

SALESFORCE

Integrating AI into the flow of government services

Autonomous agents will propel agencies beyond incremental improvements and toward true transformation.



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“THIS APPROACH IS NOT ABOUT REPLACING EMPLOYEES BUT ABOUT EXTENDING HUMANS’ CAPACITY, ACCURACY AND COLLABORATION TO HEIGHTS THAT WERE NEVER POSSIBLE BEFORE.”

The incoming U.S. presidential administration has made government efficiency a priority, particularly in terms of potential regulatory rollbacks, administrative reductions and cost savings. Although governments have long worked toward improving efficiency and customer service, significant technological developments have positioned agencies to seize new opportunities for transformational change. The latest advances in artificial intelligence can help government agencies expand their capabilities beyond anything previously imagined.

AI assistants, chatbots and tools such as ChatGPT have provided valuable support, but their capabilities are limited. It has been challenging to bring AI into the flow of work to improve public services and responsiveness. However, the arrival of autonomous agents is changing that.

Think of those agents as members of a new digital team that works alongside human employees. Instead of simply recommending what to do, autonomous agents can take action on behalf of an organization, with the oversight of humans. Onboarding a digital employee is as simple as onboarding a human employee, and there is no limit to the number of digital employees an organization can deploy or the challenges they can tackle.

A reasoning engine that ensures transparency and trust

Digital employees can handle mundane yet complex tasks, such as reviewing regulatory data in comparison to a business application. For example, the International Trade Commission’s Harmonized Tariff Schedule contains thousands of regulatory parameters for importing goods into the U.S. The 4,000-page document is updated constantly, so it takes a great deal of expertise to truly understand.

I directed Salesforce’s autonomous agent, Agentforce, to read the entire document, and then I asked the agent questions from the point of view of someone who wants to import avocados into the United States. Agentforce told me the exact steps and procedures I needed to follow. I put together my import package and gathered what I thought was the relevant documentation. But when I asked Agentforce if my avocado import application should be approved, Agentforce said no because I was missing a certificate of origin and an appropriate avocado reference number. I went back through the schedule to verify. The agency was correct, yet I had not trained it on any details related to avocados or the need for a certificate of origin.

Soon autonomous agents will be working together across disciplines—such

as the regulatory, privacy, security, legal and technical areas—to come up with ways to solve complex challenges.

Unlike large language models, which have been a black box, Salesforce’s autonomous agents have a reasoning engine. The reasoning engine allows the agent to “learn” through interactions and improve over time, just like human beings do, and they do it in a way that is transparent. Agencies can see all the references that were used to make decisions, which is vital for auditability and trust.

Overcoming government’s perennial limitations

This approach is not about replacing employees but about extending humans’ capacity, accuracy and collaboration to heights that were never possible before. Digital employees will help government overcome the perennial limitations of budget,

resources and personnel to accomplish its biggest goals.

We are no longer talking about a technology that can improve efficiency by 5% or 10%. We are adding an organizational dynamic, called the agentic layer, that changes the way the government operates.

At Salesforce, we have always strived to make technology simple and understandable. When we introduce our government customers to Agentforce, they have a light-bulb moment when they realize this is not a technology that will allow them to do something incrementally better. It is exponentially different, and it will transform everything they do. ■

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