



A STRATEGIC
WORKBOOK
for Modern Government



INTRODUCTION

Empowering a Modern, Digital Government

In the last decade, the digital transformation has brought government organizations closer to residents than ever. By steadily integrating new tools into everyday interactions – from social media to online transactions – government has reached new levels of engagement.

But while many organizations have opted to provide digital solutions to meet the basic needs of residents, the vast majority have yet to incorporate strategic approaches in the use of technology in order to spur more open, engaging, and innovative public sector environments.

Regardless of what a modern digital government looks like at your agency, the landscape has never been better for adopting digital solutions that engage your community and inform decision-making and initiatives. The shift toward using technology to shape government priorities, and not simply to support government processes, requires full adoption and lots of planning.

“The truth is, digital innovation is no longer a question of whether or if; it’s a question of how and where.”

- Mark Hynes, Granicus CEO

PRINCIPLES

Granicus created this strategic workbook to support your work as you make your way through the transition. The strategies and tactics offered throughout this workbook are built on three primary principles.

1. THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS RESIDENT-LED

The need for adopting updated digital strategies is due, in large part, to increased resident expectations. Today's residents are used to a certain type of experience – whether they are applying for a business license or weighing in on a piece of legislation – and have come to expect a seamless digital journey when interacting with government.

As you identify digital strategies and tactics that will work for your organization, know that having a “resident-centered” approach to how you create, manage, and present your organization's information through websites, digital communications, and other tools will help you reach even greater levels of public participation. This engagement will strengthen the relationship between your organization and the people you serve.

2. SHIFT TO DIGITAL INCREASES EFFICIENCY AND REDUCES COSTS

In the past, aligning meaningful technology with resident engagement expectations meant making giant investments in new technology, new processes, and new skills. This level of time and budget investment created a barrier to change and an unwillingness to shift to new methods. But today, residents expect you to communicate with them where they are, so the change is inevitable. As a result, the public sector is constantly being asked to do more with less, continue the old way

of notifying residents while adopting modern, digital communications. But the reality is it's possible to shift from the old ways to the newer ways iteratively, over time. Ultimately, organizations that use digital means for communication find them more cost-effective and much more efficient. For example, it's easier to change emails and digital ads than printed billboards. Additionally, because digital engagement is more flexible and faster, it allows you to communicate more frequently with tailored messages to specific audiences without increasing your spend.

Thankfully, providing a truly modern digital experience is easier and more cost-efficient than ever. Technology platforms have moved to the cloud, infrastructure is shared, data centers are more secure, and even government organizations under extreme budget pressure now have access to the same levels of technology support once available to only the largest government budgets. Not only do digital tools bring the promise of enhancing outcomes, they are reducing costs while ensuring a better resident experience.

3. MODERN GOVERNMENT PRACTICES LEAD TO INCREASED TRANSPARENCY

As government becomes infinitely more sophisticated in how it educates, delivers, and makes information available to its constituents, the concept of digital self-service is more than simply moving traditional content and forms online. The priority is around creating seamless digital experiences across various digital channels that can be self-discovered and consumed in ways that are natural to different audience segments.

For the modern digital government, this means engaging more deeply with audiences, and – at the same time – building a sense of greater government transparency, connectedness, innovation, and satisfaction by constituents.

CONTENTS

Granicus created content to help your organization meet resident expectations, manage the digital lift, and increase transparency. The sections include:



SECTION 1

DIGITAL ASSESSMENT

Modern Government



SECTION 2

RESIDENT/CUSTOMER

Journey Mapping



SECTION 3

EXECUTE STRATEGY

Modern Government



SECTION 4

MEASURE SUCCESS

Modern Government

You will also find additional resources and tools at the end of every section to help further your expertise in delivering on digital. If you would like to complete this strategic workbook with one of our digital engagement experts, please contact us at info@granicus.com and we will schedule a session with you.



