



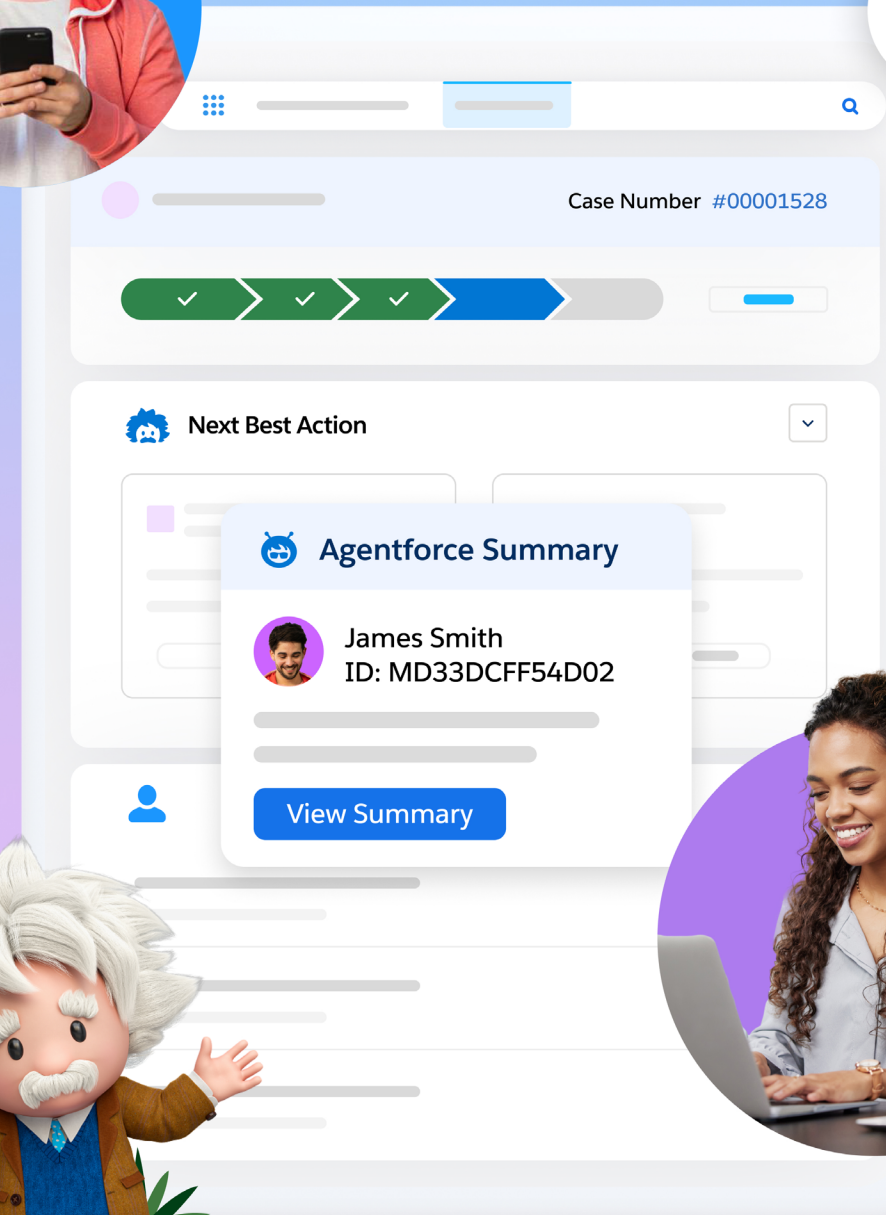
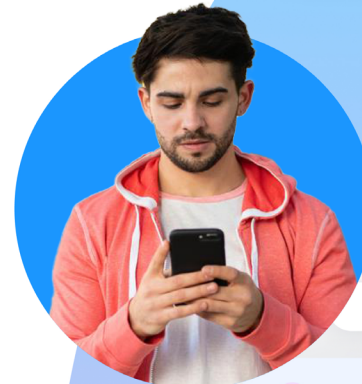
SECOND EDITION

# Connected Government Report

Insights on the state of public services and the future of agentic AI

I have a question about my benefits application

Hi, I'm Agentforce!  
Let me look that up for you.



# A Note from Salesforce for the Public Sector

Today's civil servants must navigate complicated processes and procedures, stay up-to-date on the latest legislation, and juggle increasing workloads – all with growing expectations and limited resources. Seventy-five percent of people expect the quality of digital government services to match the best private sector organizations.

Despite these demands, civil servants remain committed to service excellence. Indeed, government service employees' top priority is improving the public's interactions with government.

But their tools often fall short of delivering on expectations.

AI – and, particularly, [agentic AI](#) – offers a promising solution for civil servants. Our research found that AI can already improve government service and efficiency. How? By automating administrative tasks, providing 24/7 support, and personalizing services. Now, government employees can take advantage of agents to quickly make sense of large amounts of data, including the latest agency policies, thus freeing up time for more complex, high-impact tasks. And better yet, agents use conversational interfaces that are intuitive and easy to adopt, unlike other technologies that require extensive training.

For the public, agents provide an easy way to interact with government organizations, promise 24/7 service, and a seamless experience, whether it's filing taxes or requesting road repairs.

This report offers the latest insights on modern service delivery and how AI – including agentic AI – can drive transformational results.

Let's seize the opportunity to build trust and connection for everyone's benefit.



# About This Report

Each year, Salesforce conducts research to help professionals across job functions, industries, and geographies understand the trends most relevant to them. This special report aggregates insights from several double-anonymous surveys of public-facing professionals and back-office IT professionals within public sector organizations, as well as constituents themselves. Data was collected between February 2023 and August 2024. See [page 27](#) for further information.

Due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report equal 100%. All comparison calculations are made from total numbers (not rounded numbers).



# Contents

Executive Summary ..... 05

## PART 1

The Public’s Perspective..... 06

Chapter 1: Government Experiences Held to Private Sector Standards..... 07

Chapter 2: The Public Sees AI Opportunity for Government Services..... 11

💡 Expert Perspective: Public Sector's Agentic AI Opportunity..... 14

## PART 2

Government Workers' Perspective..... 15

Chapter 3: Public Servants Tasked to Do More With Less..... 16

Chapter 4: Technical Teams Modernize for a Digital-First, Agentic AI Era ..... 19

🔮 Look Ahead: Agentic AI Offers Expanded Opportunities..... 25

Additional Resources ..... 26





# Executive Summary

## 01 Government Experiences Held to Private Sector Standards

The public expects government digital services to be as user-friendly as those offered by the private sector. For many, positive experiences matter as much as the services themselves. Yet poor navigation and self-service options on public sector digital properties – if digital options even exist – fall short of constituent expectations. **Seventy-five percent of people expect the quality of digital government services to match those from the best private sector organizations.**

## 02 The Public Sees AI Opportunity for Government Services

The public sees AI as a chance to improve government service delivery. Overall comfort with government use of generative AI is positive, with use cases that enhance access and equity being the most popular. At the same time, the public looks to governments to provide guidance, policies, and safeguards against misuse. **Sixty-seven percent of the public expect governments to protect them from AI's negative impacts.**

## 03 Public-Facing Government Employees Are Tasked to Do More With Less

Government service workers' #1 priority is improving the public's experiences. At the same time, they are overwhelmed with rising workloads and increasing expectations with limited resources. The public wants a personal touch, but service workers often don't have the bandwidth or the tools to meet modern demands. **Government reps are 43% more likely than their private sector counterparts to need multiple screens to accomplish tasks, rather than having key information in one place.**

## 04 Technical Teams Modernize for a Digital-First, Agentic AI Era

Government IT teams are racing to modernize in the face of an increasingly digital-first public, and rapid innovations in AI, like agentic AI. **Eighty-three percent of government IT workers say they must do more to address changing customer expectations.**



# PART 1

## The Public's Perspective



01

# Government Experiences Held to Private Sector Standards



Agentforce

⚠ Application approved

You're a great candidate for  
our jobseekers' program.

Can I help you  
get started?



01

# The Public Seeks Personalization and Speed

In a time when a single click delivers groceries, a face scan checks you into a flight, and playlists are tailored to the time of day, people look for more than just good services. They are used to – and expect – consistently exceptional experiences.

**68% of people say the experience an organization provides is as important as its products and services.<sup>1</sup>**

The bar is set high. About half of people count on organizations to be proactive, understand their needs, and adapt as things change.

