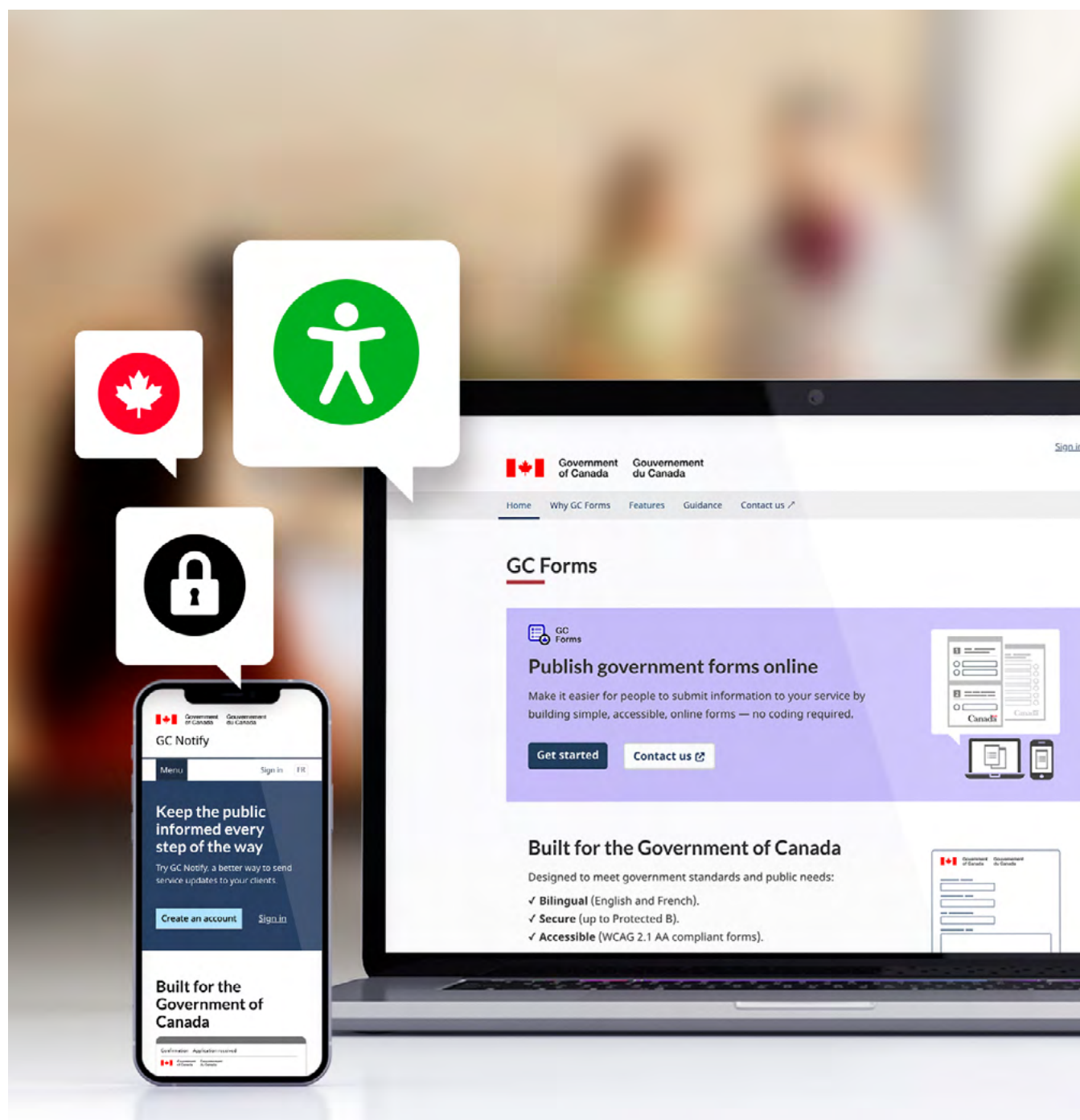


Aligning our efforts to serve people better

Canadian Digital Service | Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2023-2024)





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Canadian Digital Service
Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2023-2024)

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Executive summary

This annual report provides an overview of the work of the Canadian Digital Service (CDS) in Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (April 1, 2023- March 31, 2024) amid a backdrop of significant organizational change. Through new leadership, a pivot to Service Canada to support the mandate of the Minister of Citizens' Services, and the addition of new teams, progress continues towards improving the way government designs and delivers services for people in Canada.

CDS is doing this by building on the foundation established in previous years:

- Partnering directly with teams to improve service delivery
- Building platform products that can be reused across government to solve common service problems

As well as introducing new teams to increase impact and improve services to people in Canada through:

- Working with departments to improve the design and organization of information on Canada.ca
- Establishing a seamless way for people to access secure digital services
- Listening to and learning from people across Canada

In keeping with an organizational commitment to work in the open, this report highlights the work that's currently in progress as CDS aligns teams to deliver seamless, secure, and accessible services.

Message from our Chief Executive Officer



Source: Paul N. Wagner

Paul N. Wagner,
CEO, Canadian Digital Service

Since 2017, CDS has been relentlessly focused on improving how government designs and delivers services to people in Canada. While our goal has never changed, our approach to improving services has undergone many iterations and improvements over the past 7 years.

I'd like to thank my predecessor, Jessie Adcock for her leadership and strategic vision in placing CDS closer to services that impact people across Canada, and strengthening our ties with teams across government in support of the [Government's Digital Ambition](#). Working together across government, we can provide secure and modern digital services to people when and where they need them. I have been enthusiastically following and supporting CDS's work since its founding, and was honoured to join this team as CEO in November 2023.




In the past year, CDS has made some critical changes to bring the right teams together to deliver a lasting impact on how services are designed and delivered across government.

In the past year, CDS has made some critical changes to bring the right teams together to deliver a lasting impact on how services are designed and delivered across government. In July 2023, following the announcement of a new [Minister for Citizens' Services](#), CDS moved from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS), to Service Canada. This move has placed us at the centre of service delivery to Canadians. We're looking forward to continuing to work with teams across the GC to ensure people have access to services when they need them, where they need them (online, in-person, or over the phone).

Since moving to Service Canada, we've added teams from across government with a similar focus on improving service delivery. These teams (the Digital Transformation Office, Digital Credentials, and the Client Experience Office), combined with our existing Platform, Partnerships, and Operations teams will work together to deliver seamless digital services at scale - saving taxpayers' time and money.

There have also been a significant number of leadership changes across the digital portfolio in the GC, with a new Chief Information Officer (Dominic Rochon), President of Shared Services Canada (Scott Jones), and Chief Operating Officer for Service Canada (Cliff Groen) joining the ranks of senior leadership in the past 6 months. I'm looking forward to working with these organizations to modernize service delivery and improve people's interactions with government.

Throughout all this change, some things have remained constant.
The work outlined in this report highlights how we're continuing to:

 <p>Put people at the centre of everything we do.</p> <p>Whether it's listening to public servants using our platform products to improve service delivery, or hearing directly from people accessing public services online or in-person — we're working with the people who use our services to make things better.</p>	 <p>Work in the open.</p> <p>We're committed to meaningful transparency; sharing our work as it happens, and using open source tools to deliver scalable services. This helps build trust and reduce unnecessary duplication across government.</p>	 <p>Take an iterative approach to service improvements.</p> <p>From scaling GC Notify to allow teams to send more messages without compromising security, to testing with users to improve our GC Forms product, we're focused on regularly improving our products to ensure security and ease of use.</p>
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As you scroll through this report you might also notice that we're a team of over 260 public servants working on a lot of different initiatives to improve service delivery. Keeping with our commitment to **work in the open**, I wanted to publish this report to show all the work that's happened so far, as we align our teams to deliver seamless, secure, and simple services across government.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the work we're doing. I'm looking forward to building on this foundation to deliver lasting, impactful change to service delivery in the GC. To everyone working in government: the future of public services is in our hands; let's work together to ensure we're meeting people's needs in a digital age.

