

Providing Open Source Products

The Connect Digitally team are experts in cross-government working and delivering digital transactional channel shift. Connect Digitally provides open source products which are: acknowledged for their quality and relevance; reusable; easily adapted to meet local needs; widely used; professionally presented and effective.

Connect Digitally's comprehensive library of open source products, developed through close partnership working with both public and private sector partners, provide solutions, information, guidance and advice to enable successful service transformation. They are tried and tested, regularly reviewed and quality assured. All resources are developed with the end-user and their specific needs in mind.

Providing open source products enables self-service, prevents reinvention of the wheel and reduces local partner costs.

Examples of Connect Digitally open source products include:

- Benefits Realisation Tools
- Benefits Flyers
- Business Case Development Tools
- Business Process Models
- Cost Calculators
- Exemplars
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Indicative Timelines
- Minimum Features and Relationships Guidance
- Open Data Standards
- Open Source Code
- Service Toolkits
- Step by Step Guides
- Steps to Success
- User Guides
- Website Usability and Accessibility Guidance

Connect Digitally's steps to success for development and provision of open source products include:

- Design products with the audience in mind, ensure messages are clear and concise and overall layout is visually appealing
- Develop products which are adaptable to meet local needs
- Ensure products are practical, reusable and quality assured
- Make products easily accessible and promote their availability
- Listen to feedback, hone and refine products



Evidence of Connect Digitally success includes:

- The Connect Digitally Online School Admissions Toolkit enabled one local authority to increase take-up of online school admissions from 2.5% to 74% in one admissions round. Many others also report large increases in take-up.
- Use of the Connect Digitally Online Free School Meals Starter Pack and the Developer Toolkit have enabled successful redesign of business processes to deliver transformed Free School Meals applications, renewals and audit processes. Examples of reported savings from local authorities as a result include:
 - rationalised space and resource – from 3 offices with 9 staff to 1 office with 5 staff
 - reduced processing time for free school meal applications – from 3 weeks to 3 minutes
 - reduction of over £15k in stopping payments for children who are no longer eligible
 - reduction in paper based filing by 95%
 - increased take-up of free school meals from 2,500 to 11,000, but reduced staff requirement from 2 FTE to 0.5 FTE, saving the council over £20k.
- Work with the South West Grid for Learning consortium partner enabled digital default (online take-up of 80% and above) to be achieved by 11 out of 15 local authorities in the region.

Others agree...

“...We are delighted with our huge increase in online take-up which we've achieved through extensive use of the Connect Digitally toolkit...”

Local Government Service Manager

“The toolkit offered by Connect Digitally is thorough and comprehensive – yet easily accessible and, more importantly, easy to understand.”

Local Government Service Manager

“With a library containing all relevant information relating to the Free School Meals project, the site also acts as an invaluable source of information for all local authorities, no matter what stage of development they are at.”

Local Government Service Manager

“I have used Connect Digitally's Online Payments Business Case, Challenges and Solutions, Step by Step Guide, Benefits Flyer etc to put together a presentation to the County who [as a result] gave me permission to go out to tender for a system.”

Local Government Service Manager