NEWS RELEASE

Better government customer service: The promise that could swing Australia's vote

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With the upcoming election likely to be decided by fine margins, 57% of Aussies say improving government customer service would change their vote

Sydney, Australia – 2025 – Research from ServiceNow, the AI platform for business transformation, reveals that promises to improve government customer service could sway Australia's Federal Election.

Over half of all Australians (57%) report they are more likely to vote for a party that commits to improving government run customer service with Aussies spending almost 10 million hours (9.8) on hold to federal, state, and local agency services in 2024, according to the **ServiceNow Public Sector Customer Experience Report**.

Aussies seeking more support

More Australians are attempting to contact government services as economic, weather and health pressures take their toll, with 56% spending time trying to contact government in 2024, a number that has crept up steadily over the previous year (4%) and two years prior (9%).

Time on hold to public sector services (including federal, state, and local governments) has also increased 45% from 1.1 to 1.6 hours per person in the last 24 months. The most common reasons for contact are:

- people seeking advice or assistance (28%)
- making a complaint (18%),
- requesting a service (17%)

- obtaining information (15%)

Barry Dietrich, ANZ Group Vice President and Managing Director at ServiceNow, says:

“Governments across Australia have invested heavily in digital services, but consumer expectations keep rising. At the same time, difficult economic conditions, natural disasters, and healthcare pressures are driving more Australians to rely on government for support.

Given the increase in demand for government services, there’s a huge opportunity to use technology to do more with less. This can improve services for everyone and be a vote-winner for any party that makes improving service delivery and customer responsiveness a policy priority.”

ServiceNow revealed earlier this year that the nation is experiencing a customer service crisis, with 123 million hours (11.1 hours per person) spent waiting to make a customer service complaint or resolve an issue in 2024. This is an increase of 2 million hours year on year and a 20% jump since 2021* (89 million hours). The research also revealed government was rated as the lowest performing industry for customer service (5.3/10).

Wait times impacting wellbeing

Long wait times and complicated government systems are taking a toll on the nation’s mental health. Over half (52%) say being left on hold negatively impacts their wellbeing. Almost 2 in 5 (37%) say complicated systems do the same.

Australians say the most frustrating departments to interact with are social services (35%), tax (14%), and local government agencies (13%). On the contrary, emergency services and public safety topped the list with almost a quarter (23%) of Australians saying it has the best service, followed by healthcare (16%).

What Aussies want from government services

Before Australians head to the voting booth, the biggest changes they would like to see when dealing with government customer service teams are:

- reducing time spent on hold (59%)
- improving speed and delivery of citizen services (57%)
- ensuring they can speak to a qualified or trained person (48%), and
- limiting transfers across departments (47%).

Reserve Bank of Australia Director, University of Sydney Chancellor, Xero Chair, and ServiceNow Advisor David Thodey, who led the Australian Public Sector Service review in 2021, says:

“It’s encouraging to see the focus of government agencies and leaders in Canberra who recognise the need to make accessing services fast, simple, and joined-up. As nation, we’ve made significant progress over the years, as seen by the OECD’s Digital Government Index”.

We now have an opportunity to adopt more of the latest technologies like AI to further improve how we support citizens. Government services need to empower workers so they can provide critical, empathetic support.

AI-powered citizen services will help provide consistent service across touchpoints, predict issues before they happen, and make 24/7 access a reality. It is encouraging to see the focus in this area. A good example is the ServiceNSW application has significantly reduced the volume of calls to departments.”

*2022 data did not include social media as a measurement of time spent on hold.

Methodology

The research was commissioned by ServiceNow and Weber Shandwick and was conducted by Lonergan Research in accordance with the ISO 20252 standard. Lonergan Research surveyed 1,031 Australians 18+. Surveys were distributed throughout Australia including both capital city and non-capital city areas. The survey was conducted online amongst members of a permission-based panel, between 1 November and 11 November 2024. After interviewing, data was weighted to the latest population estimates sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics

About ServiceNow

ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW) is putting AI to work for people. We move with the pace of innovation to help customers transform organisations across every industry while upholding a trustworthy, human cantered approach to deploying our products and services at scale. Our AI platform for business transformation connects people, processes, data, and devices to increase productivity and maximise business outcomes. For more information, visit: **www.servicenow.com**.