SECTION 1

DIGITAL ASSESSMENT

Modern Government



SECTION 1

DIGITAL ASSESSMENT

Modern Government

Before your organization can modernize and digitize, it's important to take a moment to survey what your situation is right now. This lets you thoughtfully identify your organizational strengths and weaknesses and provide a benchmark from which you can measure progress going forward.

To help you with this process, we've provided the assessment below. It focuses on three areas: people, process, and technology. It's important that each area is stable like a stool. If one leg is wobbly, the whole thing can come tumbling down. People are the fundamental core of any organization. Without them, the work simply can't get done. Process ensures that the work being done by people is thoughtful and effective. And technology is what takes the process and puts it into action: delivering services and engaging residents.

We recommend that several people in your organization take the assessment to find out how perceptions vary. It's okay if there's disagreement about which areas of your strategy are strong versus weak. This section is meant to encourage conversation!

ASSESSMENT

Mission Statement: Fill in your one-or two-sentence declaration that communicates your organization's unique value to residents.

Goals: List your team's primary goals for the year as they relate to your mission.

Goal 1

Goal 2

Goal 3

ASSESSMENT NEED 1: THE RIGHT PEOPLE

What is your team structure?

Do you have the expertise you need to achieve your goals?

Yes

No

If not, what expertise do you need?

ASSESSMENT NEED 2: MODERN PROCESSES

If your team oversees services, are they delivered on digital platforms?

Yes No

If so, which services are delivered online?

Are there still some services delivered using more traditional methods like paper, in-person visits, or phone calls?

Yes No

If so, which services are delivered traditionally?

What is your existing strategy for engaging residents?

Have you ever completed a citizen journey-mapping exercise?

Yes No

Rank (1-7) the most common tools residents use to connect with you:

Telephone (direct dial or call center)	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Email	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Text message	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Website	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Social media	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Video (either livestream or online)	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>
Dedicated public input platform	<div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; width: 100%; height: 20px;"></div>

Do you regularly monitor, measure, and update your strategy based on what's working?

Yes

No

If so, what do you measure?

What internal team members are involved in monitoring and updating your strategy?

What strategies have worked well for engaging residents?

What are your biggest technical challenges?

ASSESSMENT NEED 3: DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

What are your top three most commonly used tools?

Are you measuring data of the top three common tools residents use to connect with you?

Yes No

If so, what are your monthly averages?

Do you have a self-service option for information or services provided by your organization?

Yes No

To accomplish your organization's goals, do you need paper copies of important documents?

Yes, we require paper copies

Yes, we allow paper copies as an option (but also offer online)

No, all of our services are offered digitally

What are your key performance indicators (KPIs)?

On an annual basis, how does your organization measure against your KPIs?

We never accomplish them

We sometimes accomplish them

We always meet or exceed our KPIs

NOTES

A reminder: If you would like to complete this strategic workbook with one of our digital engagement experts, please contact us at info@granicus.com and we will schedule a session with you.



SECTION 2

RESIDENT/CUSTOMER

Journey Mapping



SECTION 2

RESIDENT/CUSTOMER

Journey Mapping

A modern digital government is one that provides consistent, transparent, and secure experiences for residents. While many organizations have taken great steps toward a resident-centric approach to delivering their programs and services, mapping out the resident journey can be an enlightening experience for any organization, no matter the size or scope. And it's easier than you think!









The Importance of Resident/Customer Journey Mapping

Building a resident journey map helps tell the full story of the resident experience and answers important questions about the resident's motivations and needs. Ultimately, the goal of resident journey mapping is to connect government to its customers in a deeper way. Identifying where your audience interacts with your organization will help you identify more opportunities to enhance the experience — increasing loyalty and satisfaction.

This practice is often used in the private sector and has been a powerful tool to give customers a more personalized and user-friendly experience in their stores, on their website, and across digital platforms. The following is an example of the resident journey practice applied to the public sector.

JOURNEY MAP EXAMPLE

Building a resident journey map helps tell the full story of the resident experience and answers important questions about the resident's motivations and needs.