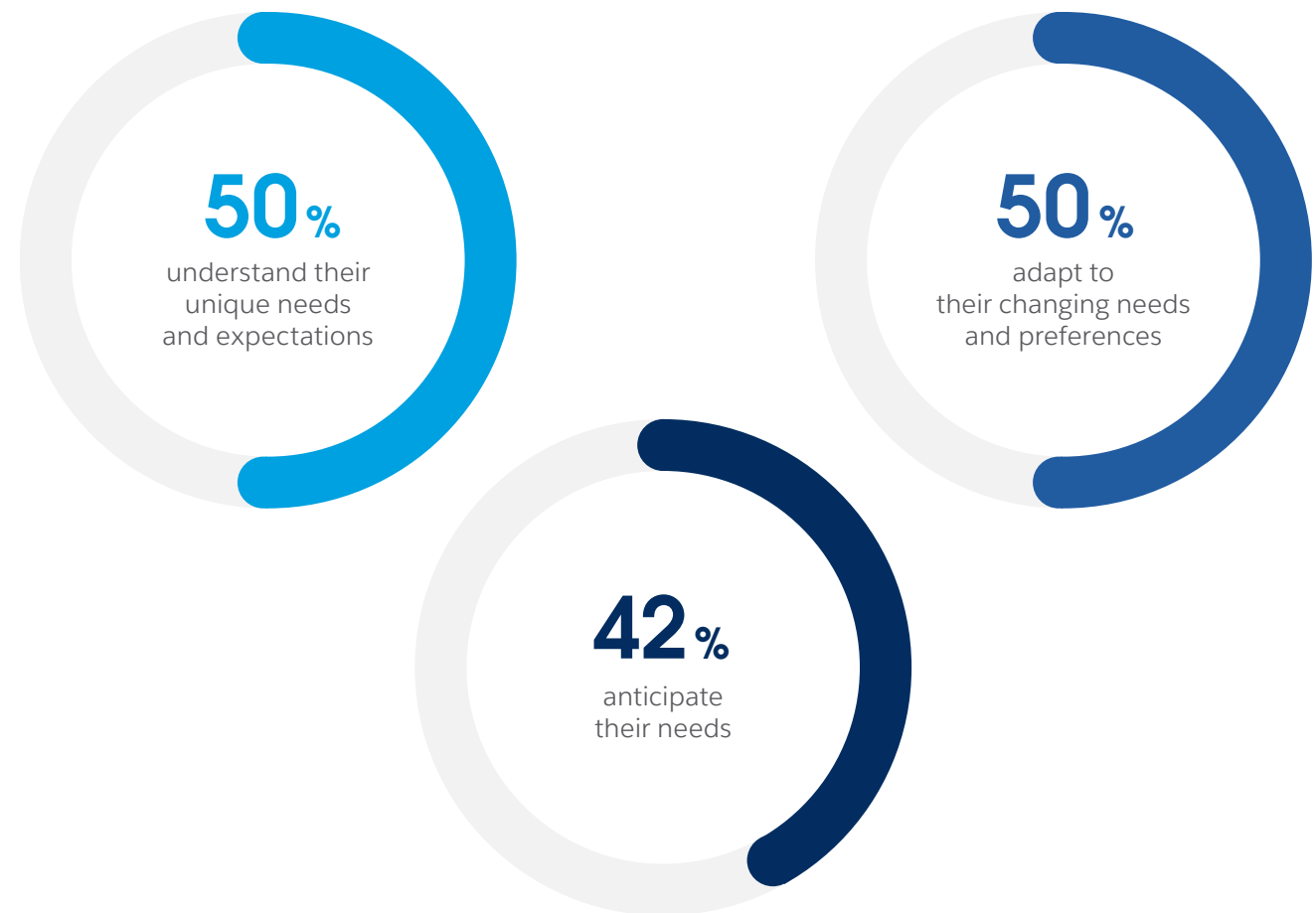
Expectations are no different for the public sector, where three-quarters of people look for digital government services to match the speed, convenience, and personalization of top private companies.

<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of the AI Connected Customer](#), October 2024.

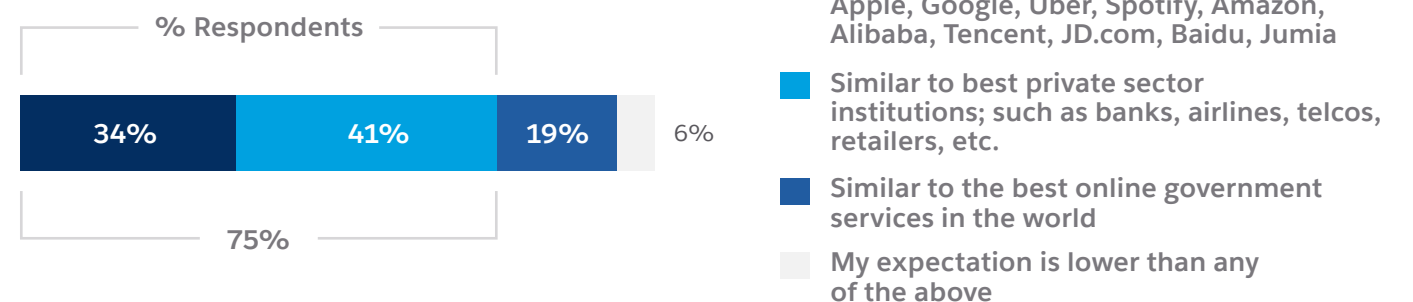
<sup>2</sup>BCG, [2024 Global Report: Trust Imperative 4.0](#), April 2024.

## Many Consider Personalized, Proactive Experiences Table Stakes in the Public and Private Sector

People Who Expect Organizations to Do the Following <sup>1</sup>



**75%** of people expect the quality of digital government services to match the best private sector organizations or global digital leaders when it comes to speed, convenience, personalization, ease of access, etc.<sup>2</sup>





01

# Self-Service Options Have Untapped Potential

When it comes to service, the public craves fast responses and fewer steps.

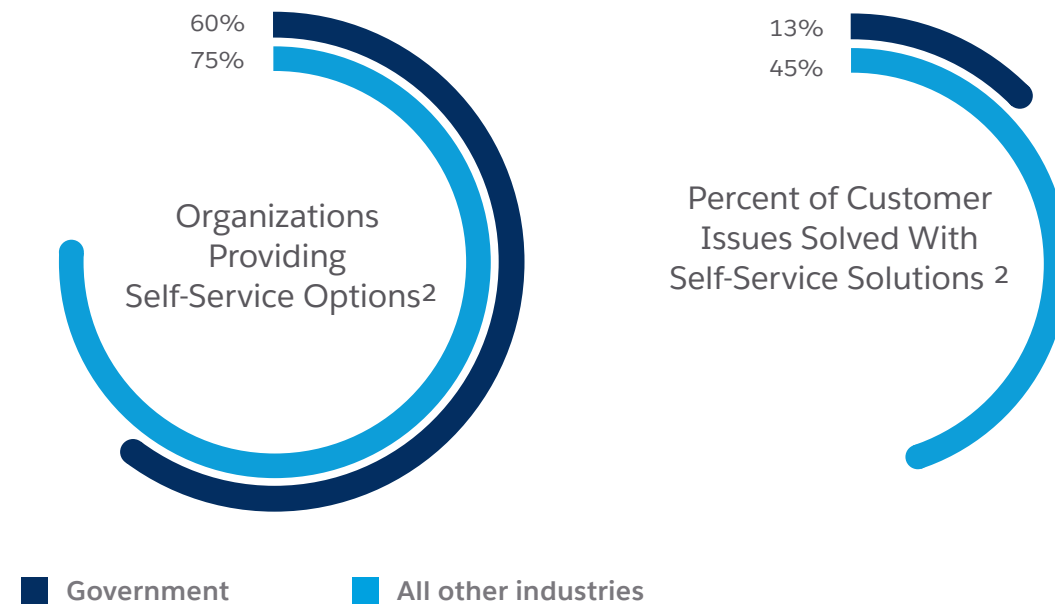
**56% of people prefer using fewer touchpoints to get information or complete a task.<sup>1</sup>**

However, people's interactions with the public sector appear much harder to navigate than those with the private sector. One indicator: government service workers are nearly twice as likely as those in other industries to assist with simple tasks that should be manageable with self-service.

