

Maryland AI Community of Practice (MDAI)

01/09/2026

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Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introduction to the AI CoP** (Lauren Maffeo, AI Enablement)
2. **AIE Team Update** (Nishant Shah, AI Enablement)
3. **Intro to Gems** (Ray Bell, AI Enablement)
4. **Building a Gem for Fleet Management** (Elisabeth Sachs & Hugh Fitzmaurice, DBM)
5. **Creating Accessible GenAI** (Dan Doggett & Stephen Polacek, MDOD)
6. **What's Next** (Lauren Maffeo, AI Enablement)

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CoP Etiquette

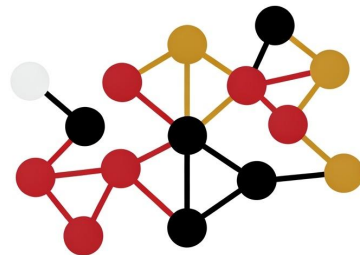
- Mics on Mute to prevent background noise
- Only the speaker should have their camera on to avoid visual distractions
- Add your questions to the Comments or Q&A section of our chat
- The AI Enablement Team will try and address questions in the chat async
- Forward this meeting to peers who might benefit (meet.google.com/wfx-xmcc-qbo)
- Bring an owner's mindset & participate!

AI Enablement Team

[Nishant Shah](#) (Senior Advisor for Responsible AI)

[Ray Bell](#) (AI/ML Product Director)

[Lauren Maffeo](#) (Senior AI/ML Program Manager)



MARYLAND
AI ENABLEMENT TEAM

Image generated by Gemini. 

Prompt: Logo for Maryland AI Enablement Team. Modern, minimalist, geometric, vector. Interconnected nodes, Maryland colors (red, white, black, gold). Clean, professional.



MDAI's Vision & Values

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Maryland's Vision for AI

The State of Maryland responsibly, ethically, and productively leverages AI/ML technologies to significantly improve constituent outcomes and reduce drudgery for the State workforce.

MDAI's Values

1) Collaborate Across Teams

- Meet regularly to share AI use cases, wins, struggles, questions, and best practices.
- Provide shared space for anyone in Maryland to learn how they can harness AI.
- Connect with peers who have the same issues or aspects of AI enablement as you do.

MDAI's Values

2) Show, Don't Tell

- Host lunch n' learns to show how Maryland's civil servants can use enterprise AI tools.
- Share AI proofs of concept to demo how your peers use AI.
- Highlight guest speakers beyond government to share new AI innovations.

MDAI's Values

3) Provide AI Updates in a Shared Space

- Share new AI policies, processes, guidance, etc. for state employees to use.
- Offer blueprints for anyone serving Maryland (city, county, state, etc.) to leverage AI.
- Provide Maryland's AIE team as a foundational source for where to start with AI.



AIE Team Update



Intro to Gems

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~~Intro to Gems~~

So, you want to build a chatbot?

What is a GEM?

GEM is what Google Gemini calls a chat bot

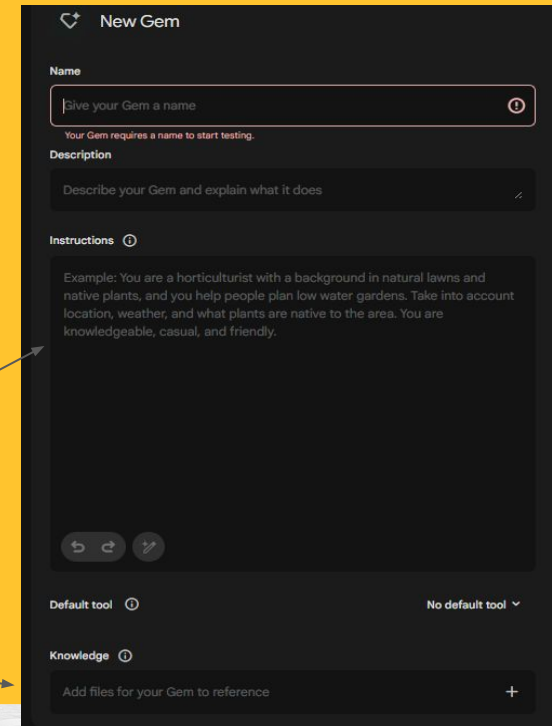
GPT -> OpenAI ChatGPT

Project ~-> Anthropic Claude

Agents -> Microsoft Copilot

**A Chat bot is System instructions
and a Knowledge base**

<https://gemini.google.com/gems/view>



New Gem

Name

Give your Gem a name

Your Gem requires a name to start testing.

