

# Better data flows for a **better customer experience**



Jason Schick

Confluent

By capturing data into streams of real-time events, agencies boost their ability to provide responsive digital services

**L**ife is a stream of events. LinkedIn's leaders recognized this about a decade ago, and as they shifted the way they thought about data, they developed a streaming capability called Apache Kafka. They then open sourced it, and it has gone on to become one of the most active open source projects in the world.

When an event occurs, a lot of people and systems want to know in that exact moment so they can take highly relevant, highly specific action. Flowing data to the systems and people who need it gives them the best chance for rapid action and a good outcome. Traditional databases weren't designed with this in mind; a different approach is required. That's why Apache Kafka is at the core of Confluent Platform, which enables agencies to easily publish and access data as continuous, real-time streams.

## A low-friction way to update information

A more responsive and personalized customer experience isn't much different from the initial problem set that gave birth to Apache Kafka. When people interact with agencies, they want those agencies to know who they are and how they've interacted in the past. They don't want to be asked for their Social Security number three times on the same phone call. They also expect that the information or service they receive will be the same whether they are accessing it over the phone, via a mobile app and on a website.

To elevate the quality of their service, agencies must be able to stream information in a low-friction way so different systems are consistent with one another and up-to-date at all times, regardless of the communication channel an individual uses.

President Joe Biden's executive order about transforming the federal customer experience is based on this capability. The most successful companies across industries have figured out how to do it, and for the most part, they've done it with open source software.

## A more nimble approach to CX

With open source, a broad set of software developers contributes to the codebase, so it tends to be vibrant and always evolving. It also means agencies are not beholden to the fortunes of one particular company. In addition, open

source technology allows agencies to start small to see what works before they make big commitments in terms of time, money and political capital.

In the real world, things are always moving, and the government needs to move quickly in response or even proactively. Therefore, it makes sense for data to be treated as though it's in motion, too. Doing so will give agencies the ability to be more nimble when it comes to providing an outstanding customer experience. ■

**Jason Schick** is general manager of Confluent US Public Sector.

A dark blue and purple graphic advertisement for Confluent. It features the Confluent logo (a stylized starburst) and the word 'CONFLUENT' in white. Below the logo, the headline reads 'Data at the Speed of the Mission'. Underneath, a list of benefits is presented: 'Power mission outcomes, better serve citizens, ensure security and compliance, enhance IT efficiency, and maximize productivity with a platform built for data in motion.' At the bottom, contact information is provided: '800-439-3207', 'info@confluent.io', and 'discover.confluent.io/dod'. The background has abstract circular shapes in shades of purple and blue.