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ISSUE PAPER

AI and the New Capacity Challenge for Secretary of State Offices

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INTRODUCTION

Secretary of State offices are managing a growing operational imbalance. As more services move online, residents and businesses expect faster responses, simpler transactions, and continuous digital access. At the same time, agencies must process rising volumes of filings, records requests, licensing activity, and constituent inquiries without proportionally increasing staff capacity.

This challenge is no longer primarily about digitizing services. For many offices, the larger issue is sustaining responsive service delivery as demand continues to scale. Every improvement in digital access increases expectations for speed, availability, and responsiveness — placing additional pressure on teams already managing complex administrative workloads.

That reality is changing how agencies evaluate artificial intelligence (AI). Rather than viewing AI as a standalone innovation initiative, many government leaders are approaching it as a practical operational capability: one that can reduce administrative burden, improve access to information, support staff decision-making, and help agencies manage growing service demand more effectively.

For Secretary of State offices, the most valuable AI applications are not replacing staff. They are expanding organizational capacity within the systems and workflows agencies already use every day.

THE SERVICE DEMAND AND CAPACITY IMBALANCE

Secretary of State offices support functions that touch businesses, residents, agencies, and civic processes. Business registrations, records requests, licensing and certification workflows, notary services, public information requests, and constituent support all require timely, accurate, and accessible service delivery.

Many of these interactions remain staff-intensive. Residents or businesses may struggle to find the right form, understand a process, check a status, or complete a transaction without assistance. Staff may spend significant time answering repetitive questions, reviewing documents, entering information, routing requests, or searching across systems for the details needed to resolve an issue.

Modernization has improved access, but it has also raised expectations. When more services are available online, users expect them to be easier to complete, available outside business hours, and consistent across channels. As a result, digital government can increase demand even as it improves convenience.

The capacity challenge is therefore structural. Agencies need to process more work, respond faster, and maintain quality without assuming that staffing and budgets will expand at the same pace. That is where AI can create practical value.

WHERE AI EXPANDS OPERATIONAL THROUGHOUT

Automation has long helped governments scale predictable, repetitive work. AI builds on that foundation by helping teams manage more variable interactions, interpret information, and support workflows that previously required more direct staff involvement.

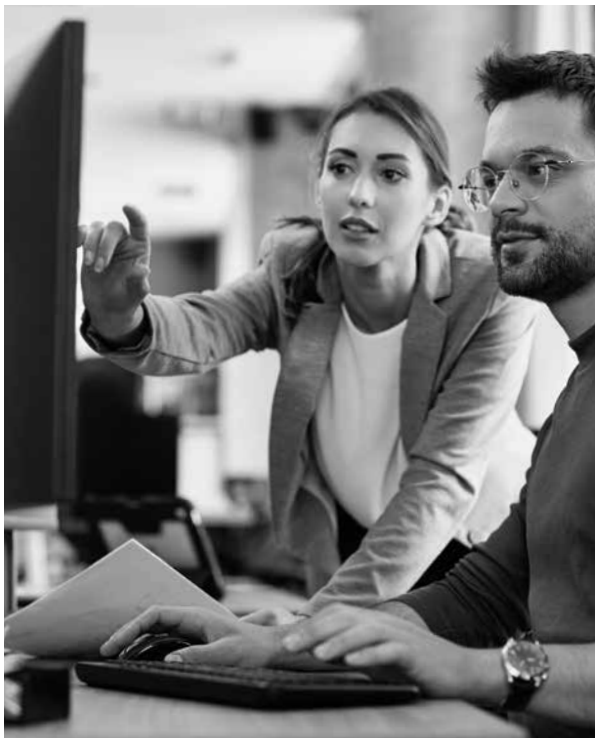
One of the clearest opportunities for Secretary of State offices is public-facing service support. AI-enabled assistants can help residents and businesses ask questions in plain language, locate information, complete routine tasks, and move through common processes more efficiently. When these tools are integrated directly into existing digital services and workflows, they can reduce avoidable calls and emails while improving access for users who need help navigating government processes.

Indiana's Ask Indiana digital assistant has handled more than 565,000 questions and contributed to 4.6 million fewer searches across government websites. Beyond helping residents find answers more quickly, the system gives agencies visibility into recurring questions and demand patterns, helping leaders identify where service friction exists.

South Carolina is applying a similar model through an AI-based resident assistant that helps users complete tasks such as applying to become a notary or paying taxes. The assistant answers more than 4,000 questions per month and has achieved a 72% user satisfaction rate. That's a strong result for a public-sector digital service and reflects the advantages of modern AI-driven chatbots over earlier, rules-based approaches. The state is also rolling out an additional AI-enabled capability to support identity verification for secure online transactions.

