whispir

7 Steps: How Local Governments Can Scale Their *Digital Communications Strategy* to Meet Growing Population Needs
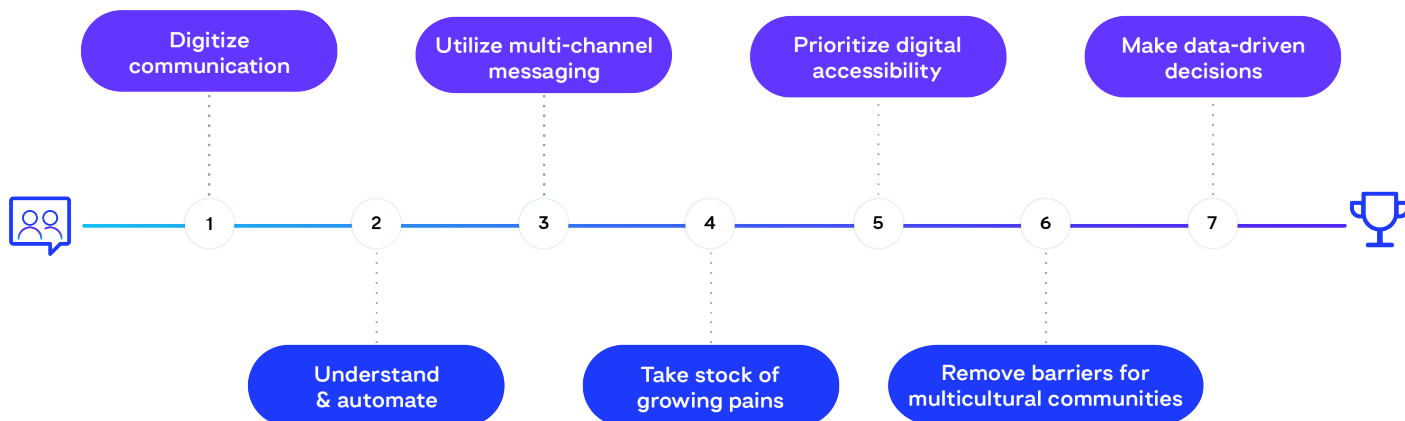
Improve productivity and reduce stress for local government workers

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the US has seen mass domestic migration from populated cities to more regional and suburban areas. This has been due to many factors, including the rise of flexible, remote work, financial changes that make city living harder to afford, and people reevaluating what's important to them in terms of where they live.

In 2020, 91% of suburban counties and 82% of urban centers saw more people move in than out[1]. This sudden population growth in suburban areas has turned up the pressure on local governments to support and provide services for much larger communities, leaving many government workers in a bind. They have fewer resources to work with, more work to be done, budget strains, and in many situations, not enough headcount.

This guide explores 7 simple but impactful ways in which local governments can seamlessly ease this burden on workers as a result of population growth.

7 steps at a glance

Digitize communication	Utilize multi-channel messaging	Prioritize digital accessibility	Make data-driven decisions

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7

Understand & automate	Take stock of growing pains	Remove barriers for multicultural communities

