



# Digital Experience Platforms: Helping Government become a Department of the Citizen

*Putting Constituents at the Centre of Digital Services  
by breaking down silos and fostering collaboration*

## Citizen-centric Lifecycle Management

Big changes can be extraordinarily rewarding, but they're rarely easy. This certainly holds true for the public sector investing in digital transformation. The Australian public sector faces a combination of severe budget constraints, growing demand, innovation in technology and the mainstream adoption of digital communication channels.

In the **Digital by Default, Open by Design** whitepaper we discussed how a digital platform strategy brings scalability and radically lower transaction costs to services. Co-designed and co-created services on a commonly supported platform allows the public sector to fit together the pieces which suit their needs and simply develop the extra elements required. The fundamental principles of open source and its ally, open standards, become key elements in satisfying the demands of the user to have both a better experience and lower costs in delivery of services.

Beyond digitising transactional functions, the real value for citizens from a digital transformation strategy are the benefits derived from collating experiences across the entire digital landscape and channels of interaction, and citizen-centric lifecycle management as a result.

Today, citizens expect to be able to engage with government through mobile devices and across social media, and they expect helpful, personalised results in real time. The same is true for those working within the public sector as they increasingly operate within a digital environment.

Rather than multiple websites with duplicated or out of date content, poor functionality, lack of usability and the expectation that users will have to navigate this complicated maze of services governments are working to make everything simpler, faster and easier to use. They are working to put citizens' and users' needs first in their digital service design.

By putting users first government can reduce the number of digital channels it operates and ensure a consolidated digital ecosystem. It can bring siloed information into channels that make sense to citizens which also cuts down duplication and provides a single source of truth.


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*The power of a digital transformation strategy lies in its scope and objectives. Less digitally mature organizations tend to focus on individual technologies and have strategies that are decidedly operational in focus. Digital strategies in the most mature organizations are developed with an eye on transforming the business.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> G. C. Kane, D. Palmer, A. N. Phillips, D. Kiron and N. Buckley, "Strategy, Not Technology, Drives Digital Transformation" MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte University Press, July 2015.



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## Digital Experience Platforms Breaking Down Silos

The demand for personalised, connected experiences for citizens has seen an increase in the need for *digital experience platforms*. Digital experience platforms can empower government to make advances in their digital strategies and deliver the exceptional experiences their increasingly connected citizens and users expect.

In an Accenture Digital Government Pulse survey conducted across seven countries and answered by 6,624 citizens of USA, UK, France, Germany, UAE, Singapore and Australia: *A third or more of citizens surveyed indicate that their lack of awareness of what services are available digitally, and service fragmentation is preventing them from increasing their use.*<sup>2</sup>

Digital experience platforms are designed to break down silos and bring together data and channels in a way that can be shared among organisational units. The ultimate goal for a digital experience platform is to manage the elements of exceptional, personalised experiences with a clear view of user activity and data, analytics, integration, and cost-effective implementation.

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*Individuals increasingly accept the idea that technology can serve them better when it knows about their lives, and rules and norms governing this information exchange have finally begun to crystallize. The remaining battle lines are drawn around innovations that digitize entirely new aspects of life.*<sup>3</sup>

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## Integrating Every Touchpoint

**“The number one technical challenge facing digital experience leaders is inadequate integration with back-end systems,”** according to a 2016 Forrester report, [“Vendor Landscape for Digital Experience Portals”](#)<sup>4</sup>.

The unifying principle for digital experience platforms remains consistent: architecture that integrates core business tools and provides a foundation for future digital innovation. Key benefits of digital experience platforms for any digital transformation project include the following:

1. **Identify immediate needs in digital citizen experience.**

Sophisticated data management streamlines the process of identifying pain points or gaps in communication, which can then be leveraged to improve digital experiences. This makes it possible to prioritise what citizens want without locking down any specific technology or type of interaction. Once departments identify immediate needs in digital user experience, they can act on them from a place of knowledge, rather than trying to build strategies based on incomplete data. A digital experience platform will then be

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Le Masson, Dr Majid Altuwajiri, 'Digital at Depth for Government Innovation, Accenture, 2015

<sup>3</sup> William D. Eggers and Paul Macmillan, 'Gov2020: A Journey into the Future of Government', Deloitte, June 2015

<sup>4</sup> Mark Grannan, 'Vendor Landscape: Digital Experience Portals', Forrester, January 2016

able to provide tools or integrate with the correct external products to address these needs.

