



Accelerating digital communication in the DoD:

What you need to know





Creating a connected digital experience that carries our troops from recruitment to retirement.

Foreword from Adobe

Always connected. Always ready.

The world recently experienced rapid digital transformation. We discovered just how much we can do in the virtual, online arena. For example, when face-to-face interactions are not possible, businesses and government agencies can seamlessly shift to virtual operations, communicating instructions, sharing files, and conducting meetings.

For the men and women at the Department of Defense (DoD) who need to collaborate across service branches—and often across the world—digital transformation creates new opportunities to stay informed, connected, and ready for whatever comes next.

DoD operations are vital to the security of our country. While military service often means deterring foreign adversaries, in 2020, the DoD was called on to work hand-in-hand with other agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak. Agencies rapidly accelerated telework initiatives. Projects that would have taken years of planning were completed in weeks. The DoD rolled out over 900,000 new remote user accounts and expanded its network capacity by over 400% in just one month.

“With more than four million military and civilian employees teleworking across the globe, preparing the DoD enterprise for telework was a massive undertaking,” said Lt. Gen. Bradford Shwedo, the chief information officer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The new processes and efficiencies fundamentally shifted how the DoD operates. Vice Admiral Nancy Norton, Director of the Defense Information Systems Agency—which manages the Department of Defense networks—said telework environment would be around long term. More capabilities are continually being added because “users deserve to access any data from any device.”

Personal and timely communication is critical for both active duty and civilian personnel. From recruitment to retirement, DoD employees depend on digital media for every phase of their career.

To successfully support their workforce, the DoD must deliver personal experiences that deliver real-time intelligence across multiple channels and devices.

At Adobe, we equip DoD with the communications tools, digital documents, and technologies that ensure everyone receives the information they need, where they need it, and when it matters most.

We recognize that technology solutions for DoD need to be cost-effective and provide quick time-to-value. They also need to be secure, reliable, and available.

In this pocket guide, Adobe has captured how technology enables the DoD to meet the agency’s mission and support our military personnel and their families.

We’ll explore how the DoD is migrating to online experiences and examine how modernizing processes—such as moving from paper to electronic forms—can enable a more streamlined and positive experience for the DoD’s military and civilian workforce and their families. Through every phase of a military career, technology can improve the overall experience, keeping our troops supported and informed—wherever they are.

Adobe is proud to support the men and women of the DoD with the technologies and solutions they need to be successful.

If you have questions on how Adobe can better assist your organization or want to [learn more](https://www.adobe.com/industries/government/department-of-defense-dod.html), please visit us at <https://www.adobe.com/industries/government/department-of-defense-dod.html>



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Executive summary

The Department of Defense is one of the nation's largest employers, with approximately 1.3 million active duty personnel, nearly 800,000 personnel serving in the National Guard and Reserve forces, and approximately 770,000 civilian employees. In addition, nearly 9.5 million Americans depend on the DoD for health care. Through every career phase, a seamless digital experience helps the DoD serve and interact with military troops and their families efficiently.

The DoD is actively changing the way it operates. According to the FY 2020 Budget Summary, the DoD's goal is to "deliver performance at the speed of relevance, organize for innovation, and drive budget discipline and affordability—resulting in programmed savings of \$7.7 billion in FY 2020."

Out of the DoD's \$718 billion-dollar budget for 2020, \$9.6 billion was earmarked for reducing cybersecurity risk, including modernizing the DoD's multi-cloud environment and investing in DoD networks and systems.

Investments in technology are in line with the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (IDEA). This 2018 law requires government agencies to modernize their digital experience for government customers, both external and internal. The 21st Century IDEA requires agencies to modernize their websites, digitize forms, accelerate the use of e-signatures, improve the customer experience, and transition to centralized and standardized shared services.

Because of "a security environment more complex and volatile than any the United States has experienced in recent memory," the Department of Defense further recognized that the "backlog of deferred readiness, procurement, and modernization requirements," which has grown in the last decade and a half, "can no longer be ignored."

The DoD's digital readiness was put to the test in 2020. Moving to remote work while being called to duty to respond to the coronavirus outbreak accelerated the pace of multiple digital transformation projects.

Mr. Peter T. Ranks, a member of the Senior Intelligence Services (SIS) who is serving as the Department of Defense Deputy Chief Information Officer for the Information Enterprise (DCIO-IE), said, "because we built this out as an enterprise system—meaning a DoD-wide enterprise system, as opposed to something that was service-unique—there are fewer barriers to collaboration across the military services and the other agencies and field activities that make up the Department of Defense."

