

eBook

3 Pathways to Building an Integrated, Digital Experience: A Guide for Federal Agencies

Executive Summary

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) policy guidance titled "Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience (M-23-22)" reinforces the goals of the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act ("[21st Century IDEA](#)"). Together, these initiatives outline new standards and actions for agencies to enhance their interactions with the American public through modern, accessible, and secure digital services.

The newest and most impactful mandate, the [America by Design Executive Order](#) (EO 14338), builds on these efforts by requiring that public-facing digital and physical experiences be not only efficient and secure but also intuitive, consistent, and visually engaging. The EO establishes a National Design Studio (NDS) and a Chief Design Officer to coordinate design excellence across government, with the first results expected by July 4, 2026.

This directive raises the bar for service delivery across agencies. It moves beyond basic digitization to require design-driven experiences that foster trust and accessibility by ensuring every digital touchpoint is cohesive, usable, and human-centered.

In this new environment, [DocuSign Intelligent Agreement Management](#) (IAM) plays a crucial role in helping agencies modernize how they engage with the public and meet these evolving mandates. By embedding digital agreements into seamless, well-designed experiences, agencies can simplify complex workflows, reduce friction, and deliver faster, more transparent services.

This guide explores three clear pathways agencies can explore when implementing the America by Design EO to an integrated, citizen-centered experience. The outcome is a digitally transformed government that inspires confidence, strengthens public trust, and delivers first-class experiences online and offline.



Pathway # 1: Digitize services and forms

Paper forms and in-person services remain common across the federal government and continue to place a heavy burden on agencies and the public.

Moving these services online is not only essential for meeting the requirements of the 21st Century IDEA, but it also lays the groundwork for the intuitive, cohesive experiences envisioned in the America by Design EO. This is the first step toward digital services that are simple, efficient, and visually aligned with modern federal design standards.

Only a very small share of federal forms have been converted into true digital experiences, and the public still spends billions of hours each year on government paperwork. Most interactions with government still take place offline, and many commonly accessed PDFs remain inaccessible.

These challenges reinforce the need to focus not only on digitization but also on design quality, usability, and full accessibility so services are designed for everyone. ⁵

How to overcome these challenges:

- Prioritize accessibility across government websites, including forms, which are the edge of the interaction: Ensure forms are fully compatible with common screen readers, browsers and assistive technologies, and support enhanced keyboard navigation. Meet all [WCAG requirements](#) and strive to exceed them where possible to deliver the most inclusive experience for all users.
- Identify high-impact services that are still paper-based, or require in-person services: Modernize to accessible, mobile-friendly, digital intake experiences that reduce administrative burden, decrease processing costs, increase completion rates, and improve overall CX.
- Use a [Template Library](#) and no longer build forms from scratch: Tap into existing OMB templates to reduce the burden of digitizing forms, streamline internal form processing, and introduce the digital experience to constituents sooner.
- Meet constituents wherever they are with a digital-first, self-serve form-filling experience: Capture constituent data via [DocuSign Web Forms](#) and dynamically populate content into forms for signature to streamline data collection within your agency.



Pathway # 2: Accelerate the use of electronic signatures

Digitizing forms is only the beginning of a modern government service. To deliver a seamless, end-to-end experience that reflects the goals of the America by Design EO, agencies must also modernize the final step in the process, the signature.

A well-designed digital service loses momentum when the last action requires printing, signing, scanning, or mailing a paper form. Expanding the use of compliant electronic signatures preserves an end-to-end digital experience that stays simple, secure, and consistent for users.

Electronic signatures create a faster, more responsive experience that supports the customer experience and burden-reduction goals outlined in the EO and in M-23-22. They eliminate unnecessary barriers, shorten processing times, and support a signing experience that matches an agency's visual identity while meeting accessibility commitments.

The current state of e-signature use in government:

- Since the E-Sign Act, signed in 2000, the federal government has recognized e-signatures as legally valid and equivalent to handwritten signatures. This, along with earlier and subsequent federal guidance, paved the way for a new era of digitized government services by removing key legal barriers to online transactions.
- Electronic signatures can be used in nearly all the same instances as handwritten signatures. But, unlike handwritten signatures, e-signatures offer a faster, more efficient, mobile-friendly experience and are supported by digital security tools that protect the integrity of the transaction.

5,500+

federal, state, and local government agencies in all 50 states use DocuSign eSignature to sign digital forms, process applications, and manage correspondence.

How to increase the use of e-signature:

- **Implement e-signatures for secure, constituent-facing processes**, including grant applications, permits, records requests, and more, to streamline service delivery.
- **Introduce e-signatures to drive internal productivity**, quality, and timeliness in delivering services to constituents, and to automate workflows for signing and managing internal government documents.
- **Enable employees and contractors to electronically sign documents using their Personal Identity Verification (PIV)** credentials, reducing paperwork for a better employee experience.
- **Offer an accessible signing experience** with e-signatures that conform to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and WCAG 2.1 AA and integrate with different assistive technologies to ensure that all users can sign documents.