2. [Improve the accuracy of citizen engagement through holistic customer data and information.](#)

The first step to improving experiences is to offer omni-channel interaction, and the second step is to constantly track, measure and analyse so that engagement can evolve and be improved. Digital experience platforms make it possible to conduct behaviour monitoring at each digital touchpoint. As the Internet of Things grows, government will have access to more channels of data, enabling new insights. As patterns in behaviour are identified these can be used to improve citizens and users experiences, even before they ask for it.

A digital experience platform can pull data into one place that each department can access as needed through customised views. This ensures that the government is working with consistent, updated information and basing decisions on accurate, holistic insights. The challenge then becomes striking a balance between capturing comprehensive citizen data which the population is comfortable with and providing meaningful value as a consequence.

3. [Use integration and flexible architecture to stay on the cutting-edge of digital trends.](#)

A common burden of technology upgrades is the unforeseen costs when development takes longer or is more complex than planned. If a digital experience platform achieves an effective level of integration and flexibility, then it will be cost-effective over time. Veterans of digital change know that a technology upgrade can take months or even years. Sometimes, by the time you get the technology and strategy right, the trend is in its last days and the industry leaders are already gearing up for the next change.

Because a digital experience platform starts with the core components in one place and product, it is a cost-effective, long-term investment that mitigates the risk in acting on a digital trend. In today's quickly changing digital environment, vendor lock-in is a handicap, and any digital experience platform should also make it easy to integrate with outside products, not just the vendor's own offerings.

## Rapid Iteration and Agile Development

In many projects and departments across the public sector a large number of digital transformation projects have implemented an agile approach to development. The emphasis on continuous improvement enables better responsiveness in a rapidly changing world and the ability to keep pace with changing users' and citizens' needs.

The Australian Federal Government's Digital Transformation Office, Digital Service Standard states: *Design and build the service using the service design and delivery process, taking an agile and user-centred approach in order to ensure digital teams build government services that are simpler, clearer and faster for all users.*

*“Re-engineering is not just about automation – it’s about re-thinking the way those processes are delivered.”*

John Jackson, CIO London Borough of Camden.

A technology that can enable digital transformation teams to deliver public-ready solutions quickly requires a flexible and modular architecture and the ability to take advantage of reusable services. It will also give anyone involved in digital transformation the ability to integrate existing applications and be able to adapt to new digital technologies and shifts in strategy.

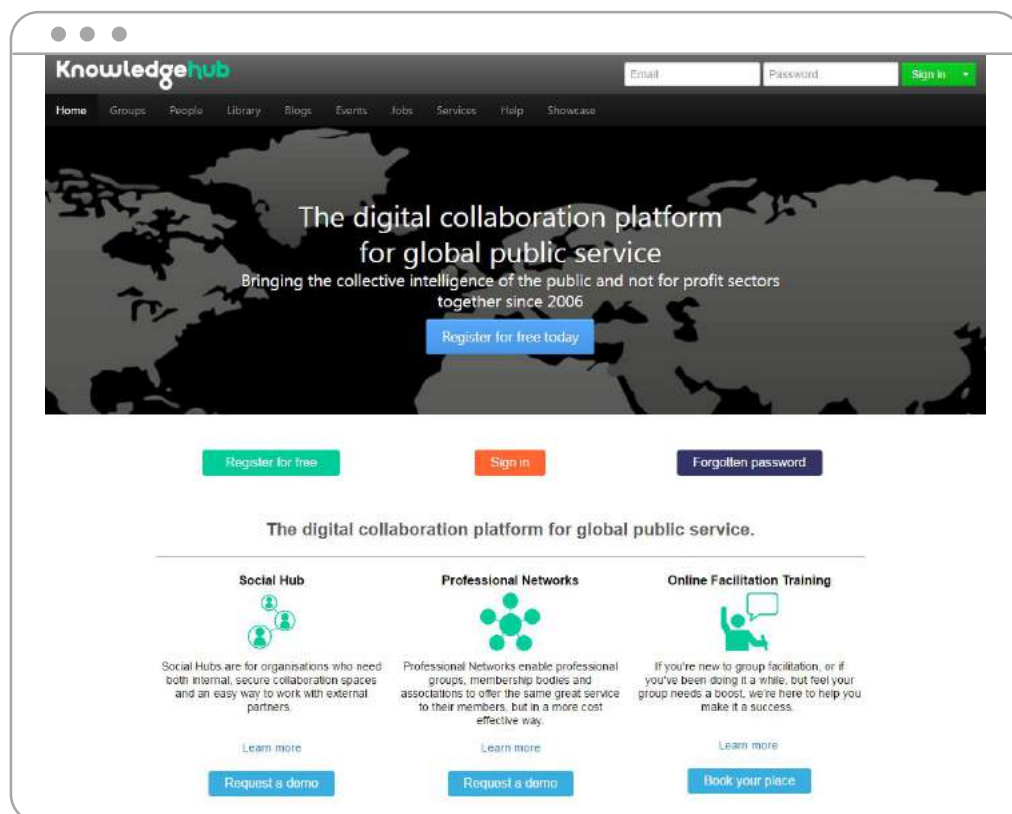
This is where open source digital experience platforms are in their element as they are by design flexible and open to innovation. They also offer economies of scale to develop quality solutions through common effort to solve common problems which entirely aligns with governments wanting to improve public services while achieving the necessary cost savings.