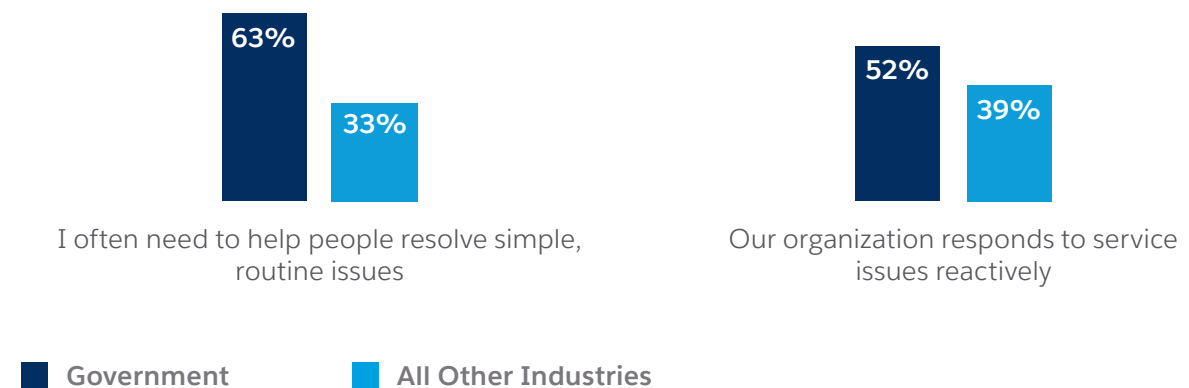
Overall, government service workers estimate that only 13% of issues are addressed by their current self-service offerings – less than one-third of what other industries successfully resolve.<sup>2</sup>

Further complicating user interactions is government workers' reactive approach to service. Over half admit to addressing issues *after* they are raised by a customer, rather than proactively resolving known issues to minimize customer effort.<sup>2</sup>

## Government Self-Service Options Leave Room for Improvement



## Service Reps Who Agree With the Following Statements



<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of the AI Connected Customer](#), October 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Salesforce, [State of Service](#), April 2024.



01

# Governments' Digital Interactions Have Room to Improve

Customer service interactions aside, governments' digital experiences also reveal areas for improvement. In the last two years, nearly three-quarters of people encountered problems while using online government services like applying for, or renewing permits, filing complaints, or accessing other public services.

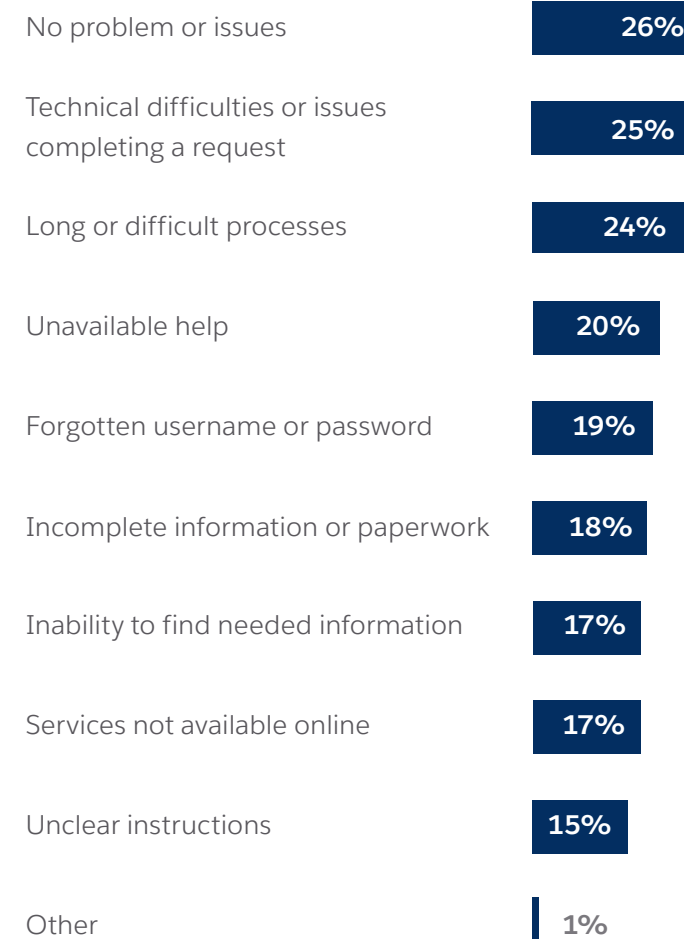
**74% of people encountered problems while using digital government services in the past two years.<sup>1</sup>**

The most common problems include technical difficulties and poor navigation, with nearly one in four saying the overall process took too long or was too difficult.<sup>1</sup>

For example, the U.S – home to Silicon Valley – has flagged that 45% of its federal websites are not mobile friendly and 60% may have accessibility issues.<sup>2</sup> Such shortcomings could hinder constituents' access to essential services, particularly those who rely on mobile devices or have disabilities.

## Majority of the Public Struggles with Digital Government Services

People Who Encountered the Following Problems with Digital Government Services<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>BCG, [2024 Global Report: Trust Imperative 4.0](#), April 2024.

<sup>2</sup>The White House, [Fact Sheet: Building Digital Experiences for the American People](#), September 2023.



## 02

# The Public Sees AI Opportunity for Government Services

 Case  
Critical Disability Application



Mrs. Clara  
Constituent Citizen  
Case Number [#00001528](#)

 AI Recommendations

Case Number [#00001528](#)

Next

Dismiss





## AI Gets Vote of Confidence

While predictive AI is already helping governments to streamline operations,<sup>1</sup> generative AI can help governments elevate interactions by improving information access, personalizing services, and boosting administrative efficiency. Overall, public comfort is positive, though it varies by use case.

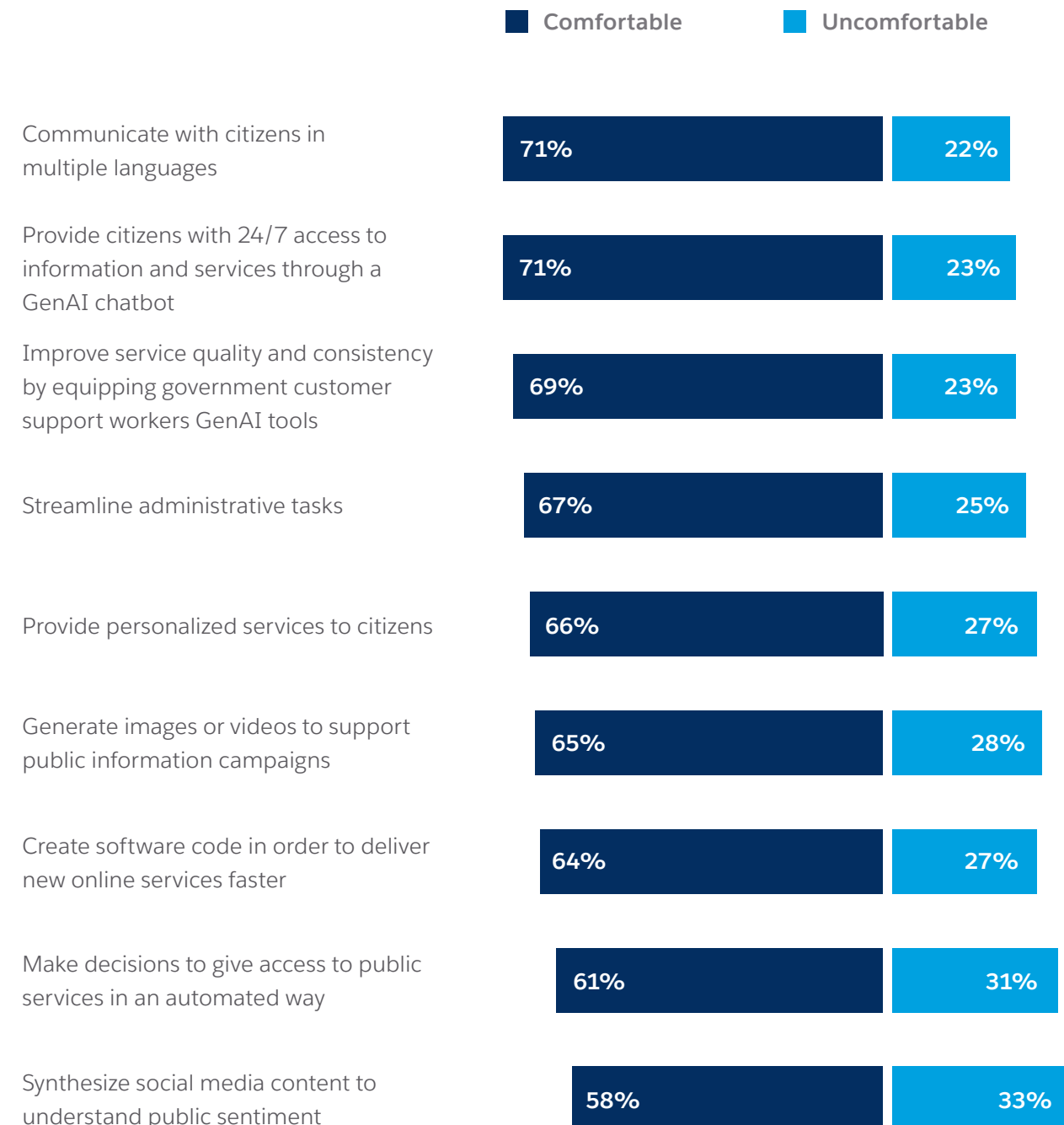
The most welcome scenarios focus on expanding access to information and services, including offering multilingual support and 24/7 service availability. This means supporting constituents in their preferred language – a particularly useful offering in places where several languages are spoken. Or, as is the case in countries like Indonesia, Nigeria, and India, several hundred languages.<sup>3</sup>

It also means services can be more broadly available to constituents at their preferred times – whether after business hours, during holidays, or on weekends. This is particularly useful for those with weekday commitments, like jobs or childcare responsibilities, that often clash with traditional 9-5 office hours.

