Acquia
EXPERIENCE DIGITAL FREEDOM

Technology in Government Agencies Today

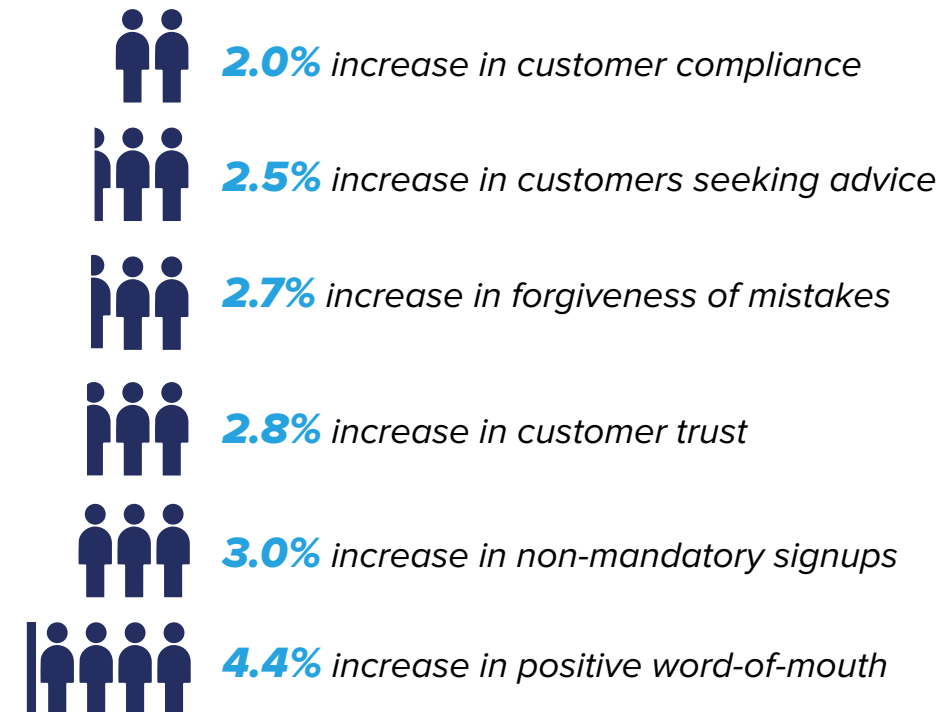# *CATCHING UP WITH CONSTITUENT EXPECTATIONS*

INTRODUCTION

Evolving technology and changing behaviors are transforming nearly every industry, and government is no exception.

Today, both national and local government agencies are seeking to improve the way they engage with constituents online, and how they deliver public services. While this undertaking presents significant challenges, effective planning and implementation now can enable government agencies to deliver the personalized, user-centric online services constituents expect today.

FOR EVERY 1-POINT INCREASE IN A GOVERNMENT AGENCY'S INDEX CX SCORE:

2.0% *increase in customer compliance*

2.5% *increase in customers seeking advice*

2.7% *increase in forgiveness of mistakes*

2.8% *increase in customer trust*

3.0% *increase in non-mandatory signups*

4.4% *increase in positive word-of-mouth*

Souce: Forrester: US Federal Customer Experience Index, 2018

FACING TRENDS IN GOVERNMENT

Leaders of government agencies understand the importance of transforming their digital experiences. Several concurrent and ongoing trends are shaping the form those transformations will take and the process required to implement them.

