



SQUIZ

The new citizen expectation

Rethinking digital transformation
in local government



Squiz Digital Experience Platform

Contents

The new citizen expectation	2
What's changed?	4
<i>Generational divides</i>	5
<i>Societal changes</i>	5
<i>Economic outlook</i>	6
<i>Technological advancements</i>	7
What will change in future?	8
<i>Priorities for local government</i>	10
Next steps	12
<i>Measuring success</i>	13
Meeting the new citizen expectation – Squiz DXP for local government	14



The new citizen expectation

One of the most noticeable digital trends in recent years is the huge growth in customer expectations. The standard for online experiences is constantly being raised and just one exceptional customer experience is enough to reset the bar for all other online experiences. When interacting with organizations online, customers now expect:



*To be treated
as an individual*

73%

want personalized experiences, and for organizations to understand their needs.



*To only see information
and services that are
relevant to them*

64%

want tailored experiences, based on previous interactions.



Ease of use

56%

of customers expect to find whatever they need from a company in three clicks or less.



Instant service

71%

expect companies to respond to and interact with them in real-time.¹

1. State of The Connected Customer Report, Salesforce, July 2019



But, as many local government organizations are increasingly aware, **customers are also citizens** – and they expect the same standard of digital services and experiences, regardless of whether they're dealing with their favourite consumer brands or their local council. In fact, 44% of citizens want public service agencies to collaborate with companies like Amazon and Airbnb, in order to provide more personalized experiences.¹

As every other facet of day-to-day life is being simplified through digital services, citizens are growing increasingly impatient with government services and processes that are stuck in the past, still dependent on paper forms and in-person transactions.

In this eBook, we'll explore how today's citizens have changed and the impact this has had on expectations from local government; what changes are likely to come in future and the steps government bodies can take to meet digital expectations.

1. What People Want: Public Service Global Citizen Survey, Accenture, July 2017

What's changed?

Almost every aspect of how we live and work is changing at an increasingly rapid pace. While the private sector is often leading (or at least more easily able to keep up with) the constant changes and requirements that their customers demand, local governments – which often face limited funding, heavy public scrutiny and bureaucratic processes – have been slower to respond.

Here are just some of the major complicating factors for local governments:



Generational
divides



Economic
outlook



Societal
changes



Technological
advancements

Generational divides

Citizens, themselves, are becoming an increasingly diverse and complex 'customer base' for local governments to serve. An aging global population alone introduces challenges such as fewer tax-paying citizens, increased demand for healthcare and aged care, and greater need for highly accessible services.¹

Simultaneously, two-thirds of citizens fall into the generation Y and Z age categories (born between 1980 and 2015), meaning we are now in an age where the majority of citizens are either very familiar with or have grown up with, smartphones and digital technologies.²

The good news is that:

61%

of citizens who use government digital services are happy with their experiences

and a further

54%

would use digital services more regularly, if governments used AI to provide more accurate information.³

1. World Population Aging Report, United Nations, 2019
2. Realizing the Promise of Government-as-a-Platform, Atos, 2020
3. Citizen Survey 2019, Accenture, July 2019
4. COVID-19 and The World of Work, International Labour Organisation, June 2020

Societal changes

Most notably, the COVID-19 pandemic – which has resulted in far-reaching consequences globally – has also put local government services under more pressure than ever. As unemployment has spiked across the world, resulting from necessary lockdown measures, citizens have looked to governments to provide increased social support, with an estimated 400 million full-time jobs lost within the first 6 months of 2020.⁴



