



Trust: The currency of government

A citizen-first, cloud-first strategy can help agencies grow the public's confidence in government



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AGENCIES FULFILL **CRITICAL** missions – related to health, safety, economics and stability – that contribute to the flourishing and success of individuals and communities. People rely on those functions to be available when they need them, so trust is essential to how agencies successfully engage with customers.

Every year, communications firm Edelman conducts a survey called the Trust Barometer that measures the American public's trust in large institutions. From 2017 to 2018, the government's trust score dropped from 47 percent to 33 percent. There are a lot of factors at play, but turning

that trend around starts by meeting people wherever they are and fulfilling agency missions in ways that build trust, credibility and legitimacy.

The age of intelligence

We live in an exciting time when artificial intelligence, the internet of things, autonomous vehicles, drones and advanced technologies of all kinds are starting to blend the physical world with the computing world. This new age of intelligence provides a unique opportunity for governments to interact with the public in ways that are connected, intelligent, personalized and convenient.

In short, we have an unprecedented opportunity to do things differently and take advantage of the technology people are already using to provide services that work for them.

Agencies have always implemented new systems using the best technology available at the time, but then because of budget and staff constraints, regulations and a complex procurement process, each generation of new technology hardens into place. Agencies build business processes around the technology, but older systems lack the agility to respond to today's expectations, leading to a "trust gap" between what the public expects and what government has been able to deliver.

Fortunately, today's cloud platforms can be implemented quickly to realize value and results in a fraction of the time to help close this trust gap. And they can be deployed on top of legacy systems that are still doing important work. Cloud platforms can introduce innovation continuously, allowing agencies to quickly adapt to changing missions and take advantage of new technologies while modernizing legacy systems along the way.

Starting small and gaining momentum

Rather than having to figure out everything upfront, agencies can start small and gain momentum as they learn – often from the experiences of other agencies. Amtrak, for example, gathered all the old systems and applications that had built up over time and reclassified them into productivity workspaces that are optimized for different kinds of workers. For instance, when a





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train pulls into its final destination, Amtrak employees must refuel it, clean it, restock food and beverages, and perform any needed maintenance or repair before the train is ready for the next trip.

Previously, those tasks were coordinated manually, which required extra time and effort and caused delays. Now Amtrak employees use a mobile app that walks them through all the necessary tasks to get a

train back into service, and managers have a complete view of all activities so that they can improve efficiency and coordination between teams. As a result of such efforts, Amtrak has improved on-time arrivals and departures for its nearly 32 million passengers a year.

Agencies are confronted with a dizzying amount of change and heightened expectations from the public, but given the

exciting technology developments and the successes of government agencies that have already blazed a trail, there are a lot of reasons to be optimistic about the government's ability to build trust in its services. ■

Casey Coleman is senior vice president of global government solutions at Salesforce.

The advertisement features a large, high-angle photograph of the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C., under a clear blue sky with some white clouds. The building's iconic dome and neoclassical architecture are prominent. In the top right corner of the image, the Salesforce logo is displayed in white text inside a blue cloud shape. On the left side, the headline "Salesforce is for Government" is written in large, white, sans-serif font. Below the headline, the text "The world's #1 CRM connects people, data and technology" is written in a smaller white font. At the bottom left, the URL "Learn more at Salesforce.com/government" is provided in white text. An American flag is visible on a tall pole to the left of the building.