




A GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PAPER

# Elevating Constituent Services with **Connected Experiences**



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**State and local governments** use a variety of communications channels and devices every day. These tools are often disjointed, contributing to fragmented services rather than providing a seamless, unified platform that improves the constituent experience.

Governments can modernize their communications infrastructure to unify these tools and create connected experiences, which lead to more convenient and personalized services for residents.

"Connected experiences take into account all the possible points of connection — whether it's mobile phones, landlines, kiosks, tablets or computers — where constituents and employees interact with each other and with applications to achieve the task at hand," says Karen Tuttle, director of connected experiences for the public sector at Verizon.

The right infrastructure can also enable anywhere/anytime productivity for agencies, creating new service efficiencies.

"Governments are looking for ways to deliver services, improve outcomes and save money along the way," says Barry Condrey, a senior fellow at the Center for Digital Government and the former CIO of Chesterfield County, Virginia. "Connected experiences allow them to do that."

## How Connected Experiences Transform Resident Services

Connected experiences allow agencies to innovate in the following ways:

- **Anywhere/anytime workplace enablement.** Agencies can deliver around-the-clock support to constituents across office, hybrid, remote and mobile environments.
- **Digital experience transformation.** An omnichannel approach that leverages AI and advanced analytics improves the use of constituent data for more relevant, personalized service experiences.
- **Secure intelligence communications.** This combats sophisticated spoofing and phishing attacks and VoIP denial-of-service attacks. Secure intelligence communications can also include real-time multifactor authentication and secure access service edge (SASE) solutions that enhance security and mitigate common cyber risks.

- **Powerful integrations and real-time responsiveness.**

Seamless integration across platforms and devices, unified communication channels, and real-time data sharing tools enhance worker productivity and constituent engagement.

When all these capabilities merge, governments can reap several benefits, according to Kirk Myers, associate director and Tier 2 solutions architect specialist for the public sector at Verizon.

"There's the drive to address constituent needs faster, 24/7/365, with greater accuracy and consistency," Myers says. "There's also the need to secure these interactions to prevent bad actors from accessing data. Connected experiences allow for all of this."

Several government organizations have already tapped into these advantages:

### DMVs

Many departments of motor vehicles (DMVs) use connected experiences to facilitate virtual appointments, sparing constituents from having to show up in person and wait in line. This approach gives employees more time to handle more complex DMV transactions or spikes in demand. DMVs have also leveraged self-service channels like customer service chatbots, easy-to-navigate websites and mobile apps that allow residents to renew licenses or vehicle registration.





### **Unemployment insurance agencies**

Agencies are using AI and the cloud to power chatbots that provide real-time information in response to constituent questions about unemployment benefits. They're also standing up self-service tools that automate application status checks and the benefits recertification process. These measures reduce call volume in contact centers and lead to speedier resolution of cases.

### **The Postal Service**

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is using chatbots to complement the agent experience. USPS has implemented Verizon's advanced communications solutions to integrate AI capabilities into its operations and move to a multichannel platform that supports email, SMS, chat and more.<sup>1</sup> This allows the agency to provide more intelligent, accurate and real-time information to customers.

## **What You Need for Connected Experiences**

State and local agencies should prioritize the following capabilities:

### **A secure and reliable network**

With the right network, agencies can layer on partner solutions — from call center solutions to self-service tools — to build their communications capabilities.

"The network is the greatest common denominator of all this, so it's highly important to have robust network infrastructure underlying all your connected experiences," Condrey says.

### **Data readiness**

Agencies need to design their data strategy before upgrading their applications and leveraging AI. This step is critical because data is often siloed in legacy systems.

"There's a lot of discussion around taking advantage of advancements in artificial intelligence, which is important," Tuttle says. "But the key is to focus on a data strategy first."

### **AI**

AI can facilitate 24/7 support via chat or voice, gather data while conversations are happening, enable real-time decisions, accelerate response times and drive greater response accuracy. Agencies should consider connected experience solutions with AI embedded into them to fully capitalize on this technology.

### **Customer-centric focus**

Agencies want a no-wrong-door approach for serving constituents, essentially offering residents a connected experience based on who and where they are — whether it's a senior constituent looking for benefits information, an 18-year-old interested in a workforce development program or a new business owner who needs to apply for a permit.

By leveraging advanced telecommunications technologies, agencies will be better positioned to serve a constituency with diverse needs. For example, agencies can use AI to achieve a comprehensive view of a constituent's various touch points across an agency, which facilitates more seamless interactions.

"It creates a more melded experience, where all of your interactions with an entity are consolidated in one place," Tuttle says.

Agencies can then meet constituents' needs faster using digital tools that enable speedier response times via automated callback, hold-place-in-line and other call features.

## **The Best Communications Architecture for Your Agency**

The ideal architecture to enable connected experiences will vary based on your needs. At a baseline, it should be scalable, elastic and allow for integrations, because one platform won't provide everything.

Verizon, for example, employs a personalized approach in its end-to-end solutioning process. The company performs an in-depth analysis of an agency's requirements and existing architecture. Verizon also accounts for future needs, ensuring everything is scalable and aligned to the agency's long-term technology roadmap.

"No government will have all the experience it needs to pull together true connected experiences," Condrey says. "You need to identify great partners who can come in with loads of experience and just knock it out of the park for you. Then you build on that success."

1. <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/verizon-digital-modernization-contract-united-states-postal-service>

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