

NASCIO State IT Recognition Awards

Always Open: Expanding Digital Access to DMV Services

Information & Communications Technology

State	Nevada
Agency	Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles, Motor Vehicle Information Technology Division
Category	Information & Communications Technology
Project title	Always Open: Expanding Digital Access to DMV Services
Project dates	March 1, 2024 - August 1, 2024; expansion ongoing
Contact	Hailey Foster hfoster@dmv.nv.gov; Tonya Laney; Angela Smith-Lamb; Suzie Pollard; Tim Simonetti

The DMV chatbot gives Nevadans a 24/7 digital path to reliable answers while reducing pressure on live agents and branch offices.

Metric	Result
Population served	More than 3 million Nevada residents
Demand context	Population growth of 21.5% since 1990 while DMV staffing increased by 3.6%
February volume	127,346 customer contacts; 29,391 chat interactions
Self-service outcome	15,400 customers assisted through chatbot self-service capabilities in February
Operating model	Routine chatbot maintenance is handled largely by RPM and CSD operational staff through configuration, reducing technical staff burden.



Executive Summary

The Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles implemented a cloud-based chatbot to expand digital access to DMV services, provide immediate answers around the clock, and relieve pressure on the Contact Center and branch staff. The project supports the DMV Transformation Effort, a broader multiyear shift from heavily in-person service toward online, efficient, and convenient access.

The business problem was clear: the DMV serves more than 3 million residents, and demand has grown faster than staffing. Population has grown 21.5% since 1990 while staffing has increased by only 3.6%, creating a supply-and-demand imbalance that affects customers and staff. Without automation, many customers must rely on phone calls or office visits for common questions, and employees spend too much time answering repetitive inquiries instead of helping customers with complex needs.

The chatbot provides a scalable, always-available information channel that delivers consistent, approved responses to common questions. Its operating model is as important as the technology: routine chatbot maintenance is handled primarily by Research and Project Management (RPM) and CSD operational staff, with little need to draw down technical staff. That makes service adjustments faster and less expensive than standard software enhancements while reserving IT capacity for more complex technical work.

Submission Snapshot

Question	Answer
Category fit	Connects stakeholders to information and services through a statewide digital communications channel.
Universal challenge	State agencies with high public demand need 24/7 channels that handle common inquiries without overwhelming staff.
Innovation	A cloud-based chatbot and contact-center workflow provide reliable, approved, scalable support; a business-owned configuration model lets RPM and CSD operational staff make routine adjustments quickly without defaulting to code changes.

IDEA

The DMV's mission is to provide efficient customer service whether a person is in a branch, on the phone, or online. Yet high demand for licensing, registration, titling, appointments, and general service information created long queues and pressure on frontline staff. The opportunity was to give customers a fast, digital, always-open path to common answers while preserving live support for complex cases.

The project matters because people often interact with the DMV at time-sensitive moments: renewals, registrations, identification, compliance, or travel. When the only accessible path is a call queue or branch visit, the customer experience suffers. A reliable chat channel gives residents a self-service option in seconds, after hours, and during volume spikes.

- Reduce contact-center and in-person pressure by handling routine questions through automation.
- Deliver consistent, accurate, and approved information across customer interactions.
- Provide digital service outside business hours and during high-volume periods.
- Create a transferable model that other high-demand agencies can adapt to their own service channels.

What made it different: This project changes the DMV story from "wait your turn" to "start with self-service." That is a small phrase with a big public-service effect.



IMPLEMENTATION

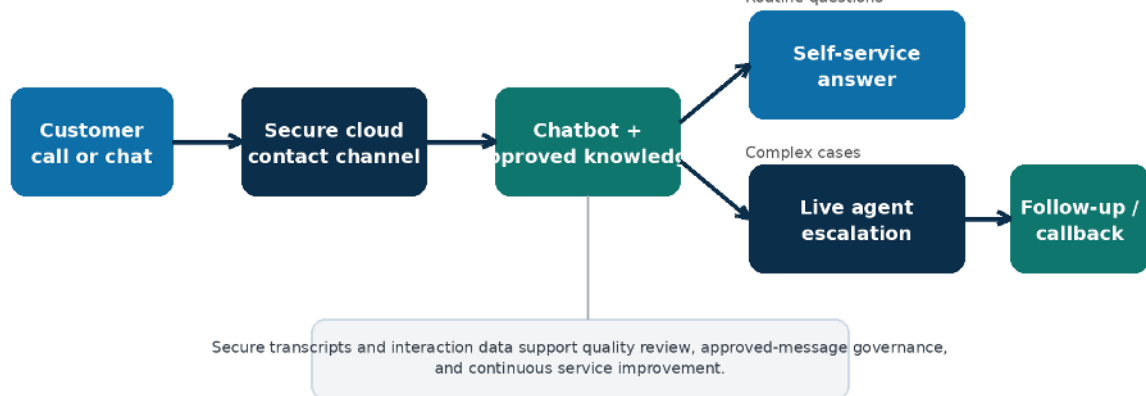
The chatbot was implemented as part of the DMV Transformation Effort and is supported by the Motor Vehicle Information Technology Division, Research and Project Management, CSD operational staff, security partners, and other operational stakeholders. It uses a cloud-based infrastructure to handle spikes in user volume, maintain availability, and expand content as new DMV products and services are added.

