

STATE  
**Texas**

AGENCY  
**Texas**  
**Department of Information Resources (DIR)**

AWARD CATEGORY  
**Digital Experience: Enterprise Solutions**

PROJECT TITLE  
***Mr. Waffles, Take the Wheel:  
Digital Texas Driver's License Upgrade Project***

PROJECT DATES  
**September 2021 - September 2024**

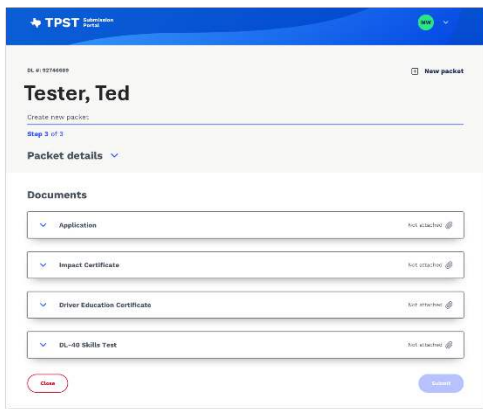
CONTACT  
**Endi Silva**  
Chief Experience Officer,  
Texas Department of Information Resources  
[endi.silva@dir.texas.gov](mailto:endi.silva@dir.texas.gov)

# Executive Summary

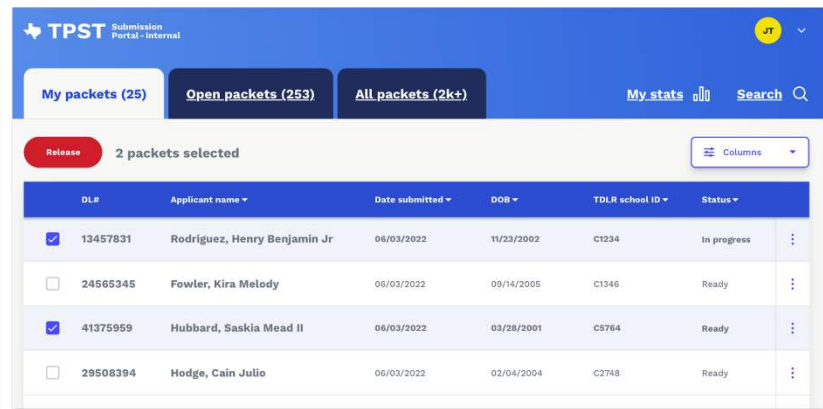
## Introducing Digital Government Services for a New Generation of Texans

In April 2024, the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) launched a digital experience for Texans needing to upgrade their learner’s license to a provisional driver’s license through Texas.gov—the state’s official website and digital government program. The project included online portals for third-party driver’s license testing providers and DPS employees, as well as a constituent-facing integration with Texas by Texas (TxT), the Texas.gov digital assistant application that offers constituents a mobile-first, account-based way to complete government transactions in just a few clicks anytime, anywhere, and from any device.

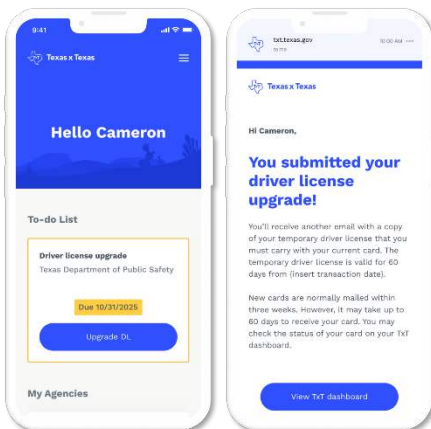
This over-arching project is a shining example of a transformative automation and modernization effort that brought government processes and services online for the first time ever, ultimately benefitting Texas public safety employees, driver’s license testing providers, and a whole new generation of Texans.



