

Improve your citizen experience

Strategic approach that adds value for citizens and governments



Fix the process or the technology first?

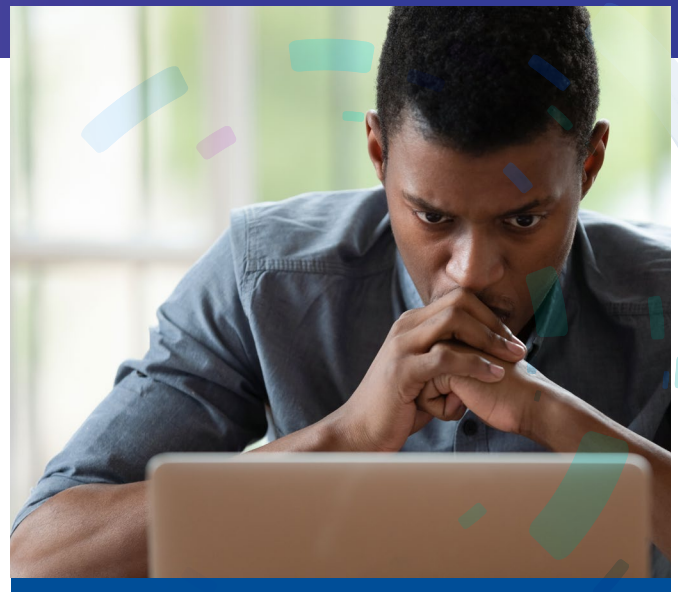
Picture a government agency director tackling a growing problem. Their citizens dig through thousands of websites and phone numbers when they have a question about renewing their drivers' license and car tags or applying for Medicare or Medicaid. The agency has a number of options and not a lot of time to determine the best solution to improve the experience for these citizens. Should they:

- A. Identify ways to save money such as outsourcing call center operations
- B. Purchase a new telephony system
- C. Understand citizens' changing needs in a timely manner
- D. None of the above

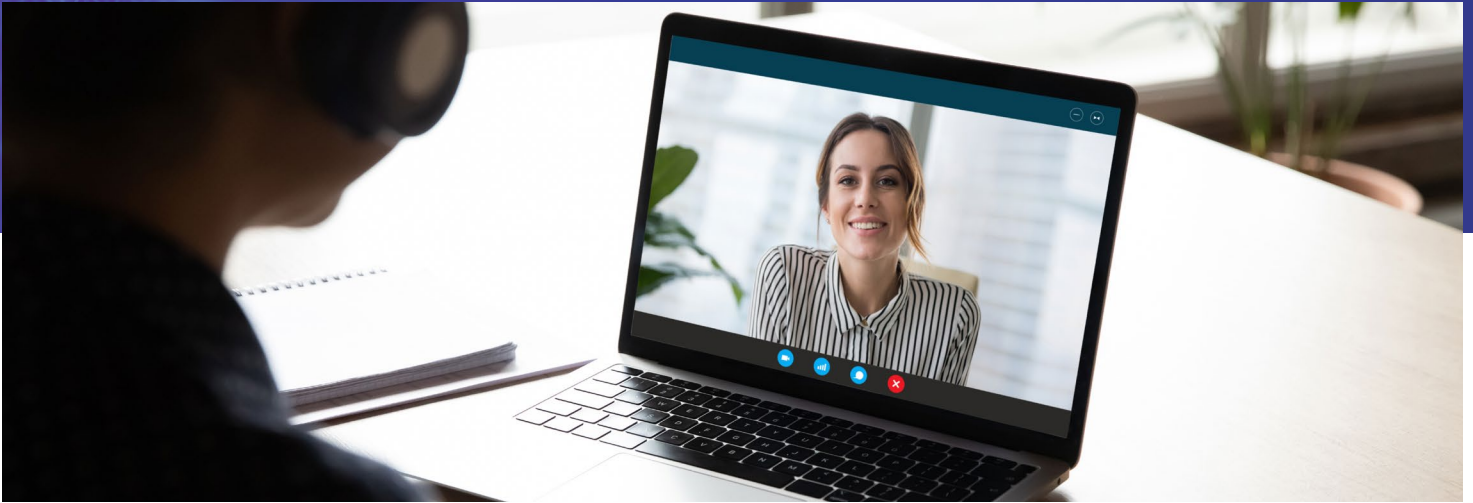
We recommend option c) to get to the root of what citizens really need and how they want to interact with the agency. Governments can learn from leading private sector organizations that focus on the customer when solving problems. The first step is to consider citizens as customers. Next, determine what the citizen experience should look like. In a recent study, only 38 percent of people feel like a valued customer when dealing with the government.¹ This article will help federal, state, and local government directors and department heads understand the customer blueprint before designing the experience. It also includes strategic approaches to build the citizen experience.

