

Improving Citizens' Digital Journey Through HHS



Megan Atchley, health and human services director for Adobe, explains how government organizations can achieve quick wins to improve services, simplify content creation and reduce costs.

What IT and business challenges do organizations face as they seek to adapt to current disruptors?

Inflexible legacy systems and custom applications have created a lot of technical debt, which impedes agility as the focus moves to digital channels and remote work. Second, there's traditionally been a large reliance on IT to manage digital channels, content and communications at scale. This has delayed communication of critical messages around COVID and hindered the public's access to services. Third, organizations lack the capability to analyze data and generate meaningful insights about customer experience and digital interactions. That capability is vital as COVID evolves into a social services crisis as well as a public health crisis.

What near-term steps can organizations take to address these challenges while keeping in mind long-term IT modernization objectives?

A lot of agencies are moving to the cloud as a first step toward agility and scalability. Another fast win is implementing digital signatures to support business continuity. There also are opportunities to quickly impact client experiences by focusing on customer-facing, front-end initiatives such as making things easier to find on agency websites through web analytics and personalizing the user experience.

These types of projects have the added benefit of encouraging adoption of existing self-service channels, and they can happen regardless of progress on backend modernization.

Please discuss the public's growing reliance on mobile technology and the kinds of solutions that support engagement across any device.

In the HHS field, a mobile device may be the only way an agency customer can access online services. In terms of the user's experience, things like responsive web design and forms are minimum requirements. However, as the number of devices and digital channels grows, the only way to keep up is by simplifying the content creation experience. To do this, organizations must be capable of centralizing authoring and management of web content, outreach or forms across all devices and publishing to any screen size — all in one automated process.

How can artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) improve the digital experience for patients and their families?

The two key pillars of creating exceptional digital experiences are content and data — and AI and ML can help with both. Using AI and ML, organizations can automate repetitive tasks that prevent them from producing and personalizing content at scale and on every single device. For example, organizations can use AI to automate aspects of website design, layout and creation, as well as the conversion of PDFs to adaptive interactive forms. In terms of data, organizations can use AI to sift through volumes of data and unlock insights that help them understand customers, predict trends, monitor unusual activity and act faster.

What should organizations consider as they adopt digital forms and documents?

Organizations should ensure forms are cross channel, responsive and able to be filled out from any device. That includes saving and resuming forms and having a compliant e-signature on any device. Forms also need to be integrated with backend systems to allow for workflows and processing. In more mature solutions, forms should be measurable. That includes having visibility into form usage down to the form field level, so organizations can better understand and correct issues that might cause people to abandon the form. The last thing, as noted earlier, is to have business-friendly, reusable components that let the organization author and update forms at scale.

The pandemic disrupted traditional government service delivery. Where is the opportunity?

With COVID shifting our focus to digital interactions, we have an opportunity to expand our vision of the “no wrong door” approach. We can improve the customer experience across all touch points, even when users aren't authenticated. If the goal is to help people obtain the services they need at the right time, at any point in their journey, we need to do a better job of predicting needs and personalizing content. We call this a “next best door” approach, using anonymous profiles — meaning we can't identify a specific person, but we can understand key traits such as age range, gender or income. These things are tied to social determinants of health and provide a clearer understanding of HHS clients and relevant services or information.



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- Streamlining service delivery with secure and compliant electronic signatures

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