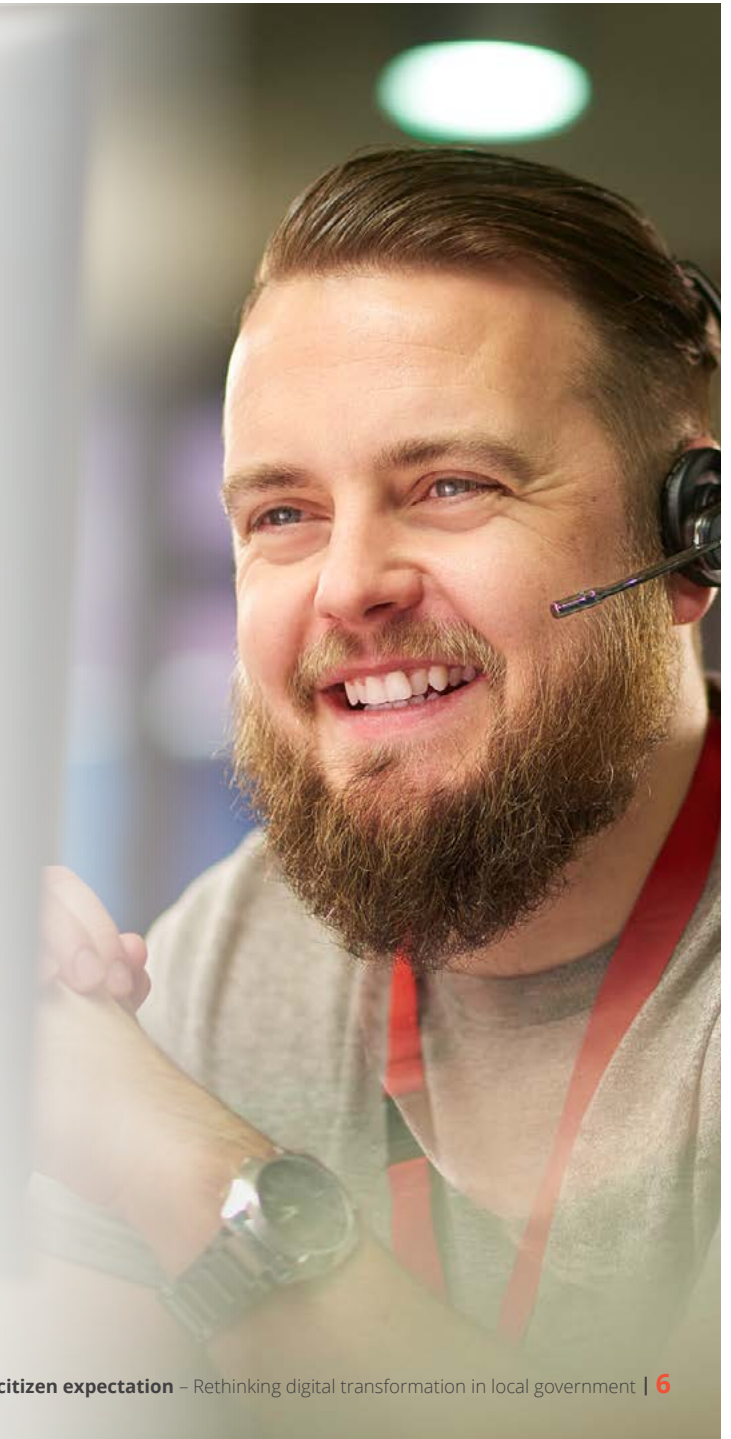
400 million

full-time jobs lost within the first 6 months of 2020.⁴

Economic outlook

Another inevitable result of the global pandemic has been an uncertain economy. The current 2021 global GDP is projected to be at least 6.5 percentage points lower than pre-COVID predictions¹, which will have huge implications for employment rates and the future cost of living – again, increasing citizen dependency on local government services and support. Even before the pandemic, other challenges included fiscal stress, linear economies, rising income inequality, talent/skill gaps and climate change.

1. A Crisis Like No Other, An Uncertain Recovery, International Monetary Fund, June 2020



Technological advancements

Needless to say, the rapid evolution of digital technologies has sparked arguably the biggest changes to how we live and work today. From enabling small ‘disruptor’ businesses to transform entire industries to empowering customers to run many day-to-day tasks from their smartphones, digital technologies have utterly changed our expectations of what we can – and should – be able to achieve within a few clicks. Notable factors include:

Hyper-connectivity

Due to advancement in communication technologies and social media, citizens are more connected than ever before; more than 3.8 billion people already use social media and 60% of the world’s population is ‘online’.¹ This ‘always connected’ mindset presents continuing challenges for governments for the delivery of public services, as they need to be omnichannel and 24/7 to reach both the online and offline citizen.

Mobile and wearable tech

By 2022, more than 25% of the US population (67 million) will use a wearable device at least once a month.² Mobile devices, wearables, mobile payments are all changing how citizens carry out their daily tasks and governments will need to provide digital services that cater to meet the needs of mobile citizens.

Serving at scale

By the end of 2020, people around the world are expected to make 726 billion transactions using digital payment technologies.³ A combination of a growing citizen population to serve, coupled with increased adoption of digital services means that local governments will need to increase operational efficiency, understand citizens and provide services that are effective. Technologies that enable governments to serve at scale – such as cloud computing, AI, analytics and automation – will play a key role in data-driven decision making.

