be in scope. This is also an opportunity to ask how might we?</p> <p>Key considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defining and writing a statement about how things could be? ▪ Generating alternative pathways on how might we respond to the ideas and insights created? ▪ Brainstorming ideas on how we might enhance the customer or user experience? ▪ Narrowing and synthesising these ideas? 	<p>This phase centres on visualising alternative solutions and building prototypes to test assumptions. Generating feedback enables designers to iterate their design and reduce the risk of failure.</p> <p>Once the program has been delivered, the service is live and completely accessible to the public, which means the service can now be moved into operational BAU with a focus on ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement - a capability that may need to be developed within an already established service delivery model.</p> <p>A post-implementation phase enables human-centred problem solving to occur on the front-line by making smaller incremental improvements in the way the service is being delivered.</p> <p>Key Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visualise concepts to alternative requirements and experiences. ▪ Storyboard the key stages the user will go through. ▪ Design all aspects of the service from the perspective of the customer or user. ▪ Create a more nuanced definition of what needs to change in order to build the desired user experience.



Source: SpencerMaurice Service Redesign Methodology

Using Enablers to Accelerate Outcomes

Program acceleration relies on a combination of digital and non-digital enablers to help guide and shape the end-to-end process of design and implementation.

Leveraging data to inform decision making

Governments can leverage data analytics to identify service delivery bottlenecks and to make data-driven decisions to streamline service delivery processes and improve outcomes.

Digitisation of service delivery assets

The digitisation of assets can help governments to scale their services more easily and cost-effectively, and to provide services to citizens more quickly and securely.

Automating the customer experience

Robotic process automation, AI and machine learning can help governments to automate repetitive tasks, identify patterns and insights in data, and make data-driven decisions to accelerate service delivery. Automation has played an important role in automating the customer experience, which has accounted for 80% of all IT growth from 2015 to 2019, with revenue exceeding \$200 billion².

“Sector leadership needs to strengthen its understanding and appreciation of the significance that digital, data, technology will play going forward, particularly within the application and utilization of unstructured data to design new services.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

² Beyond Cost Savings: Reinventing Business through Automation, Bain

Leverage social media platforms to communicate with citizens

Social media and other digital platforms can help governments to communicate with citizens more effectively and efficiently, providing real-time updates and information about services and programs.

Adopt a citizen-centric doctrine

An organising idea is a single doctrine that coordinates people, experiences, services and communications. It unites the agency and its brand around a single promise and creates consistency across all internal and external touchpoints. A citizen-centric organising doctrine ensures that all services are focused on meeting the needs of the citizens.

Focus on customer experience

Governments need to invest in customer experience initiatives to improve customer satisfaction and accelerate service delivery.

Develop partnerships and collaborations with other government agencies

Collaboration with other organisations can help agencies share knowledge and resources, reduce duplication of effort, and accelerate service delivery.

Develop agile operating models

Governments can adopt agile operating models that are flexible and responsive to changing needs, enabling them to deliver services more quickly and efficiently.

Empower employees to make decisions and act

Governments can empower employees to make decisions and take action to improve service delivery, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

“Constraints on workforce and access to digital capabilities are resulting in an internal “war for talent” across the sector. The impact being that smaller and less resourced agencies are having to work harder to compete for limited skills and talent from within the sector.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

Deep Dive Guide to Enablers

Non-Digital Enablers	Digital Enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adopt a citizen-centric doctrine.Focus on customer experience.Develop partnerships and collaborations with other government agencies.Develop agile operating models.Empower employees to make decisions and act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Leveraging data to inform decision making.Digitisation of service delivery assets.Automating the customer experience.Leverage social media platforms to communicate with citizens

It is worth considering that embracing the broader application of these enablers can result in significant benefits beyond service delivery, across a broader range of policy and functional areas.

Firstly, the effective use of AI, data analytics, and digital technologies is an interconnected practice. Organisations that can successfully incorporate these capabilities into their infrastructure, processes, and BAU service delivery can potentially generate significant insights and uncover opportunities for improvements, through analysing performance and underlying data.

“There are significant opportunities for government to improve policy in order to strengthen and improve on data and information governance across the sector.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

This in turn can contribute to improved Program and Policy design, particularly regarding potential policy costs and impacts, and the evaluation of alternatives. Secondly, these enablers can be used to assist in the reimagining and redesign of ways of working. Many public sector organisations need to manage complex interactions with stakeholders and other government entities. These more complex interactions between organisations can particularly benefit from this design approach.

And finally, a reimagination of the “shop front” can transform the interactions with customers and community, to reduce complexity and speed up delivery. For example, when a person’s situation changes, or is predicted to have changed, there may be automated triggers to pre-qualify eligibility, and then notify and guide enrolment using pre-filled forms. This can substantially speed up programs and service delivery, while also improving data quality and customer experience.

Adopt a citizen-centric doctrine.