Paul N. Wagner
Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Digital Service

CDS by the numbers



138 million notifications sent using GC Notify



27 Provincial/Territorial services using GC Notify



52 GC departments using GC Forms



1,324 federal public servants attended
Platform product demos



5,000 daily authentications on Sign In Canada



88 partnerships with teams across the GC



269 employees working across Canada



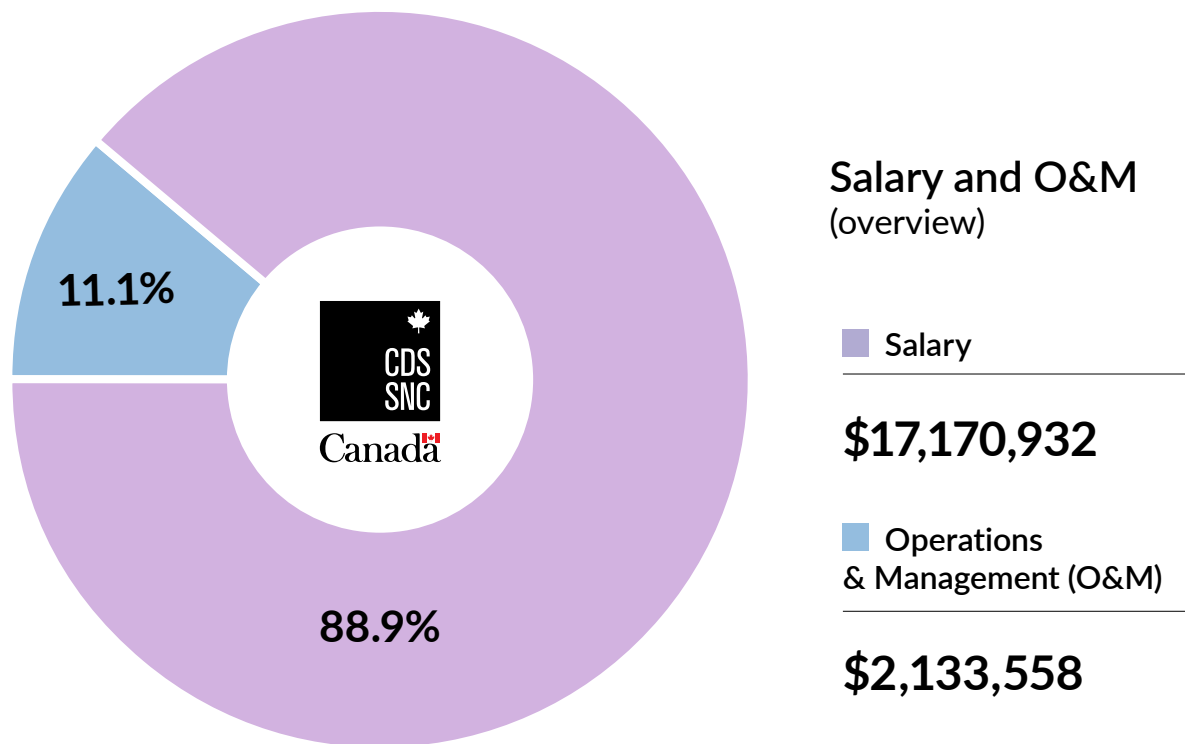
12,000 Canada.ca web pages using the page-feedback
tool to improve content



700,000 visits to the Old Age Security (OAS)
Benefits Estimator

Financial summary

Formed in 2017, CDS was created to help change the way government designs and delivers services for people in Canada. We're helping government adopt human-centered and iterative methods and tools that better meet people's needs, reduce risk, lower costs, and ensure privacy, security, and accessibility.



CDS has a **\$25.8 million annual budget** + cost recovery



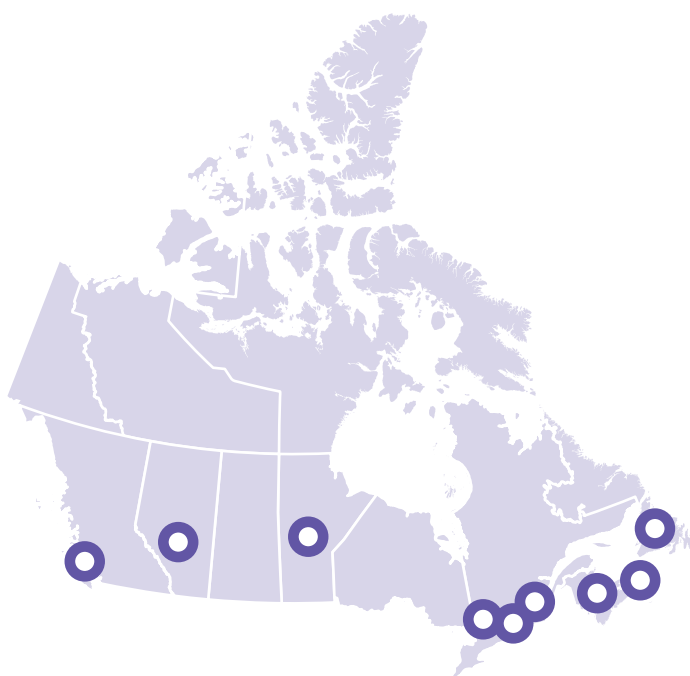
This includes corporate costs and the Employee Benefit Plan (EBP)



With these costs deducted, CDS's total operating budget for FY2023-2024 was \$19,574,746 with actual expenditures totaling \$19,304,489 (a surplus of \$270,256)

Serving Canada: The CDS team

At CDS, we work in interdisciplinary teams that break down traditional silos. As our budget demonstrates, our biggest investment is people. We recruit, train, and develop employees with diverse skills to work with teams across government to build in-house capabilities and deliver secure, accessible services for people.



As of March 31, 2024,
CDS has 269 employees
working across Canada

We work in multidisciplinary teams to deliver better services for people

74%	Of our employees work on product or service teams
33%	Live outside the National Capital Region
43%	Are from outside the federal government
35%	Work in information technology roles (IT)
28%	Work in policy (EC)
15%	Work in administrative services (AS)
9%	Work in programme administration (PM)
7%	Work in senior management (EX)
6%	Work in communications (IS)

Working with teams across the GC to deliver better services

At CDS, we work with departments and agencies to help them make timely design and technology decisions, build their in-house digital capabilities, and adopt new ways of working so they can design and deliver services that are accessible, secure, and easy to use. In the last year, we teamed up with public servants across the GC to deliver lasting improvements to 9 different programs.

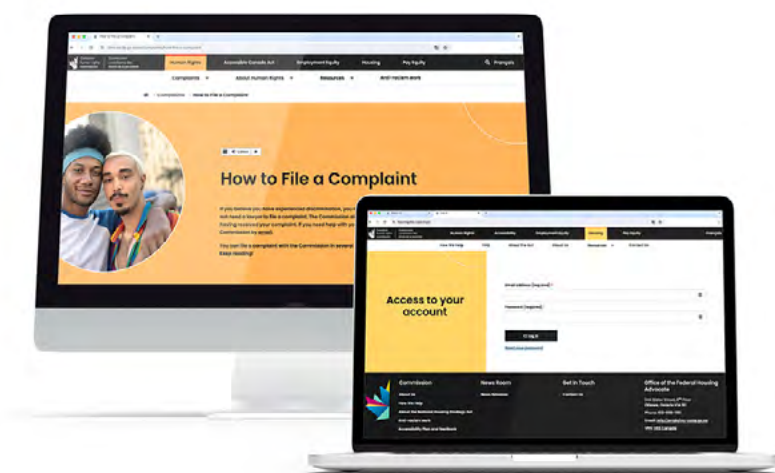


Source: Unsplash

Overview of engagements from FY 2023-2024

Canadian Armed Forces	■ Cadets User Research
Correctional Service Canada	■ Offender Portal 2FA and design advice ■ Offender Management System
Department of National Defence	■ Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre (SMSRC) Peer support mobile app
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada	■ Indigenous consultation web content ■ Indigenous IP content improvement
Courts Administration Service	■ Digital Transformation ■ User Experience review for the E-Filing/Pay Now service ■ Service Design Showcase
Health Canada	■ Cannabis - Medical Access Personal Registration System User Research - Part 2
Canadian Human Rights Commission	■ Service design support to identify requirements for a new case management system
Public Safety Canada	■ Firearms program, capacity support

Partnerships in the spotlight



Photomontage: CDS

Improving how users can file a complaint (Canadian Human Rights Commission)

The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) approached CDS for expertise and support in the launch of a comprehensive project that will redevelop and re-design the CHRC's case management system to better serve people in Canada.