Constituents Keep Expecting More

Constituents are now accustomed to the continually improving digital experiences offered by private sector businesses. From banking to grocery shopping, they're used to accomplishing nearly any kind of task online, with increasing ease and accuracy. So it's no surprise that they're expecting the same types of streamlined, productive interactions from their government.
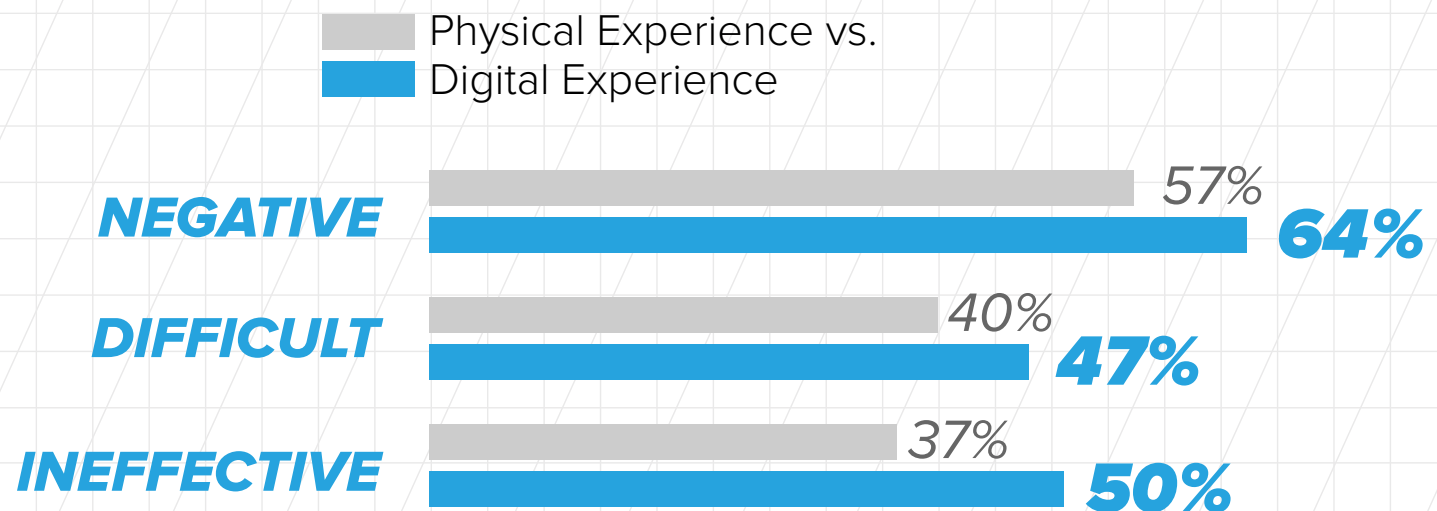
Budgets are Continually Shrinking

Financial constraints in government show no sign of abating, leaving many agencies constantly searching for strategies that enable them to do more, with less. According to Accenture's report, The State of Federal IT 2018, 47 percent of U.S. federal government IT executives list budgetary issues among their top three constraints on their digital transformation efforts. In cases where digital transformation spending is supported, agencies often face intense monitoring of budgets and the expectation of a provable return on investment.

Additionally, according to Gartner, some governments have cut budgets in an attempt to spark transformative change. But these types of initiatives have largely failed to deliver, with the cuts leading to short-lived cost savings, along with a neglected infrastructure and weakened system maintenance process.

Physical Experience vs. Digital Experience

U.S. Federal Government customers who attempt digital interactions overwhelmingly have a negative, experience.