## Public Sector Transformation Highlights

The solutions for solving the digital needs of citizens and those employed within the public sector are varied. The beauty of a flexible digital experience platform is that it can be used to serve multiple purposes. Below are just a few examples of how platforms are being deployed.

### Knowledge Hub

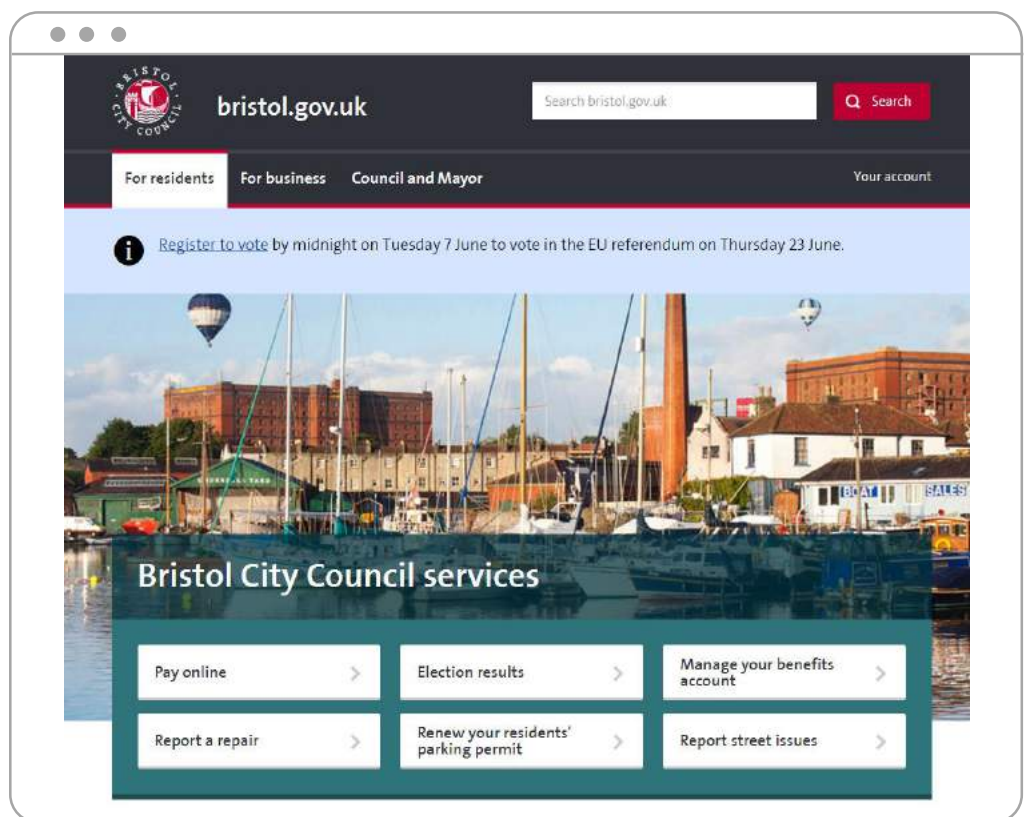
Knowledge Hub is run by the UK service provider CapacityGRID and is the largest public sector digital collaboration platform in the UK. This extensive online community of 160,000 people work across a large range of organisations involved with public service. Organisations and individuals use the platform for networking, collaborating and sharing knowledge to improve services and help reduce costs. Members harness the collective intelligence of its groups and knowledge networks to provide an informed approach to developing policy, business solutions and customer engagement.



## Bristol City Council

A new wave of digital transformation in the public sector has given rise to the concept of digital cities. Public service teams throughout major cities are using technology to improve basic services and meet the needs of local residents. This means new ways of communication and connectivity to make an impact in schools, hospitals, libraries, public transportation, water supply, waste management, and more.