"Thanks to CDS, the CHRC now has the right tools and templates in place so that they can continue to engage with stakeholders throughout this ongoing project, and analyze the data in a meaningful and efficient way."



— Farhia Ahmed,
Director General, Canadian Human Rights Commission

Making it easier for people to file documents and pay online: Courts Administration Service (CAS)

The role of the Courts Administration Service (CAS) is to provide administrative services to four courts of law: the Federal Court of Appeal, the Federal Court, the Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada, and the Tax Court of Canada. CAS operates E-Filing and Pay Now: public-facing, web-based services used by litigants to submit court documents and make associated payments. CAS's Digital Services Branch (DSB) had heard reports of user dissatisfaction from stakeholders, but needed a detailed description of the problems in order to propose improvements.

DSB asked the Canadian Digital Service (CDS) to conduct a user experience (UX) review of E-Filing and Pay Now and surface immediate opportunities to improve the user experience of these services. The UX review found usability issues in 21 categories. Themes included content, User Interface (UI), technology platform, and data validation. A key finding was that E-Filing and Pay Now pages would benefit from user-friendly language, plain language guidance, and clear information hierarchy, to reduce the likelihood of user confusion or error.

The UX Review informed a prioritization process for improvements to the two services. Work on service improvements is currently underway. The UX Review was also intended to serve as an example of using a service design method to improve services. CAS has a commitment to service excellence, and is actively building its capacity in service design and service management, and plans to use similar methods in the future.

“We established a new service design capability to ensure we leveraged technology to solve the right problem, the right way. As we were just building the team up, we reached out to CDS to help us get a head-start in introducing and demonstrating the value of service design practices to our staff and executive team.

CDS took the time to get to know CAS's unique situation, and aligned their work to our larger service transformation strategy, helping us best serve the Courts and improve access to justice.”



— **Anthony P. Sheehan**,
Chief Digital Officer, Courts Administration Service



Photomontage: CDS



Source: Disability:IN

Partner feedback & experience

98%

Percentage of partners who report that they are **satisfied with the hands-on help delivered by CDS**

98%

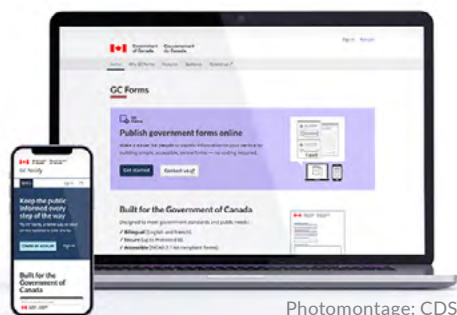
Percentage of partners who report that **help delivered by CDS is relevant to their work and needs**

88%

Percentage of partners who have received hands-on help from CDS that **report that they've seen or foresee an improvement to their existing digital services**

67%

Percentage of partners who have received hands-on help from CDS that report that they've **seen or foresee an acceleration of project delivery in support of digitalizing services**



Building products that help public servants deliver better services



CDS Platform products are a set of common, open source tools developed to be easily set up, used, and built on by other teams across government



They are designed to help departments focus their efforts on the details unique to their own services, instead of building everything from scratch



As interconnected Software as a Service (SaaS) products, they're ready to plug into existing systems to improve processing times, cut down on procurement costs, and deliver great user experiences



They're built to be fully compliant with all applicable GC policies and requirements, and are supported by dedicated product teams



CDS has a dedicated team of marketing and client experience experts to help GC teams adopt platform products, and iterate on them to better meet user needs

Awareness and product use

Last year, the CDS Platform team saw significant increases in usage and feature development, as well as increases in four key areas that serve as indicators of exponential future growth:

392% Increase in the number of public servants who attended a platform product demo in FY 2023-2024 ⁽¹⁾

72% Of federal employees working on digital or paper-based services now report at least some awareness of CDS ⁽²⁾

■ Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)

Mandated that Units replace their existing, paid notification tool (Rave), with GC Notify

■ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS)

As of April 2024, GC Forms is endorsed as one of two Forms providers of choice for the GC, and noted that of the two (1. GC Forms 2. Microsoft), only GC Forms can support Protected B information. (Source: TBS In Brief, March 18, 2024)

■ Benefits Delivery Modernization (BDM) Architecture Review Committee

Executive Director of Platform has a seat and will be advising this committee on implementation of Platform tools

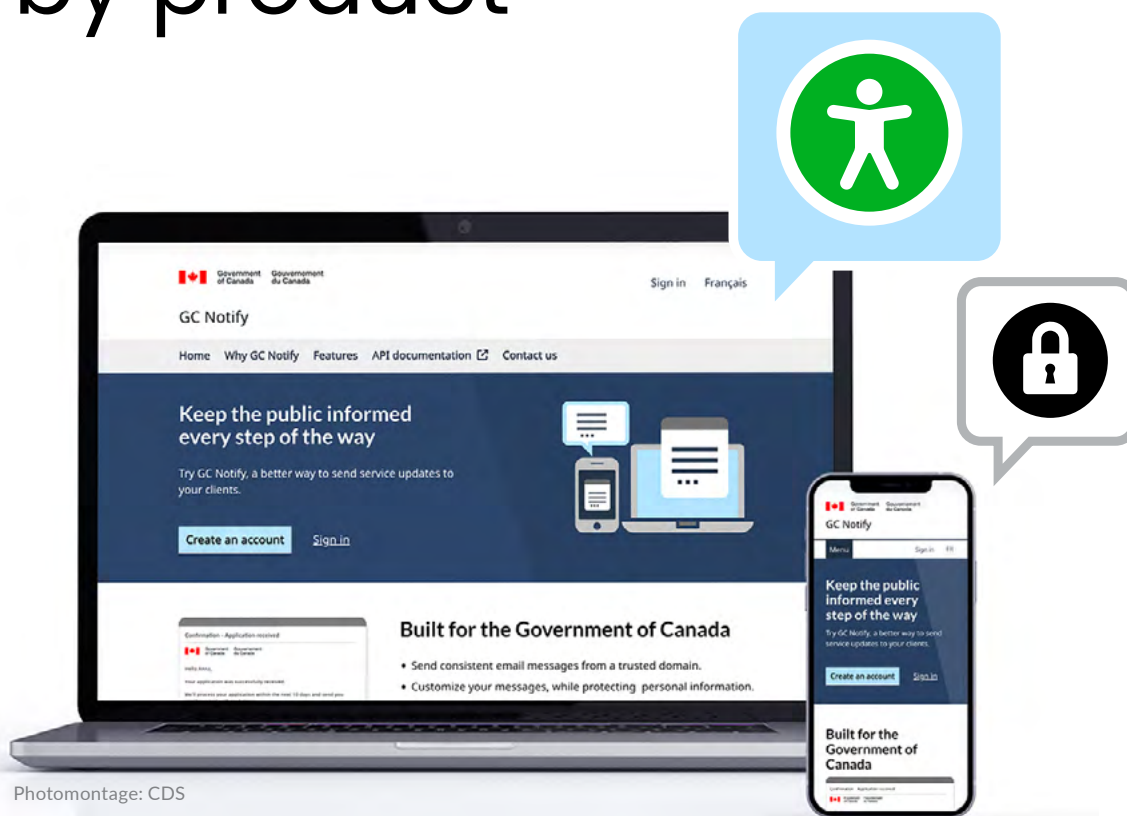
67 Federal departments and agencies are now using CDS platform products

18% Percentage of federal employees surveyed report that they have used a CDS product or service ⁽²⁾

(1) 1,324 public servants attended a demo in FY 2023-2024, up from 269 in FY 2022-23.