01. Digitize Communication

Citizens expect to be able to communicate with local governments in the same way they do with businesses and interpersonally. They want to be able to interact online. It's essential for local governments to digitize their communications to meet and engage with citizens in the digital space they already live in.
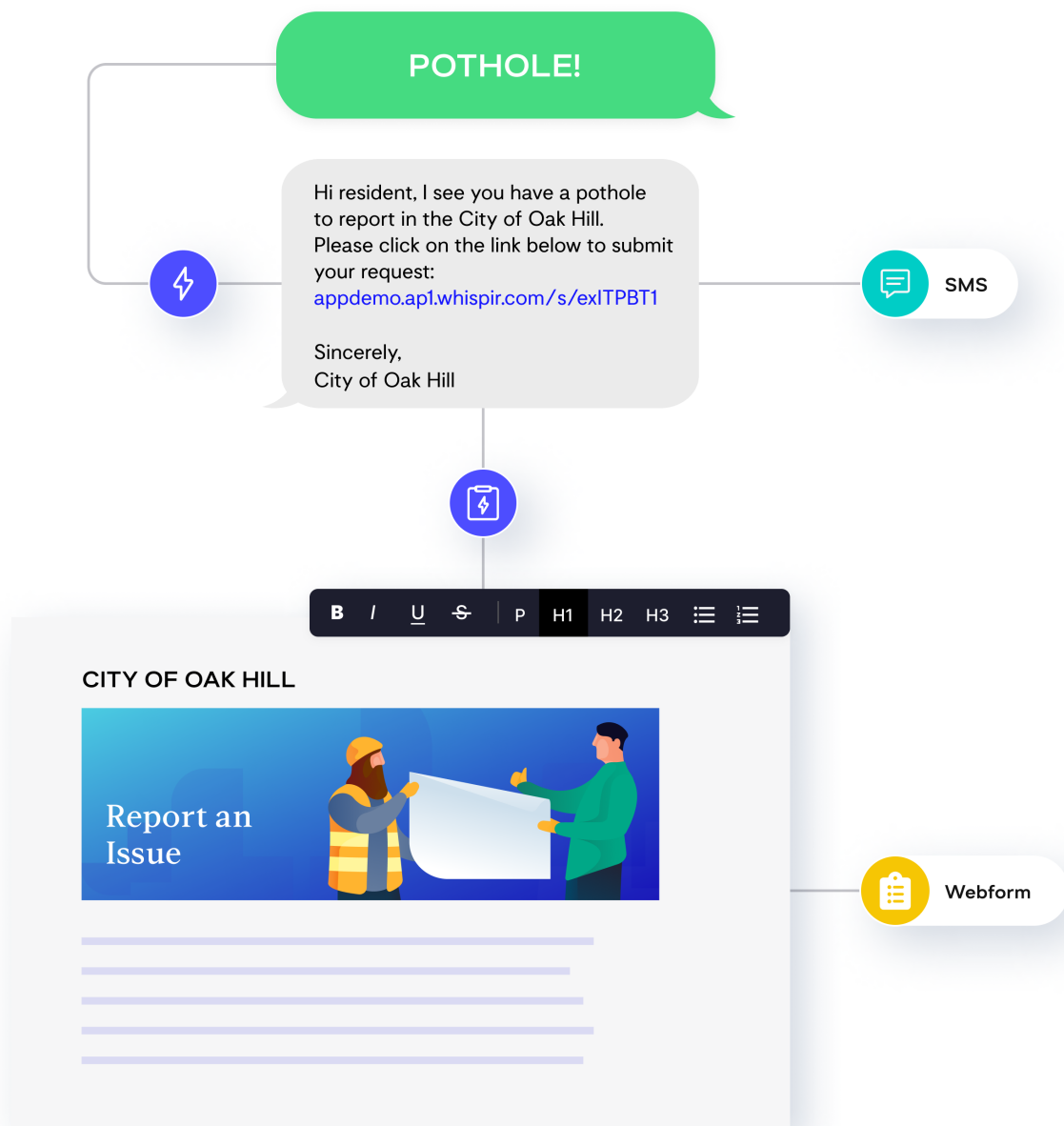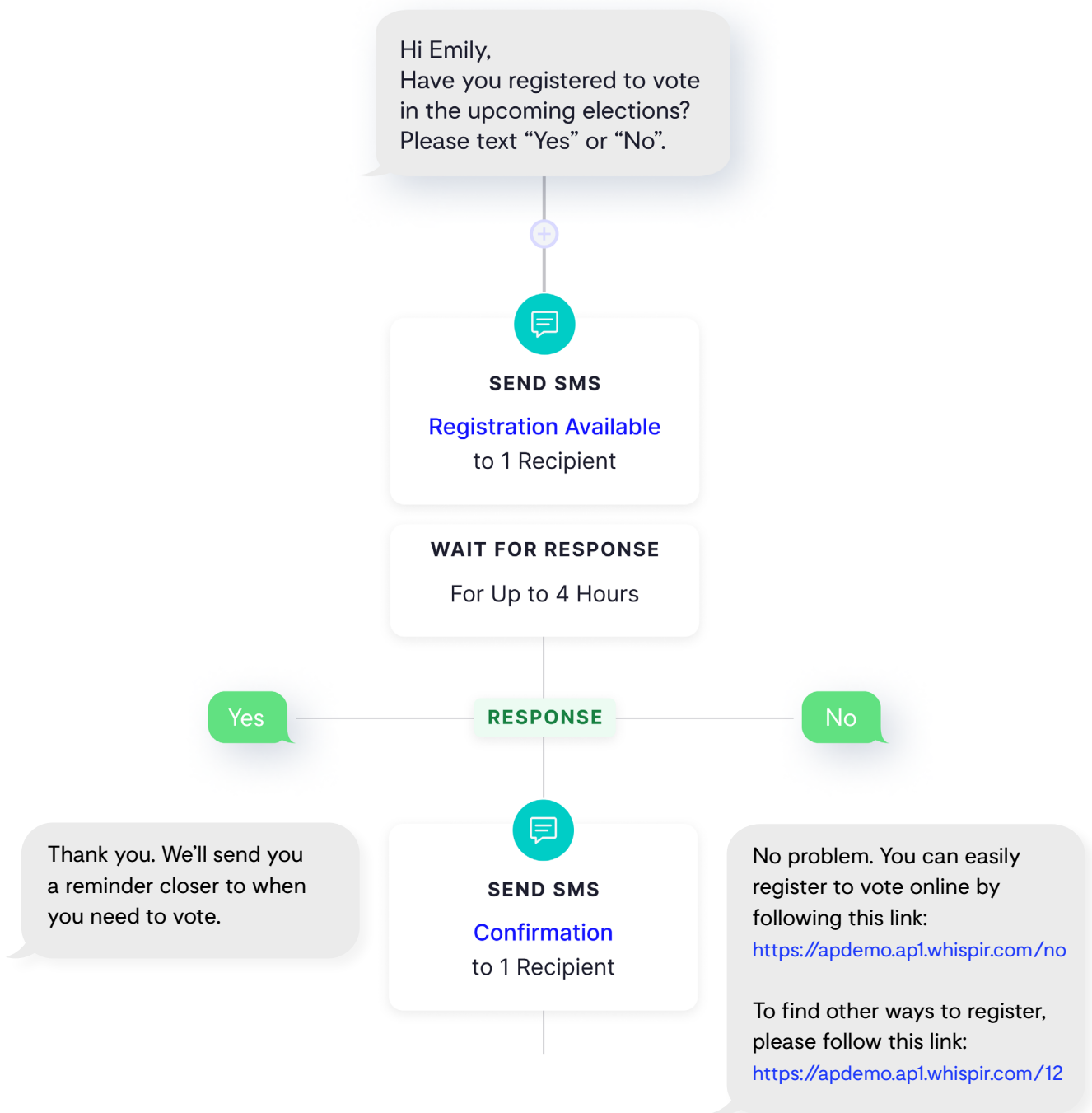

