

## What do citizens say they want?

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In the surveys conducted by states, and in the studies conducted by research organizations, these were the most common responses to the question, "What government service would you want to be electronically provided?" Generally, respondents chose these from a list.

- Renewing a driver's license
- Voter registration
- State park information and reservations
- Voting on the Internet
- Access to one-stop shopping (one portal for all government services)
- Ordering birth, death, and marriage certificates
- Filing state taxes
- Hunting and fishing licenses
- Accessing medical information from the National Institute of Health

Renewing a driver's license was the typically the first choice. It was followed most often by voter registration, obtaining state park information and making park reservations. Another common theme is the notion of one-stop shopping for government services, or the ability to access specific government information, such as medical or health care data.

The California L.E.A.D. project brings together citizens and businesses to generate lists of government services that an individual would need throughout a typical life span. One group generated a list for the 21-30 age range. It included such needs and interests as marriage, divorce, school systems, purchasing a house, name changes, and professional certificates.

In the research report sponsored by NIC, citizens were asked which activities on a standard list they would like to perform online. Of the listed services, renewing a driver's license, voting on the Internet, having access to one-stop shopping, filing state taxes, and obtaining state park information were the most popular. Additional services, chosen by less than 30 percent of the respondents, were reviewing state police reports, paying parking violations, reviewing real estate records, and paying taxes by credit card. When asked if they had already used government services online, citizens most often reported that they had contacted the IRS and paid taxes electronically. When asked about funding for e-government services, both citizens and business preferred a fee for online transactions rather than have it reflected in tax increases.

A different perspective on what citizens want is shown in the Hart-Teeter study done for the Council for Excellence in Government. This report shows that of the 1,003 citizens surveyed, only 53 percent were either very or fairly favorable of renewing driver's licenses online. The most favored examples of e-government were access to medical information from the National Institute of Health (80%), and access to a candidate's voting record (77%). Cost savings for government, and a legislation comment site followed closely with 71 percent each. Citizens were also asked about the benefits of e-government. According to this report, citizens see the biggest benefits as increased government accountability to citizens (36%), greater public access to information (23%), and more efficient/cost-effective government (21%). Finally, 65 percent of the public felt that government should proceed slowly in developing communication between citizens and government. This was due in large part to issues with security and privacy of information. Government managers, by contract, believed the effort should proceed quickly.

Arizona's GITA asked citizens what activities government should do online. State employees were informally polled first; then survey was web enabled to gather responses from the general public. The top four responses--renewing a driver's license; ordering birth, marriage, or death certificates; Internet voting; and making state park reservations -- all fall in the most common responses generated by other studies. Additional e-government services identified by the Arizona effort include filling out a single change of address for government and business, looking up a child's grades and homework assignments, and enrolling in benefit programs.

In the state of Utah, business were asked if they would favor or oppose providing e- government services to citizens. Of the services presented, only one caused the respondents to be divided in their opinions. Slightly more than half of the businesses (54%) favored providing the ability to apply for unemployment insurance, welfare, and health benefits online. Of the 43 percent who oppose providing these benefit programs electronically, 27 percent strongly oppose it. The remaining e-government services were strongly favored including renewal of driver's licenses, voter registration, and hunting and fishing licenses.

When Minnesota citizens were asked if they had done business online with the state government, 87 percent said

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that they had not. And when asked if they would use it if it were available, 61 percent said they were either very likely or somewhat likely to do so. Arkansas completed a statewide survey to ask citizens about e-government services. This report is still in preparation.

Several other states have plans to gather citizen input. New York's Office for Technology is planning a series of citizen focus groups, as well as a round of regional meetings with local governments, to identify the services that are most wanted and ways that the state and local governments can cooperate to provide them. The e-government working group in Miami-Dade County in Florida plans to develop a survey to assess the needs of the public. This effort, along with the development of a countywide customer service program, will identify services that can be provided electronically by the local government. The state of New Jersey is working with the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University to investigate e-government services to citizens. This investigation is near completion and the results will be available in the coming months. Several focus groups will also be held with businesses and citizens to get feedback on New Jersey's Web portal. Wyoming is beginning an effort to enhance public access to court records and services. Citizens and business will be polled to find out exactly what information and services they would like to access from the courts system.