1. Digital 2020 Global Overview Report, We Are Social Inc., January 2020

2. Wearables 2019, eMarketer, January 2019

3. World Payments Report 2018, Capgemini, 2018

What will change in future?

When we consider that the smartphone has only been in existence for 20 years (opinions vary on which device was the first true 'smartphone'), and that the pace of digital transformation is accelerating, governments, their citizens and how they interact are likely to change drastically in the next five years.

For governments, Gartner predicts that by 2023:

50%

Government CIOs will oversee a workforce where over 50% occupy roles that don't exist in government IT today.

80%

Over 80% of new technology solutions and services adopted by government will be delivered and supported using an 'anything-as-a-service' (XaaS) model.

80%

Over 80% of government digital implementations that are not built on a technology platform will fail to meet their objectives.¹

1. Predicts 2019: Establish the Foundation of Next-Gen Digital Government Success, Gartner, December 2018



For citizens, expectations will continue to increase, but also:

- Trust will become even more important – in fact, recent research suggests that, as a result of the pandemic, ‘trust and transparency’ have already overtaken personalization as the key factor in what is considered an excellent experience.¹
- Local government support becomes even more essential – with the cost of living, healthcare and housing becoming increasingly unaffordable, more citizens will come to depend on government services and support.²

1. Seven Enduring Consumer Behaviours, KPMG, July 2020
2. The Social Contract in the 21st Century, McKinsey, February 2020

Priorities for local government

In order to stay at the forefront of citizen service delivery, throughout this period of accelerated change, local governments must focus on both current and future citizen needs, as well as the emerging technologies and processes that will enable them to deliver these goals.

One thing that most experts agree upon is that accelerating deployment of digital services should be a top priority across all levels of government, including local.¹

Top 5 Priorities for local gov

-   Digital initiatives and industry specific solutions
-   Cost optimization / reduction
-   Operational excellence, financial goals and security
-   Customer experience and revenue / business growth
-   Data analytics and business mode change

1. 2019 CIO Agenda: Government Insights, Gartner, October 2018

The pandemic has forced a lot of organizations to react quickly to changing consumer needs, with recent research suggesting that digital transformation across the globe has sped-up by an estimated six years as a direct result of COVID-19.¹ But, for many local governments, simply getting digital initiatives past the approval stages is often a huge challenge in itself.

As digital continues to become the only solution for delivering citizen services efficiently and effectively, at scale, the business case should become less problematic. Furthermore, global spend on IT services and software is forecast to increase, post-COVID, as digital citizen services become more vital than ever.²