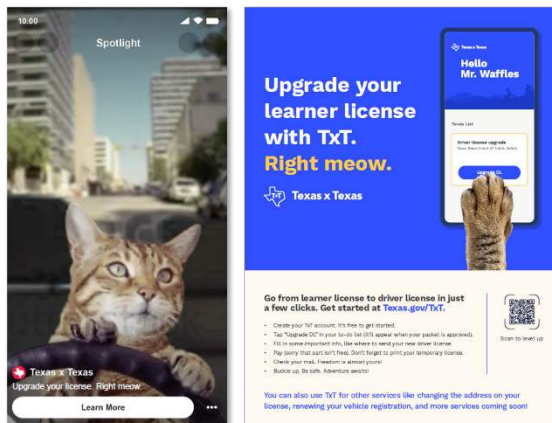
TPST Examiner Portal



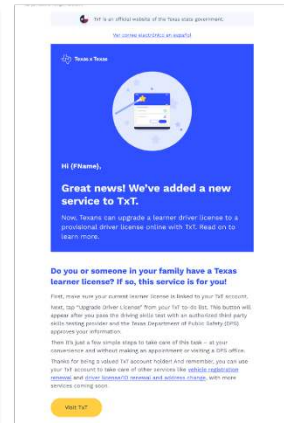
DPS Employee Portal



TxT-DLU Dashboard & Confirmation Email



TxT-DLU Marketing Campaign Ad & Digital Flyer



TxT Direct Email

## Project Narrative

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### Idea

Provided by DPS, the Third-party Skills Testing (TPST) program authorizes over 600 certified driver education examiners and schools to administer driving tests for driver's license applicants in Texas. Texas drivers, after passing their driving test, can upgrade their Texas learner's license to a provisional driver's license. Previously, both of these processes were manual and offline; TPST providers submitted driver's license applications and test results to DPS via paper methods. Drivers then had to complete their driver's license upgrade transaction in-person at a DPS office.

### **What problem or opportunity does the project address? Why does it matter? What makes it different? What makes it universal?**

In direct alignment with the [State CIO Top Ten Priorities](#) of Digital Government/Digital Services and Legacy Modernization, this multi-pronged enterprise project effectively and efficiently addressed an important agency business need, improved business processes with third-party stakeholders who help administer key aspects of the driving skills program across Texas, and expanded digital access to state government services for a new generation of constituents.

### ***Addressing Agency and Stakeholder Business Needs and Processes***

The DPS and TPST portals replaced the manual, in-person process and enabled both parties to manage the proof of driving skills testing, driver education, and Impact Texas Driver certifications electronically. These portals aimed to reduce the number of office visits Texans made to DPS, limit physical paperwork, reduce the time DPS spent managing paper documents, build more efficiency and transparency in the driver's licensing process, expedite license processing for all parties, and improve customer service.

### ***Enabling Agency Cost-Effectiveness and Constituent Satisfaction***

In general, agency cost-effectiveness improved by offering online transactions, which are typically a fraction of the cost of in-person transactions. For example, according to calculations for Texas, the cost for government agencies to offer online service options is less than \$1 per transaction, compared to nearly \$30 to fulfill an in-office transaction for the same purpose.

Additionally, satisfaction significantly improves when Texas government agencies, like DPS, can offer their constituents user-friendly, convenient, and secure online service options. In 2024, when surveyed after completing an online transaction via Texas.gov, more than 90 percent of constituents indicate that the online transaction was an improvement over other traditional channels like office, mail, or phone.

### ***Expanding Access and Engagement for the Next Generation of Texans***

A key element of this project was expanding online access to constituents to reduce visits to DPS offices. Via a service integration with TxT, Texans can now complete an "upgrade" from a learner's license to a provisional license online for the first time ever. In addition to enabling this new transaction type on TxT, the project also enhanced the over-arching TxT product platform to allow

minors between the ages of 16 and 18 to create their own limited-access TxT account. This was particularly impactful since this generational age group of Texans, a part of Gen Z, have grown up in a digital world, expect to do everything online, and form the largest and most powerful consumer generation in history.<sup>1</sup>

Offering a new service like this to a new generation of constituents also required an effective marketing plan to grow awareness, engagement, and action. Together, DIR and the Texas.gov team crafted a unique and generationally savvy digital campaign that has been incredibly successful at generating adoption among minors and their parents/guardians.

## **Implementation**

The Texas.gov team worked with DPS to design, develop, and deploy a multi-pronged enterprise solution that included two new web portals and a new TxT service integration. The TPST portal lets TPST examiners securely submit and resubmit driver's license applicant packets online and the DPS portal enables employees to review, approve, or reject packets. This project also fully automated the driver's license upgrade process for constituents by integrating it with TxT.