(2) Based on findings from our March, 2024 Federal Employee Annual Survey, 244 respondents working on digital and paper-based service delivery.

Year in review by product



Photomontage: CDS

GC Notify

GC Notify is a cloud-based platform product that helps program and service teams keep the public informed at every step as they go through a government process. It enables public servants to create reusable templates and easily send personalized email and text message updates.

How teams are using GC Notify to serve people better:

- Health Canada uses GC Notify to send notifications for [Recalls and Safety Alerts](#), helping people by keeping them informed about dangerous or unsafe products.
- Transport Canada's Marine Safety and Security Directorate (MSSD) uses GC Notify to [improve services for Seafarers and Vessel Owners](#).
- Service Canada uses the platform for its Passport Application Status Checker, to send people their passport application file number so they can check the status of their passport application online.
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) uses GC Notify to send out automated responses to application requests to their offices in embassies and consulates abroad in 11 languages in addition to Canada's two official languages. Applicants may receive replies with information in:
 - ❑ Spanish (Mexico City, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Lima)
 - ❑ Portuguese (Sao Paolo)
 - ❑ Arabic (Cairo)
 - ❑ Arabic/Hebrew/Ethiopian/Russian (Tel Aviv)
 - ❑ Chinese and Mongolian (Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou)
 - ❑ Tamil and Sinhala (Colombo)
 - ❑ Vietnamese (Ho Chi Minh City)

Hearing from users

<p>“Thanks for running an awesome, modern service!”</p>	<p>“This tool has been very helpful and the guides [are] very user-friendly so far.”</p>	<p>“Love this service. We were early adopters and it has not disappointed. It is tremendously helpful to us.</p>
<div><p>— Contractor, Department of National Defence/ Royal Canadian Air Force</p></div>	<div><p>— Senior Program Advisor, Public Safety Canada</p></div>	<div><p>—Communications Advisor, Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada</p></div>



Source: Freepik

Product advancements

In FY 2023-2024, the GC Notify Team increased the system's ability to handle future growth through advancements in scalability, reliability, security, and ease of use:

Enabled significant increases in services' daily and annual notification limits by scaling the infrastructure to handle more emails and text messages per minute:

- Increased the email sending rate by 500% (from 1,000 notifications/minute to 6,000 notifications/minute)
- Increased the SMS sending rate by 266% (from 600 fragments/minute to 2,200 fragments/minute)

Enhanced the reliability of text message sending rate in response to client demand for higher SMS limits:

- Obtained a 6-digit short code to enable faster two-factor authentication (2FA) services
- Initiated a process to amend the current 6-digit short code, to a 3-digit short code to enable an increased sending rate for a wider range of SMS use cases, with more reliability

Increased security in Notify:

- Achieved 'full rotation' of all secrets, with no downtime (all passwords, encryption keys, and API tokens were updated, without any interruptions to the service)
- Upgraded Notify's infrastructure to run on the latest 'Kubernetes infrastructure' version, to ensure security and reliability for users

Improved ease of use by increasing the number of tasks that are 'self-serve':

- Implemented a [System status page](#) to provide clients with direct access to information in the event of an incident or downgraded service, and to provide real time visibility to uptime and system health.
- Created a message limits dashboard 'counter' per service with automated email reminders, to keep clients aware of their proximity to service limits
- Improved the service flow for clients' branding requests to enable self-serve functionality without the need for support from the Platform Helpdesk

Awareness and product use

In addition to scaling infrastructure to enable future growth, the GC Notify Team made significant strides in increasing product awareness, use, and client satisfaction in FY 2023-2024:



15%

**increase in number
of GC departments**

- 54 departments used GC Notify, up from 47 in FY 2022-23

20%

**increase in
notifications sent**

- >137M notifications sent since the product launched in 2019

23%

increase in live services

- 422 live services used GC Notify, up from 343 live services in FY 2022-23

Scaling to serve other jurisdictions

Following legislative amendments in the summer of 2022, and building on the use of GC Notify by provincial jurisdictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, CDS began a pilot project to assess the feasibility of offering the GC Notify platform for use by provincial public servants. In May 2023, we partnered with the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia to measure and assess the impact of non-Covid related uses of GC Notify to deliver services. These services would be in addition to the 27 existing services in BC, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick that were approved prior to the pilot program under Covid-related exemptions.

The pilot, which runs until March 2025, is collecting data about the uses and potential time or cost savings of GC Notify, as well as any increase in efficiency or service delivery improvements. At the same time, the pilot is evaluating the impact to the operations of GC Notify of extending services to Provinces, and is monitoring for any associated negative impacts or additional costs.





Photomontage: CDS

GC Forms

GC Forms is a cloud-based form builder for public servants to quickly and easily publish secure and accessible online forms. The public can use these online forms to apply for or access the services or benefits they need.



Source: Freepik

How teams across government are using GC Forms to serve people better

- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC):** uses GC Forms to [get feedback from people on their services](#) and to participate in future usability research. Their form received over 2000 responses within the first month
- **Service Canada:** employs GC Forms to gather insights on their My Service Canada account dashboard, ensuring continuous improvement
- **Health Canada:** uses GC Forms to gather data for the Natural and Non-prescription Health Products (NN-HPD) service, streamlining data collection processes. You can learn more about the work the team is doing in [this blog post](#)

“Overall, GCForms is easy to use and very useful.”



— **Scientific evaluator,**
Health Canada

“First and foremost, great product! The user interface is clean and very user friendly.”



— **User experience researcher,**
Public Services and Procurement
Canada

“The GC Forms experience so far has been excellent!”



— **Senior business analyst,** Employment
and Social Development
Canada

Product advancements

In FY 2023-2024, the GC Forms team achieved a significant milestone with the launch of Protected B Forms, leading to more than 54,000 forms submissions within the first year and more than doubling the number of GC departments using GC Forms.

Towards the overall goal of improving services to the public, product advancements were focused on increasing the system's ability to handle future growth through advancements in both security and scalability.

Enhanced security to collect Protected B information:

- Implemented two-factor authentication (2FA) for clients
- Conducted threat modelling, pen testing, and ongoing threat analysis
- Supported password resets through implementation of security questions
- Completed the Security Assessment & Authorization (SA&A) process at the Protected B medium availability, medium integrity profile at the threat determination level four, requiring 161 security controls
- Created 63 automated alarms to immediately identify product misuse and to detect threats

Improved accessibility and laid the groundwork for future product-growth:

- Made our services easier to use for people with disabilities by creating prototypes that include features like dark mode and the ability to submit forms using voice commands
- Increased ability to support forms with higher volumes through the release of bulk exporting functionality, enabling public servants to export up to 150 responses in HTML, CSV, and JSON format
- Conducted discovery research and released the first iteration of Conditional Logic, enabling public servants to create simple rules to determine if a question should be displayed, paving the way to more complex forms in the future
- Refactored the code base to enhance user experience through faster page loads, smoother transitions, and enhanced security

Awareness and product use

In addition to advancements in security and scalability, the GC Forms team made significant strides in increasing product awareness and adoption:

1,478% increase in interest

- 931 GC employees attended GC Forms demos (up from 59 in FY 2022-23)

2,365% increase in new account sign-ups

- Number of total new accounts FY 2023-2024 is 1,208 (up from 49 in FY 2022-23)

588% increase in new requests to publish

- 337 new requests to publish forms (up from 49 in FY 2022-23)

160% increase in departments using GC Forms

- 52 total (up from 20 in FY 2022-23)

828% increase in new Forms published

- 399 new forms published (up from 43 in FY 2022-23)
- Protected B forms published: 29 total (up from 0 in FY 2022-23)
- Protected A/Unclassified forms published: 340 total (up from 43 in FY 2022-23)

Client satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction Scores (CSAT) collected at two touchpoints in GC Forms (post-product demo, and after a support request) indicate high levels of satisfaction from users:



90%

Percentage of users were satisfied or very satisfied with the customer support they received

GC Design System

GC Design System is a self-serve collection of reusable guidelines, components, and tools that provide consistency and efficiency in the design and development process.