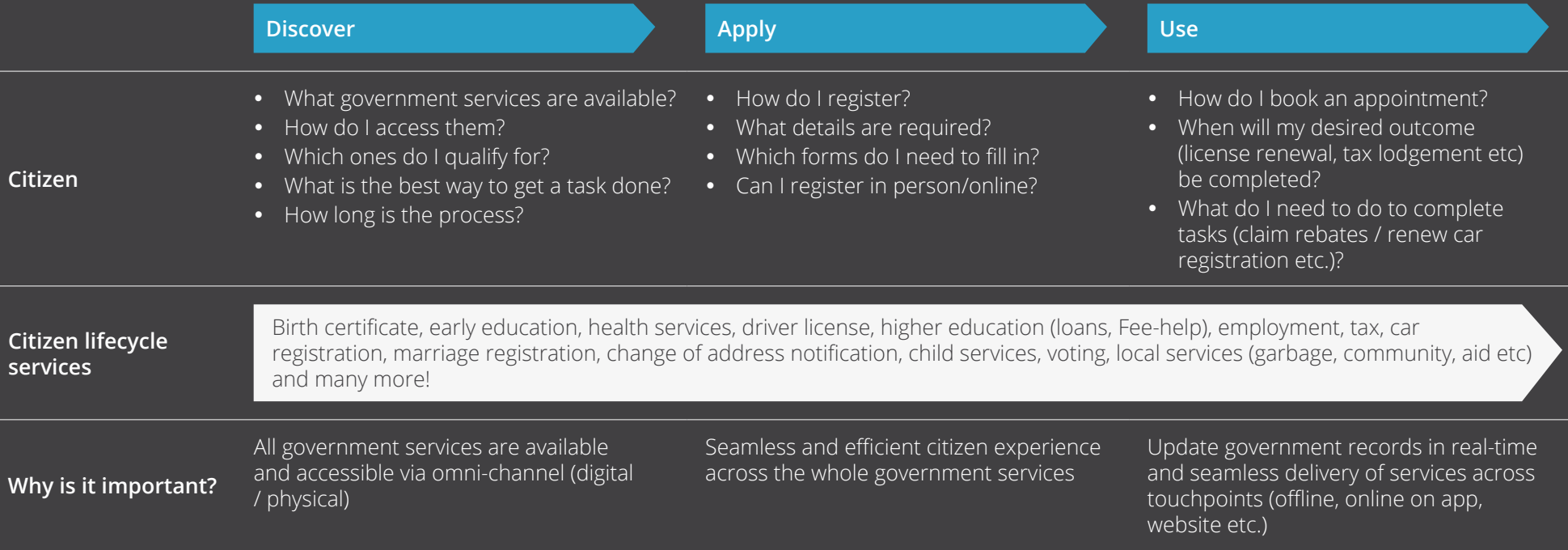


1. COVID-19 Digital Engagement Report, Twilio, July 2020

2. Gartner Forecasts Global Government IT Spending to Decline 0.6% in 2020, Gartner, August 2020

Next steps

In order to progress digital initiatives from vision to execution, local governments need to fully comprehend the digital citizen journey:



Measuring success

Just 12 months ago, Australia's NSW Minister for Customer Service, Victor Dominello, sent a very clear message to government department heads: "If you want money... show me that you understand your customers' needs... I want to see working prototypes of services".¹ Setting clear, achievable, citizen-centric objectives is key to creating digital services that are *measurably* successful.

From offering an instant, personalized service at scale, to freeing up internal staff time to significant cost-savings, digital services offer local governments the best possible method of service delivery. Here are just a few examples of transformative, successful local government digital services:

Timaru District Council

Timaru District is a local government district in New Zealand's South Island administered by the Timaru District Council. Recognizing that many customers prefer being able to self-serve and avoid the need to

queue whether on a call or at a counter, the Council developed a chatbot called 'Tim' to answer a range of customer queries 24/7. Developed in four weeks, using the council's existing web management platform Squiz Matrix CMS and Google's Dialogflow AI service, 'Tim' has handled more than 21,000 enquiries and 77% of respondents answered 'yes' when asked 'Was this response helpful?'.¹

Austrroads

The Austrroads Safety Barrier Assessment Panel (ASBAP) assesses the crashworthiness and suitability of road safety barriers, systems and devices. To improve the transparency of the ASBAP submission and review cycle, a number of process reforms were planned – one of which was the creation of a new automated online submission process. The new ASBAP Digital Submission Portal was built using Squiz Matrix CMS and offers customers a significantly easier and faster application process.

1. The Evolution of Service Delivery, NSW Government, August 2019

Meeting the new citizen expectation – Squiz DXP for local governments

Councils looking to increase digital service delivery and uptake, and match customer experience to their community's expectations, require a DXP that enables both digital service build-out and control of the customer experience.

The Squiz Digital Experience Platform (DXP) is tailor made for Local Government. Unlike other DXPs that have a pure consumer and e-commerce focus, Squiz DXP is designed with and for service-based organizations, offering innovative, industry-specific capabilities for federal, state and local governments.

Squiz's software and services were built to give organizations the ability to deliver open, fast and flexible websites, digital applications and other digital experiences needed to create and choreograph powerful digital customer experiences. Squiz DXP is built to allow councils to communicate quickly and easily, while providing powerful development and integration tools for IT and Business Transformation

groups. Councils also benefit from a marketplace of fully customisable quick-start components, extensions and integrations; providing the unrivalled speed and efficiency of templates, without looking like everyone else.

The Squiz DXP is tailor made for Local Government

- **Automate** manual processes with integration to all your back-end systems
- **Easily deploy smart forms**, transforming your all of your PDFs into intuitive online forms
- **Drive greatly enhanced customer experiences** with personalisation, to both your anonymous and logged in users. Personalisation can be set up by any content editor in minutes.
- **Deliver highly accessible websites and content** with built in tools that highlight accessibility issues, and give you on screen resolutions.
- **Drive down the ongoing cost of ownership** and benefit from inter-council collaboration.



SQUIZ

Get in touch

Get the insights and tools
essential for success

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 **Squiz** Digital Experience Platform