

WHITE PAPER

APPLICATIONS SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGY LLC

Licensing, Permitting, and Inspections:

Navigating the World of Touchless Technology in Government

AST

January 2022



CONTENTS

1	LICENSING PERMITTING, AND INSPECTIONS	2
2	INTRODUCTION.....	3
3	LPI BEST PRACTICES	4
4	THE FIVE STAGES OF AUTHORIZATION.....	5
5	THE KEY CHALLENGES	6
6	SOLUTION FOUNDATION.....	8
7	SUMMARY	10
8	REFERENCES.....	11

Transformation to epic agency productivity, employee engagement, and citizen experience starts now.

1 LICENSING PERMITTING, AND INSPECTIONS

One frequent way businesses and constituents interact with their government is through the process of Licensing and Permitting. A convoluted and complex process can impede growth and frustrate entrepreneurs who are starting small businesses.

In our connected, customer-centric world, constituents expect their needs to be met quickly and frictionlessly. They expect a simple streamlined experience to obtain a license or permit similar to how they file taxes with Turbo Tax or purchase items from Amazon. They expect a personalized, interactive platform to communicate with their state, county, or city, as well as a sense of community, to share experiences, give feedback, and be notified of happenings in real-time. Digital leaders are using new data sources to create consistent, convenient, and empathetic experiences, while still ensuring customer privacy and security.

Agencies have historically offered:

- Myriad forms to be located, completed, printed, and mailed
- Payments taken only in cash or check
- Appointments that must be conducted in person, during limited office hours

Agencies need solutions for Licensing, Permitting and Inspections that allow government to better engage with constituents, fostering trust, bolstering economic growth, and building thriving communities.

Agencies of the future will offer a different experience:

- Intelligent automation on an extensible platform
- Completely remote, touchless services
- Support for a variety of government business processes in one easy-to-use portal

Government agencies ought to replace complex, highly customized, labor-intensive processes and segregated systems with sophisticated, intuitive technology, enabling your agency to focus on serving the community.

2 INTRODUCTION

Agencies are compelled to modernize, consolidate, or retire antiquated systems that are manual, paper-intensive and require redundant, repetitive data entry. Anything less than perfect data poses a wide range of problems for the organization.

In the modern digital landscape of online applications, customer self-service, and automated workflows, government authorities and public offices must rethink and reinvent their task flows. The goal for every public sector authority is to increase constituent engagement. Technology can be leveraged to streamline internal workflows and provide constituents with answers in context.

At the same time, budgets are shrinking, and public sector agencies are expected to do more with fewer resources. A new breed of software is needed: Created for evolution, not revolution.

Solutions ought to replace complex processes and segregated systems with sophisticated yet intuitive technology. Software should offer agency professionals the opportunity to deliver streamlined processes and remarkable experiences to the workforce, creating significant value across the organization by optimizing performance in all processes, while improving quality and ensuring data integrity.

More individualized experiences have led to elevated customer expectations. Digital professionals are working to optimize experiences for the long term.

3 LPI BEST PRACTICES

The following list contains recommendations on leading practices when implementing solutions for Licensing, Permitting, and Inspections.

- Publish permitting and licensing processes online on an intuitive, easy-to-use portal
- Provide guidance on all license/permit requirements for each type of application, including
 - Dynamic forms that adapt to input and user requirements
 - Guided actions and knowledge for each stage
 - Expected timelines for completion at each stage
 - Costs and number of procedural steps related to each process
- Provide a "one-stop-shop" for licenses and permits to streamline compliance for small businesses
- Enforce a customer service mentality through constituent feedback and performance management metrics

79% of service professionals say it's impossible to provide great service without full customer context.

4 THE FIVE STAGES OF AUTHORIZATION

Solutions must help government agencies through the five broad stages of any constituent-government interaction journey.

1. Citizen outreach
2. Application intake
3. Review and approval
4. Inspections of businesses and facilities or assessments of individuals
5. Issuance and renewal based on violations and enforcement actions

Enhancing the citizen experience requires an investment in new tools, capabilities, and processes. Making investments in these areas will yield long-term benefits like a workforce with higher morale — and a desire to stay.

**MIA JORDAN, DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION EXECUTIVE**

5 THE KEY CHALLENGES

This section breaks down the key issues and challenges that citizens and public officials face.

No Single Source of Information:

A prospective business owner or constituent faces a daunting challenge finding the correct data, form or information and is often forced to access multiple websites. Even when they find the source of information, valuable time is lost navigating the site, wading through volumes of forms, and trying to understand the requirements, prerequisites, processes, and timelines for different permits and licenses. Ideally, they want to be presented with a checklist of all the licenses, and dependent permits that they require based on their business type. They want to be guided through the process and be able to track the different applications, upload the relevant documents, and manage their authorizations from a single interface.

Lack of Visibility into the Process:

After a constituent completes an application and initiates the process, there is often no self-service status capability or visibility into the case details with timeframes for each stage, progress of each license and permit, and next steps. With aspects of the process being handled offline, applicants often do not have visibility into the process which often results in frustration, confusion, and delays.

Compliance enforcement officials and other stakeholders need a consolidated view of all the disparate sources of information. There are a lot of details related to a single applicant, such as account details, related applications, dependent licenses and permits, inspection visit details, violation details, enforcement actions information, and complaint details. Officials want to manage everything from a single console to reduce their turnaround time for iterative issues and to improve collaboration across departments.