Photomontage: CDS

GC Design System will help improve the delivery of online public services through increased:



Efficiency

Enables reduction of manual, repetitive work, by using design tokens and reusable components and patterns



Accessibility

Meets the Standard on Web Accessibility (WCAG 2.1 AA), and offers accessibility guidance throughout the system for cognitive and physical consideration



Bilingualism

The documentation site, coding environments, and Figma library offer functionality in both official languages and are built to facilitate equitable service delivery



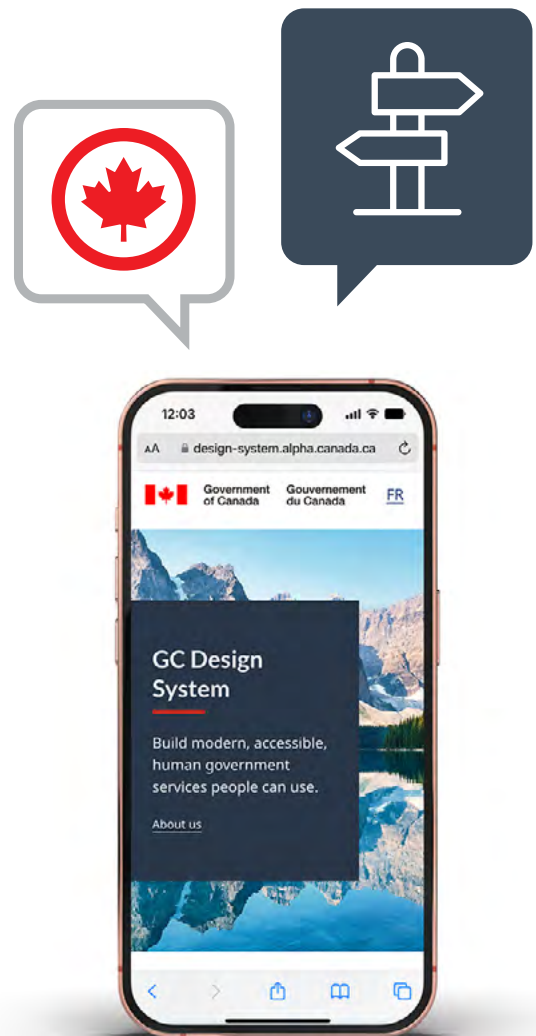
Choice of framework

Developers can code in the front-end language of their choice and designers can rapidly prototype with a rich Figma library



Simplicity

Unites code, design, and guidance for creating usable inclusive experiences on one site



Photomontage: CDS

Product advancements

Since the launch of the GC Design System in April 2023, the team has made significant progress towards a robust and mature product.

They've done this by:

- assembling a multidisciplinary team to collaboratively build out the product
- developing partnerships with five key federal departments for deployment, testing, and iteration
- working on significant expansion of both infrastructure and the component library, and enhanced accessibility

Working with partners across the GC:

- GC Design System team developed an integration plan with the Digital Transformation Office (DTO)
 - DTO team members onboarded to GC Design System team with active Sprint participation
 - Maintenance mode planning for Canada.ca design system and GCWeb
 - Developed and started to implement an integration plan that includes both the product and guidance on a single website (design.canada.ca)

- Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) - Benefits Delivery Modernization Programme, Integrated Channel, Common Interface (ICCI)
 - Worked alongside ICCI Design System team to review and implement relevant library components, and started to explore additional features
- Principal Publisher / Adobe Experience Manager (AEM)
 - Started ongoing testing of GC Design System components in AEM
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
 - Actively testing GC Design System components in Drupal with a team at DFO

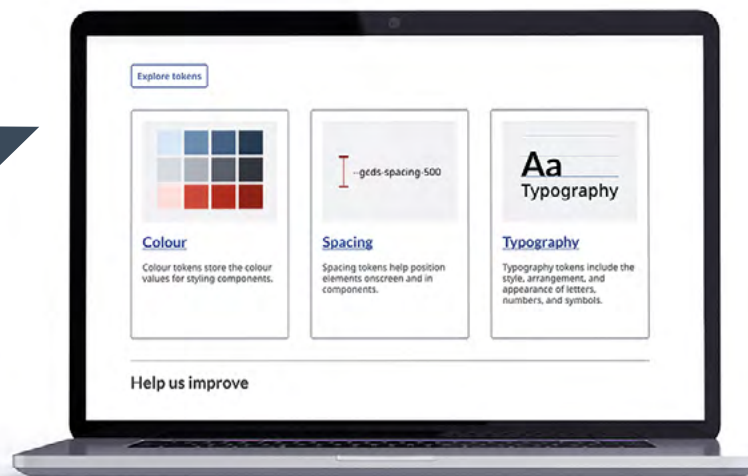
New components and features:

- Implemented all 11 mandatory components from design.canada.ca (excluding page templates)
- Expanded library to 30 components
- Implemented StencilJS to allow teams to code in the front-end framework of their choice
- Built brand decisions into code by creating design tokens for colours, spacing, and typography
- Conducted on-going accessibility testing with people using assistive technologies implemented correlating fixes of 11 issues over 5 rounds of testing
- Implemented a new hosting solution to improve resiliency and security of the documentation website of GC Design System
- Conducted an accessibility audit with OCAD University and addressed 18 out of 20 issues raised

Awareness and product use

16

government departments have begun actively using GC Design System since its launch in April 2023



Photomontage: CDS

Year in review by Platform Business Operations Team

The Platform Business Operations teams ensures the smooth functioning of various aspects within the Platform Business Unit, including strategy, marketing, promotion, client support, and reporting.



Source: Freepik

Growth



The Growth team is responsible for driving product awareness and trial, and for client account management.

Last year, the team scaled in size in order to respond to product growth, and supported the product teams by:

- Leading initiatives to establish a consistent and cohesive client experience with Platform products, including updated visual identity, marketing materials, content audit, and language taxonomy
- Enhancing self-serve initiatives to streamline client onboarding, including automated sign-ups for Platform communications and demo registrations
- Launching a CRM solution to help improve situational awareness of client engagements across multiple Platform products
- Creating and managing a Platform Products Metrics dashboard to enhance visibility, accountability, and reporting

Client Experience (CX)



The Client Experience (CX) team supports the Platform Business Unit and each multidisciplinary product team, to enhance client satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement.

Last year, they supported the product teams by:

- Developing and automating additional surveys and reporting to measure client satisfaction (CSAT) and to collect feedback at key touchpoints
- Analyzing support ticket data to develop and iterate upon self-serve support knowledge bases
- Working with the GC Notify product team on qualitative research to better understand barriers to conversion for the product, based on Business Intelligence (BI) insights, and;
- Conducting the first large-scale survey of a broad sample of federal government employees. The survey establishes benchmark measures of level of awareness of CDS, and of platform products, and includes data on how federal employees perceive CDS and adopt technology. These findings will inform marketing and product growth efforts

Client Support



The Client Support team plays an integral role in Platform Product development by providing technical support to Platform clients, maintaining a product knowledge base, supporting client retention, and sharing insights to inform agile product development.

In FY 2023-2024, the team:

- Scaled in response to the increased volume and complexity of support requests
- Developed consistent processes and automation to improve response times
- Created a structured, clear, and current knowledge base for each product
- Responded to **1,946 tickets**, 100% within Service Level Agreements, and with a 96% client satisfaction rating
- Provided weekly reporting to each Platform Product team with actionable data-driven insights

“Great at explaining the features and even went the extra mile to provide us a designated number upon request!”



— Program Advisor,
Employment and Social Development Canada

“The GCNotify customer support team are rock stars. The rest of the PS could learn a thing or two from them. Thanks again for your speedy assistance!”



— Program Manager,
Veterans Affairs Canada

“Team was very knowledgeable, courteous and quick to respond. Super impressed!”



— Program Advisor,
Department of National Defence

Core Services



The Core Services team manages shared technology assets and provides microservices to enable faster, safer, cleaner code delivery among the Platform Product teams.

