Reading the Digital Temperature

A Candid Poll on Digital Tool Provision in State and Local Government

Introduction

State and local government agencies continue to push for digitization in citizen-facing and internal processes. The capacity for these organizations to provide safe, effective digital services has even become a recent presidential plank.[1] How effectively has state and local government upgraded its digital toolkit, and what can decision makers reveal about this process? GBC surveyed 202 state and local government employees to find out.

Plurality of those polled believe employee feedback is effectively incorporated

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My organization is effective at incorporating employee feedback about digital tools."

Strongly agree	5%
Agree	36%
Neither disagree nor agree	27%
Disagree	28%
Strongly disagree	4%
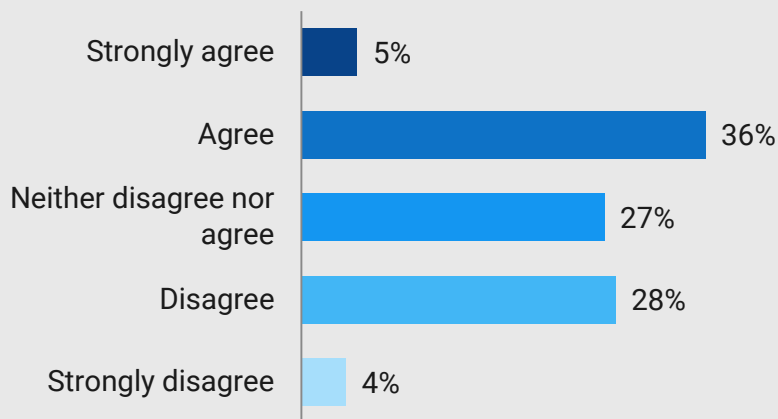
Percentage of respondents, n=165
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

- **41%** of state and local government employees agree or strongly agree that their organization is effective at incorporating employee feedback about digital tools.

- Still, **a sizable share (32%)** disagree or strongly disagree with this sentiment.

Analysis:

While more than two-fifths (41%) of respondents believe their organization effectively incorporates employee feedback about digital tools, it is important to note that nearly one-third (32%) hold a contrary opinion.

Insights from Accela

The pressure is on for state and local government leaders to deliver on the digital promise offered by evolving IT. Positively, many employees in state/local agencies feel that their organizations are providing adequate citizen-facing tools and are doing a job soliciting employee feedback about digital tools. Still, while these standards are key for meeting baseline expectations, governments across the country should consider opportunities to demonstrate digital leadership and show their capacity for citizen-first innovation. By focusing on state/local partners' specific 2019 objectives – bolstering the effectiveness of customer service applications, maintaining security, and continuing to push away from a dependence on legacy tech – technical leaders and other decision makers can ensure robust change at the town, city, county, and state levels.

Despite consensus, large minority of respondents dissatisfied with digital tools

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: "My organization's digital tools are meeting citizen expectations."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
7%	19%	28%	42%	5%
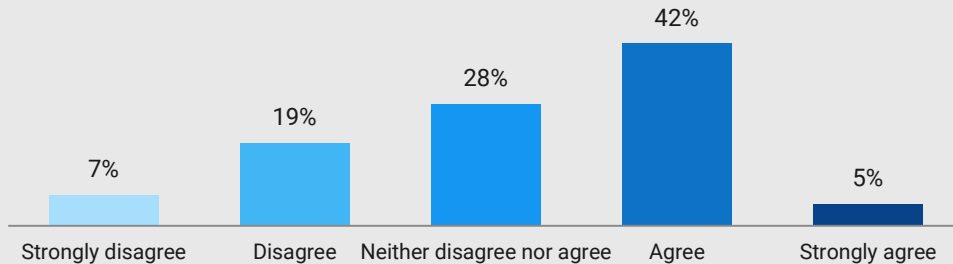
Percentage of respondents, n=199
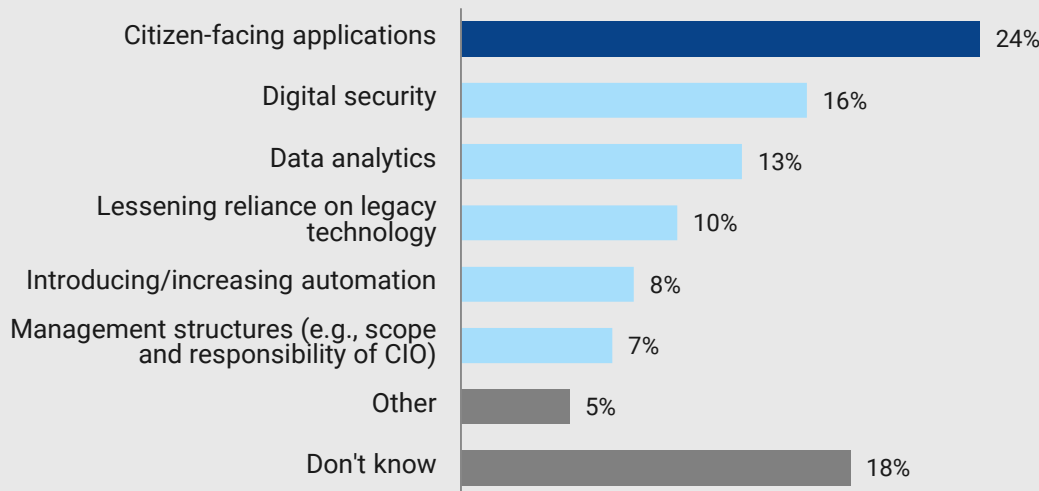Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

- **47% of respondents** believe that their organization's digital tools are meeting citizen expectations, while 26% disagree or strongly disagree with that assessment.

Analysis:

State/local government respondents see their digital tools as adequate, marking a key assumption in the digital transformation conversation.

Citizen-facing applications, digital security top 2019 lists for state/local gov't

What is your organization's biggest digital priority for 2019?

Citizen-facing applications	24%
Digital security	16%
Data analytics	13%
Lessening reliance on legacy technology	10%
Introducing/increasing automation	8%
Management structures (e.g., scope and responsibility of CIO)	7%
Other	5%
Don't know	18%

Percentage of respondents, n=165
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

- **24% of respondents** cite citizen-facing applications as their biggest digital priority for 2019, compared to digital security (16%) and data analytics (13%)

- Relatively few state/local employees selected management structures (7%) and introducing/increasing automation (8%) as their top digital priorities

Methodology
GBC deployed a 3-question poll on digital tools to a random sample of 202 state and local government employees. The poll was fielded in March 2019.

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