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Human Services: Empowering Services, Improving Lives

Why Health and Human Service Agencies Must Adopt a Digital Mindset
Four Technology Trends to Put to Work

Technology innovation is fueling health and human services transformation, but it raises some important questions. Which technologies are most relevant now as new rules and new operating models are introduced? How can health and human service organizations use these new technologies to improve service, reduce costs and enable better outcomes?

The Accenture Technology Vision 2013 offers answers to these questions.[1] Each year, Accenture evaluates technologies that are three to five years away from full maturity. The Vision is not about

unattainable technology—rather, it provides a snapshot of the future and a practical guide for putting these key technologies to work. These ideas are relevant for government organizations that are under pressure to innovate and transform in order to deliver public service for the future.

Top technologies to pursue in health and human services

The theme of this year's Vision, "Every business is a digital business," marks the need for organizations to embrace the opportunity for IT to function as a

strategic asset that can fuel new levels of performance. For health and human services, this theme also illustrates the need for IT to help support collaboration and promote a client centric service delivery that can improve outcomes.

To help organizations understand the range of technology opportunities today, Accenture has identified four technologies that health and human services agencies can consider to help sustain an effective transformation agenda.

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1. Accenture Technology Vision 2013: Every Business is a Digital Business, http://www.accenture.com/sitecollectiondocuments/microsites/it-trends-innovations-2013/pdfs/full-report-2013.pdf

1. Relationships at Scale

Connecting with every citizen in relevant ways and maintain that relationship at scale.

Personalization and relationship management is core to health and human services. Automation raises the risk of weakened personal relationships in exchange for stronger output, as opposed to outcome.

In human services, it is important to understand each citizen's needs based on their personal circumstances, previous interactions they had with public services and their intent. Through self-service, and the ability to manage cases more virtually than before, we won't need citizens to "tell their story" at each turn. Organizations can use technology to connect with every citizen in relevant ways and maintain that relationship at scale.

The Accenture Citizen Self-Service Portal allows citizens to access services virtually, check eligibility, fill out applications or report changes online, and manage their benefits across multiple programs through a personalized home page. The Accenture Benefits Management System (ABMS) creates a whole picture of a citizen by sharing benefit summaries, previous documentation and real-time access to related systems. This information reduces the possibility of duplication and can help staff more quickly understand what is new and what is needed.

Such models and solutions must be the next step for health and human services organizations—from the development of a holistic citizen view to customized interactions based on that understanding. And the result? Greater efficiency and effectiveness in meeting customer needs for less cost and in a timelier manner.

2. Analytics = the Outcome Engine

Managing data as a strategic resource.

Analytics can help tackle fraud, improve service delivery and inform policy. Analytics has the power to transform how health and human services systems operate, enable and better measure outcomes. However, health and human services agencies must plan for and invest in analytics in order to realize the true benefits of this emerging technology.

Thanks to the latest processors, information appliances and analytics tools, the underlying challenge is not technical. Rather, the path to smarter and more coordinated decision making faces process-oriented and culture-related roadblocks. Today's public service environment demands that organizations manage data as a strategic resource.

Organizations that achieve high performance through analytics do not simply patch a business intelligence or data warehouse program onto existing operations. Rather, they ask: Who needs what information to make the very best decisions? Which processes and governance are required to ensure that such information reaches the right person, in the right format and at the right time, anywhere in the enterprise?

Analytics can become the single most valuable tool in the delivery of public services. In San Bernardino County, predictive analytics is identifying and reducing fraud with greatly improved returns and more effective staff deployment.

3. Data Velocity

Information and insights available at the point of need, regardless of source.

When data moves at the velocity of the business, it enables a new level of outcome management. Data at velocity means that information and insights are available at the point of need, regardless of source. This has great potential in human services to help reduce errors, improve satisfaction and inform cost allocation for greatest impact.

For example, the Accenture Benefit Management System uses a service-oriented architecture and business process management to integrate verification data, risk insights and information and interactions from related programs.

Caseworkers and providers can use this integrated case management information to take appropriate action or provide feedback.

4. Seamless Collaboration

Embedding collaboration technologies across government processes and systems.

Collaboration is essential to effective health and human services delivery. The variety of organizations that can contribute to improved outcomes for multiple problem clients should be included. Technology solutions can connect all of these organizations and support the convergence of client centric institutions. A holistic view allows agencies to collaboratively focus on need, and the sources of need, beyond what a single agency can encompass.

Seamless collaboration requires agencies to take the lead and embed collaboration technologies into processes and systems across government. Technologies that work with existing processes, securely share data and enable effective communication across organizations, can unlock the next wave of service delivery.

For example, eligibility workers can collaborate with community providers on service plans and caseworkers can confirm service options with experts who review the cases as they are processed. It's all about furthering seamless collaboration within an organization and across external boundaries to improve outcomes and reduce costs.

Striking the right balance for results

Emerging technologies are exciting—but often elusive in the public sector. To drive value, improve outcomes and stay relevant, health and human services should consider the opportunities these technologies present. Although technology changes every day, these recent trends are accessible, available and proven. Forward-thinking organizations can put them to work now to improve outcomes and drive the public service transformation agenda.

Technology innovation is fueling health and human services transformation, but it raises some important questions. Which technologies are most relevant now as new rules and new operating models are introduced? How can health and human service organizations use these new technologies to improve service, reduce costs and enable better outcomes? To help organizations understand the range of technology opportunities today, Accenture has identified four technologies that health and human services agencies can consider to help sustain an effective transformation agenda.

RELATIONSHIPS AT SCALE

Opportunities:

- Increases personalization and relationship management
- Understands citizen needs based on personal circumstances, previous interactions and intent
- Connects with every citizen in relevant ways and maintain that relationship at scale
- Develops a holistic citizen view
- Increases efficiency and effectiveness in meeting customer needs

ANALYTICS = THE OUTCOME ENGINE
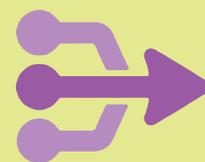
Opportunities:

- Identifies and reduces fraud
- Improves service delivery
- Informs public sector policy
- Smarter, more coordinated decision making
- Manages data as a strategic resource

TECHNOLOGIES TO HELP TRANSFORM THE PUBLIC SECTOR
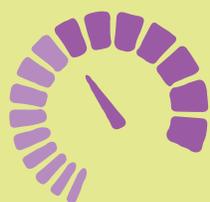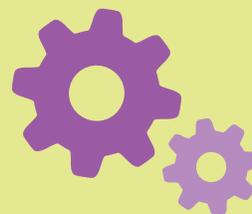
DATA VELOCITY

Opportunities:

- Enables a new level of outcome management
- Information and insights available at the point of need, regardless of source
- Reduces errors
- Improves satisfaction
- Informs cost allocation for greatest impact

SEAMLESS COLLABORATION

Opportunities:

- Connects all organizations and supports convergence
- Collaboratively focuses on need, beyond what a single agency can encompass
- Embeds collaboration technologies into processes and systems across government
- Unlocks the next wave of service delivery
- Improves outcomes and reduces costs

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