Modernizing Government the Right Way with Intelligent Content Management and AI-Powered Solutions

Introduction

To improve user experiences and strengthen resilience and security, state and local agencies should modernize systems and processes, use automation to increase efficiency and optimize operations with integrated, AI-powered technologies.

Modernization is an urgent need. Research indicates government legacy systems are between eight and 51 years old, on average, and cost nearly $340 million annually to operate and maintain.[1]

While some agencies adopted new point or departmental solutions to accelerate modernization during the pandemic, a more forward-looking, enterprisewide vision is now essential. The need to empower today's remote or hybrid workforce, deliver digital services and mitigate security risks requires better information access, management and compliance.

Embracing a new approach — intelligent content management — helps agencies modernize their infrastructure the right way for the long term. Built on a cloud-native, next-gen platform, intelligent content management and AI-powered solutions allow agencies to electronically harness content and data across the information life cycle — from receipt and use to retention and disposal — and achieve their mission from anywhere, at any time.

What is Intelligent Content Management?

Intelligent content management uses integrated AI and cloud-enabled technologies to put today's enterprise information to work by securely connecting government systems and automating the processes agencies use every day.

With intelligent content solutions, agencies can take content and data previously stored in siloed, legacy applications and transform it into actionable intelligence to optimize decision-making.

"It's about what technologies you can incorporate to extract meaningful information from the content you're working with, capture information that is most relevant to a process and then use that to make decisions," says Kevin Flanagan, associate vice president of government and higher education sales at Hyland, a leading provider of intelligent content solutions for the public sector.

Modern intelligent content management systems have several key features that distinguish them from traditional point solutions:

- ☐ **Use of AI to unlock new levels of efficiency.** AI and machine learning (ML) models help scale and aggregate content. These tools also transform unstructured content into actionable intelligence. "Taking that contextual or semantic content from less-structured content and combining that with user patterns, existing core business data and business rules can create a level of hyper-automation," says Don Dittmar, director of product management at Hyland.

- ☐ **Increased flexibility and extensibility.** These systems seamlessly integrate with enterprise applications. Agencies can embrace new service delivery offerings, such as self-service portals or digital identity verification options. Extensibility helps agencies reap maximum value from their technology investments.

- ☐ **Open standards.** "As organizations are considering their next phase of modernization, they've got to think, 'I might not get to this for another 15 or 20 years, so I'm going to do it the right way,'" says Flanagan. "That means technology that isn't locked in or proprietary to a particular vendor, and a solution that allows an agency to modify the technology as its business needs change."

Success Story:
Washtenaw County, Michigan

The challenge:
The county had a legacy document management system that was costly to maintain and required time-intensive custom coding for any changes.[2]

The solution:
The county adopted an intelligent content management system for better process efficiency and document access.

The result:
The system enabled Washtenaw County to integrate more than 50 line-of-business applications without custom coding and install 100 process improvement workflows. More than 300 users across 15 departments now use the integrated system to streamline document management, compared to only 20 users for its previous system. By upgrading to the new system, the county saved $400,000 as well as $50,000 in annual consultant fees. The county has eliminated the cost and maintenance of custom-coded solutions and disparate legacy systems.

Next-Generation Capabilities for Digital Government

Intelligent content solutions empower digital government by making an agency's content universe more user-friendly, connected and compatible with modern-day business. They provide end-to-end capabilities that help staff gain quicker access to critical information and make faster, accurate decisions.

Intelligent content capture

Intelligent content capture delivers AI-powered document capture, separation, classification, and intelligent data extraction and validation. Robotic process automation (RPA) automates high-volume, manual data entry and eliminates costly errors and rework to accelerate processing. Agencies can bring processes online from the source, reducing paper and storage costs as well as exceptions and bottlenecks.

Connected content management

Connected content management modernizes how content is organized, accessed and used, bridging information silos for easier document retrieval across databases and departments. Connected content management empowers remote and hybrid workforce models as employees can access and process information online from any location.

AI-powered process automation

AI helps make agency information-driven processes work better, not just faster. It helps break down processes into workflows with predictable steps and outcomes, which then can be optimized. Agencies can drastically decrease manual processing in nearly every government use case — from permits and licenses to inspections and investigations to benefits programs.

Process automation steps can include:
- [ ] Data accuracy and validation
- [ ] Routing of documents and decisions
- [ ] Automated rules-based tasks
- [ ] Task notifications and updates
- [ ] Managing complex approvals
- [ ] Workload balancing

Secure data governance

Data protection and security are baked into intelligent content management systems, which are compliant with NIST 800-53 and DOD 5015.02 global open government standards. They feature records management tools that can be easily configured to automatically align with an agency's data governance policies and current privacy regulations. Data is encrypted at rest and in transit, so users benefit from robust end-to-end security controls and enhanced compliance.

Intelligent content capture delivers AI-powered document capture, separation, classification, and intelligent data extraction and validation with precision.

Low-code case management

Building applications from scratch is time-intensive, but low-code/no-code solutions can reduce development time by 90%.[3] Low-code capabilities enable employees to quickly develop solutions for their specific use case or as the need arises without custom coding.

For example, low-code tools can help health and human services agencies modernize existing case management systems by letting staff design new forms and data models without custom coding. They can also easily add features that automate everything from screening to assessments and risk evaluation – allowing caseworkers to focus less on rote tasks and instead use their institutional knowledge to resolve cases faster and deliver better outcomes.