Last year, they supported the product teams through:



Threat investigation



Change management



Automated testing



Compliance modelling and code analysis



Leading a discovery

For business intelligence (BI) tools and solutions, as well as analytics infrastructure, to help inform future product strategy, product roadmaps, and growth initiatives

New teams, same focus

Since joining Service Canada in July 2023, CDS has welcomed new teams from across the GC with a shared focus on improving how services are designed and delivered. Here's an overview of what these teams accomplished in FY 2023-2024.



Source: Freepik

Digital Transformation Office: making services easier to find and understand

The Digital Transformation Office (DTO) is the design team for Canada.ca, and joined CDS in August 2023. In addition to its design work, DTO also advocates for web users by reporting evidence and data on user needs and behaviours, and advises and enables departments to improve how they design and deliver services and information on Canada.ca.

Design: Making services easier to find and use

DTO provides the overall design for Canada.ca (visual, information, and content) to improve the user experience and build trust. DTO executes the Canada.ca design across an ecosystem of websites and services from 91 departments and agencies.

In June 2023, DTO continued its modernization of navigation on Canada.ca by updating design patterns for the [Global Header](#). This is the latest step in the transition to a new overall wayfinding strategy for Canada.ca, making it easier for people to find and use information. This strategy solves the problems faced by a number of departments when adopting the Canada.ca design.

Organizing services by “life events”

During January-March 2024, DTO began a project with colleagues at CDS to explore the potential of incorporating “life events,” such as losing a loved one, starting or expanding a family, retiring, and starting a business, into the information architecture and home page

for Canada.ca. This is in support of the [Minister’s mandate](#) to explore a “life events” model in delivering GC services to citizens. More to come on this work in the new fiscal year.

Advocate: Putting users at the heart of our services

DTO advocates for the people using Canada.ca by gathering feedback and reporting key user experience indicators.

During FY 2023-2024, DTO, in partnership with the Principal Publisher at Service Canada, continued to scale awareness of the [GC Task Success Survey](#) (TSS), a continuously-running website exit survey that identifies and measures the top tasks people undertake on Canada.ca.

600 + Tasks in the TSS from 38 departments

68% Average completion rate of the top 50 tasks on Canada.ca. This shows there are many opportunities for improvement

DTO also continued to scale the **page feedback tool**, which allows departments to collect user feedback directly from Canada.ca pages. This real-time tool is now being used by 33 institutions on over 12,000 web pages, with over 400,000 comments collected during 2023-2024. DTO worked in tandem with the Principal Publisher team to integrate the feedback tool into the Managed Web Service (MWS), allowing publishers using that system to more easily apply it on their pages. DTO also recently launched several key improvements to the feedback viewer, making it easier for departments to manage their incoming feedback.

Building on work started by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and in collaboration with teams at CDS, DTO worked on piloting a search assessment tool for other government departments. Currently in alpha, this tool will allow departments to assess the performance of their top search terms in Google and Canada.ca. The tool will be accompanied with instructions for use and metadata guidance to make things more findable for their users. DTO is aiming to scale the tool to more departments in 2024-25.

Advise: Providing hands-on help

DTO provides the hands-on help that departments need to accelerate improvements to the user experience on Canada.ca.

During January-March 2024, DTO and CDS undertook 2 projects to optimize departmental top tasks:

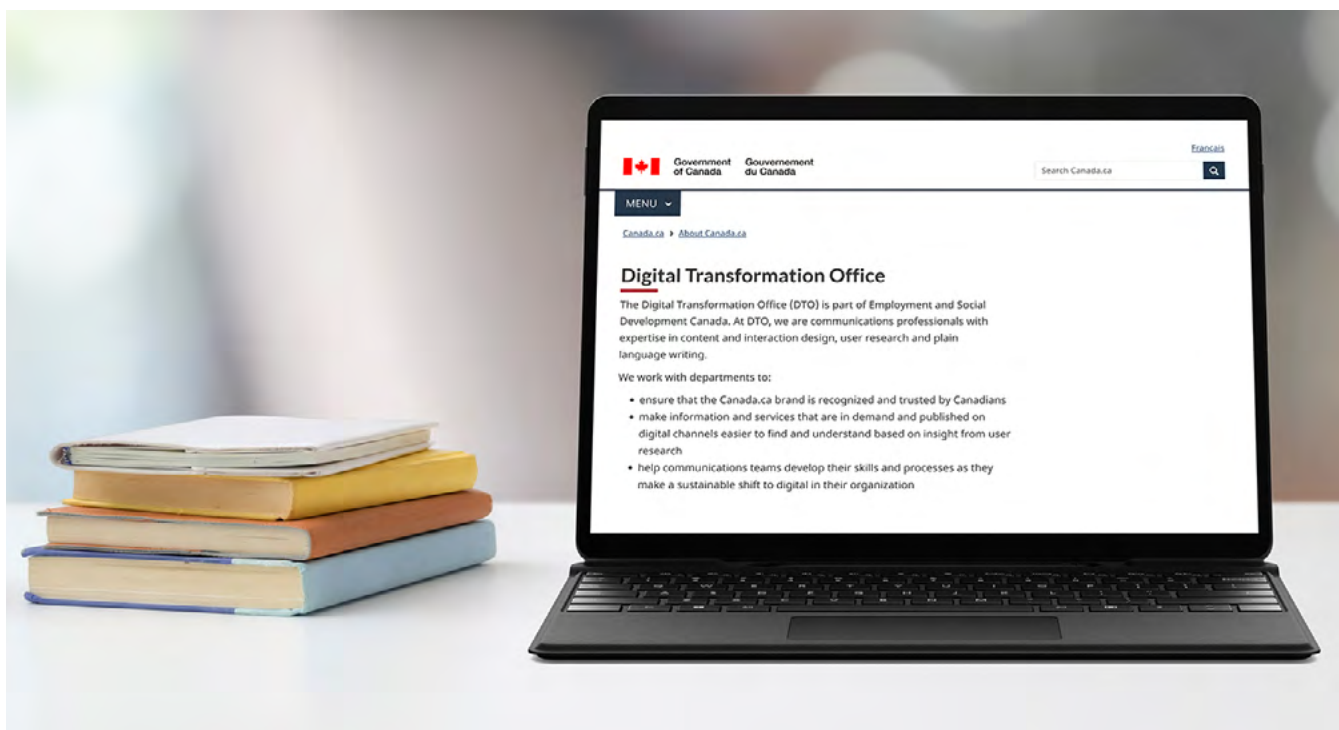
- Direct deposit, with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC)
- Indigenous benefits, with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

These targeted projects will continue into next fiscal year, and will provide these departments with concrete changes they can make to measurably improve end-user task performance.



Iterate: Adapting to a changing digital landscape

During 2023-2024, DTO began developing improved guidance for departments in terms of chatbots and search optimization, in light of how the tech industry's rapid adoption of generative AI is changing the findability landscape. Working with the Principal Publisher, CRA, and IRCC, DTO has created initial versions of this guidance, and will be soliciting feedback on the drafts from departments and stakeholders in 2024-25.



Photomontage: CDS

Enable: Supporting improvement across Canada.ca

DTO enables teams with reusable designs, guidance, and actionable data to build and continuously improve service content on Canada.ca. During FY 2023-2024, DTO, with the input of 18 departments, developed a set of standardized templates for web pages related to signing in to a government account, including help and account registration content.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) launched the first implementation and fine-tuned it with DTO over the course of millions of visits. CRA and Service Canada have templates in progress. Standardizing the experience makes it easier for citizens and clients to find and access the account they need regardless of which department they are interacting with. It will also make it easier

for departments to make the switch to [the future digital credentials program](#).

In collaboration with CDS colleagues, DTO modernized the Canada.ca [Content Style Guide](#) in FY 2023-2024, prioritizing 15 improvements collected from user research and suggestions by departments. These improvements keep the guide aligned with current international standards, and provide guidance for departments on how to design high-quality, usable content.