### **What was the roadmap? Who was involved? How did you do it?**

#### ***Leveraging Texas.gov to Modernize, Automate, Transform, and Promote***

When DPS decided to modernize the processes and systems associated with TPST, they leveraged Texas.gov, which is part of DIR's Shared Technology Services portfolio. As the state's official website and digital government program, Texas.gov is a holistic digital ecosystem that provides a full range of services and capabilities for Texas government entities to access for their constituent-serving digital solutions. These include application design and development; digital modernization and transformation; ongoing maintenance and operations; and marketing, analytics, and user satisfaction and feedback. This project also enabled the DPS Driver License Division to expand its existing enterprise portfolio of Texas.gov service offerings, which already included other high-profile online services for Texans, such as driver's license renewal and licensee driver records.

Multiple parties were involved in the project, including DPS, TPST providers, DIR, and Texas.gov teams from Deloitte. Using an agile project management approach, the group stewarded the project to a successful implementation. Examples of notable workstreams and artifacts are highlighted below.

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<sup>1</sup> Roy Avidor, "[The Great Gen Z Chase: The Biggest Online Spending Power In History](#)," *Forbes*. February 28, 2025.

**Design and Development. An exceptional user experience is core to the value of Texas.gov services.**

The team designed a clean and intuitive user interface for the DPS and TPST portals using TexKit, a modular design library of reusable components that helps streamline the design and development process and standardizes the user experience across projects. This library of pre-built and tested elements—which is also used on Texas.gov’s flagship product, TxT—accelerates development and delivery timelines, fosters agility, and reduces redundant effort and errors, while also maintaining the high standards of consistency, quality, reliability, and accessibility by which Texas.gov is known.



**Reusable and Expandable Framework. The DPS and TPST portals feature a new framework for document upload, routing, and management that is reusable and expandable.** In order to maximize efficiencies and return on interest within the Texas.gov program, this framework and its capabilities can be reused and expanded upon for additional projects, such as another upcoming project with DPS for online driver’s license surrenders.

**Stakeholder Training and Communication. To ensure stakeholder buy-in and adoption, this project included the development and implementation of training and communication plans for over 650 DPS and TPST users.** Following thorough stakeholder analysis and assessment, the team developed a comprehensive training strategy and corresponding training methods including tailored user guides, live training sessions, job aids, and FAQs. The team also developed and executed a targeted communication plan for stakeholder personnel including cadenced email announcements in advance of the deployment, in-person meetings and training sessions, and on-demand training.

**TPST** External Portal

My packets (22) | Open packets (22) | All packets (2k+) | My stats | Search

ID #	Applicant Name	Created	Status	Address
13467821	Rodriguez, Henry Benjamin Jr	06/01/2022	Claimed	USA
22847223	Fowler, Rita Madely	06/01/2022	Claimed by me	Start
34294885	Hubbard, Basile Maud H	06/01/2022	USA	Claimed
78543439	Hedge, Cain Julie	06/01/2022	USA	Outdated
87843242	Andrade, Roman Markus	06/01/2022	USA	
43988986	Andrade, Roman Markus	06/01/2022	USA	

Packets you have claimed can be processed and worked on.

**Leading the Transition**

LPS Admin can support adoption of the portals in many ways:

- Communicate:** Consistently message the purpose, goals and benefits of the portals to all internal and external stakeholders.
- Access Resources:** Ensure LPS Staff and TPST implementers can easily access resources and understand what is available to them.
- Change Processes:** Support LPS Staff and TPST implementers adjust processes to align with online system functionality.
- Champion:** Champion adoption and respond early to adapters to generate benefits.
- Track Data:** Use data and reporting to track usage, report process changes, and further adoption.
- Monitor Adoption:** Monitor adoption and system usage to identify opportunities for improvement and relay feedback.

**How to Create and Submit a Packet – TPST External Portal**

**Create and Submit a Packet**

Use this process flow to understand the steps to create and submit a packet.