 OBJECTIVES <i>(The four primary phases of the resident journey)</i>	 Attract	 Interact	 Engage	 Convert
	<i>Trigger a Need</i>	<i>Understand the Need</i>	<i>Provide Options</i>	<i>Encourage Action</i>
 NEEDS <i>(What are the resident's needs in each phase?)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need to apply for a service • I have a problem • I need information your organization has • I need to renew a service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've found the organization • I don't know the important details • I have a lot of questions • I want to see if there's an online option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will call the front desk • I will start on your website • I will search for self-service options • I will search Google 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've connected with someone • I have sent in my question • I've answered my questions • I've submitted my request
 FEELINGS <i>(How do they feel in each phase?)</i>	Anxious Distracted Stressed Overwhelmed	Curious Defensive Guarded Frustrated	Interested Calm Excited Lost	Resolved Satisfied Peaceful Confused
 BARRIERS <i>(What are their primary barriers?)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I didn't know I needed to renew • The timing wasn't ideal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know where to start • I'm frustrated. This wasn't clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had to search around too much • There weren't any self-service options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I couldn't find information on the website • This wasn't convenient

THE RIGHT TEAM

A team that interacts with residents on a day-to-day basis are the ones who will be most useful in identifying their needs. Does your agency have a self-service desk where residents can come in ask questions or apply for permits? How about customer service reps who guide people through policies and processes? Or even a secretary (who often knows all facets of the office)? These are the people to look to first. Ask them about the questions they're receiving, the departments to which they refer people, and where pain points often arise.

Identify the team members you need for the exercise below:



Team Member 1



Team Member 2



Team Member 3



Team Member 4

TURN TO DATA

Having the right team can point you in the right direction, but their input is based on anecdotes and colored by their own experiences. So it's important to verify strengths and weaknesses using data – after all, data doesn't lie. Any strategy that doesn't use data is merely guesswork. So what should you be measuring? Here's a few data sets to think about:

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

Your website is the digital front door to modern government. It's often the first interaction residents have with your agency, whether they're looking for more information, trying to pay a bill, or sign up for a service. Using a tool like Google Analytics, the most popular (and free!) analytics tool, you can see the pages your residents are navigating to, where they're getting stuck, and how often they simply give up and move on. It's also important to know the search keywords that are driving people to your page, referrals (where your customers are coming from), bounce rates (when residents arrive on your site and immediately leave), etc.

Fill in your website analytics here:

Average monthly website sessions/
unique visitors per capita

Pages per session

Average session duration

Average monthly bounce rate

Primary traffic source (organic,
referral, etc.)

Percentage of visitors coming
from a mobile device

Top 10 most-visited pages on your site:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

SOCIAL MENTIONS

Social tools are a powerful way to directly connect with residents quickly and efficiently. You might already be using Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, but are you measuring their impact? A quick way to identify resident sentiment through these tools is to check on your mentions – are they positive, negative, or neutral? If you want a deeper dive, each platform offers its own set of analytics tools to find out which posts are getting the most engagement. There are a number of tools available that can compile this information, like [Hootsuite](#) or [Brand 24](#), but you can also track this information manually in a spreadsheet.

Don't forget to go back to Google Analytics to check just how big of an impact social has on driving people back to your website!

List social mentions in the past 10 days:



Mention 1

Positive

Neutral

Negative



Mention 2

Positive

Neutral

Negative



Mention 3

Positive

Neutral

Negative

FOCUS GROUPS AND SURVEYS

While this falls somewhere between anecdote and actual data, a well-conducted focus group or survey can provide powerful insights about the gaps in your assumptions. Talking to actual people can help make your strategy more effective.

When is the last time you conducted a survey?

What were the core findings?

Have you ever conducted a focus group?

Yes

No

If so, what were a few anecdotes you remember?

STEP INTO THE RESIDENT SHOES

This is also anecdotal, though it's important to think through. Public sector employees are people just like the residents they serve, so they should try approach this from a customer perspective.! Go to the website and tinker around. Do you get lost, or does something look off? Do Tweets or Facebook posts seem informative enough? Thinking like this can put you one step closer to improving engagement and service to your customers.