Modernizing key communications capabilities for better outcomes.

To address the growing number of complex challenges facing America's armed forces, the Department of Defense needs enterprise technology that:

- Allows people to work securely on any device from any location
- Fosters collaboration across military service branches
- Distributes communications in bulk, personalized to individual members of the DoD community, including family members
- Consolidates software solutions, reducing maintenance, training, and fees
- Enforces a Zero-Trust security model to strengthen data protection
- Has content data rights management (DRM) and content-management security features that manage content access by security clearance and prevent use of expired or unapproved materials
- Gives content creators a shared central repository for digital asset management (DAM)
- Simplifies data collection and retention with electronic documents and forms
- Combines e-signatures in a single document or form while controlling who signs where, and in what order

To find, train, and support highly skilled people, the DoD needs modern ways to keep our troops and their families informed and working efficiently across a global network. Only Adobe has a secure enterprise platform that integrates communications and content management.

DoD reach and results: Then and now

The Defense Department has made steady progress in modernizing its IT infrastructure, business systems, and network security.

By the numbers

\$718 billion

dollar budget for 2020

\$9.6 billion

dollar investment in cybersecurity & modernization

\$300 million

in CARES funding to procure information technology spent in 2020 (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act)

\$7.7 billion

in forecasted savings from operational efficiencies in 2020

\$2.3 billion

dollars in savings from business-process improvements

\$250.5 million

in savings from business-systems improvements in FY 2018

One million

DoD personnel telework-enabled in 2020

440

websites managed by the DoD

24%

was the increase in engagement the USMC saw on its website after implementing Adobe Experience Manager



Important landmarks

2008

Army Knowledge Online records its one-billionth login. Army Knowledge Online is a web-based information-sharing system for DoD personnel that includes email, discovery, and directory capabilities. It has become the standard template for many other DoD portals.

2017

The Modernizing Government Technology Act is announced, offering federal agencies new tools for replacing legacy IT systems with innovative solutions. Programs are also launched to offer agencies money for solutions—with a focus on CX and emerging technologies.

2014

The Army establishes communities of practice for science, technology, and engineering services that can address critical and chronic technology challenges internally. The U.S. Army Research, Development, and Engineering Command launched eight communities of practice in 2014.

2018

The 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (21st Century IDEA) is a law created to improve the citizen experience while lowering service costs. By providing a modern web experience, online forms, and electronic signatures, agencies can reduce paperwork, improve employee efficiency, and create better/faster outcomes.

2016

Marine Corps launches recruiting advertisements that feature more women in ads as part of a new campaign designed to attract recruits. The Marines also focus on social media advertising and shortly after become the first Armed Forces branch to reach one million Instagram followers.

2020

In response to the coronavirus outbreak, the DoD accelerates telework and other digital experience initiatives. Over a million DoD employees become telework-enabled in less than a month.



Today's service members and their career journeys

To implement consistent engagement and personalization across a global workforce, the DoD must look for ways to consolidate IT across the four commonalities of every service member's career, reach, enroll, inform, and communicate.

Service branches often buy their own technology. Over time, this has resulted in tens of thousands of operational systems and servers. Some applications only perform one small but critical function. Maintaining this vast network of systems is time-consuming and costly. Worse, the processes are inefficient and detract from achieving larger, more critical mission goals. The DoD has backlogs of forms and paperwork behind every decision.

Many legacy systems revolve around paper—an outdated medium that creates obsolete

workflows. Paper slows down decision-making and manual tasks can lead to human error. Processes involving paper routinely cost more and take more time than the digital alternative.

DoD needs 21st-century technology solutions that can integrate with others throughout the life cycle of military personnel.

In recruitment, military branches must first reach potential enlistees—which is a challenge of its own—and from that point, they must stay competitive with the private sector in order to sustain their interest. For future service members to be effective, they also must receive accurate and consistent messaging about the demands of the job. For success in the modern day, this means reaching recruits through any channel—on any device and at any time—with the same relevant, personalized content they expect and are used to in their

day-to-day digital experiences. To do so, the DoD must utilize industry-leading solutions and technologies to attract, acquire, manage, and deliver experiences throughout the timeline of recruitment.

Once they are a part of the DoD, recent recruits must have the information necessary to settle in and excel at their jobs. Military bases represent dramatic shifts in lifestyle, and for recruits to be successful, they need to access channels that will help them through the transition. Cloud technology supports morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) initiatives by keeping service members in communication with friends and family.