With Whispir, governments can make it possible for citizens to interact with them via two-way communication, and automate responses accordingly.

See how Whispir transformed: **Oak Hill's Digital Communication Strategy**

02. Understand and Automate the Citizen Journey

Whatever the reason a citizen needs to engage with you, they'll take a certain journey or pathway to do so. Understanding that journey makes it easier to automate it, and in turn, eases the burden of having to manually respond to citizen needs at every step of the journey.

Hi Emily,
Have you registered to vote in the upcoming elections? Please text "Yes" or "No".

SEND SMS

Registration Available
to 1 Recipient

WAIT FOR RESPONSE

For Up to 4 Hours

Yes

RESPONSE

No

Thank you. We'll send you a reminder closer to when you need to vote.

SEND SMS

Confirmation
to 1 Recipient

No problem. You can easily register to vote online by following this link:
https://apdemo.ap1.whispir.com/no

To find other ways to register, please follow this link:
https://apdemo.ap1.whispir.com/12

You can create responses that are automatically sent based on how a citizen replies, e.g. "**yes**", "**no**", "**confirm**", or "**cancel**".

03. Utilize Multi-Channel Messaging

Every citizen communicates differently. Some people will not engage with an email but will respond to text messages, while others will prefer one channel for reaching out to their local municipalities and another for finding out information about their municipality. As best as possible, local governments need to offer a range of options that can accommodate all.

SMS
Create and send rich SMS messages securely through Whispir's online SMS platform.

EMAIL
Send rich, interactive emails in bulk from anywhere in the world.

MULTI-CHANNEL
MESSAGING

SOCIAL
Send updates to multiple social media accounts using a single message, including Twitter & Facebook.

VOICE
Create powerful voice experiences with easy-to-implement, two-way workflows.