Another approach is to sit next to a constituent doing something for the first time and observe their approach to finding the information they need. Shadow them throughout the entire process of connecting with your organization and follow up with questions like: Was it easy? Were instructions clear? Did you get what you needed? Did you have to abandon the digital option and jump to in-person interactions. If so, why?

As a resident, where would you look for your organization's information first? List your primary steps here:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Step 5:

PERSONAS

As insights from your data become more clear, you'll begin to notice common themes in your resident journey mapping exercise and can start to build personas. For instance, one journey map could demonstrate a business owner applying for a business license. The map should lay out the typical, digital journey from start to finish. Perhaps it starts by Googling business licenses in your given jurisdiction, looking through results, finding your site, and navigating from here.

Or think of someone trying to sign up for health insurance through a state exchange. If they're running into issues while they're already on the site, they might try to find a help button or page and try to start an online chat with a customer service rep. Who are the personas who embark upon a digital journey with your organization?



Persona 1



Persona 2



Persona 3

PRESENT FINDINGS

Present these personas, maps, and other findings to leadership to gain support in your efforts to enhance the resident experience. This ensures you can get leadership backing and cross-departmental collaboration and support.

Summary of findings

Summary of persona development



Persona 1



Persona 2



Persona 3

Opportunities for improvement



SECTION 3

EXECUTE STRATEGY

Modern Government



Once you've presented your findings and have the go-ahead from leadership, it's time to take what you know, flesh out your strategy, and put it into action. But where do you start? With the same three areas we asked about in the assessment: people, process, and technology.

Expand Your Team's Expertise

Do you have the right people by your side to do the work? If it's not possible to add additional team members, consider adding an extension of your team to get your organization where it needs to go. The Granicus Experience Group is our in-house team of communication experts, content strategists, digital designers, and business intelligence analysts who can guide your agency through its transition to become a more modern, digital organization. They do this by helping you craft new strategies, build campaigns to grow your audience, or improve the results of current initiatives.

Update Your Process to be Resident-Centered

Once your team is in place, it's time to shake up what you're doing. Based on what you learned during journey mapping, what internal processes need to be changed to deliver the best results to the people you serve? Perhaps you realize you don't have enough information about your residents to make an informed decision, or truly understand the impact of recent decisions. Or perhaps you should focus on something that's already working in your organization and doubling down on that strategy to make a greater impact. Putting the resident at the center of everything your agency does shines a spotlight on what needs to change internally.

TOOLS

Use the Tools That Make the Greatest Impact

A digital government requires modern technology and up-to-date resident input to power the level of service that residents expect today. Your agency has been working to update its processes – now it's time to put them into practice with the right tools. But where should you start?

ALWAYS SEEK FEEDBACK

Whether you're looking to identify operation bottlenecks, quantify the impact of changes, triage emerging issues, or validate hypotheses about poor program adoption, providing opportunities for feedback throughout the resident journey will help to confidently plan and prioritize where to focus resources.

[Get our guide to Google Analytics Benchmarks >](#)

COMMUNICATE REGULARLY

You've already identified the channels residents are using – or want to use – to stay in touch with your agency. Social media posts are a low-effort way to kick this off. One of the most important channels is email – everyone has an email address, and it's a great way to quickly get need-to-know information into the hands of residents. Granicus' digital communications solution makes email and other messaging simple with an easy-to-use editor, top-notch security, and – because it's used exclusively by government organizations – messages won't end up in the spam folder. More than 300 million residents trust Granicus to keep them up-to-date. Not sure what a strong email looks like?

[Download This Infographic >](#)

GET ADVANCED

Once you have a handle on updating your website and communicating regularly, you can move to more advanced ways to engage your audience. Using Granicus' website solution, you can transform your website into a digital one-stop shop, leverage our service finder to make it easy for residents to find top tasks and complete them online through paperless forms. And instead of sending all of your messages to your entire audience, you can start A/B testing and segmenting in using Granicus's digital communications solution to find the messaging that works and target those messages more effectively.

