



**PwC's Connected Government  
thought leadership series**

# Citizen-centric service delivery

What an organising idea can do for  
government agencies





## A central organising idea cuts through complexity and is key to creating citizen-centric services. Here's how your government department or agency can embed one.

From transformation strategies to the reporting of outcomes, citizen experience has become more important than ever to the public service. There's a good reason, particularly in a world post-COVID. In PwC Australia's Citizen Survey 2020,<sup>1</sup> we found that the reported use of digital channels to access government services increased by 37% during the pandemic, with the need to better connect services, improving the end-to-end experience. And while the concept itself is simple – designing services that fit seamlessly into citizen's lives and not the other way around – the challenge lies in delivery.

That's because even something as powerful as citizen-centricity can become diluted when delivered across multiple departments and agencies.

Enter the “organising idea”: a powerful way to cut through.

### The challenge: complexity

Government departments and agencies are complex organisations focused on delivering against their legislated remit and authority. Different teams and functions vary in the way they interpret citizen-centricity, and these multiple definitions can create confusion among customers and disparities in delivery.

Delivering seamless digital experiences is made harder through multiple strategies, organisational silos, a range of touchpoints, and copious service and program brands.

Disconnect and discrepancies are common. All too often we see organisations with layers of complexity (vision, purpose, mission, customer-value propositions and employee-value propositions). Staff are left confused.

For government departments, this is a real missed opportunity.

Governments that are citizen-centric deliver better government outcomes by focusing on behaviours and deeply understanding the lives of citizens. They also enjoy better economic outcomes through the consideration of creating seamless experiences that are easy to navigate, thus removing time, effort and errors of citizens. At the same time, the pace of private sector digital transformation is outpacing that of the public sector and the government must accelerate to meet the constantly evolving needs of their citizens.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pwc.com.au/consulting/citizencentric/pwc-australia-citizen-centric-report-2020.pdf>



# The solution: a central organising idea



When it comes to connecting the brand promise of citizen-centricity with government operations, the answer is: a central organising idea.

An organising idea is a single idea that coordinates people, experiences, services and communications. It unites the organisation and its brand around a single promise and creates consistency across all internal and external touchpoints.

In particular, it generates:

- Efficiency towards a common goal
- Horizontal alignment and cohesion
- Top-to-bottom alignment for all disciplines.

A central organising idea cuts through complexity, simplifies decision-making and creates cultural alignment. Just as a great brand guides behaviour and sets a clear direction; an organising idea provides clarity. Note: it must do this simply. Any organising idea worth its salt will reduce business and/or marketing jargon.

At the same time, the concept should focus on innovation and ensure citizen experiences match expectations. In a nutshell, it's a compass for governments when creating enduring value for citizens.



## Transforming internal reporting, modernisation and worker productivity

One of the most well known examples of the power of organising ideas is found in the industrial sector. Paul O'Neil, CEO of Alcoa, quintupled revenues through the organising idea of 'worker safety' that transformed internal reporting, modernisation and worker productivity.





# How a central idea can have widespread reach

An organising idea can give focus and meaning to activity across all parts of an organisation or department, including across all of the following dimensions:



## Citizen strategy

Citizen-centricity is often poorly defined, leaving governments with no compass to plan resources beyond meeting citizens' functional needs (such as providing an easy or frictionless customer experience). A central organising idea adds strategic direction, creating truly transformational digital solutions that put citizens firmly at the centre of the picture.

## Experience

Trust is key and so it's essential that government departments create holistic experiences that foster trust at every point of contact. An organising idea provides focus and consistency for experience creation. It also ensures departments deliver on their promises. By integrating organising ideas and customer experiences, governments can create purposeful experiences for individuals, communities and businesses. This, in turn, creates brand value and trust.

## Innovation

Innovation is a crucial component for growth across product, servicing and experience design. In the face of multiple citizens' needs, however, innovation can be broad and directionless. Building tomorrow's government services begins by considering citizens' needs today, and thoughtfully designed digital solutions require a consistent approach. Effective innovation needs the sort of purpose and constraint that an organising idea offers.

## Culture, EVP and employee behaviour

Standardised and generic service ethos and models can cause disconnect between promises and delivery, potentially eroding consistency and transparency. A department's ability to match internal/external values and behaviours to deliver on citizen expectations, is key. A central organising idea can create the link between customer and employee value propositions that support staff with ways of working and set customer experiences.