AI can also help agencies reduce administrative effort behind the scenes. Capabilities such as document review, information retrieval, summarization, intelligent routing, and data extraction can help staff manage high-volume work more efficiently while maintaining human oversight and accountability.

A broader operational lesson is visible across these examples. AI delivers the most value when it is applied to clearly defined service challenges, integrated into day-to-day operations, and evaluated based on measurable improvements in responsiveness, throughput, and administrative capacity.



WHY AI ADOPTION BREAKS DOWN IN PRACTICE

AI adoption stalls when the operating environment is not ready to support responsible, reliable use.

Many agencies continue to work across systems implemented at different times for different needs. Data may be inconsistent, ownership may be unclear, and workflows may depend on manual handoffs or local workarounds. For AI initiatives to be fully effective, the organizational and data conditions needed to support them must be addressed first.

This is why sequencing matters more than acceleration. Successful AI adoption depends on defining the operational problem first, improving the data and content AI relies on, establishing governance, and keeping staff involved in oversight.

For Secretary of State offices, this discipline is especially important because many services involve public trust, legal compliance, official records, business activity, identity, or time-sensitive civic processes. AI must be implemented in ways that are transparent, secure, explainable, and accountable. Agencies need confidence not only that the technology works, but that it works within the expectations of public service.

FIVE OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR TRUSTWORTHY AI

1. Prioritize What Matters

Start with low-risk, high-impact use cases where AI can address a clear functional need. Good candidates include repetitive inquiries, document intake, status questions, information retrieval, and routine process guidance. Early use cases should produce measurable value while building internal confidence.

2. Build a Trusted Data and Knowledge Foundation

AI is only as reliable as the information it uses. Agencies should inventory the data, content, forms, policies, and knowledge sources that support high-demand services. Strengthening governance, consistency, and accessibility helps reduce errors and improves the quality of AI-enabled support.

3. Lead With Oversight

AI initiatives need clear ownership from agency leaders, operational teams, technology staff, and subject-matter experts. Human review remains essential, especially where decisions affect records, compliance, eligibility, identity, or public trust. Oversight should be designed into the operating model rather than treated as a later control.

4. Prepare the Workforce

Staff need to understand how AI will support their work. The strongest implementations use AI to reduce repetitive administrative effort, surface relevant information more quickly, and allow staff to spend more time on work that depends on their judgment and expertise. Change management should address both process adoption and employee confidence.

5. Evaluate and Improve Continuously

AI adoption is not a one-time implementation. Agencies should monitor performance, review outcomes, assess user satisfaction, refine content, and adjust workflows as needs evolve. Continuous evaluation helps maintain trust and ensures AI remains aligned with operational goals.

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CONCLUSION

Secretary of State offices are being asked to deliver faster, more accessible, and more reliable services while they manage increasing demand. The path forward is not simply to digitize more services or introduce AI as a separate innovation project. It is to build capacity into the way work is performed and services are delivered.

AI can help agencies meet that challenge when it is applied to clearly defined organizational needs, supported by strong governance, and implemented in ways that strengthen how staff deliver services. Used well, it can reduce administrative burden, improve responsiveness, strengthen service access, and help teams focus more time on mission-critical work.

The most effective approaches will start with clear needs, trusted data and content, strong oversight, and measurable outcomes. Sustained progress will also depend on secure cloud-based environments and experienced partners that understand how government workflows, systems, and service delivery operate together. As agencies expand AI capabilities over time, connected systems and integrated workflows will become increasingly important for delivering reliable, scalable service experiences.

For Secretary of State offices, AI's value will ultimately be proven by how reliably it helps agencies serve people, businesses, and communities at scale.

For additional insights, visit Tyler Technologies' AI Solutions page.

ABOUT TYLER TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Tyler Technologies (NYSE: TYL) is a leading provider of technology solutions purpose-built exclusively for the public sector. Tyler's end-to-end solutions empower local, state, and federal government entities to operate efficiently and transparently with residents and each other. By connecting data and processes across disparate systems, Tyler's solutions strengthen the core operations of government and help agencies turn insight into action for their communities. With more than 50,000 installations across 16,000 client locations, Tyler serves clients in all 50 states, Canada, the Caribbean, Australia, and other international locations. Tyler has been recognized numerous times for growth and innovation, including on Government Technology's GovTech 100 list. More information about Tyler Technologies, an S&P 500 company headquartered in Plano, Texas, can be found at tylertech.com.

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