Why modern government is important

Government agencies in the U.S. must modernize in order to keep up with changing user needs, regulations, and health and public safety requirements. Leaders of modern governments rethink business processes and service delivery models to more effectively achieve their mission. This article is one of a series that features how modernizing affects the government workforce and the user experience, improves security and public trust, and accelerates the digital journey. KPMG team members offer insights intended to help guide governments in their modernization efforts to encompass all processes, technologies, policies, and the workforce so each works together to create connected, powered, and trusted organizations.



¹ "Impacts of COVID-19 on digital transformation strategies and the future of work," Forrester Consulting and KPMG, July 2020.



Get the citizen experience right without unneeded technology

Governments that follow a **citizen experience approach** deliver individual, human-facing services that give organizations **insight into who their customers are, the ways they choose to interact with the organization, and how they conduct their daily business and lives.** This valuable insight guides government organizations as they redesign and rebuild the citizen engagement model to better meet citizens' expectations while lowering the average cost to serve. Governments can also build lasting trust with citizens.

Careful analysis can help determine whether citizen engagement issues are caused by their experience, the program itself, or something else. Look at a campaign where the organization contacted people eligible for a program, for example. Do they abandon the application process or complete it and are denied? Are these the right people according to diversity, equity, and inclusion targets? Is there bias built into the experience? The only way to identify the issue is to understand who customers are, map their journey, and identify pain points for each customer type. To learn more about delivering more equitable citizen experience, read our article, [Rethink human experience beyond one point in time.](#)

Many government organizations push services out to citizens without considering their point of view. Citizen needs and preferences have changed. Citizen experience begins with understanding their multiple dimensions and behaviors. What gets their attention and motivates them? How much time and money do they have to spend to access and secure a service? Finally, how do they prefer to connect? Organizations must understand if the service is what citizens need and consumable in the way they want it.

Citizen experience also requires engaging people, so it is equally important to know whether the organization markets and communicates at the right time and in ways the people can access information. For example, the agency in the opening scenario could begin by classifying citizens by user segment and building a profile for each. With which agencies does each segment want to interact? Where and how do citizens want these interactions to take place? Do they know what services are available? Do they have smartphones and internet access or just landlines? Then the agency maps the journey for each group. Next they plan how to build the solution. Once the experience is mapped, they plug in the components—telephony and CRM systems, outsource or build in-house capability, and more. Taking these steps could keep the agency from spending \$20 million for technology that does not solve the original problem.



Customer experience definition

KPMG defines customer experience (CX) as the sum of all interactions a customer has or perceives to have with an organization from the point of awareness and consideration through purchase or acquisition and use of the product or service.

Understand the problem before solving it

The challenge for governments is effectively providing the service and outcomes citizens expect based on the modern digital experiences they receive in the private sector. The public's overall customer experience with the federal government was 59 percent on Forrester's 2019 U.S. Customer Experience Index, trailing behind the average score of 70 percent across all industries.² For local governments, just 51 percent of professionals involved with customer strategy decisions believe their customer experience meets customer expectations, while only 8 percent believe they "consistently exceed" expectations.³

KPMG offers its **customer experience excellence methodology** as a strategic delivery approach to help governments deliver citizens a positive experience all the time. Organizations that use this method to create customer experience strategies will:

- Understand **citizens'/customers' needs**, the moments that matter most to them, and their pain points in meeting those needs
- Determine what **channels citizens/customers are able and prefer to use** to interact with the organization
- Develop a **customer experience strategy and delivery model** that meets customers' needs and adds value to the organization
- Create a tactical plan to **cost-effectively deliver** thorough, personal, and equitable customer experiences