[Learn How Granicus Can Support Your Communicaitons >](#)

EMBRACE A PLATFORM

You can likely execute your new strategy with a hodgepodge of tools, but why do that when you can use a platform that integrates together seamlessly? Granicus solutions are built to work together to provide results. Our flexible content management systems (CMS) allows you to build a beautiful, easy-to-navigate website. Our digital communications solution lets you communicate efficiently with constituents and can be linked directly into your website for overlays, sign ups, etc. And our suite of meeting and agenda tools work alongside those as well, making it easy for constituents to engage in their community's legislative process. With Granicus as your partner, you get cutting-edge tools that deliver the modern, digital experience residents expect.

[Learn More About the Full Granicus Platform Here >](#)



SECTION 4

MEASURE SUCCESS

Modern Government



The assessment is complete. The strategy is being executed. The results are pouring in. Now, it's time to find out what's been successful – and what needs more attention. It's important to remember that measurement is an ongoing process. What works today won't necessarily work tomorrow, as needs and patterns of behavior change. Your agency needs to embrace failure and will need to actively look for ways to make adjustments when that happens. So, how is success measured?

COMMUNICATIONS

You should be monitoring your click, open, and engagement rates when you send emails, which can be done directly in our digital communications solution. Your new strategy will hopefully have improved each of these, but how do you know if those numbers stack up well? It's important to have benchmarks to compare against.. If you want more information on this, check out our [Benchmark Report](#).

RESIDENT SATISFACTION

This work is done primarily through anecdotes, surveys, and focus groups. For instance, the City of [Bellevue, WA](#), used a combination of Granicus' community engagement and digital communications software to successfully connect and engage with it's community.

Metrics are a critical component of a modern, digital government, because they allow you to demonstrate the value you provide to residents and are a way to keep important programs alive or persuade a legislator that your agency needs more funding.

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT TO REDUCE COSTS

The measurements here depend largely on what processes needed to be changed in the first place. A few examples:



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

CONNECT PEOPLE TO CRITICAL INFORMATION

The Department of Veterans Affairs' My HealthVet portal provides critical health care information and services to veterans. The VA turned to Granicus to help define the digital footprint for its portal, leveraging Granicus Experience Group – our in-house team of strategists and expert communicators and our digital communications software – to enable timely, health-related, outbound digital communications for veterans.



The City of Longview, TX

REDUCE CALLS AND IN-PERSON VISITS

The *City of Longview* wanted to improve service to its residents, so the city council decided to use Granicus' 311 request management solution. After just one year, the city increased transparency, saved \$8K, and reduced phone calls and in-person visits by 15%.



The City of Santa Ana, CA

REACH THE HARD-TO-REACH

Recognizing the need to be as inclusive and transparent as possible, the *City of Santa Ana* made its public meetings accessible in both English and Spanish, which inadvertently required countless hours of staff time to produce. By implementing Granicus' meeting and agenda software, the city was able to make the process infinitely more efficient, freeing up staff time to connect further with diverse populations.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

UNITE AND CONSOLIDATE COMMUNICATIONS

The Bureau of Health Workforce, an office within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, was tasked with overhauling and consolidating internal communications. Using Granicus digital communications solution, the Bureau created a popular newsletter with an impressive 70% weekly open rate that did that, and so much more.

ABOUT GRANICUS

Granicus provides technology and services that empower government organizations to create seamless digital experiences for the people they serve. By offering the industry's leading cloud-based solutions for communications, government website design, meeting and agenda management software, records management,, and digital services to over 500,000 government professionals, Granicus helps turn government missions into quantifiable realities. Granicus products connect more than 300 million people, creating a powerful network to enhance resident engagement. By optimizing decision-making processes, Granicus strives to help government see better outcomes and a greater impact for the residents they serve. For more information, visit [granicus.com](https://www.granicus.com).

Would you like to complete this strategic workbook with digital government expert?

Contact us at info@granicus.com to schedule.



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