By removing such barriers, governments can better meet equity and access goals, effectively reaching diverse and underserved communities.

### Comfort With Gen AI Use Cases is Net Positive

#### Comfort With the Following Generative AI Use Cases<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, "[AI in Government: Top Use Cases in the Public Sector](#)."

<sup>2</sup>BCG, [2024 Global Report: Trust Imperative 4.0](#), April 2024.

<sup>3</sup>Ethnologue, "[Countries with the most languages](#)," 2024.



## The Public Calls for Government Involvement in AI

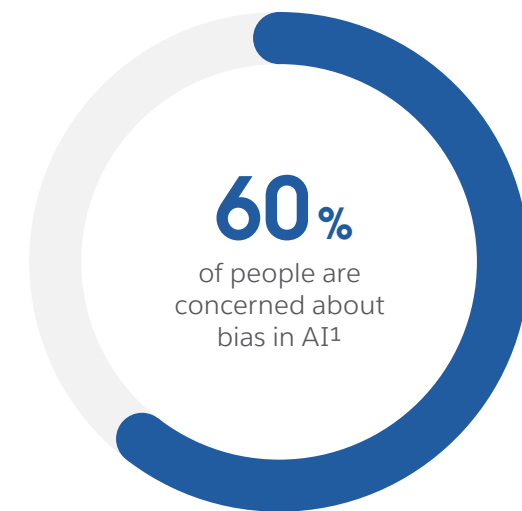
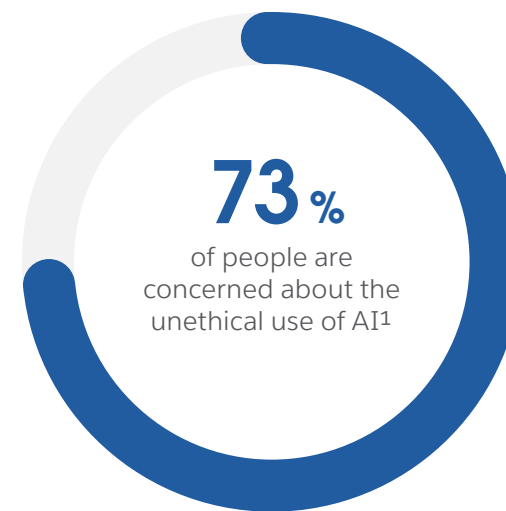
AI is becoming part of everyday life, from optimized directions within navigation apps to automatic fraud detection in banking services. While people appreciate many of AI's benefits, they also worry about its potential to introduce bias or be used unethically.

As concerns over unfettered AI usage intensify, so do calls for governments to play a role in oversight. Many believe public sector leaders should actively monitor technological innovation and two-thirds of the public considers it the government's role to protect them from any AI harms.

<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of the AI Connected Customer](#), October 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Edelman, [2024 Edelman Trust Barometer](#), January 2024.

### People Wary of AI Misuse and Bias



### Constituents Call for Government AI Safeguards





## Expert Perspective on the Public Sector's Agentic AI Opportunity

### **Generative AI headlines are quickly being eclipsed by talk of AI agents. What exactly is this newest wave of AI?**

We're entering a new era where AI doesn't just make suggestions: it can take action. While generative AI crafts content from prompts, agentic AI can tackle tasks entirely on its own. Agentic AI, or agents, are intelligent AI software that perform tasks independently, with as much or as little human intervention as required.

### **How can agentic AI benefit public sector organizations?**

Agentic AI provides a powerful set of tools to augment civil servants' capacities and more efficiently deliver government services. How? By addressing common public sector pain points like increasing case resolution, reducing backlogs, and offering real-time, one-on-one service. For example, agentic AI can:

- help civil servants manage seasonal peaks in call centers, such as increased inquiries before tax deadlines, given their 24/7 availability
- retrieve relevant, trusted data to deliver individualized, proactive guidance
- respond to individuals via their preferred channels and languages, thus improving accessibility.

### **How can public sector organizations get started with agentic AI?**

Promising use cases can be found in tasks that involve extensive manual processing, experience significant peaks in volume, have a large backlog, or require complex cross-department collaboration. Or, more simply, situations where constituents frequently express frustration over inefficiency. Then, think about which data, reasoning, and actions are required for the agent to provide trusted, personalized guidance to the end user.

Finally, consider starting with simpler use cases, then gradually progressing to more complex and autonomous ones. For example, imagine a constituent reaches out to a government office to find out the status of their application for benefits. The simpler agent response would be to provide an application status and recommend additional services based on the trusted data available. To get more complex and autonomous, an agent could then guide the individual through the application process and take action to submit.

This approach enables a safe and gradual adoption of AI, where the output is based only on selected, trusted data sources and the human intervention is as much or as little as required to deliver government services more efficiently.

**Rita Tehan**  
AVP, Strategy and Business Development, EMEA, Public Sector



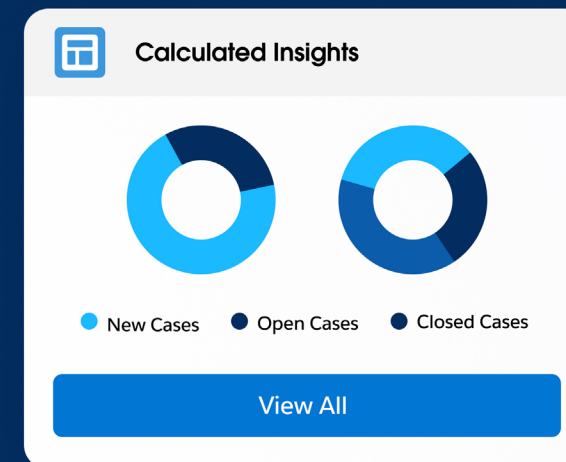
## PART 2

# Government Workers' Perspective



## 03

# Public Servants Tasked to Do More With Less





## 03

## Rising Demands Strain Workers

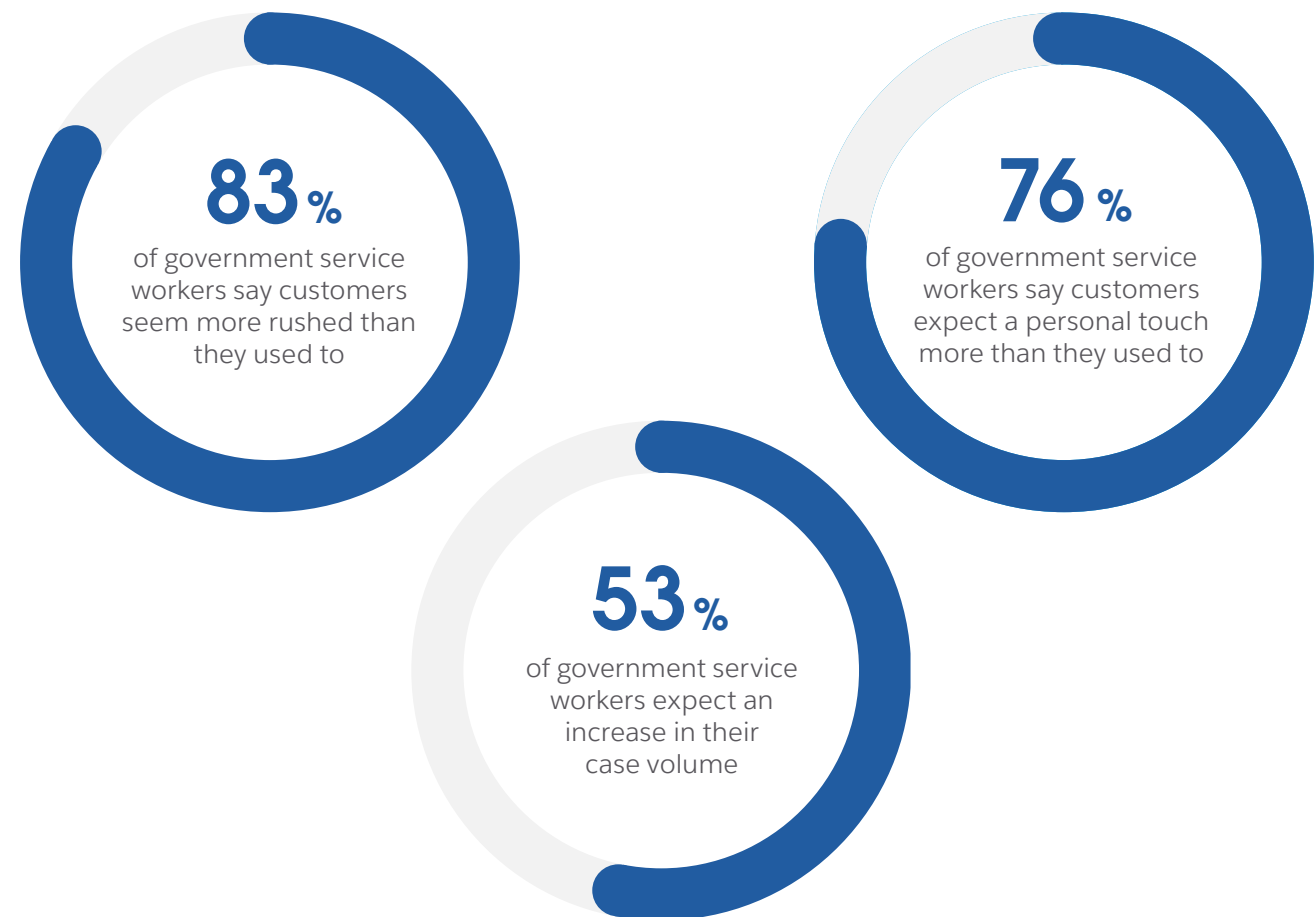
The dynamics of customer service are shifting. Workers report that people are more pressed for time while demanding more personalized attention. This dual mandate creates a challenging environment for government service teams who are further strained by rising case volumes and limited resources.