APPS
Incorporate our mobile apps into your communications plan and reach citizens regardless of location, device or carrier.

You can send messages and create content across various platforms, including SMS, email, social media, web pages, and more.

04. Take Stock of Growing Pains

With a growing and changing community, there's likely to be growing pains. You don't have to rely on guesswork to know what these are. Instead, it can be helpful to reach out to citizens to find out where pain points exist and gather real data points for how you can improve in what you offer the community.


You can easily build and send out survey forms with our drag-and-drop content buildier for citizens to fill out, to gather feedback, requests, and suggestions.

05. Prioritize Digital Accessibility

Many Americans don't connect to the internet or their email via fast broadband on a home computer. Instead, they access the internet using their cell phone[2] and use Facebook as their go-to for news and information[3]. Communications fail if messaging is not designed with all citizens and ways of accessing information in mind.

EMAIL

SMS
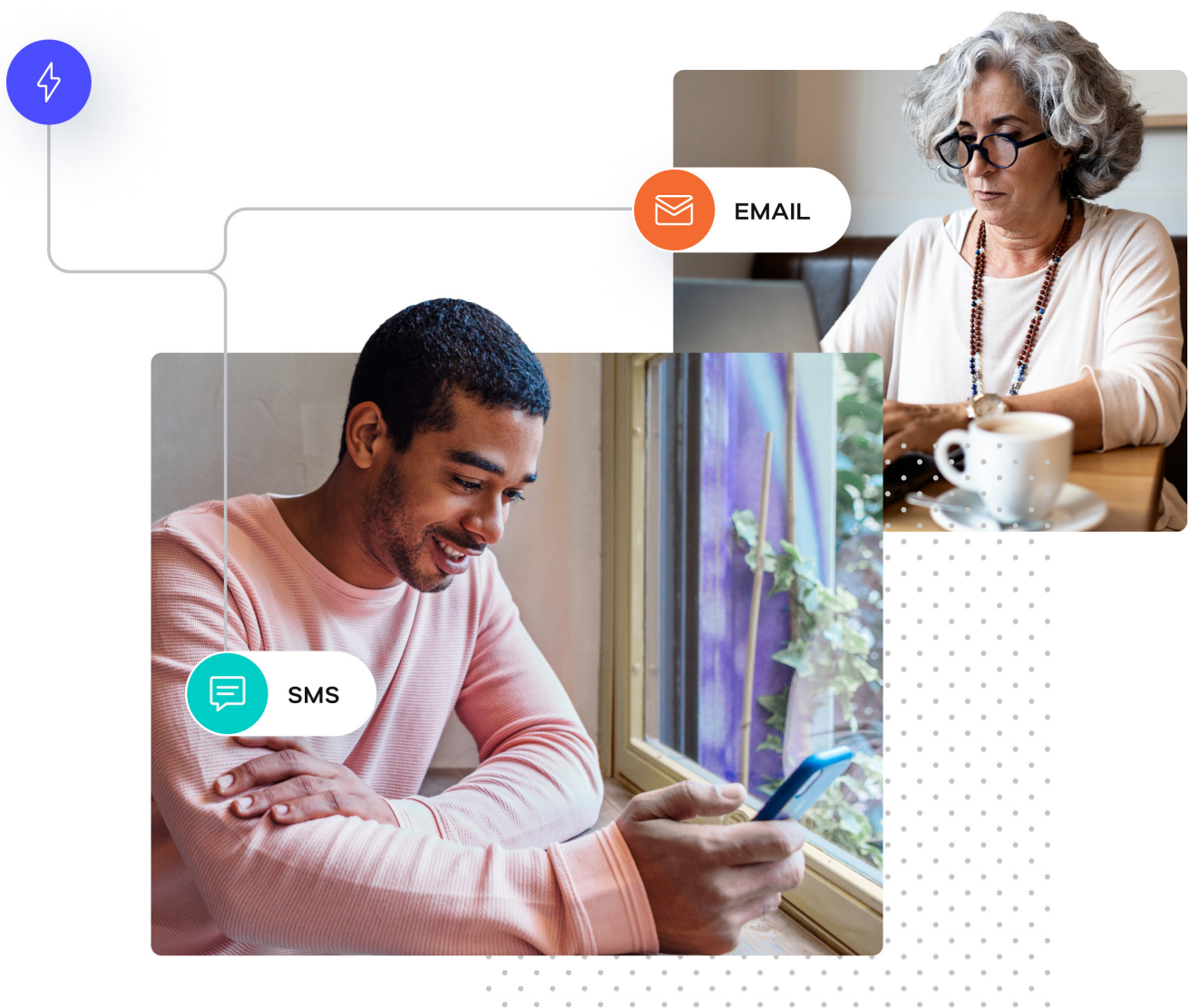
With Whispir you can consider all your demographics and the channels that will suit them best.