NEGATIVE — 57% / 64%

DIFFICULT — 40% / 47%

INEFFECTIVE — 37% / 50%

Souce: Forrester: US Federal Customer Experience Index, 2018

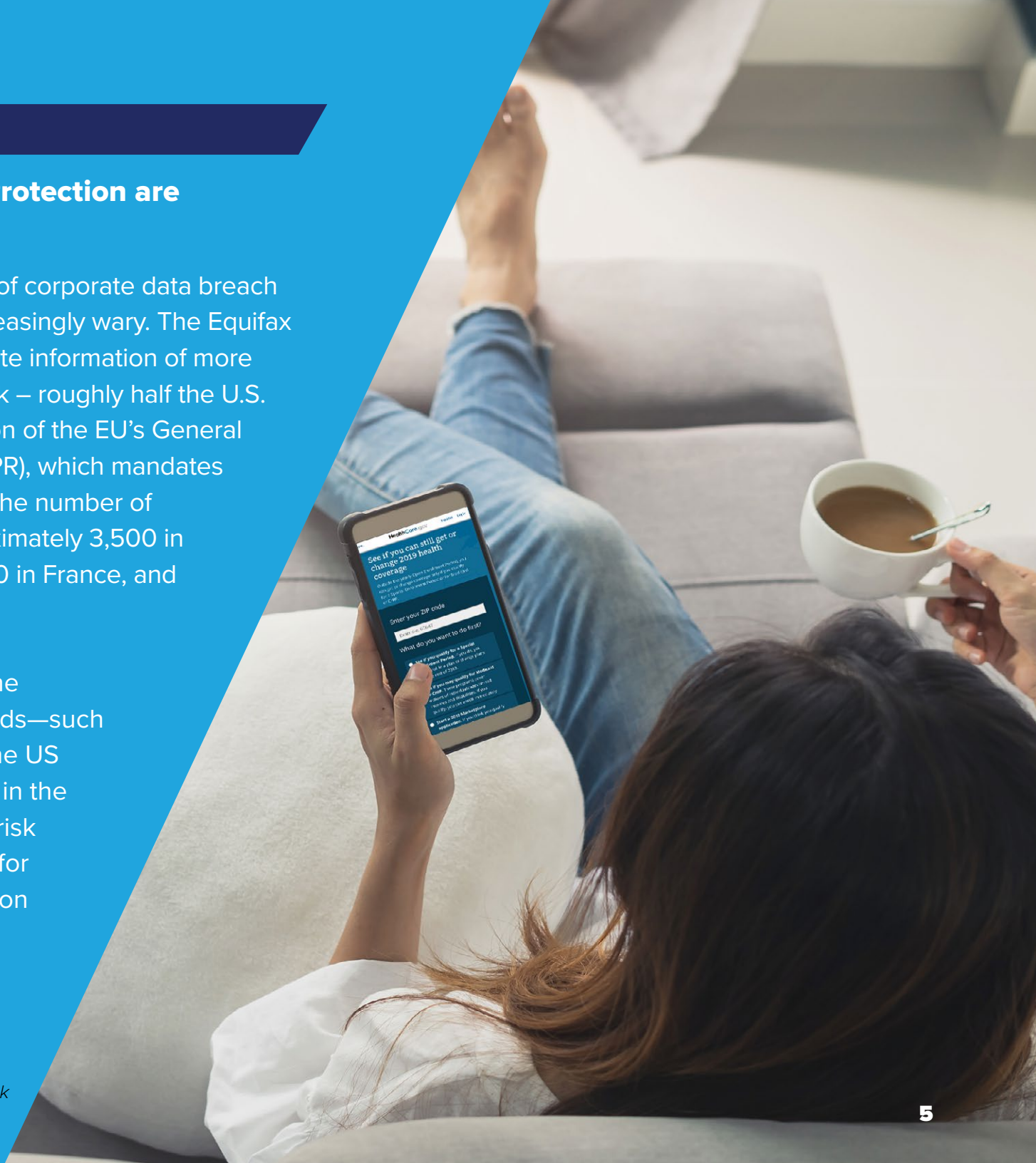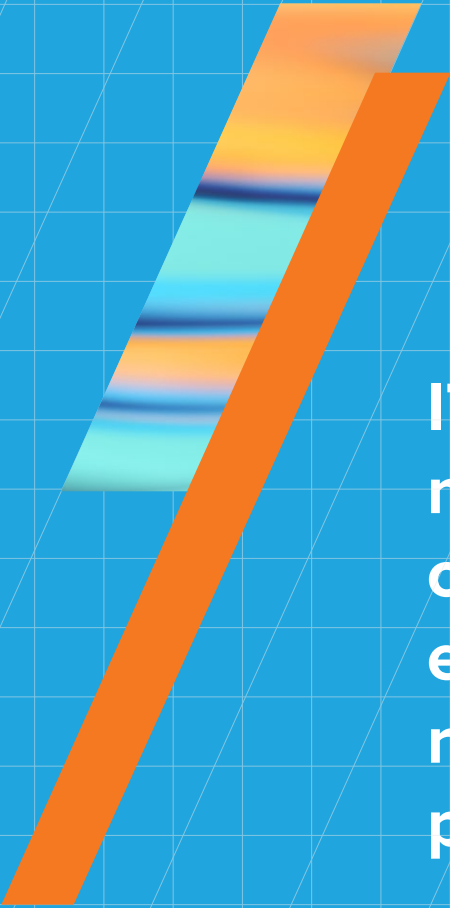## Cyber Security and Data Protection are Growing Concerns

