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Email Archiving & eDiscovery

What to Look for in a Government Software Solution

The 4 Key Capabilities That Will Set Your Agency Up for Success

Getting Started
Identifying Your Immediate Needs

Like any modern organization, government agencies at all levels rely on software systems and tools to store data, manage operations and complete key tasks. However, unlike organizations in the private sector, government agencies are meant to serve the public, which means they're subject to certain requirements that can make it challenging to find optimal solutions.

From customer relationship management systems and accounting software to performance management tools and archiving platforms, there are many different types of government software solutions on the market; which one(s) you choose will be dictated by your agency's immediate needs and/or what problem(s) you need to solve.

For example, let's say that your agency's procurement process is manual and largely paper-based; this not only slows down procurement, but also introduces the risk of human error and makes it more challenging for your employees to keep track of important paperwork.

To resolve this issue, you might consider investing in multiple solutions to automate different components of the procurement process and better manage the associated paperwork — solutions such as an automated bidding platform, contract management software, a requisition purchase tracking system and/or an expense reporting system. You might even consider investing in all of the above and working with an experienced implementation partner to ensure that all systems are tightly integrated and can easily communicate with one another.

Once you've determined what type of software you require, you can begin to compare specific solutions, using the checklist below to find one that delivers the right combination of features and functionality.

Core Government Software Comparison Criteria

Generally speaking, the basic requirements for two different types of government software will substantially differ; after all, you wouldn't look for the same capabilities in a communications platform as you would in a work order system.

With that said, there are a few common criteria to look for when evaluating various solutions:

✓ Security

Government software typically houses confidential, classified or otherwise sensitive data, including both employees' and citizens' personally identifiable information. Should any of this information fall into the wrong hands due to a data leak or data breach, it has the potential to cause substantial harm to individuals, threaten public safety and lead citizens to distrust the very institutions intended to serve them.

Given what's at stake, thoroughly vet each solution's — and solution provider's — cybersecurity systems and protocols to ensure that they're up to standard.

Some questions to ask:

☐ Do you have a security alert system in place?

☐ What type of access controls have you implemented?

☐ Do you offer round-the-clock system monitoring?

☐ Are you compliant with recognized data protection standards?

☐ Do you hold any security certifications?

☐ What additional security measures do you have in place? (e.g. firewalls, anti-virus and anti-malware protection, two-factor authentication, encryption)

✅ Ease of Use

Training government employees on new internal systems is not only time-consuming — it can also be expensive. Look for solutions that offer an intuitive, user-friendly interface to encourage user adoption and streamline onboarding and training.

Keep in mind that ease of use is just as important — if not more important — for external-facing systems as it is for internal ones. Government websites and citizen self-service portals should be clean, easy to navigate and designed with accessibility in mind to best serve the needs of the public.

Key questions to ask:

☐ Does your solution follow user-centered design principles?

☐ Do you conduct regular usability tests?

☐ Do you offer any premade training programs or materials?

☐ Is your solution WCAG 2-compliant?

☐ Do you have a plan in place to address any usability issues that might arise?

☐ Do you offer 24/7 customer support and/or self-service options?

✅ Mobile-enablement

Not all government work takes place in an office setting, and employees in the field require access to mission-critical systems just as much as those sitting at a desk.

When evaluating government software, be sure to look for solutions that are mobile -enabled, so that employees have the ability to log in and do their work, regardless of their location and whether they're using a desktop computer or government-issued device.

Some questions to help you get started:

☐ Which mobile devices do you currently support?
(e.g. Smartphone, tablet, laptop, wearables, etc.)

☐ Do you have plans to support additional devices in the future?

☐ Do you offer remote access to application configuration for administrators?

☐ Do you conduct regular mobile device compatibility testing?

☐ Do you monitor application performance to ensure rapid response times and prevent connection errors?

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✅ Compatibility

There's a software solution to solve almost every government issue under the sun. While that's great news, it can also lead agencies to adopt more and more platforms over time. If these platforms are not tightly integrated, you run the risk of developing data silos and sprawling software ecosystems.

This can, in turn, lead to miscommunications both internally and externally, make it more challenging for citizens to access important information, slow down core processes and prevent you from gaining a complete view of operations across your institution.

To avoid this issue, ask the following:

- ☐ Is your solution compatible with our existing systems?

- ☐ Is your solution compatible with multiple data formats?

- ☐ Does your solution offer Big Data connectivity?

- ☐ Does your solution utilize a flexible architecture?

- ☐ What level of integration support do you offer?

- ☐ Do you provide data cleansing services as part of your integration process?

- ☐ Will my data be accessible during integration?

Although it is not a specific capability, it's also important to ask any potential solution providers whether they have prior experience working with an agency of your size and at your particular level of government, and whether they'd be willing to provide customer references.

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Your Go-To Source for Government Archiving Support

In need of an archiving platform for your government agency? Intradyn has you covered. We've worked with agencies at all levels of government to implement archiving software and help them maintain compliance, and so have the proven, hands-on experience to help you get started.

We encourage you to contact us for more information.

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