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    graph TD
      A[Click the New Packet button] --> B[Open the applicant info TAB, click and click # of 20]
      B --> C{Does the chosen applicant?}
      C --> D[Confirm the student is correct.]
      D --> E[Click on the bottom Contact button and Review]
      E --> F[Upload each required or optional corresponding file.]
      F --> G{The packet has successfully been created and submitted.}
      G --> H{Does the printer permit?}
      H --> I[Add all attachments for the applicant's age and/or structure.]
      I --> J{Does the printer permit?}
      J --> K[Phone contact Manual Review and Program Review.]
      C --> L{Is the packet ready to be submitted?}
      L --> M{Does all documents have been selected, PDFs, and submit.}
      M --> N{Progress will not be saved on the packet if you exit.}
      N --> O{Does the printer permit?}
      O --> P{Does the printer permit?}
      P --> Q{Does the printer permit?}
      Q --> R{Does the printer permit?}
      R --> K
  
```

**Course Objectives**

LPS Admin should use this training to:

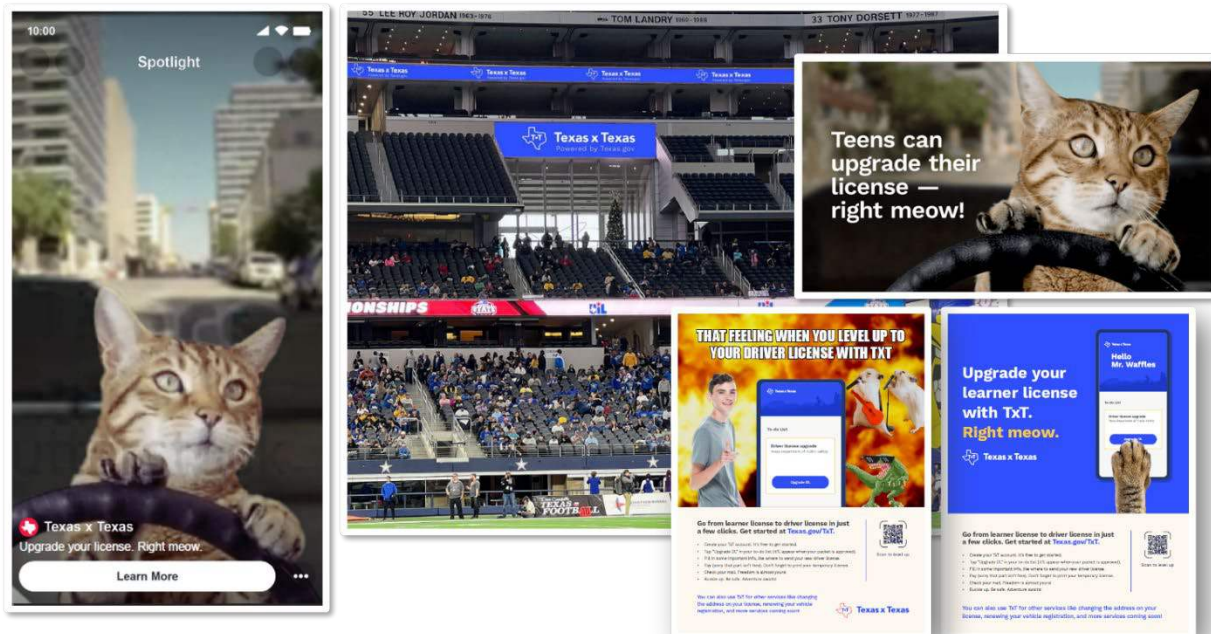
- ✓ Support their role in managing transition to online portal.
- ✓ Distinguish roles in the portal and how functionality differs by role.
- ✓ Understand additional permissions and functionality in admin specific-use cases.
- ✓ Participate in a live question and answer session.

**Tip**

- If all required documents have not been uploaded for the applicant, an error message will show. This can be through the selected location by clicking the drop-down menu where your current location is shown and clicking select their location.
  - Once you submit a packet under a specific location, you cannot change the applicant's location.
- All documents must be in PDF, JPG, or PNG file with a maximum file size of 20MB to be uploaded. You should use the latest version of Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

**Constituent Marketing. DIR invests in constituent-facing marketing initiatives as a proven tool in expanding awareness and adoption of Texas.gov services, such as TxT.** This project presented a prime opportunity to start promoting TxT to the next generation of constituents—Gen Z Texans. With

a generationally savvy creative approach that featured intentionally low-fidelity quality and age-appropriate humor, including a driving cat “*Mr. Waffles*,” the team launched a small, pilot campaign targeted towards this new audience in May 2024. The campaign ran across a variety of digital channels such as Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, and streaming TV platforms, and also included sponsorship of the Texas state high school football championships with stadium-scale executions. The team also produced digital flyers to share with TPST providers, as they offer a direct channel to the target audience. These marketing initiatives were so successful in 2024, that the team made this service the primary focus of campaigns in 2025, and the results have continued to be impressive.



## Impact

This transformative automation and modernization project brought previously offline, paper-based, and manual processes fully online for the first time ever. It has had a significant positive impact for TPST providers, DPS employees, and Texans, and has shown notable results since it was deployed to production in April 2024.