Description

Describe your Gem and explain what it does

Instructions ⓘ

Example: You are a horticulturist with a background in natural lawns and native plants, and you help people plan low water gardens. Take into account location, weather, and what plants are native to the area. You are knowledgeable, casual, and friendly.

Default tool ⓘ No default tool ▾

Knowledge ⓘ

Add files for your Gem to reference +

Don't build a GEM(!)

- Start with prompting
- Test prompt instructions and really understand your knowledge base
- Eval yourself in a spreadsheet
- Now build your Gem and share it! (keep you content in a Doc: see above)
- Get feedback from a colleague (tell them to use the sheet)
- Adjust if you need and share more broadly

My chat bot

System Instructions

Do XYZ. Do not do ABC

Knowledge base

Link 1

Link 2



Gem auditing (for IT leads)

- Mime type lookup in Google Drive
- Only sharable with maryland.gov emails with Gemini access
- Gemini logs exist but not easily tiable to Gems

User	Conversation ID	Conversation Title	Turn No.	Request ID	Model Version	Timestamp	Prompt	Response ID	Response
ray.bell@maryland.gov	c_e71983c97a71	Ready for Testin		1_r_76c30b043dcc	bard_uft26_r4_7	2025-01-14T19:1	test	rc_9999e6e54cf	Okay, I'm ready for your test! What would you like me to do? For example, you could: * **Ask me a question:** I can answer that. * **Give me a writing prompt:** I can help with that. * **Test my knowledge:** You can ask me a question. I'm excited to see what you come up with!

My Drive > Gemini Gems

> Insights from Gemini

Organize files | Type | People | Modified | Source

Name	Owner
DoIT 2025 IT Master Plan Gem by AI Enablement Team, DoIT	me
Fleet Maintenance Vendor Rankings	me
MD AI Bills	me
Plain language gem	me
test	me

State of Maryland Gemini Usage

Last update
Jan 7, 2026

Gemini users
13,499

Adoption %
32.03%

Gemini activity
269,509

Number of Shared Gems
103



Case Study: Building a Gem for Real-Time Fleet Management



Context and Agenda

Context:

Governor Wes Moore launched the **Government Modernization Initiative** in January 2025 to **save taxpayer money** and promote more **efficient government operations**. The Governor's Office of Performance Improvement, in partnership with executive agencies, has examined multiple opportunities for cost savings including **statewide fleet management**

Agenda:

- Overview fleet maintenance savings initiative
- Describe AI use case and development
- Demo fleet maintenance Google Gemini application



Initiative Overview | Opportunity to achieve savings by shifting maintenance spend to lowest-cost vendors by region

Maryland current state fleet maintenance vendor selection

- Vendor selection often driven by **historical usage and convenience of maintenance location** to agency vehicle pool
- Dealerships and higher-cost independent maintenance vendors **performing routine services** increasing overall spend
- Supervisors have **varying levels of visibility** on repairs under approval authority cost, depending on agency standard procedures

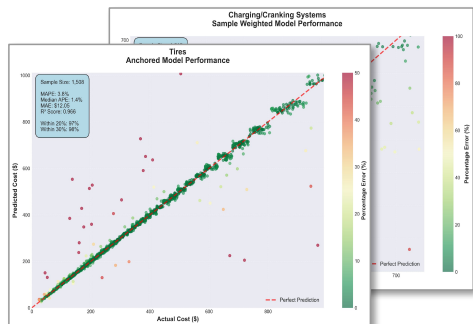


Recommended savings approach

- Utilize existing network of vendors and historical data to determine **lowest-cost, qualified vendors** by service type for each region
- Provide drivers with list of optimal vendors to **inform decision-making** when considering vehicle maintenance vendor selection

Knowledge | Developed closed-source knowledge base using internal maintenance data

Predictive analytics model



- Built model to predict maintenance costs and identify **lowest-cost vendors** using seven years of historical maintenance data

Optimal vendor list

PIA Exempt – Confidential Information

Detail | Baltimore City identified vendors by maintenance category reviewed with DGS fleet manager