2. Pew Research Center - Digital divide persists even as lower-income Americans make gains in tech adoption
3. Pew Research - 10 facts about Americans and Facebook

06. Remove Barriers for Multicultural Communities

Approximately 1 in 5 Americans speak a language other than English at home[4]. According to data from the 2019 Census Bureau[5], around 8% of the population stated they speak English "less than very well". Local governments need to consider potential barriers this presents when thinking about how to communicate with citizens. With Whispir you can segment your audiences and communicate according to the channels each group finds the most engaging.

1 in 5
Americans speak a language other than English at home[4]

8%
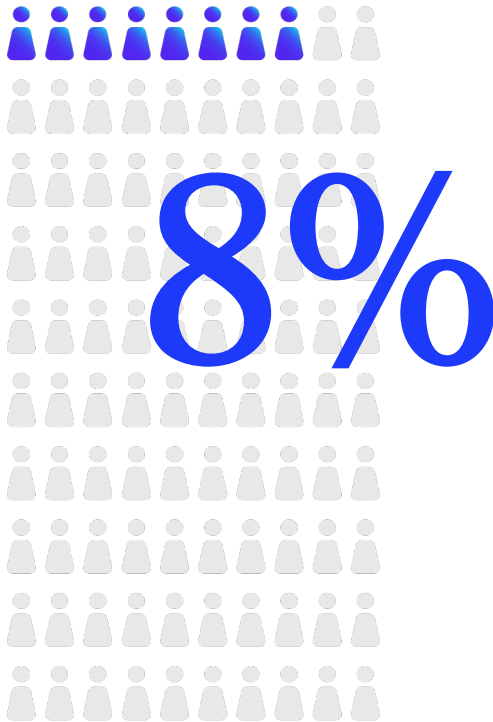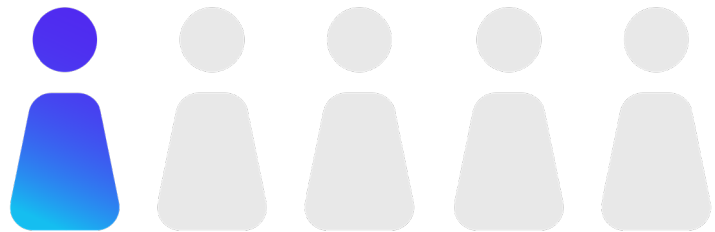
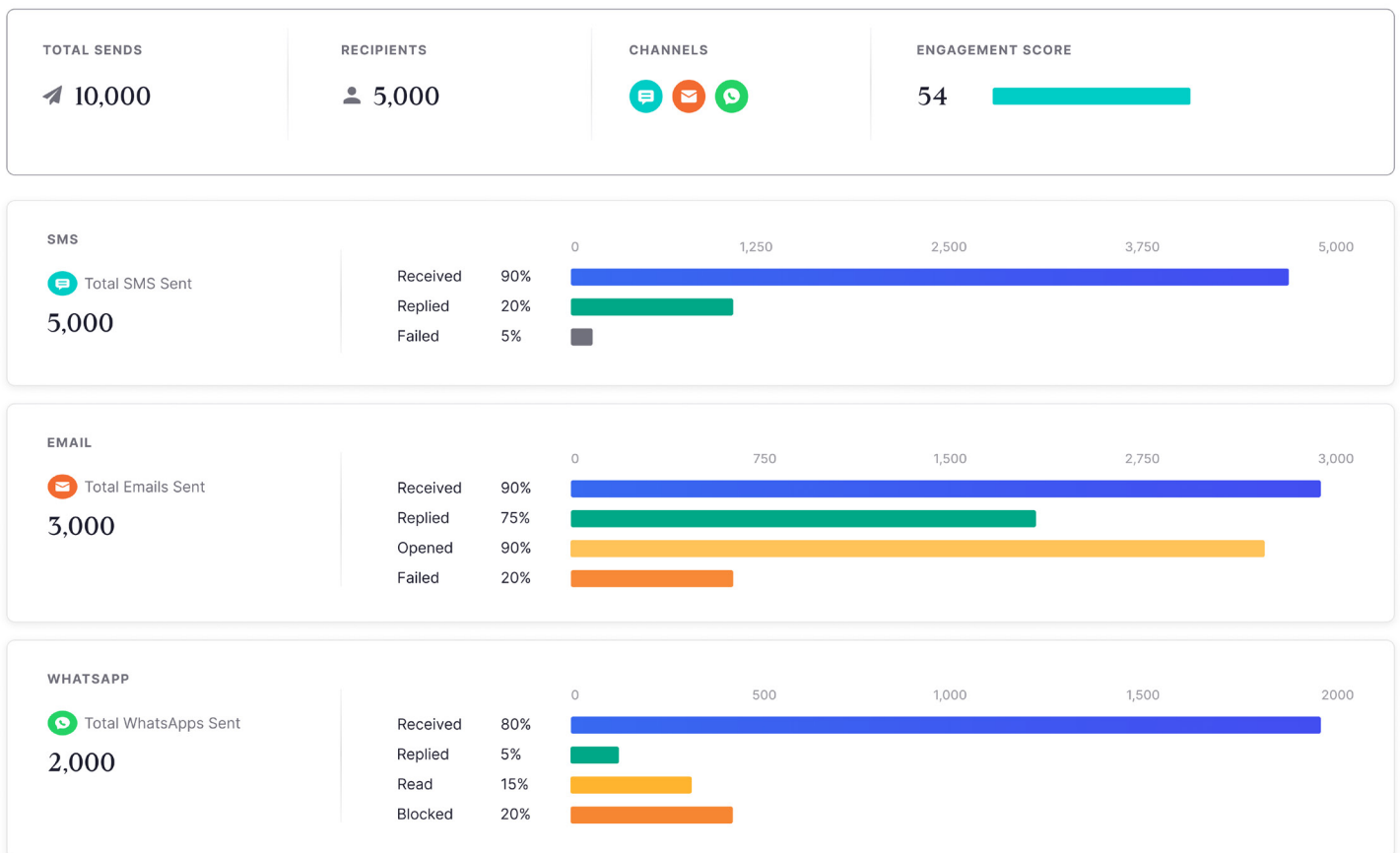... of the population stated[5] they speak English "less than very well"