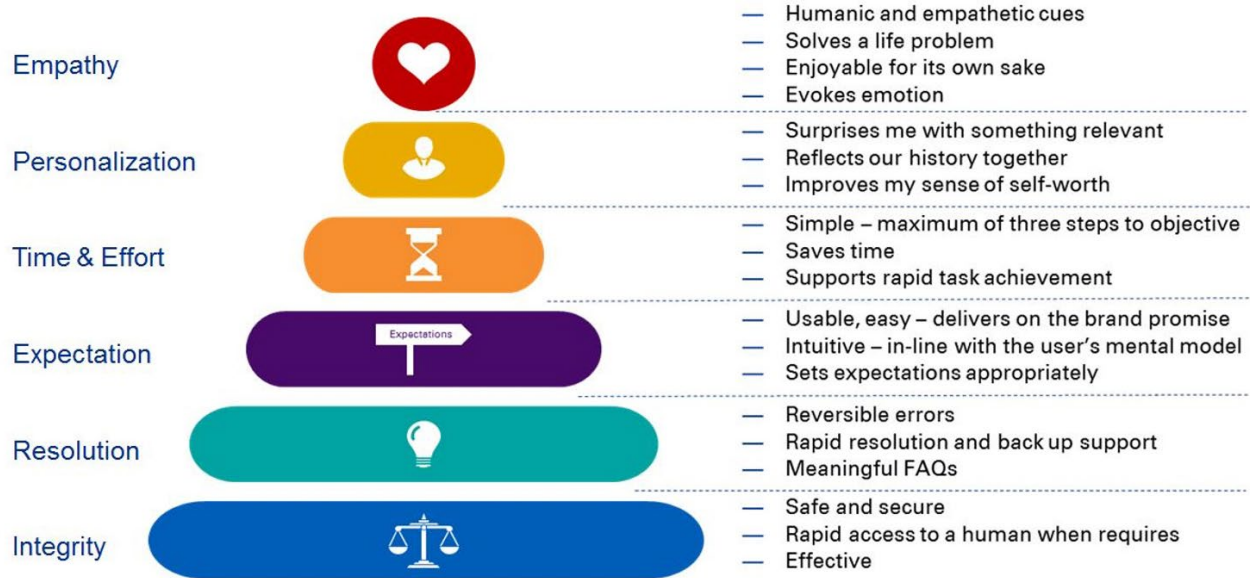
The customer experience excellence **approach includes six fundamental components**, or pillars, of every great experience that we identified and validated through more than 3 million evaluations across multiple markets over 10 years. As shown in the illustration, digital basics are personalization, resolution, integrity, and time and effort. Once organizations effectively deliver digital basics, they focus on the human differentiators, empathy, and

expectations. These pillars are the basis of employee and citizen interviews and deep analysis to identify the main service delivery gaps and possible solutions. With the strategy in place, organizations can establish and execute change management, communication, and training plans. They can also transition employees and clients to their new experience.

² "Light on the Horizon – the State of Customer Experience Quality," Forrester Research, June 11, 2019.

³ A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of KPMG, November 2020.

The Six Pillars of Customer Experience



Source: KPMG Nunwood 2017 US Customer Experience Excellence Analysis

Balance customer experience with value

Using a customer experience approach enables organizations to balance the ability to deliver experiences that meet citizens’ expectations with what makes financial sense for the organization to deliver. We call this customer experience economics. The return varies by agency and by each agency’s goal. Some organizations measure value gained by improving the citizen experience while others measure the return in good (or not bad) media coverage or number of citizen complaints.

For example, one government agency was on the verge of bringing customer service in house after outsourcing for years. They had selected customer resource management and telephony vendors. After helping the client explore what was and was not working before settling on a solution, they made a few discoveries. They knew they were unhappy with the outsourcer. They also did not grasp the complexities of today’s customer service centers—the capacity and capabilities they would need to build and manage such a function. Learning their citizens’ needs and preferences helped them determine how to choose a new vendor that could deliver the experience citizens expect within the budget. Setting specific objectives and key performance indicators helped manage the vendor to their expectations.

We recommend following four actions to achieve customer experience economics:

- 1. Measure** to understand what customers value in the experience and why. Use experience preference and value analytics with outside-in measures such as customer satisfaction, customer effort, and net promoter scores, which measure how citizens perceive the government organization. Then measure the inside-out—the cost of an individual experience.
- 2. Analyze** data from the previous step to extract actionable insights. The analysis must connect customer experience value measures and operational cost measures into a singular ratio versus cost to deliver.
- 3. Prioritize** using data and insights from the prior two steps based on the organization’s mission.
- 4. Refine** with a process to improve the prior three steps and continue meeting customer expectations over time.

Organizations that master customer experience economics can adapt and continue to deliver quality experiences while also realizing value in the investment when it matters most.



Value of citizen experience for the long term

Citizen expectations, technology, and the overall digital landscape will continue to change and become more important in government strategy and day-to-day operations. According to a recent prediction, by 2024, more than 30 percent of governments will use engagement metrics to track citizen participation quantity and quality in policy and budget decisions.⁴ If this prediction becomes a reality, the investment in citizen experience will be valuable for the long-term.