Oil Changes	Brakes	Performance	Tire Products/Services
Vehicles for Change	Vehicles for Change	Pickens of Franklin Street Inc.	Vehicles for Change
Plasville Automotive	Plasville Automotive	Just 4 U Transit	Plasville Automotive
Central Service & Repair	Pickens of Franklin Street Inc.	Maew Motors	Maew Motors
Freestone	Freestone	Freestone	Pickens of Franklin Street Inc.
Valvoline Instant Oil Change	Jiffy Lube	Goodyear	

HVAC	Steering/Suspensions	Charging/Cranking Systems	Tires
Freestone	Maew Motors	Freestone	Pickens of Franklin Street Inc.
Vehicles for Change	Pickens of Franklin Street Inc.	Vehicles for Change	Maew Motors
Maew Motors	Plasville Automotive	Plasville Automotive	Vehicles for Change
GSP/OTI TIRE SERVICE	Nowood Service Center	Maew Motors	Plasville Automotive
Just 4 U Transit			Nowood Service Center

DRAFT – DO NOT DISTRIBUTE

- Mapped lowest-cost vendors by **region** and **maintenance service** to create actionable vendor recommendations to drive selection

Delivery platform

I am in Baltimore and need my brake pads changed

Fleet Maintenance Vendor Rankings - Custom Gen

Show Ranking

A crucial service request! For a fleet in Baltimore needing a **brake pad change**, I will prioritize high-ranking vendors specializing in fleet and brake services, especially those offering mobile repair for maximum fleet uptime.

Based on our criteria (lowest cost/fleet services), here are some top recommendations for brake pad replacement in the Baltimore area, including both traditional shops and convenient mobile options:

3. Top Ranked Vendor Options in Baltimore for Brake Pads

Vendor Name	Service Type	Location / Proximity	Key Strengths / Ranking Factor
Waco Mobile Mechanics of Baltimore	Mobile Brake Service	Serves all Baltimore City & County	Highest Convenience: On-site brake pad replacement, offers same-day service. Excellent for fleet vehicles to minimize downtime.
Frankie Auto Repair	In-Shop Fleet Service	4444 Harford Rd, Baltimore, MD 21224 (Northwest Baltimore)	Strong Fleet Focus: Complete fleet services, brake repair, nationwide 3-year/30,000-mile guarantee on parts/labor.
Wrench / YourMechanic (Mobile Services)	Mobile Brake Service	Serves the entire Baltimore area	Highly Rated Mobile: Certified mobile mechanics come to you. Competitive pricing and services covered by a 30-month/50,000-mile warranty.

- DoIT Office of AI Enablement** recommended and guided development of Google Gem AI tool to deliver vendor recommendations to drivers



Gem Development | Created Gem minimal viable product within ten hours

Developing Gem Instructions (two hours)

Gems have two key elements:

- **Knowledge:** data sources to feed outputs
- **Instructions:** gem operating manual
- Prompted Google Gemini with situation and desired tool functionality to get initial instructions framework
- Advised Gem on formatting requirements and conversation cadence
- Implemented strict knowledge constraint to restrict usage of outside sources to produce recommendations



Troubleshooting and Iterating (eight hours)

- Simulated potential user prompts to validate functionality and formatting
- Simplified knowledge documents to **reduce "hallucinations"**
 - Asking Gem to produce answers based on lookups through **multiple documents** increased likelihood of Gem recommending a **non-existent vendor**
- Instructed Gem to adjust to user-focused **maintenance vernacular**

Example common language to account for:

I see a leak coming from the bottom of my car...



Validation | Conducting pilot to test and improve tool functionality

Vendor Selection Tool Pilot

- Identified **pilot agencies** based on fleet manager experience and previous engagement with the initiative
- Integrated Google survey within Gem to gather data points on **tool functionality** and **vendor service quality**
- Scheduled **weekly meetings** with agency fleet leadership to gather feedback and discuss next steps
- Hosted open **"Office Hours"** for pilot participants to demo tool and field questions



Next Steps

Working with **DoIT Office of AI Enablement** to address:

- **Statewide rollout accessibility**
 - Organizations on different infrastructures (Google versus Microsoft)
 - Scaling from ~20 users to ~200
- **Long-term ownership**
 - Where does the Gem live?
 - Who is responsible for updating?
- **Knowledge base refresh**
 - Rerunning predictive model to update vendor costs
 - Integrating continuous vendor satisfaction survey responses