There is yet another layer to this challenge. While the majority of civil servants acknowledge relationship building as an important part of their job, 26% still don't consider it a priority.

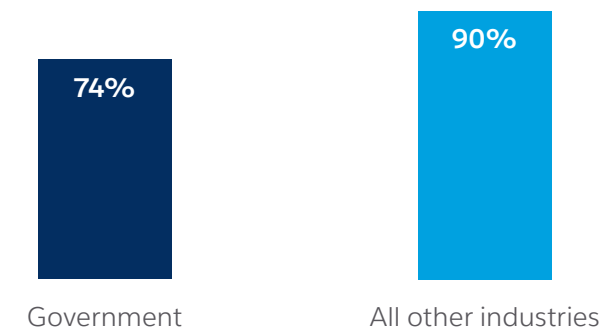
This relatively low emphasis on building empathy and personal connections directly conflicts with the public's appeals for a more personal touch. In turn, it risks reinforcing an impersonal or bureaucratic image, and, ultimately, could diminish trust and satisfaction.

<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of Service](#), April 2024.

### Public Sector Service Teams Face Rising Demands



### Service Workers Who Say Building Personal Customer Relationships Is Important to Their Job



# Government Employees Aren't Enabled to Meet Expectations

Government service workers are dedicated to improving constituent experiences but face tougher challenges than their peers in other industries.

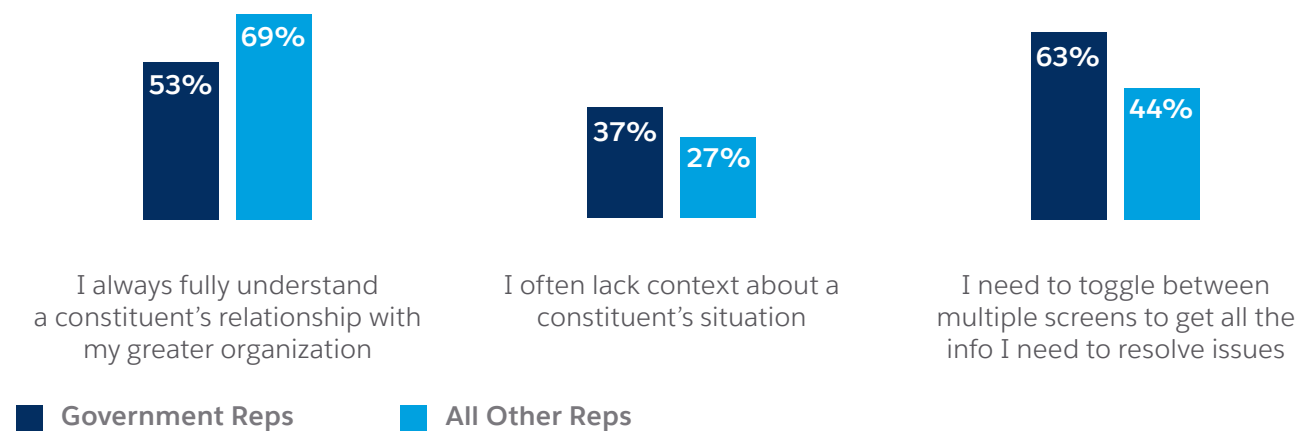
## Government service workers' #1 priority is to improve the customer experience.<sup>1</sup>

One major hurdle: understanding their audience. Government service workers often lack complete insights about the individuals they assist and therefore enter interactions without crucial context.

Government workers' back-end tools and processes slow their problem-solving abilities. They are nearly 50% more likely than their private sector counterparts to turn to multiple screens to accomplish tasks, rather than having key information in one place. It's no surprise that government employees want updated tools and technologies to serve their constituents better.

### Government Service Workers Are Less Equipped to Resolve Issues

Service Reps Who Agree with the Following<sup>1</sup>



### 63% of government workers believe they need enhanced digital workplace tools and technologies<sup>2</sup>



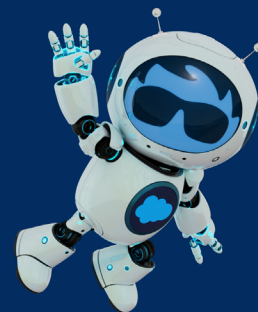
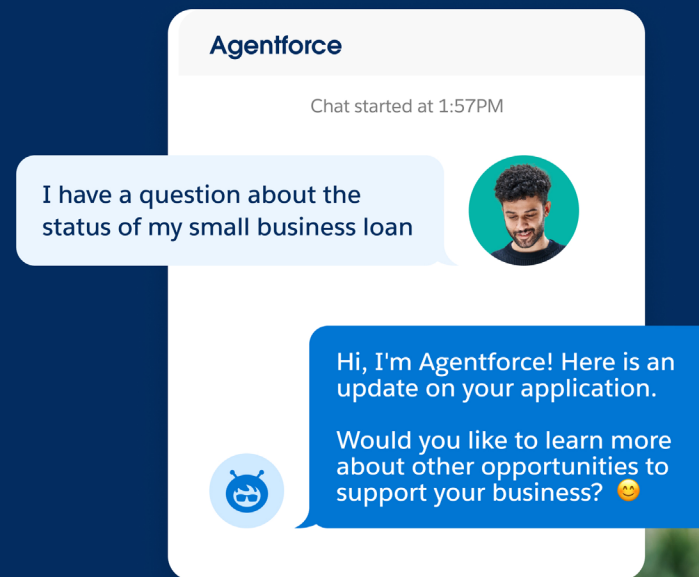
<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of Service](#), April 2024.

<sup>2</sup>EY, [2022 Work Reimagined](#), October 2022.



## 04

# Technical Teams Modernize for a Digital-First, Agentic AI Era



# Digital Transformation Is a Moving Target

Despite being seen as an analog sector, governments' interactions with the public are firmly in the digital age. Seventy-three percent of public interactions are now digital, adding pressure on government IT departments to modernize and integrate their systems.<sup>1</sup> Yet many IT workers feel they're falling behind as digital transformation remains a moving target.

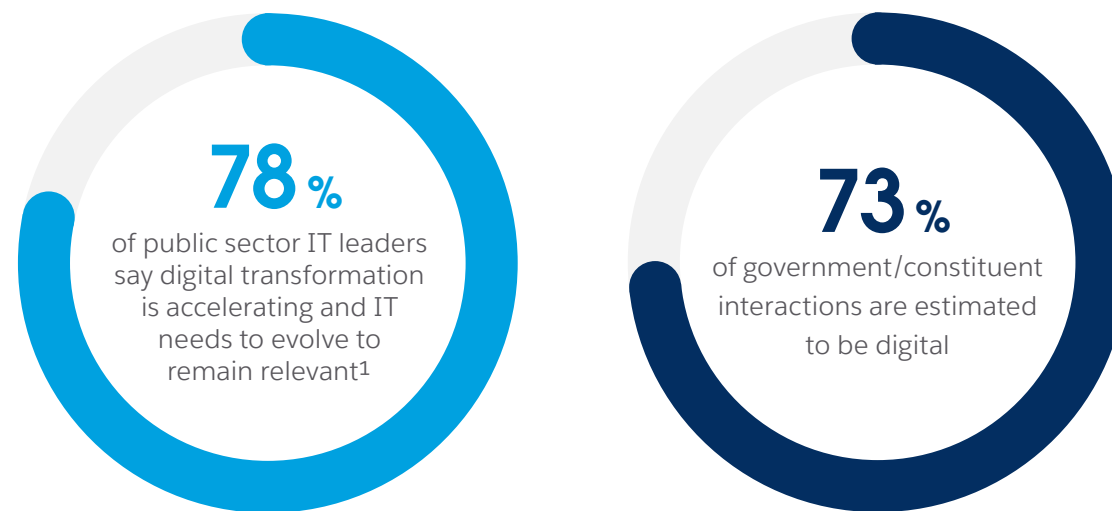
## 83% of government IT workers say they must do more to address changing customer expectations.<sup>2</sup>

This isn't just about catching up; it's about staying ahead in a constantly evolving landscape.

