

Digital Services in the Age of COVID

Engaging digitally with your residents is no longer a 'nice to have'; it's now a must. There are two major factors contributing to this imperative.

1. Expectations are rising. People do so many things in their lives digitally – they shop, learn, bank, communicate and entertain themselves. Whether they are residents, visitors, businesses, employees, or partners, they expect their government to keep pace.
2. Budgets and funding sources are under pressure. Asking your residents to drive to a physical building, wait in line, and fill in a paper form is expensive – both in the time you ask your residents to invest, and the people and facilities you require to process paperwork. Savvy agencies are looking for more cost-effective ways to provide these services.

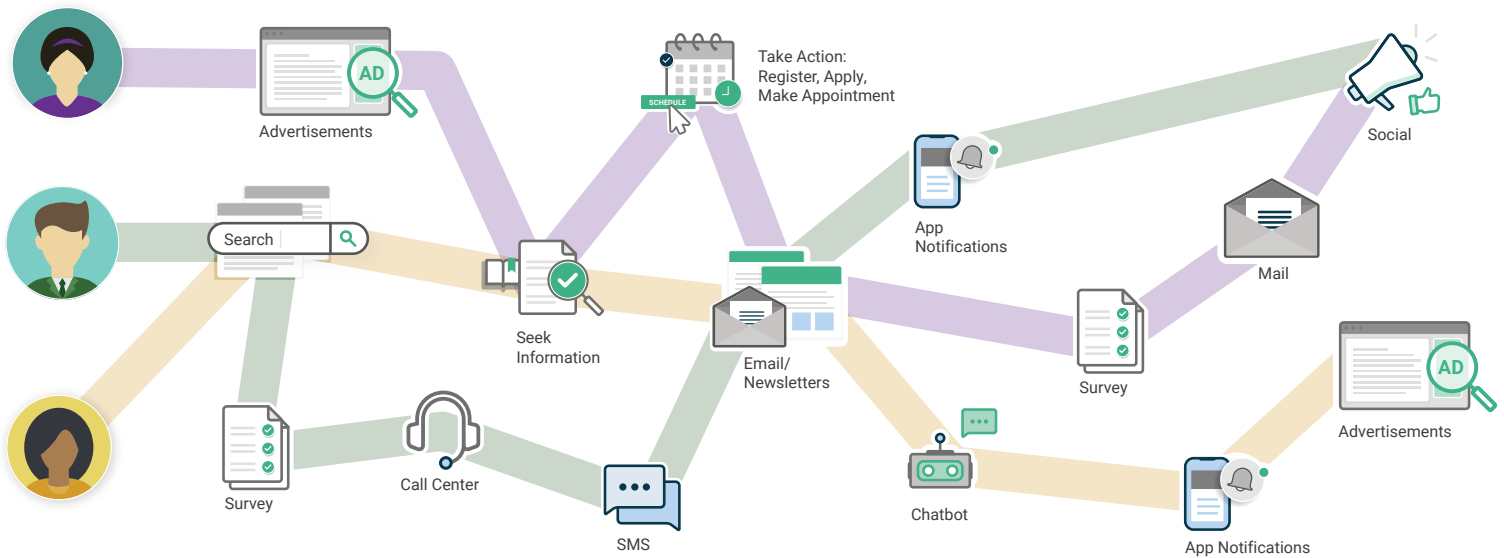
Together, they are driving governments to innovate, and they are having an impact. A recent Forrester analysis showed a 5% reduction in physical activity and a 14% increase in digital prior to COVID.



The COVID Wave

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a massive jolt to digital activity. According to McKinsey, digital adoption vaulted forward five years in just eight weeks. That means the number of residents that are trying, for the first time, to do things digitally is now thirty times higher than it was before the pandemic.

These are the things your residents most need to do digitally: get unemployment benefits, renew their driver's license, attain health insurance, obtain food assistance, and receive treatment for mental health.



Digital Journeys Are the Foundation

A digital journey represents the steps a resident must take to accomplish their goal. They may be seeking information, or they may need to act. Their journey might involve your websites, mobile apps, social media posts, digital ads, call centers, and other connected devices.

Every step in this digital journey creates breadcrumbs in the form of website, app, and device data. Because this data is being generated by digital properties that you own, it is called *first-party digital data*. These breadcrumbs can be stitched together to show the path each resident followed. For example, some may start by searching on Google, then come to your home page, and then browse to a page focused on renewing their license. Others may click on an ad and be taken to a page to apply for food assistance.

Some digital journeys may be seamless, integrated, and relevant end-to-end experiences. Others fall short, and digital journeys provide the data-driven guidance you need to make improvements. Combining and analyzing all your digital journeys provides new insights into behavior. You'll see which pages and topics they browse most often, which information they seek, where they are visiting from, and which steps are experiencing problems or obstacles.