## Leadership

Leaders need to set a clear narrative that communicates the value being created for citizens and, in turn, connects and inspires all parts of the organisation. This has the potential to transform everything from staff morale to media relations.

## Objectives, drivers and value creation (KPIs and metrics)

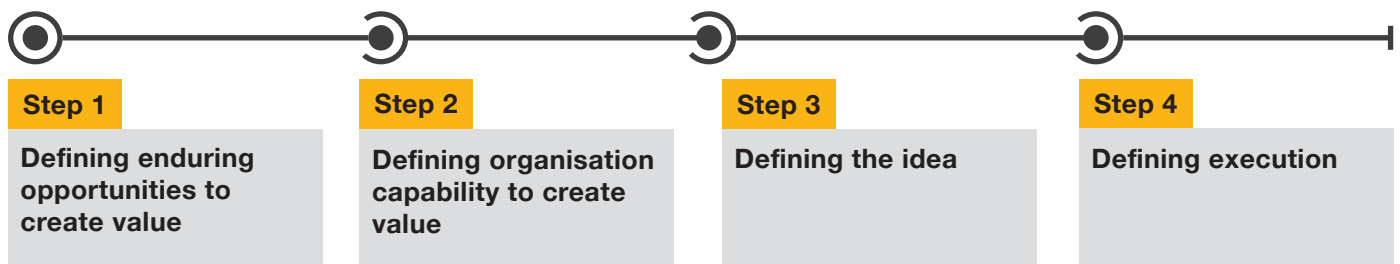
To deliver what matters most to citizens, connected governments must move from generic metrics to KPIs that better reflect how the department creates value in the lives of citizens. That way, departments can effectively measure their impact and allocate their resources better.



# 4 steps to establishing a central organising idea



Already a trusted partner of many government organisations, PwC Australia can assist departments in developing a central organising idea as the basis for a citizen-centric approach to service. This is a four-step process:



## Step 1

### Defining enduring opportunities to create value

To determine the most important problems to solve, we review citizens' needs across three dimensions:

1. The functional challenges to solve within the category (or agency or department),
2. The beneficial role of those challenges in life, and
3. The collective societal needs.

## Step 2

### Defining organisation capability to create value

To determine the core focus for the department or agency, we review citizens' needs against the organisation's ability to solve these needs across service, experience, channel and communications.



### Step 3

#### Defining the idea

Next, we define the central organising idea as a single citizen benefit that demonstrates a clear role for the department or agency. This idea should be easy to understand and provide clarity for policy, culture, experience design and KPIs. Typically, the idea is a single functional benefit distilled to as few meaningful words as possible for ease of understanding and adoption. For example in the world of healthcare this can be: “the whole picture”. Organising how we help all stakeholders understand the complexity of mental health.

### Step 4

#### Defining execution

Create a high-performance culture	Citizen-orientation	Core behaviours/delivery principles
Development of new habits aligned to delivering the organising idea. These should be tracked through ongoing departmental reports as behaviours, departmental and societal outcomes.	Usually requires a shift from a program-centric focus to citizen-centric design. This requires a strong emphasis on KPIs to orientate the department, and is often implemented in stages: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. knowledge/tracking of needs</li> <li>2. equip teams to deliver</li> <li>3. creation of greater customer value (based on meeting more complex needs).</li> </ol>	Development of new habits aligned to delivering the organising idea. These should be tracked through ongoing departmental reports as behaviours, departmental and societal outcomes.
<b>Core metrics: meet organisational goals</b>	<b>Core metrics: Customer outcomes, NPS etc.</b>	<b>Core metrics: delivery to principles (i.e. simple)</b>



### Case study

#### How a central organising idea transformed a federal government agency

A federal agency responsible for providing government services required a brand due to changing government structures. The task? To create a truly citizen-centric agency to begin restoring trust.

The principal need was for customers to move forward with their lives via the core capabilities required to provide simple, transparent, respectful and helpful services. The agency’s organising idea was: progress.

The concept of progress informed a new leadership narrative, brand rationalisation, brand system design, experience design (to reduce steps in processes) and customer service training. All were tailored to ensure customer progress and resulted in a reinvigorated government agency with a transformed culture that is saving citizens time and improving satisfaction.



**This perspective is shared as part of PwC Australia's Connected Government thought leadership series. Reimagining citizen services and digital products by connecting the brand promise with how governments operate, resulting in a seamless, human experience.**

**[Visit our website](#) to learn more about how our Connected Government solutions can help your organisation.**

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