A core issue? The skills gap within public sector IT teams, making it tough to harness new technologies like agentic AI.

The UK government is addressing this challenge head-on with Government Campus, its central resource for training civil servants. Initiatives include an apprenticeship program for roles like software developers and cyber security technologists, and courses in digital, data, and technology skills to ensure all employees can meet modern demands.<sup>3</sup>

### Public Sector IT Navigates Continuous Digital Transformation



### Public Sector IT Leaders' Top Digital Transformation Challenges<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Lack of skill sets and experience within IT teams
- 2 Migrating legacy code or applications
- 3 Creating a single view of customers

<sup>1</sup> Mulesoft, [Connectivity Benchmark](#), January 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Salesforce, [State of IT](#), July 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Gov.UK, [Skilled: How the Government Campus Supports Your Learning and Development](#), August 2023.

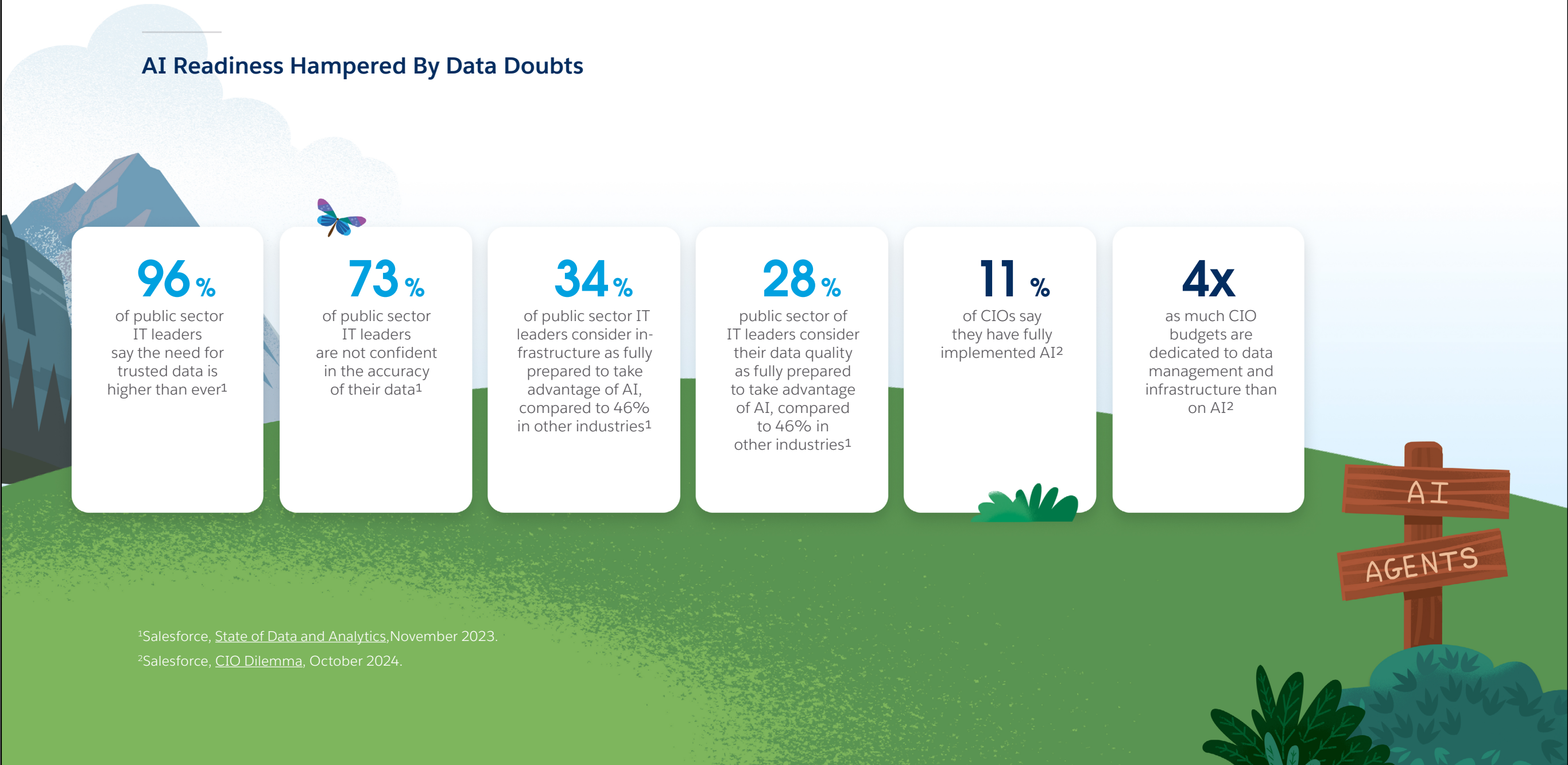


## 04

# Data Is the Foundation for AI

Data quality is crucial for digital transformation and AI efforts. Indeed, the demand for trusted data is higher than ever, yet confidence in its accuracy is shaky. And public sector technical leaders aren't alone: only 46% of IT leaders in other industries feel their tech stacks and data quality are truly up to par to take full advantage of AI.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the vast majority of CIOs have yet to fully implement AI systems, and are currently spending four times more on data infrastructure to prepare for artificial intelligence than AI itself.<sup>2</sup>

## AI Readiness Hampered By Data Doubts



**96%**

of public sector IT leaders say the need for trusted data is higher than ever<sup>1</sup>

**73%**

of public sector IT leaders are not confident in the accuracy of their data<sup>1</sup>

**34%**

of public sector IT leaders consider infrastructure as fully prepared to take advantage of AI, compared to 46% in other industries<sup>1</sup>

**28%**

public sector of IT leaders consider their data quality as fully prepared to take advantage of AI, compared to 46% in other industries<sup>1</sup>

**11 %**

of CIOs say they have fully implemented AI<sup>2</sup>

**4x**

as much CIO budgets are dedicated to data management and infrastructure than on AI<sup>2</sup>

AI

AGENTS

<sup>1</sup>Salesforce, [State of Data and Analytics](#), November 2023.

<sup>2</sup>Salesforce, [CIO Dilemma](#), October 2024.

## Silos Limit Efforts to Provide a Unified Experience

Public sector IT leaders face yet another challenge: too many apps and not enough integration. IT leaders within large public sector organizations (i.e., 1,000+ employees) use nearly a thousand different applications – but only a small fraction work together.<sup>1</sup>

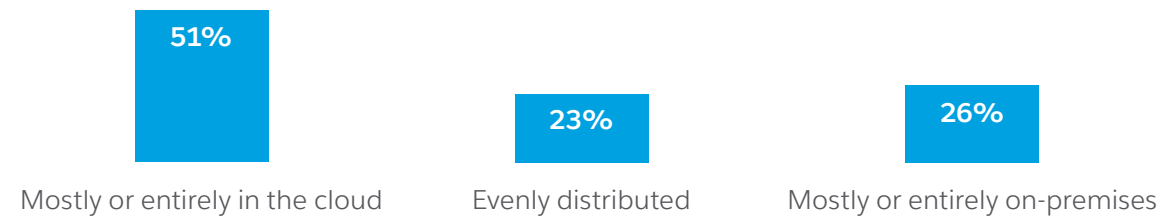
This lack of connection is a major roadblock, with most leaders saying it hampers their digital progress. The consequences are significant: without proper integration, the benefits of AI – including agentic AI – could remain out of reach. Over half of IT leaders feel their systems aren't ready to fully harness AI.

<sup>1</sup> Mulesoft, [Connectivity Benchmark](#), January 2024.