Bristol City Council has been a leader in bringing technology and techniques together to help transform the way they deliver their services to the community and as a result their digital platform deliver services through various channels. It allows Bristol City Council to become more flexible and adopt new features while providing the citizens with a simpler, more relevant experience.

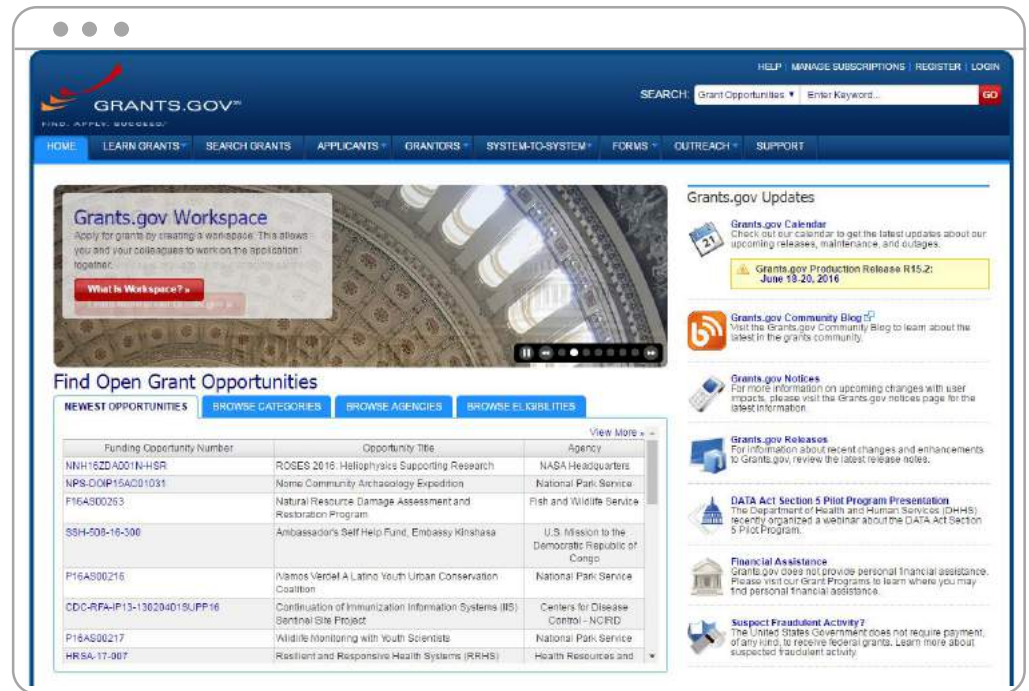


## Grants.gov

An initiative of the United States Federal Government, Grants.gov was chartered to deliver a system that provides a centralised location for grant seekers to find and apply for federal funding opportunities.

Today, the Grants.gov system vets grant applications for 26 federal grant-making agencies. 300,000 completed applications are submitted to Grants.gov annually and it houses information on over 1,000 grant programs managing over \$410 billion annually in Federal grant-in-aid funds. It sends over 1 million email notifications and receives over 4 million page views weekly.





## Moving Forward with Digital Transformation

Digital experience platforms can be seen as a response to technology meeting citizens' needs. With the right platform, government can provide access to relevant touchpoints on whatever device a citizen or user wants, which leads to a better overall experience.

They can manage and unify disparate systems and channels, while providing an architecture that allows for integration. Together, this means that digital technologies are opening new doors in government-citizen relationships that can drive future innovation and growth which allows for quick implementation and an evolving digital strategy with reusable and resilient services which means they can be refined over time as required.

## About Liferay

Liferay makes software that helps to create digital experiences on web, mobile, and connected devices. Liferay's Digital Experience Platform is the only open source solution in the Leaders position in [Gartner's Magic Quadrant for Horizontal Portals<sup>5</sup>](#), for the sixth consecutive year.

As an organisation we believe open source and open standards underpins a right to choose tools that offer the best quality and value.

## Get in touch

If you would like to find out more about Liferay's work in the Australian public sector please get in touch at [sales-au@liferay.com](mailto:sales-au@liferay.com) or alternatively please visit [www.liferay.com/public-sector-au](http://www.liferay.com/public-sector-au) for more information.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.liferay.com/about-us/awards/gartnermq-portals?tactic\\_id=59223882](https://www.liferay.com/about-us/awards/gartnermq-portals?tactic_id=59223882)