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FCW CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT SUMMIT
VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

IMPROVING CITIZEN EXPERIENCE WITH AUTOMATION

Mariela Melero, Chief, Office of Citizenship and Applicant External Affairs Directorate US Citizenship and Immigration Services: I call it the non-authenticated or the non-transactional customer. And this is the individual that is looking for information and is searching at a very high level for how do I get to do something. And so we could not, it would have been absolutely impossible, to assume that we would be able, with the infrastructure that we had, to provide the services that that individual needs.

So automation was absolutely critical to address the needs of individuals that are just searching for information and then landing on some of the services that we're providing.

Chris Zinner, Managing Director and Digital & Customer Experience Lead: I think the next horizon though – where the federal agencies have the opportunity to take it – is building off the success that Mariela's had, and a couple other agencies, around artificial intelligence. So. I'm sure Mariela will talk around Emma and what they're doing over there, as well as Amtrack has Ask Julie, and US Army has Search & Stars. So there's just some examples of chatbots that are out there that are designed for self-service, and citizens/tax payers come in and interact with these. But to date, they've been limited to those more generic questions. Right. So not questions about me and my specific account. They are taking chatbots to the next level. They are

personalizing them. I can ask these chatbots about me and my particular situation. It's cross channel, right. It's not just about going to the web and chatting. I can talk to Julie on the phone and on the web. And lastly, and just like if you think about in a contact center environment today, if I call someone and talk to an agent, and that person can't help me, there's no issue with them transferring me to another agent. Well, we're already seeing in the commercial world these chatbots are looked at as virtual coworkers and there's no reason the virtual chatbot can't transfer you to a human being when you run up against their limitations.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE IN GOVERNMENT

Zinner: I would love to see in a year or two from now that it's the expectation when a citizen comes to a federal government website that they're going to see a virtual agent of some sort. And they're going to welcome it. And they're going to actually use it and walk away with their needs met. And being able to serve themselves on their own terms. And not feel the need to call that call center and walk into that service center and validate that self-service experience they had. So it's a win-win. Where as a customer, a citizen, I get what I need on my terms and I leave happy. And then the agency is able to then be a good steward of taxpayer dollars.

Melero: And for me, I want to see customers really adapting the concept of an account. Just like we do. They have liquid expectations. And

so we need to make sure that we're serving them appropriately. And so we would like and we have billions of accounts already so we're moving in that direction. But I would like them to adapt an account create their own ecosystem one more time for the management of every aspect of their case. They don't have to call. They don't even have to interact with Emma if they don't necessarily desire. Why? Because everything is there. You will have your personalized processing time, have the ability to securely message the organization. And by the way, those are things that we are offering today. Adoption is what we need to drive. And we hope that the ability to file electronically – to have that end to end experience electronically which our current leadership is championing, is that one thing that will be a game changer in 2020.