### What did the project make better? How do you know? What now?

In alignment with the original goals, this project significantly improved DPS and TPST business processes by automating and digitizing the entire workflow between these two entities to improve processing time and efficiency, facilitate transparency in the licensing process, reduce waste from paper-based documents, decrease wait times associated with in-office visits, and increase constituent satisfaction. The driver’s license upgrade integration on TxT has enabled Texans to take advantage of the ease and convenience of this online service offering, so they no longer have to deal with the hassle and lag of scheduling and waiting for an in-office appointment to complete this transaction.

### Measuring Project Success

Some of the key performance metrics include:

- ★ More than **600 TPST examiners** have onboarded and used the TPST portal.
- ★ DPS employees and admins enjoy an **automated**, much **quicker**, and **more efficient** workflow.
- ★ Over **36,700 minors** have created their TxT account and nearly **20,000 driver's license upgrade transactions** have been completed on TxT.
- ★ The Fiscal Year 2024 TxT-Driver's License Upgrade marketing campaign delivered over **53 million impressions** and an impressive **74 percent conversion rate** (*as compared to an industry average conversion rate of five percent*). Meanwhile, the Fiscal Year 2025 TxT-Driver's License Upgrade marketing campaign—still in progress—is averaging a **100 percent conversion rate**.
- ★ A direct email sent to 7.6 million existing TxT users promoting this new service generated a **130 percent increase** in TxT account creations by minors.

### ***Delivering Satisfaction, Cost Effectiveness, and Efficiency with Digital Government Solutions***

The following are some additional metrics we use to measure the impact of digital government solutions, like TxT, across the Texas.gov ecosystem.

***Constituent Satisfaction and Cost Savings.*** TxT has a **93 percent satisfaction rating and 95 percent of users would recommend TxT to others**. This level of satisfaction is well above both government and commercial industry benchmarks. Additionally, completing a transaction online with TxT takes seven minutes or less, while an in-office transaction can take nearly two hours. This leads to at least \$57 in time and gas saved by taking care of a transaction online rather than in an office. Using that calculation, **Texans that completed a driver's license upgrade on TxT have saved over \$1.1 million dollars**.

***Agency Cost Savings.*** According to calculations, it costs Texas government agencies less than \$1 to offer an online transaction, as compared to nearly \$30 to fulfill an in-office transaction. Using that calculation, **DPS has saved approximately \$580,000 from the TxT driver's license upgrade transactions that have been completed online instead of in their office**. Beyond operational efficiency and improved customer satisfaction, online services are fundamentally more cost-effective.

### ***Investing in the Future***

DIR continues to plan for and invest in the ongoing expansion and evolution of TxT, which has experienced unprecedented growth and adoption by Texans. To date, nearly 10 million users representing over 42 percent of the state's age-eligible population have TxT accounts and have completed almost 20 million transactions to date.

Recently, DIR and the Texas.gov team worked with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to develop and launch a new service on TxT that enables Texans to renew their boat registration online—further adding to the participating agencies and services on the platform.

DIR is proud to provide opportunities for Texas government agencies to automate, modernize, and transform via the Texas.gov program. The availability of well-designed, high-performing digital government services, such as those highlighted here, make a significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of Texas government entities. They make a meaningful difference in the daily lives of Texans and how they do business with their government.