Segment your audiences and communicate according to the channels each group finds the most engaging.

4. Center for Immigation Studies
5. United States Census Buruea 2019

07. Make Data-Driven Decisions

Utilizing data can help you personalize experiences for citizens, and make more informed decisions. Coupled with automation, data allows you to increase the effectiveness of your communications while simultaneously reducing the burden on your time and resources.

TOTAL SENDS	RECIPIENTS	CHANNELS	ENGAGEMENT SCORE
✈ 10,000	👤 5,000	💬 ✉ 💬	54

SMS

💬 Total SMS Sent
5,000

		0	1,250	2,500	3,750	5,000
Received	90%					
Replied	20%					
Failed	5%					

EMAIL

✉ Total Emails Sent
3,000

		0	750	1,500	2,750	3,000
Received	90%					
Replied	75%					
Opened	90%					
Failed	20%					

WHATSAPP

💬 Total WhatsApps Sent
2,000

		0	500	1,000	1,500	2000
Received	80%					
Replied	5%					
Read	15%					
Blocked	20%					

Use reporting and insights to see how your citizens interact with your communications, and adapt them accordingly.

4. Center for Immigration Studies
5. United States Census Buruea 2019

The Whispir Solution

Need to reimagine your communication strategy? More than 23 local government agencies around the world have chosen Whispir as their communications technology. We know firsthand how our platform can offer a seamless solution that benefits both workers and citizens.

Using our platform, you can set up and automate journeys for your citizens to take, utilize insightful data, better understand and segment audiences based on demographics, gather feedback from citizens to make for better relationships, and so much more.

Best yet, Whispir doesn't require any tech skills. It's designed to be easy and efficient to set up and use, radically reducing the burden on time and resource-poor government workers.

To find out more, get in contact with us today.

To find out more: Visit Whispir today