Adopting a citizen-centric doctrine is crucial for governments seeking to improve service delivery to their citizens. A citizen-centric approach focuses on designing and delivering services that meet the needs of citizens, rather than the convenience of the government. This approach involves developing a single organising idea that coordinates people, experiences, services, and communications around a single promise, creating consistency across all internal and external touchpoints.

To implement a citizen-centric approach, governments should understand the citizen journey, which is the entire experience that a person has when seeking a government service.

The citizen journey has a discrete beginning and end, and because it is typically multi-touch and multi-channel, it is also cross-functional in nature. Australian governments are adopting citizen-centric service delivery models to improve customer experience.

“As a sector, we will need to become more comfortable working with uncertainty and ambiguity and embrace more agile approaches when it comes to design and delivery if we are to remain competitive & relevant.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

“Government leaders will soon be faced with having to manage the risks, benefits and trade-offs associated with adopting more agile or iterative approaches to service design - rather than relying on traditional and linear approaches before a program or service is deployed.

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By adopting a citizen-centric doctrine, governments can improve service delivery, increase citizen satisfaction, and foster greater trust in government.

Focus on customer experience

Broad, complex problems can rarely be solved in isolation and the diversity of knowledge, experience, and capability that has been developed across the Australian public sector can be invaluable to any agency on their own path to innovation, program delivery, and service improvement.

The public sector is collectively the largest service provider in Australia and developing interagency forums to strengthen collaboration and knowledge sharing, as well the exchange of resources, will enable a one government approach to program delivery and to pass on the benefits of past successes and failures to their counterparts.

Develop partnerships and collaborations with other government agencies

Developing partnerships and collaborations with other government agencies can help achieve common goals and promote better service delivery to citizens. A successful collaboration requires recognizing and accepting the need for partnership, developing clarity and realism of purpose, ensuring commitment and ownership, creating clear and robust partnership

arrangements, developing and maintaining trust, and monitoring, measuring, and learning. Partnership arrangements can range from legally incorporated entities to simpler collaborations with varied stakeholders. Developing partnerships and collaborations can also enhance efficiency and effectiveness by leveraging each other's expertise and resources.

“Public sector leaders will need to focus on developing and embedding new service capabilities and delivery streams that rely heavily on agile program delivery if we are to keep pace.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

Develop agile operating models

Agile operating models in government call for experimentation and flexibility. This approach allows governments to test and improve their processes, from procurement to workforce

Example Methodology: Digital NSW

Digital NSW has developed guidelines to ensure that the planning, consideration, and design of solutions is effective and efficient from the outset.

The Pre-Discovery Phase

This phase ensures the problem to be solved is understood and clearly articulated, the landscape within which the problem exists is well researched, clear outcomes and expectations are established, and a tailored approach has been developed including the establishment of a multi-disciplinary team.

The Discovery Phase

This phase ensures deep understanding of service users and their needs to imagine better programs and services to meet those needs, including research to uncover key insights, themes and patterns, and ultimately sharing findings with key stakeholders to determine next steps, if any.

The Alpha Phase

This phase allows for rapid testing of different concepts and prototypes with users to bridge the gap between research and co-design, and prior to designing and building a service to ensure potential issues are identified and resolved early on. Ultimately this phase will determine which solution, if any, will best meet user needs and will establish a clear vision of the service and how it will be supported

management. To successfully implement an agile model, teams need to be clear on their purpose and strategy, which requires strong leadership and communication. Agile development techniques typically require a shift in working methods to engage in a trust-based, collaborative relationship between the vendor and client. By adopting this approach, government agencies can increase collaboration, improve responsiveness to changing needs, and drive greater impact across their various locations.

Empower employees to make decisions and act

The public sector workforce has evolved over decades into the diverse, multifaceted pool of capability that it currently is, and it will continue to develop while driven by ongoing enhancements in the technological and employment landscape. To really leverage workforce capability, public sector leaders can adopt a combination of strategies to drive innovation, accelerate program

“The low levels of trust and engagement within some parts of the sector are limiting the capacity for the sector to access alternative sources of talent, particularly those who may wish to work remotely”.

*Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov
Round Table 2023*

delivery and ensure the ongoing enhancement of services and customer outcomes. These include increasing the impact of current workforce capabilities by identifying, empowering, and drawing from capabilities that already exist within the organisation; borrowing capabilities that don't currently exist within

the organisation through interagency or private sector collaboration and partnering where similar work has been undertaken; and developing future-ready workforce capabilities by assessing and planning for a significant shift in the fundamental ways of working. Although there has been some discussion about the future of the Australian workforce regarding the anticipated impacts of technological advancements on job loss and job creation, what is clearly evident is that most jobs will indeed change to some degree.

