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Australian governments could give citizens a day back each year from moving transactions to digital

SYDNEY, Australia – 27 June, 2019 – Adobe and Deloitte have today released the 2019 [Rethinking the Digital Dividend Report](#), revealing that greater digital transformation across government services could save Australians as much as a day a year in time saved.

According to the report, as Australians interact with federal and state government agencies, they are on average spending, and losing, 8 hours a year, filling out and mailing forms, waiting on-hold or standing in queues.

Time lost is worse for people living in regional Australia, who often have to travel further to complete in-person transactions. They stand to save 14 hours a year through more streamlined, digital service delivery experiences. People who have to interact with government more often, including pensioners and those accessing social security, could potentially save 13 hours a year.

The report looks at the impact of digitisation on government services, drawing on recent Australian and global examples of digital transformation, digital and financial statistics, case studies, and insights from ten government sector leaders, to report on the benefits of digital experience platforms for government. The research updates the [Digital Government Transformation Report](#) commissioned by Adobe in 2015.

Australian government agencies are currently providing services across both traditional and digital channels, with separate platforms dedicated to each agency. However, if governments developed a shared digital infrastructure which could be leveraged by multiple agencies, this would provide a consistent experience and reduce the time that people spend finding the appropriate service and filling in forms.

Digital transactions are already overtaking traditional channels. In 2018, 825 million government service transactions were conducted via digital platforms, compared to around 290 million via traditional channels. Australia's growing population will add to demand for access to digital transactions, so digital experience platforms will be needed more than ever.

While the share of digital transactions has risen from 60% to 74% over the past 4 years, not all of the \$17.9 billion in cost savings estimated in 2015 (over the decade to 2025) are on track to be achieved because levels of government employees in traditional roles have not fallen by much, and touch points between government and citizens have grown in overall terms. That is why government needs to *Rethink the Digital Dividend* – broadening the dividend to recognise citizen time savings and engagement benefits, and that data and service delivery benefits will outweigh direct cost savings unless more effort is put into realising them.

Businesses have recognised the need for personalised, digital experiences, evident in everyday activities such as banking and entertainment. Governments, however, have been slower to adapt. According to a recent [Forrester](#)

[survey](#), 94% of government representatives recognise the need to transition, but only 15% said their agencies were doing so.

If the governments don't implement digital experience platforms that meet the expectations of Australians, they risk disengagement and a decline in the perception of government effectiveness. New analysis for this report finds that countries with better digital interaction and service delivery performance enjoy higher perceptions of government effectiveness.

John Mackenney, Adobe Principal Digital Strategist, says, "We know that Australians have the highest expectations in the world when it comes to online experience as revealed in the [2019 Adobe Experience Index](#). So it makes sense that they would demand high standard digital interactions with government agencies too. The technology is available now, and it is accessible and affordable, so there is no reason why governments shouldn't be investing in digital transformation. At Adobe, we believe that technology should be used to provide relevant, seamless services online. Doing so, organisations, including government agencies, can build better relationships with people and have them engage with their services more."

As part of this research, Deloitte collected perspectives from 10 state and federal public sector leaders in digital government and found the top three reported challenges to expanding use of digital experience platforms were: integrating new technologies with legacy systems, insufficient in-house skills and high IT investment costs.

John O'Mahony, Deloitte Access Economics Partner, said, "We understand there are barriers to going digital, but governments need to deliver consistent digital experiences that can provide tangible benefits for Australian citizens. We hope this report helps drive debate and action, and an understanding of the potential citizen engagement dividend, which provides an even more compelling case for change than the financial savings that can be achieved from moving away from traditional transaction channels alone."

The report concludes with six next steps for digital transformation:

1. Create a shared sense of commitment to improving government services.
2. Simplify the number and complexity of services for targeted citizen and business groups.
3. Build and operate the digital platforms that support unification and harmonisation of services.
4. Measure and analyze the data that citizens share to improve their experiences.
5. Review business case guidance to enable the real value of citizen experience benefits to be measured to justify investment.
6. Put customers at the core of decision making and progress open data initiatives which support citizen trust, transparency and user control.

The *Rethinking the digital dividend: Government needs to deliver better citizen digital experiences* report can be downloaded [here](#).

Craig Levy, Asia Pacific Adobe Alliance Lead Partner, Deloitte Digital, said, "Citizens today place the same expectations and demands on digital experience in government as they would with any other relationship. This means that more than ever, government departments and agencies need to close the digital engagement gap and focus on delivering the right content and services at the right time; across all citizen touchpoints."

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