Vendor Selection Tool: Demo



Lunch n Learn: Creating Accessible GenAI

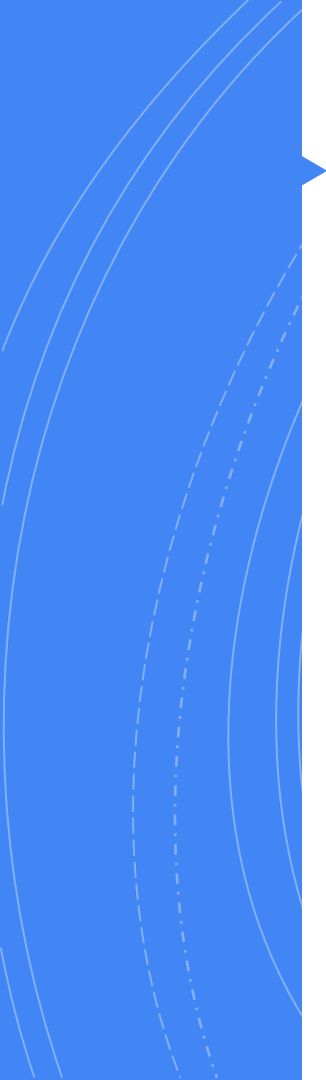


Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES

STATEWIDE IT ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVE

Creating Content Using AI



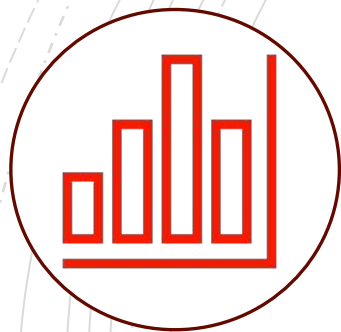
Objectives of this Information Session

- Understand the specific requirements of the updated ADA Title II rulemaking and how it applies to AI-created content.
- Analyze the “AI Accessibility Gap”
- Understand Common AI Coding Errors and How to Implement Accessibility in Prompting.
- Navigate the State Digital Compliance Process.

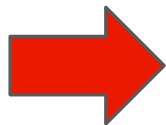
- All publicly available state web content, mobile apps, and digital documents must be accessible to people with disabilities.
- An updated rulemaking now requires this content to conform with A and AA guidelines of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) by April of 2026.

ADA Title II overview

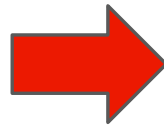
How Does AI Work?



Data



Pattern



Prediction

The Problem:

**95% of
websites do not
meet WCAG A
and AA
conformance**

- Poor Data: Statistically most code being pulled by AI is inaccessible.
- This creates an echo chamber of inaccessible code.

Source: <https://webaim.org/projects/million/>

Common Problems with Creating Accessible Code



The AI model follows standard templates that must be adjusted to fit your app.



Inserting code to fix the issues only adjusts that section - may not work in greater context (menus are a good example).



It over engineers the solution, adding multiple code attributes that may interfere with native behaviors.



The AI pulls from the wrong source for the solution, using an outdated technique or incorrect information that causes more problems while fixing the initial one, creating a loop.

Suggestions to improve accessibility in your prompts



Assign

- Assign a persona (“Act as a senior frontend developer and digital accessibility expert”)

Create

- Create a “custom instructions” document with digital accessibility-specific rules (keyboard access, labeling all buttons, 4.5:1 color contrast, etc.)

Prompt

- Prompt with accessibility from the beginning.

Conduct

- Conduct automated accessibility checks and prompt refinements using those results.
 - Important note: Automated tests only find 30% of accessibility issues.

Submit

- Submit a ticket for manual accessibility testing with DoIT and MDOD.

DoIT Step-by-Step Accessibility Testing Process

1. Submit a ticket to doit.intake@maryland.gov
2. DoIT or MDOD will provide an accessibility audit of your content and provide feedback.
3. Once feedback has been addressed, a validation pass will be conducted to ensure compliance has been achieved.





Questions?



What's Next?

- We meet each 1st Friday per month
- Forward this invite to colleagues who might be interested in joining
- [Submit your AI use cases](#) to our inventory
- [Book MDAI Office Hours](#)
- Email AI@Maryland.gov to show your team's AI work at a future CoP!