

New York

NYS Office of Information Technology Services

Artificial Intelligence

Virtual Agents

Kick-Off 08/6/2025 – Go-Live 01/12/2026

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Executive Summary

The NYS Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), in collaboration with Google and its vendor partner Egen, have successfully launched a transformative Generative AI (GenAI) Virtual Agent initiative for employer services at the Department of Labor (DOL). This landmark project, implemented on January 12th, 2026, represents DOL's first deployment of GenAI, significantly enhancing the experience for employers interacting with state services.

The initiative was developed to address the substantial volume of employer inquiries that could be resolved through readily available website FAQs, thereby alleviating pressure on DOL staff and allowing them to concentrate on more complex issues. The project's vision was to create a more efficient, responsive, and satisfying engagement for all state employers.

The impact of this initiative is already evident. Since its deployment, the Virtual Agents have successfully handled 37% of all employer conversations, demonstrating their effectiveness in providing essential knowledge and clear instructions. Key benefits include improved customer service through instant access to information for common questions and reduced wait times for employers needing assistance with more complex inquiries. This project marks a significant advancement in modernizing public services and optimizing the employer experience with the NYS DOL.

Project Description

Idea



Faced with an abundance of calls from employers, that could be answered by FAQ's found DOL's website. The implementation of a FAQ type of question Virtual Agent came into play. To alleviate the stress and allow DOL's staff to focus on more complex inquiries. This initiative was designed to significantly improve the experience for employers interacting with DOL services. This project marks the first time a Generative AI (GenAI) agent has been deployed across any business unit within DOL.

Implementation

Project Planning



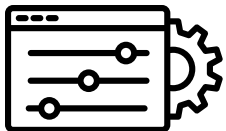
The vision for this project was to create a more efficient, responsive, and satisfying experience for all state employers engaging with the NYS DOL. This initiative was developed in partnership with Google and its vendor partner, Egen, leveraging cutting-edge Generative AI, Google's Contact Center Artificial Intelligence (CCAI), and Dialogflow CX.

Project plan included 2 main workstreams:

- 1 **Development of this Virtual Agent.**
- 2 **Continuation of Hypercare services for existing Virtual Agents**

A meticulously crafted timeline was established for the project, encompassing several critical phases. This structured approach began with the comprehensive gathering of knowledge source data, followed by in-depth discovery sessions involving all stakeholders to clearly define the project's scope, assumptions, and constraints. To proactively mitigate risks and facilitate iterative improvements, multiple User Acceptance Testing (UAT) cycles were conducted. The project's deployment was managed through phased releases, and a commitment to ongoing support was established with phased hypercare extending through 2026.

Development and Implementation



The development and implementation of the Generative AI Virtual Agent was guided by an Agile Scrum/Kanban methodology, fostering flexibility and continuous improvement. This involved:

- Utilizing agile practices with fixed sprints, user stories, a prioritized backlog, and regular planning/retrospective meetings at vendor's end.
- Establishing strong Cloud Foundations for architecture and infrastructure. Google's CCAI was key in building the virtual agent, which seamlessly integrates with the NYS DOL's IVR system to handle high call volumes, answer common questions, and improve user and staff experiences.
- Ensured quality assurance through thorough end-to-end testing, AI bot validation, integration testing, and comprehensive UAT support provided by NYSDOL.
- The implementation plan included a phased rollout, initially routing 50% of calls to the Virtual Agent, with ongoing performance monitoring. This was supported by post-deployment support and hyper care to maintain system stability and drive ongoing improvements

Leadership, Staffing, and Partnerships

The Virtual Agent project benefited from strong executive sponsorship by NYS DOL and ITS, guiding its strategic direction.

This project's success was built upon the strong partnership between

- The NYS DOL, Google, and ITS. The NYS DOL provided essential business context and user needs via its Program Managers and Business Leads.
- The ITS team, with its Technical Leads, Enterprise Architects, Information Security Office team and Project Manager (s), played a pivotal role in guiding the technical implementation and overall project execution. Google in partnership with Egen (Google's vendor partner) used their core CCAI and Dialogflow CX technology.

This collaborative staffing model ensured a comprehensive blend of domain expertise, technical acumen, and project management capabilities, instrumental in navigating AI implementation complexities.

Organizational Structure Supporting AI Development and Innovation

The successful implementation of the GenAI Virtual Agent for Employer Services represents a significant step forward in the effort to modernize NYS DOL's, underpinned by strong leadership, as stated before, and collaborative execution. This initiative directly supports DOL's vision for enhancing public services.

- **Executive Sponsorship:** Secured executive buy-in and dedicated resources through sponsorship from the NYS DOL and ITS, demonstrating a commitment to AI initiatives and empowering change.
- **Collaborative Development:** The ITS team led the delivery, fostering seamless collaboration with various ITS teams, DOL business leads, and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).
- **Leveraged External Expertise:** Effectively integrated external expertise from Google and Egen to ensure the successful development and deployment of the virtual agent.
- **Visionary Alignment:** The project directly contributes to the DOL's overarching vision for modernizing public services, showcasing a forward-thinking approach to service delivery.

Impact

Key metrics

Since its implementation, Virtual Agents has proven to be a powerful tool, successfully handling 37% of all conversations. This adoption rate demonstrates the effectiveness of the technology in providing employers with essential knowledge and clear instructions.

Key benefits of this initiative include:



Improved Customer Service: Employers now have access to instant knowledge and guidance through the Virtual Agent for common questions.



Reduced Wait Times: The Virtual Agents offer immediate assistance for common questions, decreasing call center wait times for employers with more complex inquiries.

Moving forward

Our plan is to continue expanding the use of virtual agents to handle frequently asked questions (FAQ's) from different lines of business across DOL that the public interact with. Other expansion of use could include cases that require authenticated intents, this is being explored based on supporting operational needs. With the collective goal to help further enhance DOL's ability to serve the public effectively and efficiently.