Since joining CDS, DTO has been collaborating with the Platform team and the Principal Publisher at Service Canada to incorporate the Canada.ca design system and the Web Experience Toolkit's GCWeb theme into the alpha [GC design system](#). This work aims to provide a single integrated design system for the GC.

Digital Credentials/Sign In Canada:

Providing a seamless service experience

The Digital Credentials program is working to build the GC Sign In Service, a secure, inclusive, and user-friendly sign-in experience that will make it possible for people to prove their identity once for all GC services by providing authentication and verification of their identity for government services.



GC Sign-In will visibly improve the service experience for people in Canada by making it simple to access all GC services easily and securely through a common digital front door. With GC Sign In, obtaining digital services will take less time, be simpler, less expensive to deliver, and safer through best-in-class technology and security.

The Digital Credentials program is the cornerstone to one single front door to all government services with the vision for one streamlined, convenient sign-in experience on any device, at any time, from anywhere. This service will also provide a robust platform for issuing and verifying digital credentials. A GC-wide approach to sign-in and digital credentials enables the success of some of the largest and

most visible investments in citizen experience. This includes Benefits Delivery Modernization (Old Age Security, Employment Insurance, and Canada Pension Plan) and investments in the travel continuum by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (Digital Platform Modernization), Canada Border Services Agency (Traveller Modernization), and Transport Canada (Right Touch Travel).

Following the publication of the Minister of Citizens' Services mandate letter in November 2023, the decision was made to transfer the Digital Credentials delivery team to CDS, in order to provide a more cohesive approach to digital service delivery across the GC. While the transfer is still being finalized, the team began integrating with CDS in January 2024.

Here's what the team worked on in FY 2023-2024:



Launched the procurement of a world-class Customer Identity and Access Management SaaS and identified 4 Qualified Respondents, which will support the launch of a single front door to GC services in the coming year



Worked collaboratively with partners within the GC, other jurisdictions, other governments and the private sector to identify needs and articulate the role of digital credentials in improving services to people in Canada



Advised departments on how to provide a consistent and secure sign-in experience for their clients



Signed a collaborative agreement with the province of Quebec



Onboarded 5 new services to the [Sign In Canada version 1 \(SIC v.1\)](#) platform



Launched SMS Multi-Factor Authentication with recovery to SIC v.1 customers



SIC v.1 currently operates with 14 departmental services including more than 5,000 daily authentications. The platform serves over 20,000 active users as of March 2024 and has continuously maintained a 99.9% availability



Launched the [Announcements page](#) on the SIC v.1 website to better inform departments of any potential impacts to service as well as upcoming changes



Source: Unsplash

Client Experience Office: listening to and learning from Canadians

The mandate of the Client Experience Office (CXO) is to drive the revamping of service design and delivery by putting clients and their needs at the centre of our services. **The CXO transitioned to CDS in January 2024**, presenting the opportunity to leverage new tools and strengthen the role of CX within Service Canada and ESDC. Here are some of the projects they're working on:

Integrated Channel - Common Interface (ICCI)

The Integrated Channel - Common Interface project designs, architects, and implements a common service layer that enables users to access common cross-benefit services and enables Service Officers to support clients to resolve their queries quickly and efficiently when needed. The project vision is to use existing service standards to design and build an integrated digital channel experience that will help users navigate personalized benefits and services available to them, while making it easier for public servants to deliver a

human-centered delivery experience. Through user research and client feedback, the project team identifies problem spaces and decides which products to build that best meet user needs. These products are the first steps to building a client-centred digital channel, which improves client experience, increases awareness of benefits, and provides opportunities for self-service. In FY 2023-2024, ICCI successfully completed multiple milestones for some of its digital products. Here's a look at some of those projects:

Old Age Security Benefits Estimator (OAS BE)

[Old Age Security Benefits Estimator \(OAS BE\)](#)

helps clients understand their benefit eligibility, as there is often confusion or uncertainty about whether or not they qualify for a benefit. OAS BE helps Canadians near retirement find the OAS benefits they're eligible for and estimates their monthly payments.

Rather than navigating over 400 OAS rate tables or calling a Service Canada Centre to be provided an estimate, the online tool provides Canadians with a concise and user-friendly web form to verify eligibility and entitlement for their OAS benefits, including OAS pension, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Allowance, and Allowance for the Survivor.

Using client feedback and research results, the OAS BE product team completed 10 releases, since the launch of the MVP in June 2023. Since launch, the OAS BE has achieved:

700,000 + Client visits

- Over 2,500,000 page views

600 + Feedback survey submissions

- A success rate of 85% with the new tool, compared to a 35% success rate when performing the same set of tasks with the old OAS rate tables



Source: Freepik



Photomontage: CDS

My Service Canada Account Dashboard (MSCA-D)

[My Service Canada Account Dashboard \(MSCA-D\)](#) offers a solution to the problem of managing benefits that clients face along their journey, as it's difficult and complex for them to navigate and find relevant information, as well as complete tasks to manage their benefits.

MSCA-D is improving the client experience of the current My Service Canada Account by allowing clients to easily access all their benefits and services on a single page, rather than getting lost through multiple benefit pages or attempting to identify benefits and services over multiple platforms. This helps reduce the need for clients to call Service Officers and increases adoption of the self-serve function.

The MSCA-D Beta was launched on December 6, 2023 with minor update releases after. This initial release allowed users to toggle on the new interface and provide feedback for future iterations. Additional features will be added over the next 18 to 24 months. Since the December launch, over 20% of MSCA users are

using the new MSCA-D, and over 70% of feedback received from 800 users has been positive.

Registration & Authentication

The Registration & Authentication (R&A) wizard assists clients when they decide to apply for benefits. Currently the application and registration process on MSCA is difficult and confusing. The GC Task Success Survey has determined that the user experience for registering for MSCA is very poor, with a 38% success rate. With a new R&A wizard, clients will be provided with information before starting the experience, directing to the correct R&A flow. This will increase the number of clients able to successfully register and authenticate for MSCA using ECAS.

User testing on the new R&A flow designs created by the product team showed an overall success rate of 73%. The pre-authentication wizard is targeting a release in Spring 2024.

Service Canada Labs

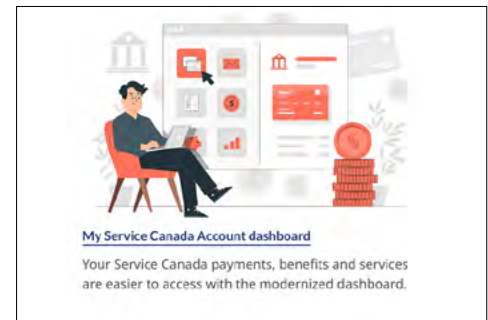
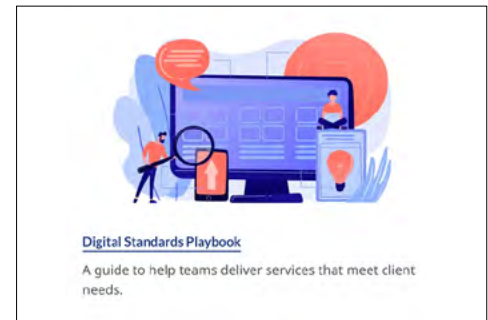
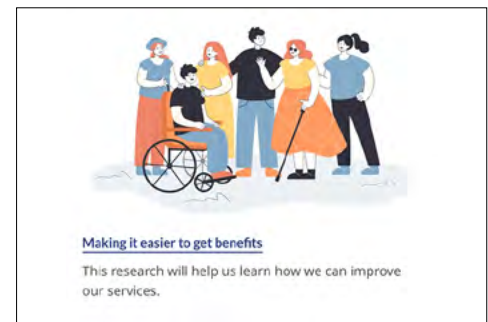
[Service Canada Labs](#) contributes to the client-centered design and delivery approach. It's a website that allows people in Canada to see and participate in digital service improvement projects being developed at Service Canada. This works to solve problems of low user feedback rates on products and low trust in the government's delivery of user-friendly services.