With data, analysis, methods, and technology advances, government organizations can access what they need to improve citizen experiences. Organizations with the ability to rethink processes, manage data, and use emerging technologies to adapt experiences in a fiscally responsible way will maintain trust with citizens today and in the future. Starting can be the most difficult part. We can help your organization begin today with these initial steps:

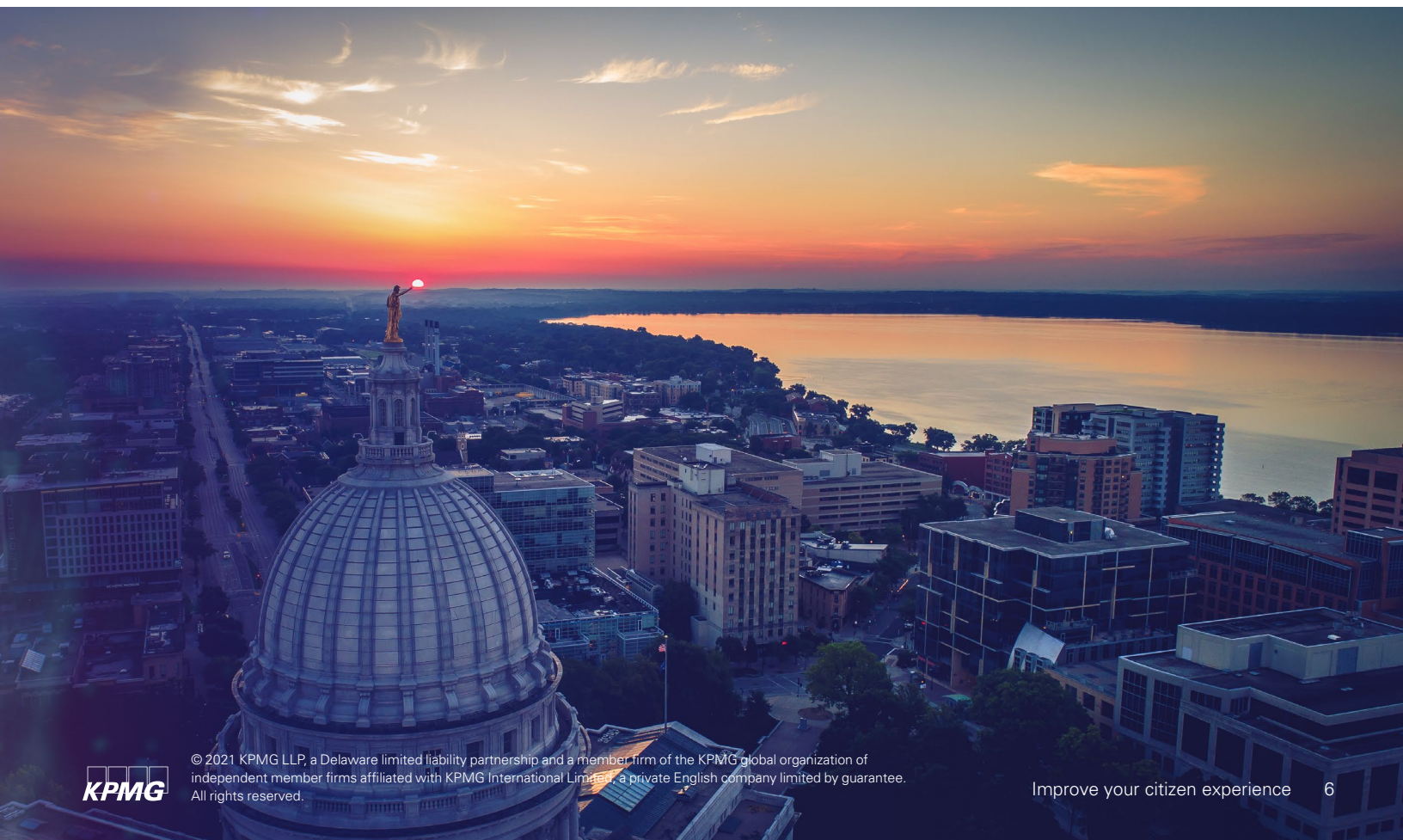
1. Understand your citizens' and citizen segments' needs and pain points.
2. Define your organizations most underperforming experience(s) and determine how to improve.
3. Determine the capabilities and technologies your organization needs to deliver these improved experiences.

⁴ "Gartner Identifies Top 10 Government Technology Trends for 2021," Gartner, Inc. March 29, 2021.

About KPMG

KPMG has worked with federal, state, and local governments for more than a century, so we know how agencies work. Our team understands the unique issues, pressures, and challenges you encounter in the journey to modernize. We draw on our government operations knowledge to offer methodologies tailored to help you overcome these challenges and work with you from beginning to end to deliver the results that matter.

The KPMG team starts with the business issue before we determine the solution because we understand the ultimate mission. When the way people work changes, our team brings the leading training practices to make sure your employees have the right knowledge and skills. We also help your people get value out of technology while also assisting with cloud, advanced analytics, intelligent automation, and cybersecurity. Our passion is to create value, inspire trust, and help government clients deliver better experiences to workers, citizens, and communities.



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