Finally, the DoD needs modern ways to communicate with families and the public. Websites, emails, and other communication channels help the DoD secure funding, connect with communities, and gain public support and trust. Our military families need personalized communications and follow-up that stay aligned with the stage of their family member's military career. To be successful, the DoD needs secure, scalable content management systems to communicate a consistent message.

"DoD needs to be careful to avoid destroying its strategic communication process with the very bureaucracy it is building to create it. While the strategic goals and priorities delivered through the strategic communication process may serve as guideposts for the desired outcome, information tactics and communication strategies at the tactical and operational levels must be agile and creative."

– Lt. Col. Lindsey J. Borg, U.S. Air Force

With Adobe solutions, the DoD can optimize every aspect of a military career.

Recruit

For years, DoD recruitment tactics consisted of bombarding consumers with TV advertisements and mass messaging. As Americans have become more technologically sophisticated, the DoD has needed to adapt and become increasingly creative to reach their target audience. To be effective and reach their recruitment goals, the DoD needs to personalize their communications to reflect the recruit's background and interests in their marketing messaging.

Armed services recruitment focuses exclusively on younger crowds. Population segments can offer immediate insights into who might or might not be interested. Even as commercials and campaigns have been tailored to younger audiences, the DoD has still lacked the measurement capabilities to evaluate the real-time success of campaigns—which can complicate innovative ideas such as video game advertisements.

Solution: DoD recruitment is dependent on several factors: targeting interested parties, personalizing messaging, and responding to determinative feedback. Therefore, the DoD needs to find ways to access and personalize a unique recruiting approach for its diverse audience. To see the potential benefits, there needs to be consistent analytics on content and experiences across channels that can be tailored to the audience and further personalized, allowing for optimization throughout.

In real time, that means evaluating whether social media posts are more effective and cost-efficient than TV ads for reaching 18- to 24-year-old recruits—who can further be analyzed on demographic lines. As the DoD has seen, social channels often outperform TV counterparts.

Then the DoD needs to ask what images, graphics, and messages can be used to maximize the impact of the message. Content and analysis solutions can help craft, disseminate, and measure these ideas, and A/B testing can fine-tune messaging.

Onboard

In the DoD, information often needs verification, authorization, and clear communication. Higher-level personnel need to make sure that direct policies reach the ears of those affected by them and that sign-offs are quick and immediate.

Forms management is complicated by the size of the DoD. Traditional paper-based processes can take too long to make their way through the large organization, especially when people are geographically distanced.

Solution: *Electronic forms and documents can help the DoD communicate faster, more securely, and more efficiently. Form workflows route documents to the right people for review or approval. Responses can be personalized and sent in bulk, making onboarding work easy and efficient.*

Going paperless and implementing electronic signature technology immediately saves time and money. Eliminating paper and ink also benefits the environment. Most importantly, privacy and content security settings are automatically enforced. Access rules can be set based on security clearance levels.

Inform

In a world that's constantly changing, DoD personnel need timely access to accurate information. Employee handbooks, equipment manuals, files, and training guides are continually updated and reissued. Sending materials back and forth between content authors is time-consuming and can create confusion. Without proper version control and digital rights management, service members may end up using unlicensed, unapproved, or expired digital assets.

Solution: *All of the DoD—but especially the Printing and Publishing Offices—need content management solutions that make it easy to store and retrieve the latest training manuals, equipment reference guides, files,*

and handbooks. This allows content creators to collaborate in real time, updating the same document from different locations. Built-in version control gives people the confidence that they have the right document. Digital Rights Management (DRM) allows content authors to associate licensing information with your assets to lower the risk of using unapproved assets. Access rules can be set based on security clearance levels. Portals can connect people with similar interests and responsibilities—as well as important resources. Intranet portals can offer the flexibility of forums, file-sharing platforms, and social networks.

Communicate

Sometimes the most difficult part of informing and communicating is arranging content understandably. Service members are inundated with information surrounding themselves and the military.

When general messages are blasted out to everyone, it can be difficult for members of the military—and their family members—to know what's relevant and what actions they need to take. They start ignoring the messages and find their own ways of obtaining information, usually placing the burden on senior personnel and experienced colleagues.

Solution: *Use technology that allows the DoD to personalize communications at scale, translating messages into other languages and meeting accessibility standards. That way, every individual receives the information that's aligned with their interests—in a format they understand.*



How the DoD can digitize effectively

Modernize Web Experiences

Create, manage, and optimize modern digital experiences. Build scalable, secure, future-proof web experiences for civilians and service members with industry-leading technologies.