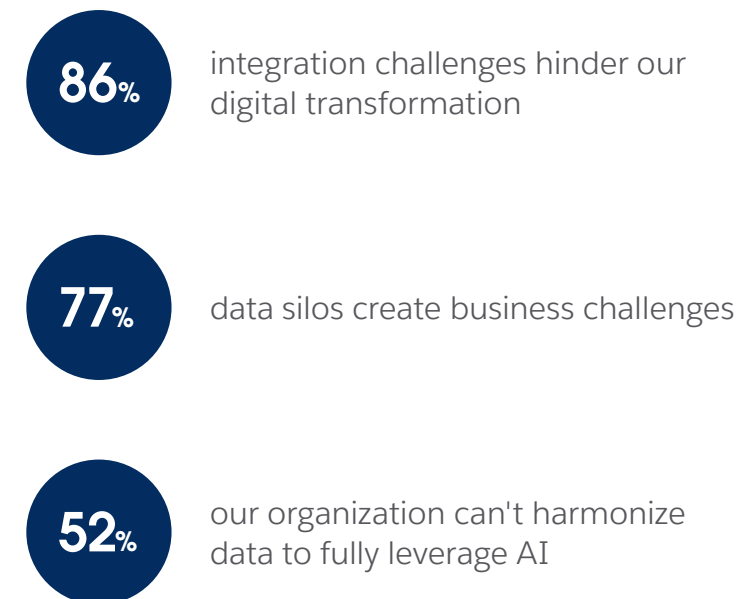
<sup>2</sup> Salesforce, [State of Data and Analytics](#), November 2023.

### Integration Woes Stall Digital Progress

Where Public Sector Data Originates<sup>2</sup>



### Public Sector IT Leaders Who Agree With the Following Statements<sup>1</sup>



Large public sector organizations use an average of **973** different applications, only **28%** of which are integrated<sup>1</sup>





## Spotlight: Security Concerns Weigh on Government IT Workers

Security is paramount for all IT workers. But for those in government, the stakes can be particularly high. With cyber attacks targeting local governments on the rise, cyber threats can jeopardize security at all levels of government – not to mention shatter public trust.<sup>1</sup> Beyond that, public sector tech stacks often rely on older technologies that are vulnerable to today's sophisticated bad actors.

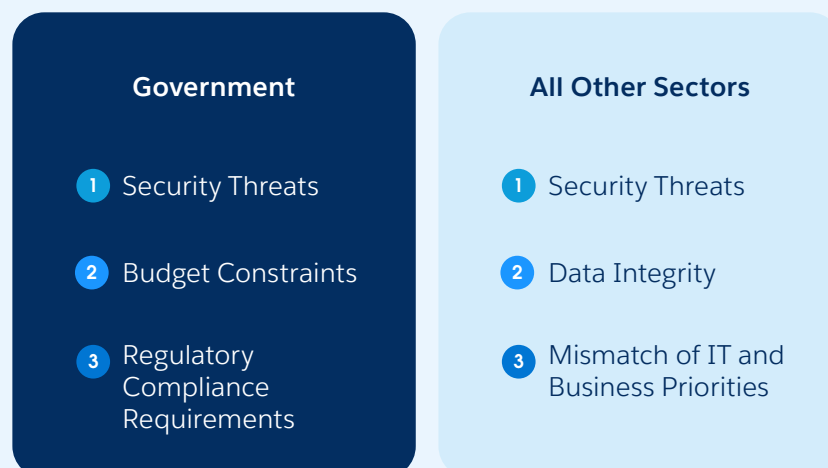
### 55% of government IT workers cite vulnerable legacy systems as a major concern, compared to only one-third of IT workers overall.<sup>2</sup>

With risks so high, some government IT leaders go above and beyond other industries to safeguard systems. For instance, 70% use identity and access management tools compared to 52% of IT leaders overall.<sup>2</sup>

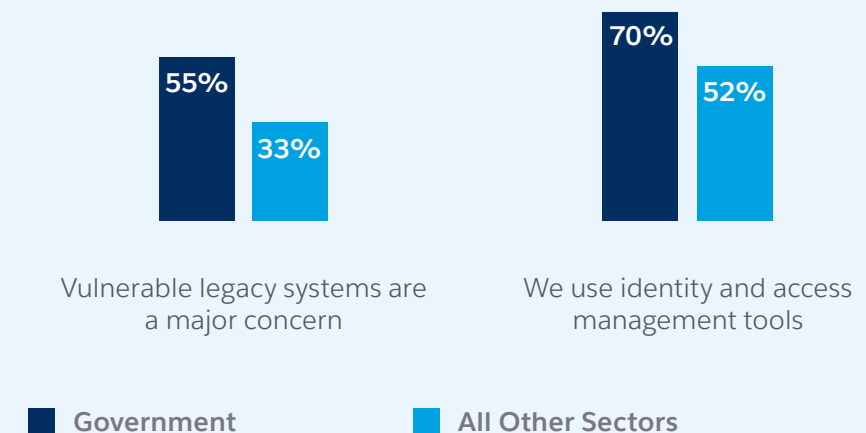
Security aside, government IT workers face different challenges than their peers in other industries. Their biggest hurdles include budget constraints and difficulties adhering to stringent regulations. This contrasts with private industry workers who are more concerned with data integrity and aligning IT and business priorities.<sup>2</sup>

#### For Government IT, Security Is a Priority

##### Top IT Challenges<sup>2</sup>



##### IT Leaders Who Agree With the Following Statements<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Center for Internet Security, [Nationwide Cybersecurity Review](#), January 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Salesforce, [State of IT](#), July 2023.

## Government IT Workers See a Future With AI

When it comes to enhancing civil servant productivity, predictive AI use cases are just the beginning. Recent AI advancements, like generative and agentic use cases, offer even more opportunity. According to BCG, generative AI alone could unlock government productivity gains worth \$1.75 trillion USD by 2033.<sup>1</sup>

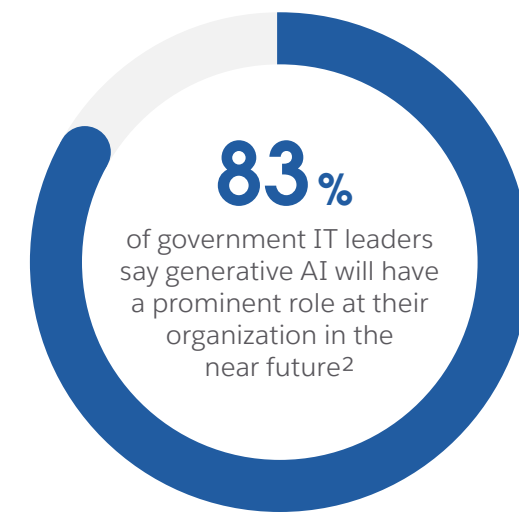
Government IT teams recognize AI's potential, and already see how it can be used in their organization. In fact, over four in five believe generative AI will play a prominent role in their organizations relatively soon.<sup>2</sup> Already 12% of government workers have experimented with generative AI for work.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>BCG, [2024 Global Report: Trust Imperative 4.0](#), April 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Salesforce, [State of IT](#), July 2023.

<sup>3</sup>Salesforce, [New Era in Data Stewardship in Government](#), April 2023.

### Government IT Sees AI's Promise, But Proceeds With Caution







## Look Ahead: Agentic AI Offers Expanded Opportunities

Nearly one-third of people say timely customer service experiences are a must to earn their trust. In this regard, [agentic AI](#) could be a game-changer. These intelligent AI systems have the power to streamline interactions like handling routine inquiries, processing applications, and providing real-time information based on an understanding of policy documents quickly at any hour – without human intervention.

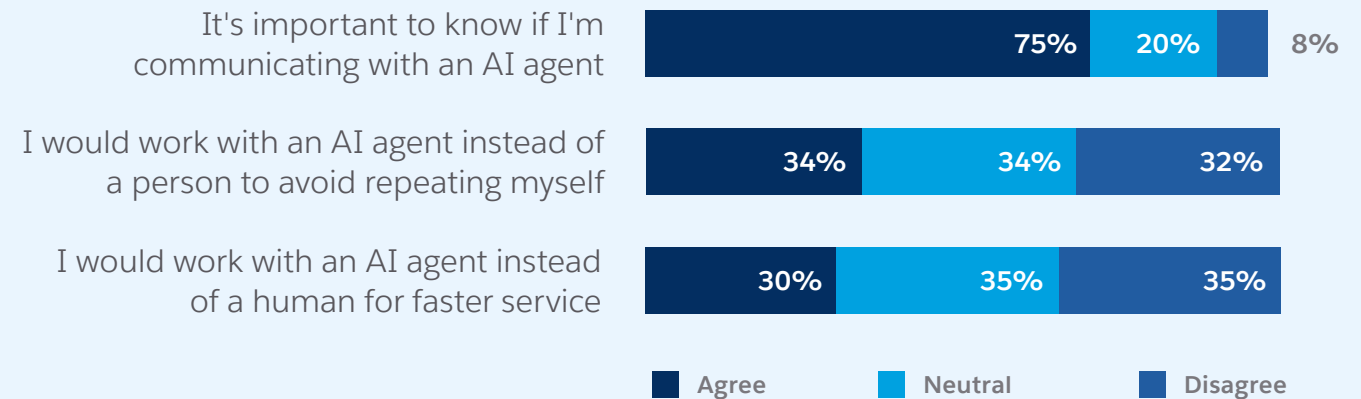
While the technology is still new, nearly a third of the public is interested, if it means getting better outcomes like faster service or avoiding redundant questions. People are also more comfortable with lower-stakes scenarios, like scheduling appointments, but still hesitant to allow agents to take high-risk actions that could impact their finances.

