

Administrative Compliance and Economic Loss

A policy framework for modernizing
government intake processes

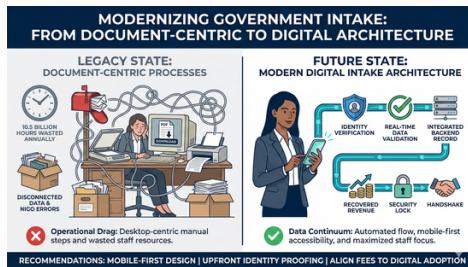
Executive summary

State governments have modernized backend systems, but the citizen-facing intake interface remains static and creates friction. This gap leads to “Not In Good Order” (NIGO) filings, wasting valuable staff time and increasing administrative costs. This whitepaper proposes a simple shift: treat the intake form and the final legal record as a continuous, integrated digital data flow. By moving from static PDFs to smart web forms, states can recover lost revenue, deter fraud, and deliver the modern constituent experience.

The challenge of digital service parity: Meeting modern citizen expectations

The private sector has normalized instant, mobile-first interactions, but the public sector has been slow to adopt these same measures. For example, many business registration workflows remain paper- or desktop-centric. For a citizen, this creates a service experience disparity where they must navigate complex steps—such as downloading static PDFs or managing offline printing and scanning—that slow down the pace of business formation.

Figure 1:
The operational shift from the legacy document-centric processes to modern digital intake architecture.



This gap functions as a tax on user time. The public spends approximately **10.5 billion hours annually on government paperwork**.¹ This burden falls hardest on those with the fewest resources. Portals that rely on PDFs can be difficult to navigate on smartphones, creating unintentional barriers to entry for citizens who rely on mobile devices for internet access. Furthermore, requiring users to print, sign, and scan creates a security risk and disconnect in trust.

¹ Delivering a digital-first public experience: One agency's plan (2024), Digital.gov.

The tangible costs of legacy intake processes

Inefficient intake processes result in more than just lost time; they represent a tangible economic cost. When workflows are disconnected, valuable staff resources are often diverted to error remediation rather than high-value service delivery.

Unrealized Economic Potential

Research suggests that disconnected agreement processes result in substantial global economic costs, estimated to **exceed \$2 trillion annually**.² For a Secretary of State, this impact is local and immediate. Every delayed LLC filing or rejected application represents a pause in local economic activity. Accelerating these filings allows businesses to launch, and generate tax revenue, sooner.

Maximizing Staff Resources

Even when citizens successfully navigate complex forms, the resulting filings may contain errors or be NIGO when submitted. Static formats often lack the digital guardrails to prevent blank fields or miscalculations. This necessitates manual review and remediation by staff. Because data is trapped in these static files, **67% of mission leaders** say they cannot access their own data to make decisions.³ Organizations with disconnected workflows take two weeks longer to finalize agreements versus modern systems.⁴ Modernizing these workflows can free up government offices to focus on higher-value service delivery rather than error correction.

Case studies in modernization

Modernization is not a theoretical risk; it is a proven strategy. Agencies are already using Intelligent Agreement Management to secure data and accelerate operations.

Transparency & Speed

Facing permit backlogs, **San Miguel County, Colorado** adopted a fully digital workflow. Implementing dynamic web forms and automated routing reduced processing time from weeks to hours. They are now able to locate documents in 99% less time, drastically improving transparency.⁵

² Optimizing Agreement Management: What Sets High-Performing Organizations Apart (2025), Deloitte and Docusign.

³ Data and AI: The Top trends shaping government (2024), ICF.

⁴ Permitting and Docusign as Solution with Forms (2025), Internal Policy Analysis.

⁵ San Miguel County Strikes Gold, Supercharging Agreement Management with Docusign, Docusign.

Critical Service Delivery

The **Oregon Health Authority** replaced disparate manual processes with a unified digital system resulting in a 93% faster cycle time for new contracts, accelerating critical health service deployment.⁶

Resource Optimization

The **Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee on Parole** decreased staff required for high-volume workloads by 80% and cut process steps by 40%, freeing personnel for other work and reducing errors.⁷

The solution: Security and efficiency via a modern digital intake architecture

States must transition beyond simple document digitization (placing static files online) toward implementing a true digital transformation that leverages responsive, data-driven web applications.

Proactive Security

Integrating Digital Identity Verification at Intake

As identity fraud becomes more sophisticated, static PDFs are a vulnerability. A modern digital intake architecture integrates digital identity verification directly into the intake process. By verifying the filer's identity before the document is generated, government agencies shift their posture from reactive fraud investigation to proactive prevention.

Drive Efficiency

Real-Time Data Validation and Dynamic Intake

Utilize dynamic logic and guided data collection such as logic branching to show only relevant fields and validate data in real time to prevent NIGO errors at the source.

Implement a Continuous Data Flow

Establishing the Form as the Final Digital Record

True modernization means data should never hit a dead end. Instead of trapping information in a static PDF, agencies can create a continuous data flow, where data flows automatically from the initial application to the final database. This accelerates filing times, allowing businesses to launch, and generate tax revenue, sooner.

⁶ Oregon Health Authority Gains Contract Visibility and Speed with DocuSign CLM, DocuSign.

⁷ Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee on Parole Breaks Free from Paper-Based Inefficiencies, DocuSign.

Conclusion & recommendations

A modern digital intake architecture represents the next critical frontier in economic stewardship. Secretaries of State are uniquely positioned to spearhead this evolution. By harmonizing the citizen experience with robust backend efficiency through a continuous integrated digital data flow, states can remove barriers to business formation and reinforce their role as catalysts for economic growth.

Prioritize Upfront Digital Identity Verification

Implement integrated digital identity verification at the point of intake to establish filer integrity, proactively combat fraud, and secure public registries.

Mobile-First Service Design

Ensure public intake portals satisfy mobile responsiveness standards to close the disparity in constituent service parity and eliminate technological barriers that perpetuate the digital divide.

Optimize for Dynamic Intake with Real-Time Validation

Transition from static, document-centric fidelity to dynamic, web-based forms that utilize logic-branching and data validation to prevent NIGO errors as the source, maximizing staff resources.

Realign Fee Structures to Incentivize Digital Adoption

Conduct a comprehensive review of filing fee schedules, adjust the cost of paper-based transactions to reflect their true operational burden and eliminate disincentives (convenience fees) for digital submissions.

About Docusign

Docusign brings agreements to life. Over 18 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 the Docusign Intelligent Agreement Management platform, companies can create, commit, and manage agreements with solutions created by the #1 company in e-signature and contract lifecycle management (CLM).

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