Improve Internal and External Communications

Personalize communication and centralize your outbound messages across channels on a single platform.

Replace Paper-Based Processes

Replace paper processes with digital forms and documents. You can improve the speed and accuracy of mission-critical services with mobile-friendly forms, workflow automation, and digital documents.

Accept Electronic Signatures

Easily accept electronic signatures. In just one click, DoD service members, civilian employees, and families can sign documents. No matter where they are physically located, administrators can feel secure streamlining the process and will benefit from saving time and money.

Manage Social Media Communication

Social media management tools allow users to customize their pages and posts across platforms, as opposed to having to go into each service one by one.

Receive Data and Insight

Utilize marketing and analytical tools spanning email, Internet, and social media. Marketing tools allow departments to measure engagement, such as open rates, demographics, and click-throughs—which can be used to refine and target content.

Industry spotlight

How digital integration can improve the service-member experience

An interview with Andrew Sullivan, Vice President for Adobe's DoD Digital Experience, and Yasir Saleem, Senior Solutions Consultant at Adobe



Battles have long served as metaphors for sports bouts. Watch a football game and listen to a coach motivate his team. "This team is a family" and "Have your teammate's back" are common examples of coach-speak, and they are derived from the non-strategic tenets of success on the battlefield: trust, communication, and chemistry.

On the battlefield, military operations need the utmost precision to be executed properly. But before that point is ever reached, the DoD must establish the right lines for communication, collaboration, and growth—just like a championship-winning team.

To better understand how the DoD can modernize solutions to improve the employee experience for DoD personnel, GovLoop interviewed Andrew Sullivan, Vice President for Adobe's DoD Digital Experience, and Yasir Saleem, Adobe Senior Solutions Consultant.

"At Adobe, we do have the ability to provide the full end-to-end life cycle," Saleem said. "From attracting a recruit to getting them into the services and onboarded, we can keep them informed with the most up-to-date and relevant content and provide them with the ability to communicate—all the way to retirement."

To prepare military operations for success, the DoD first needs to attract the attention of recruits and then convince them that the

military is the right step. That means finding the ideal channels of communication to reach quality leads and having the content in place to follow up with intriguing products.

The right technology solutions can put practice into play and remove the guesswork from recruiting. Adobe Creative Cloud offers the DoD the ability to create cutting-edge advertisements and content for attracting recruits. Then, Adobe Experience Manager lets officials manage content across channels—to ensure that the right message is getting to the right place.

But it can be tricky to know how successful a campaign is until the final results—since in this case, qualified leads are released. Adobe Analytics and Adobe Target allow recruiters to see in-depth stats based on demographics and advertising choices and then follow up with A/B testing to track the effectiveness of editorial decisions.

"It's a workflow," Sullivan said. "It's about being able to identify and retain information on the people who either come to the website or show interest and then presenting them with relevant information that they care about if they're a recruit."

Once in the military, recruits also need to access information and resources. Adobe Experience Manager can be used to manage and target mass emails and content on inward websites. Intranets such as Army Knowledge Online can offer recruits a network of resources and assistance.



"Having this community, people can come in and share ideas with each other," Saleem said. "There could be blogs. There could be an area where you can share files, so if you think about it from that perspective, it opens the doors to having these communication channels."

"You're not just limited to email. You're providing a web experience where people can come in at any time, gain knowledge, learn things, share information, and also connect with their other peers."

The DoD can use these same capabilities to communicate with military families. Solutions like Adobe Campaign can help finely tune the skill of connecting with a wide range of people across many channels.

Finally, the full potential of the DoD can be unlocked when the agency moves toward e-signatures and modern forms-management processes. Solutions like Adobe Digital Rights Management can establish access controls for internal documents—as well as alerting users when forms are out of date or updated.

While each of these solutions can help the DoD hone its content and communications, together they can allow the DoD to offer a digital experience that saves the Department money and establishes a profile for each service member. The same information that is gathered during recruitment can populate files or EDL courses and place recruits automatically in the right communities of interest.

"All of that can be connected together to help build a profile," Saleem said.

With a fluid and adaptable digital experience, the DoD can progress recruits into long-serving personnel and maximize the readiness of United States Armed Forces.

Engaging the next generation of Marine Corps recruits



Mirum and Wunderman Thompson partnered with Adobe to help the Marine Corps connect with digital-native recruits.

With nearly half of the Marine Corps' target audience accessing the website on mobile devices, how could the Marines more effectively manage content and quickly capture every click, like, and positive response of prospective Marines?