The seemingly constant stream of corporate data breach events has left constituents increasingly wary. The Equifax breach in July 2017 put the private information of more than 143 million Americans at risk — roughly half the U.S. population. Since the introduction of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which mandates the reporting of data breaches, the number of reported events reached approximately 3,500 in Ireland, 4,600 in Germany, 6,000 in France, and 8,000 in the UK.[1]

The highly sensitive nature of the information the government holds—such as Social Security numbers in the US and detailed health information in the UK and EU—creates increased risk and vulnerability, and the need for a level of diligence and protection that may exceed that of the private sector.

Source: "EU Sees More Data Breach Reports, Privacy Complaints," Mathew J. Schwartz, Bank Info Security, December 19, 2018

IT transformation on the national level must "concentrate on culture, talent, and organization first. Focusing on these people elements may seem counterintuitive, but our research points to culture as the strongest predictor of effective transformation."

Bobby Cameron
VP and Principal Analyst at Forrester

CHALLENGES FACING GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Advances in technology and changes in behavior undoubtedly present significant potential benefits to government agencies, including increased trust and satisfaction, and decreased expense. But to achieve those benefits, several specific challenges must be confronted.

Managing Technical Debt and Inefficiencies from Legacy Systems

Government agencies are frequently saddled with outdated technologies that barely function, and often cannot be updated. Many processes are still heavily reliant on paperwork, particularly in the US. According to the President's Management Agenda: Improving Customer Experience with Federal Services, a multi-agency effort conducted in 2018, more than 23,000 different paper forms lead to 11.4 billion hours of paperwork annually, and often provide a poor user experience. Transitioning American government agencies to paperless processes will be a substantial undertaking.

Additionally, as Gartner explains, because legacy systems must be kept running while new initiatives are in progress, those systems consume funding and resources desperately needed for digital modernization efforts.

Data Constrained in Silos Obstructs the View of the Constituent Journey

Data locked within departments, agencies, or third-party providers, along with the politics involved in data ownership, can hamper efforts to utilize data to improve systems. As a result, constituent experiences often fall short of meeting both needs and expectations.

Data that is accessible is frequently incomplete, making it difficult to make connections and develop actionable insights. While operational and performance data may be tracked, it's rarely linked to actual constituent feedback, which hampers the development of a comprehensive understanding of the overall constituent experience. Services delivered through third-party providers further obscure visibility.

IT Constraints Lead Business Partners to Make Direct IT Investments

As the pressure for digital transformation continues to increase, IT departments within government agencies are typically limited in their resources and their ability to quickly respond. As a result, agencies often seek solutions directly from outside providers, bypassing their own internal IT resources. These relationships can increase costs, while also raising the risk of potential architectural issues in the future and adding to existing IT technical debt.

> "We, as government agencies, have to be resourceful. We don't have the same level of insight, research, or analytics that you'll find at a Walmart or Target, but we have to do what we can with the information we have available to us."