Accessible constituent portals

User-friendly web interfaces and self-service portals make it easier for residents to submit forms and service requests. Automated workflows then route this information to the right department for faster processing. Constituents can view documents online and check the status of their requests.

These portals not only make information more accessible; they also meet the needs of diverse users by integrating Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Cloud-native content storage

Moving content to the cloud provides increased availability and reliability for accessing information anytime, anywhere and on any device without sacrificing ownership or control. It also reduces the administrative burden associated with records retention and ongoing server updates. Agencies can safely and securely store large volumes of information and scale storage as their needs grow.

## Success Story: Horry County, South Carolina

The challenge:
The Horry County Auditor's Office handles more than 90,000 property tax returns every year. With its legacy system, the office's small staff had to manually extract data from a mix of paper and digital documents. Processing returns took six months.[4]

The solution:
The department implemented an intelligent content management platform with integrated RPA and intelligent content capture capabilities to digitize its processes.

The result:
Residents can now submit their returns electronically, reducing paper records and allowing the department to automatically extract information from tax forms. Integrated RPA helped automate manual data entry and instantly cross-check information with other systems, such as erroneous property valuations. The department can now process a third of its 90,000 applications without human intervention. Staff no longer need to dedicate half the year to processing returns and can spend time on more high-value tasks.
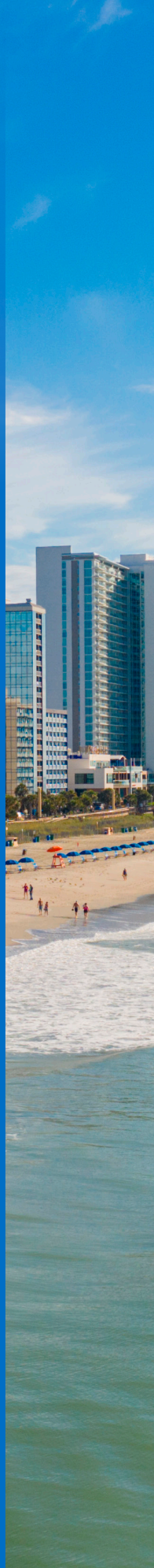
Best Practices for Modernizing the Right Way

The right implementation strategies will help your organization optimize intelligent content management and successfully modernize for the future.

☐ Assess your data environment
Understand what data is currently stored in your systems, who has access to it and what business processes it supports. A data inventory followed by a data audit to assess current governance can be valuable for establishing this baseline.

☐ Work with the right strategic partner
A technology partner can help aggregate, deploy, and scale content and data across your organization for a wide range of use cases. The right partner should offer cloud-native platforms and AI-powered solutions that can predict and adapt to constituent service demands.

☐ Start with a test case
Identify use cases and processes that are ripe for automation or AI enablement, such as permitting processes or social services benefit applications. Work from there to learn, adapt, and build staff buy-in and executive leadership support.

☐ Prioritize data governance
Intelligent content management requires continuous good governance. An enterprisewide data governance strategy can improve data quality and better control the entire information life cycle.

☐ Don't forget about change management
Develop change management strategies that streamline the adoption — and unlock the full potential — of intelligent content solutions. On-demand training modules, an internal knowledge base, user guides and regularly sharing best practices can empower employees to use these tools and find new and more effective ways to apply them in their everyday work.

☐ Focus on continuous improvement
Monitor the performance of intelligent content management processes and systems — and focus on iterating and improving. Constituent and employee feedback is a vital part of this process. Seek regular feedback to refine and enhance processes and systems.

**Success Story:
Multnomah County, Oregon**

The challenge:
The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office could only see a fraction of its documentation electronically, and retrieval for case research averaged 72 hours.[5]

The solution:
The county adopted an intelligent content management system that reliably stores, indexes and retrieves case material with a single electronic repository viewable from any location.

The result:
The system significantly reduced the office's paper consumption and file storage, making it the county's smallest — rather than largest — consumer of paper and archive storage. Case histories can now be retrieved and researched in seconds rather than 72 hours; lawyers have on-the-spot courtroom access to any needed documents. The platform has also helped the county comply with court-mandated e-filing requirements while meeting the standards for open source and document management systems.

Conclusion

Technological advancements have led to better approaches to modernize government operations by leveraging innovative solutions that can be integrated within the systems agencies use every day.

With automated and streamlined processes across the information life cycle, enterprises can drive proactive decision-making, evolve digital service delivery, and improve productivity and efficiencies. They can also thwart ongoing cybersecurity breaches and meet evolving compliance requirements.

By implementing intelligent content management and leveraging AI-powered solutions on a modern, cloud-native platform, agencies can turn their existing content and data into a valuable asset for achieving their mission.

"A lot of usable information that can help you make decisions is sitting in your content locked away," Flanagan says. "You can unlock it by modernizing legacy systems with cost-effective tools that are available today to access this information, make meaning out of it and make better decisions that improve outcomes for the constituents you serve."

1.   Center for Digital Government and Hyland, Keeping Pace with Modernization in the Age of Rapid Obsolescence, 2019.
2.   https://www.hyland.com/en/customers/washtenaw-county
3.   51 Research, Intelligent Process Automation and the Emergence of Digital Automation Platforms, 2018 vis Hyland NASCIO IT Priorities Ebook, pg. 8
4.   https://www.hyland.com/en/customers/horry-county
5.   https://www.hyland.com/en/customers/multnomah-county-oregon

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