Manual Processes and Lack of Coordination:

With the involvement of multiple officials and departments, there is often a lack of cohesion between processes. Enforcement and compliance officers depend on reviewers, multiple approvers, and

inspectors to fill them in on critical updates before they can issue or renew licenses and applications. Reviewers and approvers want a unified view of information related to any applicant. They want to simplify the process of coordinating reviews and approvals and sending notifications to the appropriate parties.

Disconnected Systems and Redundant Paperwork for Inspections:

Inspectors in the field lose valuable time planning visits, manually integrating their notes into back-office systems, and recording inputs in different forms. There's typically no easy way to associate pictures and videos captured during inspections with predefined regulatory codes and violations. They need a mobile application to simplify these tasks—one that would let them view all regulatory codes specific to the business they are inspecting, check out license and permit details, capture their findings, take photos, and assess violations with a few simple clicks. Access to such an application would reduce errors and save valuable time with minimal post-inspection follow-up work. There is also a need for this functionality to be available in offline mode.

Inadequate Risk Analysis to Reduce Bottlenecks:

Public sector executives do not have adequate insights into customer engagement and application processes to make data-driven decisions. They struggle to track and analyze trends and outcomes to support a well-informed opinion on how to bridge the gap between citizens and the government

Covid Impact:

It is imperative that governments embrace touchless technology and provide digital business registration capabilities to constituents using a single online portal. Switching to touchless technology reduces common touchpoints, helping safeguard against the spread of COVID-19 by reducing face-to-face meetings and the handling of paper forms. All this at a time when U.S. state and local governments are [facing severe budget shortfalls](#).

Digital leaders are rethinking how their organizations use technology to operate more efficiently and better meet customer needs. **Eighty-three percent of marketers say their work will be more technology-driven after the pandemic than before.**

6 SOLUTION FOUNDATION

A Licensing, Permitting and Inspection solution should remove bureaucratic red tape by increasing collaboration across government departments and breaking up data silos. The solution should provide citizens with an easy-to-use web portal where they can find the right information at the right time. Using the web portal, prospective business owners and applicants can easily understand the processes and track the status of their licenses and permits, inspection results, and enforcement actions.

Time to Market

The city, county, or state needs to quickly deliver a transformational constituent experience and an improved level of service to its citizens and partner organizations. The solution must allow the organization to focus on business, not technology, to deploy faster, adapt rapidly, and lower the overall support burden.

Versatility

The platform should be developed for extensibility and customization, easily installed and able to interoperate with existing system components. The platform should have the ability to be customized to meet the requirements of the customer with clicks not code. The shift from an exclusive, technically-skilled user base to a general business user focus has resulted in lower costs associated with talent and shorter development time. Most tools provide the underlying hosting and upgrade services, which ensures that application updates and maintenance are a non-issue.

Accompanying development tools and pre-built templates must allow agencies to tailor applications to meet their unique use cases, without heavy reliance on system integrators. Application development tools should give businesses the ability to conceptualize, design, develop, and roll out specialized applications quickly and easily. Users should also be able to browse through a comprehensive database of ready-built, customizable applications and components.

Mobile-first Design

In 2015, mobile devices overtook desktop as the world's most preferred method for accessing internet data. It has become imperative that application developers design their programs to function first and foremost on mobile devices. Mobile-first design shows that the developer is concerned with user convenience and allows for a wider audience.

Amidst all the pandemic disruption, 52% of Gen Z didn't believe the government had the necessary tools to help them.

7 SUMMARY

Accelerate with Pre-built LPI Components.

Accelerate each step in the license, permit, and inspection cycle by taking a digital-first approach. Guide constituents through application requirements for their business, occupational, or individual needs while streamlining site visits to keep business and residential projects moving forward.

Use intelligent automation on an extensible platform that supports additional government business processes and provides remote, touchless services to constituents. Government agencies need to replace complex, highly customized, labor-intensive processes and segregated systems with sophisticated, intuitive technology in order to focus on serving the community.

Overcome manual processing, decentralized and complex processes, a lack of visibility, and long turnaround times with a solution that offers your workforce and citizens modern features like:

- A self-service customer portal,
- Consistent navigation with relevant, easy-to-find information,
- Streamlined communication between parties,
- Seamless payment integration,
- An end-to-end record of transactions, communications, and documentation; and more.

Provide an entirely remote, digital process to modernize business processes for citizens, the workforce, and executives.

- Enhance the customer experience
- Decrease processing times
- Improve job satisfaction for your workforce
- Increase collaboration
- Elevate transparency

8 REFERENCES

- [Digital Trends Report – Salesforce](#)
- [StatCounter Global Stats](#)
- [Council on Foreign Relations - How COVID-19 Is Harming State and City Budgets](#)
- [How Public Sector Organizations Will Transform in 2022](#)
- [How Gen Z's Preferences Can Increase Citizen Engagement in the Public Sector](#)

AST is an award-winning full-service enterprise systems integrator, serving clients in the public sector for more than two decades. Clients look to AST for leadership and assistance in systems integration, business process redesign, project management, systems administration, and training. From on-premise applications to modern cloud technology, AST's services encompass all aspects of Enterprise Resource Planning, Business Intelligence, Enterprise Performance Management, Customer Experience, and Middleware. AST also offers flexible Managed Services, supporting the needs of over 200 Public Sector customers around the country.

Licensing, Permitting, and Inspections:
Navigating The World of Touchless Technology in Government
January 2022

Copyright © 2022 AST Corporation



AST LLC
4343 Commerce Court, Suite 701
Lisle, Illinois 60532
Phone: 888-278-0002
Fax: 630-778-1179
www.astcorporation.com