To earn trust and inspire greater adoption, privacy and transparency are key: three-quarters of people want to know if they're communicating with an AI agent or a human, and over one-third say safeguarding their personal information is critical to winning trust.

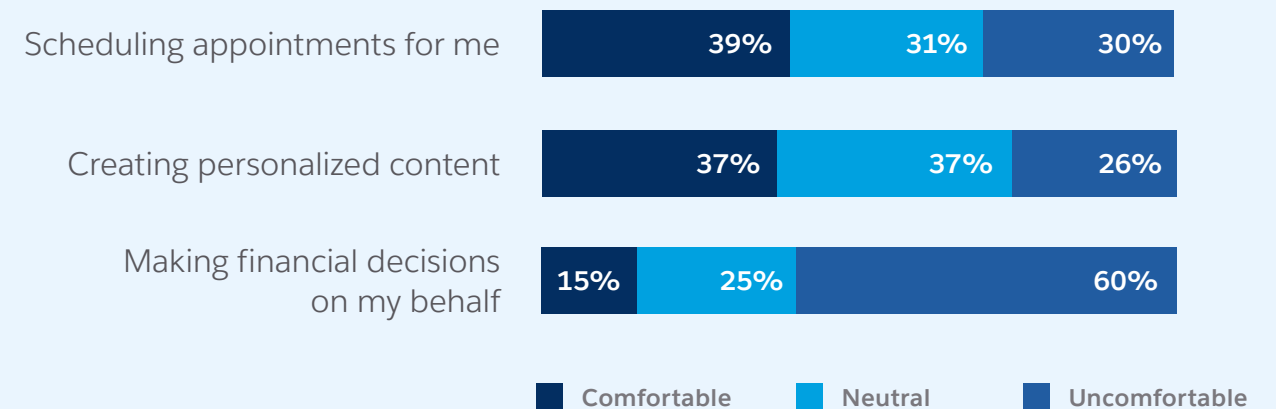
<sup>1</sup> Salesforce, [State of the AI Connected Customer](#), October 2024.

### People Express Ambivalence Around New Tech

#### Extent People Agree With the Following Statements<sup>1</sup>



#### The Public's Comfort With AI Agents Conducting the Following Tasks<sup>1</sup>



**29%**

of people say timely customer service is important to earning their trust<sup>1</sup>

**36%**

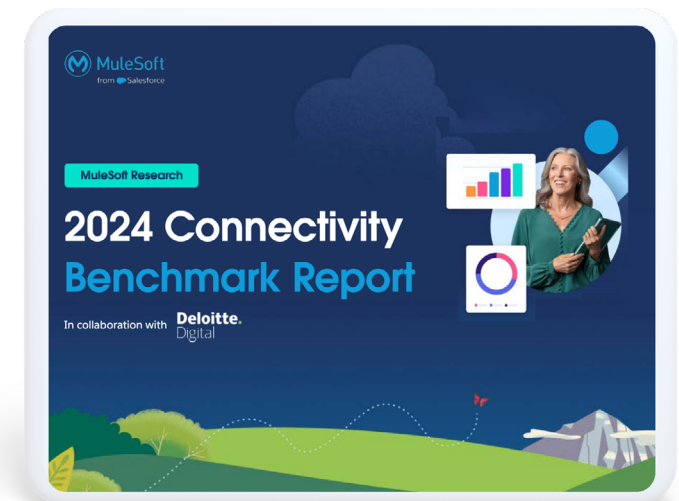
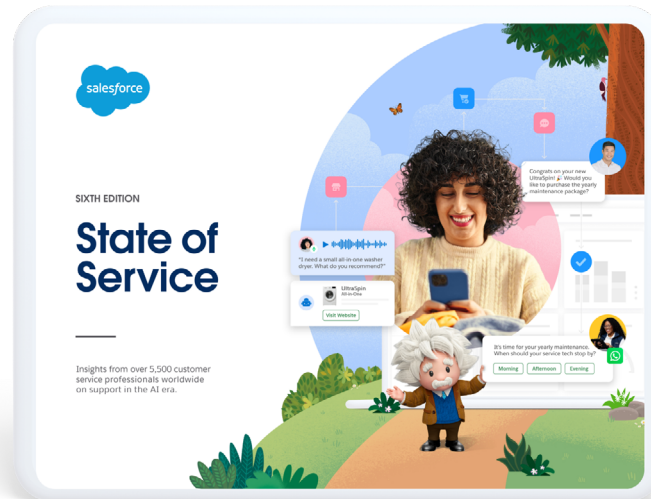
of people say protecting their data is important to earning their trust<sup>1</sup>

# Additional Resources



# Associated Research Reports

In addition to other sources cited in this report, data comes from these recent original research studies from Salesforce. See each report to learn more about methodologies, respondents, and geographic coverage.

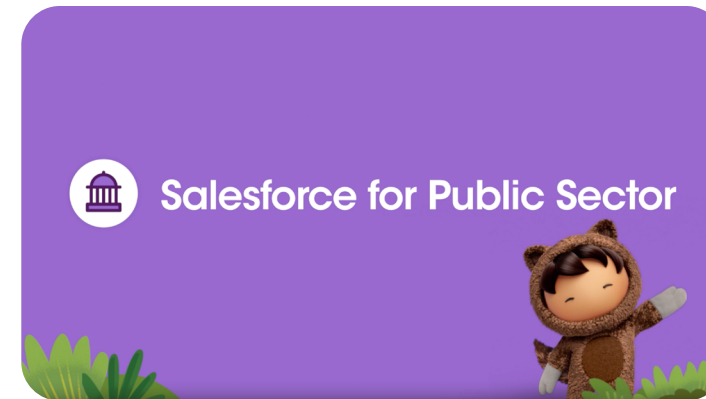


## Ready to Learn More?



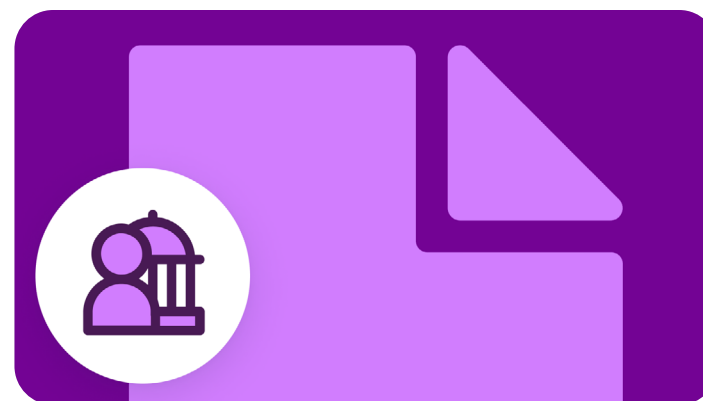
### Data Culture Playbook

Learn how to build a data culture at your public sector organization

[LEARN MORE](#)

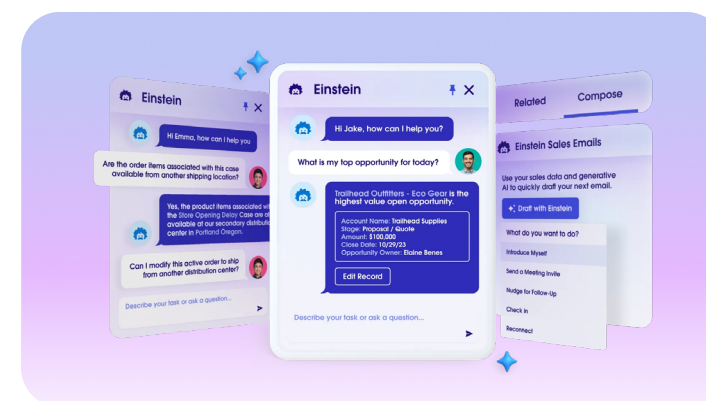
### Salesforce for Public Sector

See how Salesforce helps public sector organizations modernize their service delivery

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Government Digital Transformation Whitepaper

Discover the four key components to successful digital transformation in the public sector

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Public Sector AI Use Cases

Browse practical AI use cases for the public sector.

[LEARN MORE](#)





The information provided in this report is strictly for the convenience of our customers and is for general informational purposes only. Publication by Salesforce does not constitute an endorsement. Salesforce does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any information, text, graphics, links, or other items contained within this guide. Salesforce does not guarantee you will achieve any specific results if you follow any advice in the report. It may be advisable for you to consult with a professional such as a lawyer, accountant, architect, business advisor, or professional engineer to get specific advice that applies to your specific situation.