Aileen Smith, former head of operations, US State Department Passport Services Directorate

TO GROW AND THRIVE, GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES MUST PRIORITIZE:

1. Security

Because government agencies work with the most sensitive types of personal data, security is even more vital than in private sector industries. Security considerations come from multiple angles: insider threats, stolen credentials, and compliance with a growing roster of regulations—including GDPR in the EU, and FISMA, Common Criteria, and many others in the US. Forward-thinking agencies should take advantage of the advanced security protections available through cloud environments and other technologies to protect constituent data, secure government information, and comply with legislation.

2. Continuity and Availability

Top-tier digital experiences share one characteristic: successful outcomes. Constituents have specific expectations about their online experiences, including reliability, ease of access, transparency, and quality. They expect their time online to be time well spent, and to complete the task they set out to accomplish.

According to the Forrester US Federal Customer Experience Index, in 2018, just 50% of digital-only federal customers were able to accomplish their goals for interacting with a government agency, while 63% of those using traditional physical channels were able to accomplish their goals. Traditional IT areas must remain a focus, including ensuring mission readiness through operational continuity, and providing 24x7 availability. Quick, agile, and consistent delivery is crucial.

3. Innovation

Government IT transformation must be rooted in constituent needs and driven by insights. The goal must be to boost execution and adaptation speeds to understand what constituents need and want most. Transformation efforts begin as smaller solutions that meet specific needs, and then spread across the agency to encompass the entire constituent journey.

4. Cost Containment

Unsuccessful user experiences can generate additional costs, ranging from increases in complaint and service phone calls to legal fees. Identifying and addressing issues quickly can lead to longer-term improvement and decreased spending on problem solving.

"Too many governments still think that putting existing, specific services online is a sign of transformation or better citizen experience. That is a low level of digital government maturity and takes an exclusively government-centric view. More-advanced government organizations see specific services as a part of life events or civic moments that can be transformed only through a dedicated focus on the entire citizen experience."

Gartner: Government Digital Transformation Primer for 2019

FINDING THE WAY: HOW ACQUIA CAN HELP

According to Gartner's 2018 CIO Survey, digital transformation was the most common response from government CIOs who were asked what their organization's top business priority would be over the next two years. Forward-thinking government IT professionals aren't asking whether or not they need to accelerate their digital transformations. They're determining the level and source of funding they need to put into digital marketing platforms, personalization tools, and better methods of engaging with constituents.

Moving ahead, governments and their agencies must offer a more intuitive, personalized digital experience, while gaining better control of their digital assets, and effectively using analytics and insight to develop an efficient journey for constituents that builds trust and delivers satisfaction. Digging for data and insights to understand the true effectiveness of each effort is key. Knowing what's working, what's not, and where the gaps lie are all vitally important.

Acquia is the pioneering partner that can help build those experiences and relationships—on your own terms.

United States

Acquia has been granted an Authority to Operate (ATO) by the U.S. Department of Treasury under the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP). FedRAMP provides assurance to agencies that the appropriate security and risk management practices are in place for their cloud properties. Only cloud providers that meet the strict provisions of FedRAMP gain this certification.

United Kingdom

As an approved vendor, Acquia is fully compliant with associated regulation and is committed to serving the UK's government agencies.

The security, reliability, and agility of Acquia's agile platform enables government departments and agencies to properly align their resources and deliver on their mission.

"The stakes for federal IT executives have never been greater. Their growing ability to digitally transform government can empower their agencies to deliver upon the immense expectations of the American public."

Tom Greiner, Technology Lead, Accenture Federal Services

Our web content management and customer journey orchestration have empowered leading organizations to create the world's greatest digital experiences. We'll help you establish the more intuitive, personalized digital experiences today's constituents expect – all using open source technology, with the security the industry requires.

Gain control of your digital assets, deliver the right content at the right time, and tap into the data and insights you need to understand what works, what doesn't, and why. Meet constituents with what they need at every step of the journey.

For more information about how we're transforming the digital experience in government, visit www.acquia.com/solutions/government

CONTACT ACQUIA

To learn about how Acquia can help you deliver a constituent-first experience, please contact us at sales@acquia.com.

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