Work activities that can be standardised will become automated and significantly reduce the need for staff to perform transactional tasks. It is estimated that “between 25 and 46 percent of current work activities in Australia could be automated by 2030, helping to drive the renaissance in productivity.” This will inevitably create renewed capacity and opportunity within the public sector workforce for the development of higher value capabilities including the technical skills required to use new technology as well as improved reasoning skills to take on more meaningful work.

Developing and implementing a future-oriented workforce strategy is the key to ensuring an organisation's workforce can confidently adapt to the very real changes to impact service delivery and to enable staff to draw from their collective capability to support citizens and businesses in managing more complex cases and ensuring the customer's needs are met.

NSW Data Analytics Centre & Behavioural Insight

The NSW Data Analytics Centre (DAC) partners with agencies to deliver innovation in service provision and improve customer outcomes by providing data and analytics capability and support for agency-led projects.

The Behavioural Insights Unit partners with agencies to improve the effectiveness of public services and policy by combining evidence from behavioural sciences and behavioural economics with the experience of service agencies and their customers.

The centre is tasked with applying analytics and data science approaches to realise the potential of data and improve customer outcomes.

The DAC achieves this by:

- Leading data coordination across jurisdictions
- Providing stewardship for linked data assets
- Providing capability and support for agency-led projects
- Inspiring widespread adoption of analytics and data science
- Supporting policy and service delivery using machine learning, automation and Artificial Intelligence

Leveraging data to inform decision making.

The public sector has access to an abundance of quality data assets and analytical expertise now more than ever before. Leveraging these capabilities, whether internally or through interagency collaboration, will ensure far more predictable improvements across accelerated program delivery, service quality and customer experience.

Data driven insights will, at the very least, enable public sector leaders to make well informed, evidence-based decisions allowing them to streamline services by easily detecting and eliminating inefficiencies thereby transforming the end-to-end service delivery cycle, supporting service automation efforts, personalising the customer experience and identifying areas for potential and purposeful policy reform.

Use of data driven insights can support both small scale and large-scale service delivery improvements and ensures that change is rooted in actual organisational and/or customer needs by removing guesswork.

Digitisation of Service Delivery Assets

The digitisation of service delivery assets involves leveraging digital technologies to improve the delivery of public services. Countries such as Denmark and Estonia have made significant strides in this area, with national portals and platforms offering digital services to residents and businesses.

Over recent years, Australians have become conditioned to expect information, services and support on demand due to notable strides the private sector has made in improving the digital user experience. Alongside this change, however, traditional methods of service delivery are still required and expected of government agencies from some segments of the population.

There are significant benefits to digitisation as both small and large-scale enhancements can ensure 24/7 accessibility, reductions in both time and cost to provide a service, as well as overall service friction and administrative burden which has historically impacted most public services.

Automating the Customer Experience

Services Australia has made significant improvements in the digitisation of services provided by Federal agencies and state-based organisations have been following suit. However, there are still many critical public services which have not yet commenced their digitisation journey to enhance service delivery. Leveraging the digitisation capabilities, tools, and platforms available will ensure a more rapid delivery of valuable public services by creating a seamless service experience that enables easy access to reliable information as well as increasing the availability of channels to access relevant services.

“There needs to be a greater emphasis and focus placed on government leaders understanding the ethics and social consequences associated with the development of digital services that rely on automation and AI across government.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

“The adoption of new distributed service delivery models offers real opportunities for government and the sector to access alternative talent sources.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

The real potential of leveraging automation technologies - including AI, advanced robotics, and machine learning - is to bring to life the vision of a completely new service experience; one which uses automation to redesign the “front door” and enable customers to increase their self-sufficiency by quickly and easily connecting with the personalised services they seek. Automation technologies can offer public sector leaders significant improvements in the delivery and continuous improvement of services while also personalising the customer experience, collecting and analysing data and developing insights, managing risks, as well as standardising and streamlining end to end service components to increase the simplicity, reliability and consistency of those services. Automation also enables staff to focus on the resolution of more complex cases and engage in higher value interactions with the public, which further develops the overall workforce capability and ultimately the customer experience.

“The digitisation and streamlining of critically important workforce and talent attraction and onboarding processes provide government with an opportunity to accelerate the talent and onboarding processes more efficiently and effectively, especially across multiple agencies with diverse and complex service delivery portfolios.”

Public Sector Leader, Kofax Gov Round Table 2023

Leverage social media platforms to communicate with citizens

Social media platforms have become an increasingly popular tool for governments to engage with their citizens. By leveraging social media platforms, governments can create discussions and engage with citizens, rather than just broadcasting advertisements. However, it is important to note that not all citizens have equal access to digital technologies and platforms. To ensure that everyone can effectively engage with the government through social media, digital literacy skills are important for citizens to have. Additionally, there are concerns about the negative effects of social media, including a decline of in-person communication and interpersonal connections. Therefore, while social media can be a useful tool for governments to communicate with citizens, it is important to consider the potential limitations and drawbacks of using social media as a communications platform.

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