Orchestration Is Not the Answer

Much of the guidance in this area centers around using digital journey data to “orchestrate” digital journeys. This idea is predicated on a false premise. Journeys are not orchestrated; they emerge from complex human decisions that are rooted in context and intent. Your residents do not want their journeys orchestrated; they want them guided by relevance – informed by data.

Orchestration is based on the premise that a designer should use their judgement to decide which steps residents should take, and then build complex rules and flows that serve as guard rails. It turns out your residents do not want inflexible guard rails restricting their choices. They want the flexibility to choose their path, guided by relevance.

< INTENT/CONTEXT >

- How do we identify visitor's intent?
(seeking information vs. Taking action)
- How should we segment/cluster visitors?
(self-service vs. guided?)
- Can we leverage previous visits?
74% of consumers frustrated by starting over

< JOURNEY/EXPERIENCE >

- What do cross-session and cross-site journeys look like?
(which sites do people visit before taking action?)
- Which topics are hard to find?
(search visitors leaving and then returning)
- Can we identify “pleasant” and “unpleasant” journeys?
(which journeys end in failure & how they start?)

< KPIS/OUTCOME >

- What are the different paths to a success event?
(can pathways be simplified?)
- Are failed journeys related to cross-site activity?
(DMV change-of-address? Unemployment application?)
- Which site elements should we measure?
(GTM/GA tagging strategy and structure)

Relevance Is the Way

The first step to a more relevant experience for your residents is to analyze their digital journeys. Identify successful journeys and study them for learnings and best practices you can apply more broadly. And identify unsuccessful journeys so you can identify the root causes and address them. Typically, these kinds of activities are accomplished by analyzing journeys, determining insights, and using judgement to apply those insights to websites and apps.

The ultimate digital journeys, however, go further. They start with visual elements that are driven by world-class design. They then apply machine learning algorithms to digital journeys to fill those elements with the most relevant content to each visitor. In the same way Amazon predicts which products you might want to buy, and Netflix predicts which show you might want to watch, algorithms predict which information each resident seeks, or actions they want to take.

And when you can predict the most relevant content and actions for each resident, you can make your outreach more consistent and effective. You can target your audiences for digital advertising, build segmented lists for email messaging, send customized push notifications to mobile apps, and personalize your websites and apps for each resident.

Cloud Is the Enabler

First-party digital data is extremely powerful; it drives 30% of traffic on amazon.com, 80% of views on Netflix, and 33% of listens on Spotify. But it is also orders-of-magnitude more challenging than traditional enterprise sources of data. It is both massive in volume, and complex in structure – truly big data.

Fortunately, the cloud offers unparalleled scalability to construct digital journeys, analyze them quickly, and generate relevant recommendations. Syntasa has partnered with Google to apply their world-class data processing and analytics technologies from Google Cloud Platform (GCP) to overcome these challenges.

Syntasa software runs natively within your private GCP account, keeping sensitive data inside your firewall. In today's environment it is mandatory to treat Personally Identifiable Information (PII) responsibly to comply with regulations such as California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); Syntasa enables encryption of PII data at the time of ingestion to ensure that all analysis and algorithms comply with these regulations.

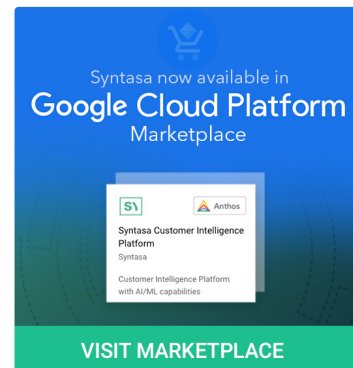
The Syntasa Advantage

Combining Syntasa's software and expertise enables you to jumpstart your transition to digital services. We are at the forefront of digital experiences and will guide the way. The Syntasa team are first-party digital data experts – highly skilled in the practice of collecting, measuring, analyzing, visualizing, and interpreting data. We explore each data source independently, perform hygiene and verify accuracy, combine data sources into journeys, and configure data pipelines to keep those journeys updated on a continuous basis.

Our deep expertise in big data processing, cloud technology, and machine learning delivers insights, which in turn suggests appropriate actions. Our team of data scientists assess time-series trending of digital journeys and build predictive models to identify the most relevant content and actions for each resident. Our experts can dive deeper into interesting or anomalous areas, explore the underlying data in more detail, interpret results, look for unexpected behavior, formulate questions for further exploration, add context for a greater understanding, and recommend actions.

The Syntasa Digital Services solution includes several components to get up and running in a few short weeks:

1. Pre-built adaptors to ingest first-party digital data from websites, apps, devices, and other martech and adtech systems
2. Common schema with pre-defined attributes and metrics to speed journey construction and machine learning
3. Syntasa can be installed quickly and easily in the [GCP Marketplace](#)



Gartner named Syntasa a Cool Vendor and a leading UK retailer was awarded *Best Use of AI* through the use of our software with digital journeys.

To learn more visit www.syntasa.com/public-sector or contact us to [request a trial](#).