Since the re-launch of Service Canada Labs on April 11, 2023, the product has:

4 Products onboarded (with the 5th in progress)

■ 10,000 + unique visitors

2 Additional features (articles and a pre-made survey)



Source: Service Canada Labs

Omnichannel Discovery

Establishing an integrated digital channel is a priority in ESDC’s Service Target Operating Model (STOM) and the Integrated Channel Management Strategy (ICMS) and although it is the least mature of service delivery channels, the digital channel is considered to be the backbone of future service delivery.

To operationalize the 2018 ICMS strategy and build the digital channel, we took the following steps as part of a discovery process:



Engaged senior leadership across ESDC’s service delivery ecosystem to align on the vision, future-state service models and tackle barriers and enablers to transition towards a guided omnichannel service model



Engaged with real clients (CPP-D and EI) to better understand their current pain points and crafted a view of the future based on their needs



Leveraged user research findings to develop a current and future state service blueprint



Identified a set of opportunities to improve CX, address channel clog, and build the foundations for omnichannel service at ESDC



Assessed current state technical capabilities and mapped a set of core capabilities that are required to deliver the vision



Developed an omnichannel roadmap of prioritized initiatives



Identified principles and service metrics to enable self-service on the digital channel

Client Feedback

Centre of Expertise

Based on the Service Canada Client Experience (CX) Survey Measurement Model, the Service Canada Centre Feedback Questionnaire was developed and launched in January 2024, in consultation with the Citizen Service Branch. This questionnaire can be accessed via QR code at in-person Service Canada Centres (SCC) or via a link on office computers available for client use and helps stakeholders access valuable information to identify ways to improve the client experience.

The feedback questionnaire collects CX data on the purpose of the client’s visit, the program accessed and the client’s demographic profile. It assesses the impact of service improvements in real-time by measuring service attributes such as satisfaction, ease, and effectiveness. Open text analysis helps with understanding feedback. CX data collected from the questionnaire will be more fully integrated into other service channel data reports via PowerBI dashboards. The data can then be used to improve service delivery and access to programs, as well as respond to clients’ evolving service needs.

380

Responses a week on average

- 257 out of 297 offices generating real-time, in-person CX data (87%)
- As of March 22, 2024, a total of 4,111 responses were received

72%

Overall satisfaction (February 2024 results)

- SCCs receive higher satisfaction ratings than other service channels, which is consistent with insights from the Service Canada’s annual Client Experience Survey

70%

Waited a reasonable amount of time to receive service

- The most common complaint in the open-text field is on the subject of wait times, mentioned by 25% of respondents

79%

Found it easy to get what they needed

- And 84% of clients leaving feedback knew what to do next



Source: Freepik

Client Insights and Business Intelligence

In FY 2023-2024, we expanded our usability testing and sludge auditing practice to improve the design, delivery, and effectiveness of ESDC service delivery based on feedback from Canadians.

Rapid usability testing was piloted in Service Canada Centres (SCCs), in collaboration with regional staff, to support the roll-out of registration for the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) through the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

This cost-effective solution helps us find and correct problems during the service design stage, allowing for continuous refinement and leading to:

- Reduced burden on clients to easily access and understand information, and;
- Improved client experiences and better client satisfaction

After implementing the CX recommendations, almost 80% of clients completed their application unassisted using the IVR, allowing clients who needed assistance to speak with an agent within seconds.

We also piloted the use of sludge audits to identify and eliminate bureaucratic obstacles and unnecessary complexities in processes that make it harder for people to access services, complete tasks, or obtain benefits. We audited the application process for the Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPPD) program, uncovering a number of frictions in the client journey which the team is looking to address in collaboration with the program to improve the client experience.

By incorporating feedback, streamlining processes, and putting people at the centre of our services, we're working with teams across ESDC to improve access to programs and deliver high-quality services that meet peoples' needs.



What's next?

As public servants, we owe it to the people of Canada to work in the open. We commit to sharing our progress as we work with teams across government to design and deliver better services for people.



Want to learn how we're working across government to align our efforts to serve people better?

[Take a look at our forward strategy](#)

Have questions about the way we work or the work we do?

[Let's talk](#)

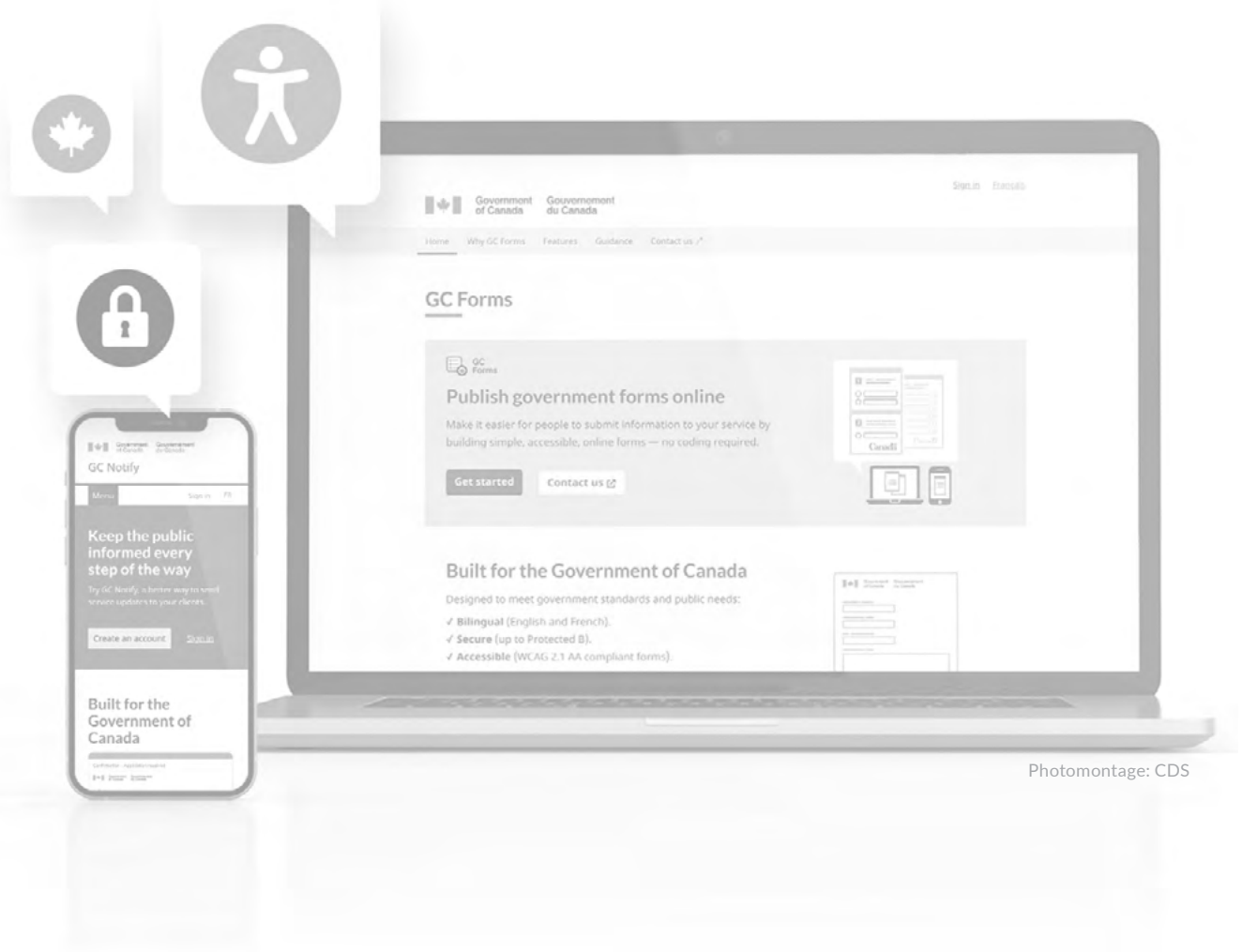
Want to stay informed of digital transformation work across the GC?

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Aligning our efforts to serve people better

Canadian Digital Service
Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2023-2024)



Photomontage: CDS