Pathway # 3: Improve customer experience

Advancing customer experience for employees and citizens remains a top federal priority. Digitizing forms and expanding electronic signatures helps, but the broader goal is to deliver seamless, intuitive, and trustworthy services across every channel.

The America by Design EO strengthens this focus by making design excellence central to customer experience. It calls for services that are not only digital but also consistent and easy to use to build public trust. Agencies are now expected to treat design as a core customer experience pillar. Visual presentation, clarity, and usability are essential because poor design undermines confidence while thoughtful design creates familiar and reliable interactions.

The EO also expands the focus beyond forms to include improvements for high-impact service providers (HISPs), public-facing websites, and physical sites that shape everyday experiences. Strengthened visual quality and consistency across these touchpoints helps agencies build a unified experience that supports trust and transparency.

The current state of government CX:

Since the 21st Century IDEA was signed in 2018, a series of executive orders, legislation, and OMB memos have put CX at the forefront of federal service delivery:

- A [2021 Presidential Executive Order](#) directs agencies to modernize programs, reduce administrative burdens, and pilot new online tools to provide the public with simple, seamless, and secure experiences.
- The “[Fed CX Mandate](#)” is grounded in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) A-11 Section 280, which establishes the CX framework for agencies and outlines requirements for designing, measuring, and improving CX. Section 280 provides ongoing guidance and leading practices for measuring and managing CX across high-impact federal services.
- The [Government Service Delivery Improvement Act](#) aims to strengthen federal service delivery by modernizing programs, improving CX, and encouraging agencies to adopt effective digital tools and technologies—including commercial software solutions where appropriate.
- The [Improving Government Services Act](#) would require agencies to develop plans to improve CX, including evaluating and incorporating relevant private-sector best practices when interacting with the public.

How to create a consistent, comprehensive, and deliberate approach to CX:

- **Use qualitative and quantitative customer satisfaction and experience data** from across the executive agency to identify areas of concern and take appropriate action to improve the delivery of constituent services.
- **Streamline a wide range of processes and paperwork**, beyond just forms, to meet the growing needs and expectations of employees and the public.
- **Coordinate with other agencies** and seek to maintain as much standardization and commonality as possible to deliver familiar experiences to users.

Gain quick ROI with Technology Modernization Fund (TMF) investments:

Created in 2017, the TMF supports federal IT modernization by investing in projects that improve cybersecurity, modernize legacy systems, enhance digital public services and enable cross-agency collaboration across many areas. Over time, the TMF has increasingly prioritized initiatives that strengthen digital citizen services and accelerate government-wide transformation.

Federal agencies can apply for TMF support to modernize digital services, including improving web accessibility and digitizing public-facing forms—key goals of the 21st Century IDEA. TMF investments help federal agencies create better digital experiences, reduce reliance on paper processes, and demonstrate measurable cost and efficiency gains.

Supporting the goals of the *America by Design* Executive Order

Docusign recognizes that building an integrated digital experience requires more than moving applications into the cloud. True modernization depends on redesigning business processes, strengthening security, and creating services that are intuitive, consistent, and visually clear for both constituents and employees.

With the introduction of the America by Design EO, agencies are now expected to meet a higher standard for digital service delivery. This builds on the digital requirements of the 21st Century IDEA and OMB M-23-22, adding new expectations for usability, simplicity, clarity and aesthetic quality across every public-facing interaction. The Docusign IAM platform is uniquely positioned to help agencies meet these elevated expectations while improving operational efficiency and trust.

Through secure solutions such as [eSignature](#), [Docusign CLM](#), [Web Forms](#), and [SMS Delivery](#), Docusign supports the creation of digital experiences that feel seamless and intuitive from start to finish. These capabilities directly align with the design-focused goals of the America by Design EO and can help agencies present services that reflect clarity, consistency, and professionalism.

Docusign also welcomes the opportunity to partner with the National Design Studio and the Chief Design Officer to support standardization efforts across government. Our team is ready to consult with agencies to modernize agreement workflows, improving usability, reducing friction, and advancing the design excellence envisioned by the new EO.



About Docusign

Docusign brings agreements to life. Over 1.6 million customers and more than a billion people in over 180 countries use Docusign solutions to accelerate the process of doing business and simplify people's lives. With intelligent agreement management, Docusign unleashes business critical data that is trapped inside of documents. Until now, these were disconnected from business systems of record, costing businesses time, money, and opportunity. Using Docusign IAM, companies can create, commit to, and manage agreements with solutions created by the #1 company in e-signature and contract lifecycle management (CLM).

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