The chatbot is built on a rule-based framework that automates common inquiries while maintaining compliance with approved messaging. The approach is intentionally practical: customers receive dependable answers quickly, staff retain ownership of complex cases, and RPM and CSD operational staff can maintain most routine adjustments through configuration rather than code changes.

- Customers access the service through the DMV website using chat as an alternative to phone or in-person inquiries.
- Approved knowledge and response paths keep information consistent across interactions.
- Contact-center routing allows live agents to focus on cases that truly need one-on-one assistance.
- The platform is designed to evolve with new DMV services, divisions, and future appointment-scheduling functionality.
- Business staff can adjust approved responses and service flows through configuration, reducing reliance on code changes and allowing IT staff to focus on more complex technical enhancements across the department.

DMV Chatbot Service Flow (generic architecture)

Immediate self-service where possible, clean escalation where necessary, consistent information for customers and staff.



Generic service flow: cloud contact channel, chatbot, approved knowledge, self-service answers, escalation, and callbacks.

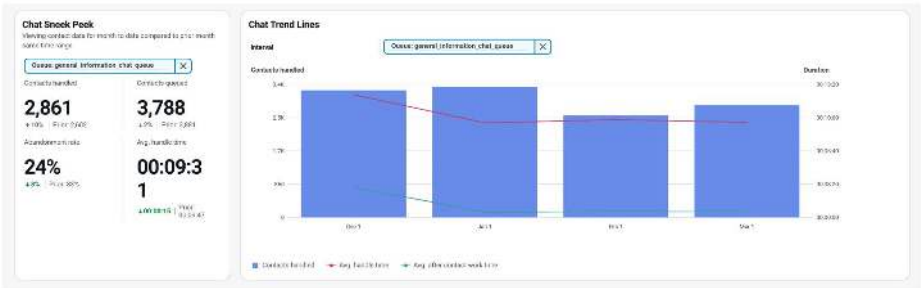
Implementation note: The technical architecture matters less because of the tools and more because of the operating model: immediate self-service where possible, clean escalation where necessary, a consistent information source, and configuration-based updates maintained largely by RPM and CSD operational staff.

IMPACT

The chatbot improved customer access, staff capacity, and the cost profile for routine service changes. Before implementation, customers relied more heavily on the Contact Center and branch offices, and staff absorbed repetitive questions that limited their ability to work complex cases. Now, customers can obtain answers in seconds through a 24/7 channel, live agents can focus on customers who need human support, and business staff can keep common service information current without turning every update into a technical enhancement.

The available performance data shows both adoption and service value. In February, 29,391 customer interactions occurred through chat, a channel that did not exist before implementation. Of those chats, 15,400 customers were successfully assisted through chatbot self-service capabilities. The monthly trend data also shows sustained chat activity, reduced abandonment compared with the prior month, and average handling time improvement.

Impact area	Measured result
Customer contacts	127,346 customers contacted the DMV through the Contact Center in February.
Digital channel adoption	29,391 interactions occurred via chat in February.
Self-service success	15,400 customers assisted through chatbot self-service capabilities in February.
Staff relief	Routine inquiries automated so Contact Center staff can focus on more complex customer needs.
Consistency	Rule-based framework delivers consistent, accurate, dependable information aligned to approved messaging.
Service availability	24/7 access supports customers outside business hours and during user volume spikes.
Business-owned configuration	RPM and CSD operational staff maintain routine chatbot content and configuration, minimizing technical staff burden and reducing the cost and cycle time of service adjustments.



Operational dashboard showing monthly contact and chat trend indicators.

Testimony

Voice from the field: A DMV technician reported that the chatbot automates responses to common inquiries, reduces call volume, eases pressure on Contact Center staff, and allows employees to devote more time to customers who truly need one-on-one support. Operational feedback also highlights the value of a business-maintained configuration model, where routine adjustments can be made swiftly without taxing technical staff.

What Now

- Expand chatbot capabilities across additional DMV divisions and service areas.
- Develop appointment-scheduling functionality.
- Move toward transaction-completion pathways so more customers can complete DMV business fully online.
- Continue designing transformation solutions that can be enhanced by business staff through approved configuration rather than routine code changes.