Less than 10 years ago, it could take the Marine Corps several days for lead delivery. The Marines—with their wealth of information about the diversity of potential recruits—needed to use data and analytics to connect relevant content with prospects quickly and deliver qualified leads as soon as possible.

To help the Marine Corps achieve its targeting goals, Mirum and Wunderman Thompson built an ecosystem using Adobe Experience Cloud to capture and respond to every multi-channel interaction with potential recruits.

Marines.com utilizes strong imagery with a user experience that focuses on scrolling to access content on mobile. For the site's content management system (CMS), Mirum and Wunderman Thompson implemented Adobe Experience Manager, which streamlines the

content management process with features such as in-line editing as well as real-time copy and image updates on the pages themselves.

The results speak for themselves. Marine Corps website saw a 24-percent increase in engagement with a richer user experience, resulting in more time spent on each page. Bounce rates have reduced, attributing to new site content and improved engagement. Conversion rates have improved, as those submitting Request More Information (RMI) forms increased by eight percent.

Mobile visits were up 22 percent year over year, with desktop seeing a 21-percent decrease. Mobile lead form visits increased 25 percent, versus an 18 percent decrease in desktop.

By partnering with Adobe, Mirum and Wunderman Thompson have helped the USMC develop a more engaging user journey for digital natives that better captures the intentions of recruits—centered around the unique story of the United States Marine Corps and what Marines do.

"Having moved Marines.com to Adobe Experience Manager gives us access to all of the services of a modern marketing cloud. Adobe is also FedRamp-compliant, which helps significantly with our security management."

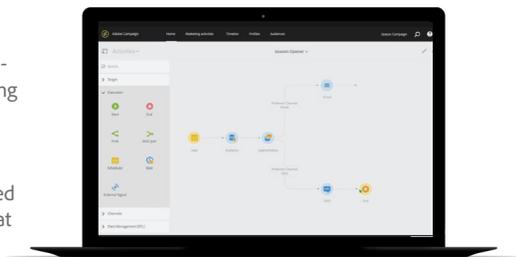
Bret Otzenberger, Mirum North America CTO

Cheat sheet

This takeaway section will provide actionable ways to evaluate your digital experience and offer the best steps forward—as well as more information about the ways the DoD can incorporate digital experience technologies.

Current challenges the DoD faces in providing an integrated digital experience

- An entanglement of IT infrastructure that varies across and within armed service branches for collaborating
- Difficulties in connecting with service members, recruits, and families on practical, accessible platforms
- A lack of data sharing and visibility between applications that requires frequent reentry and cumbersome logging
- An outdated forms management process that relies on printing, scanning, and mailing or faxing paper-based documents to an office—a process that is both inefficient and slow



How to evaluate specific technology systems

1. Look for paper-based processes that can be digitized, creating online forms and workflows that immediately generate cost savings. Technology—such as electronic signatures—can expedite efficiency and allow for the widespread access of forms from anywhere.
2. Scan for processes with similar functions and see what platforms they operate on. If processes should be similar, such as requiring content management or a creative application portfolio, evaluate whether they can be consolidated with one vendor to optimize the functionality of each system.
3. Survey the community benefits. If a program won't help service members or their families in day-to-day life, the technology may not be a fit.
4. Implement systems with data visibility and analytics that can offer real-time feedback. If the DoD is unable to judge the effectiveness of an ad campaign, objectives are hard to accomplish—and failed objectives are harder to repair.

An end-to-end digital foundation

Make: Create, curate, and collaborate

Manage: Perform, function, and collect data

Measure: Analyze data and systems

Optimize: Integrate systems to maximize engagement and improve digital experience

For more information, visit: <https://www.adobe.com/industries/government/department-of-defense-dod.html>

Digital Government Experiences That Put People First

Adobe Acrobat:

A common platform to create, share, and sign PDFs.

Adobe Experience Manager:

Create personalized, content-led experiences faster using a digital asset management platform with the power of a content management system.

Adobe Experience Manager Forms:

Build end-to-end digital enrollment and onboarding journeys that deliver a personal touch.

Adobe Campaign:

Use rich customer data to create, coordinate, and deliver dynamic campaigns that people actually want—through email, mobile, offline channels, and more.

Adobe Sign:

Easily add electronic signatures to any document. Automate critical workflows. And comply with strict DoD regulations and standards.

Adobe Creative Cloud:

Use the world's best creative apps and services so you can make any content you can imagine.

Modern digital capabilities allow service members to complete their military life cycle in a connected, streamlined digital environment—one that equips them to excel in a life of service.

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To request a demo call 1-800-87 ADOBE



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