

Substance Abuse in the Age of COVID

COVID-19 has acted as a catalyst for society's accelerated shift to digital on a global scale. Online interaction with citizens is no longer an emerging development for government agencies. It has become our new normal. And with so many people operating remotely for the foreseeable future, the digitization of agency-citizen interactions has moved from **nice-to-have** to **must have**.

Given the uncertainty around how long the pandemic will last and whether it will recur, agencies need better online capabilities. As the ecosystem adapts to these changes, we are witnessing, in real-time, the need to remove paper-based processes from every aspect of agency operation. Digital use cases are expanding at a remarkable speed.



Figure 1 – Increase in online activity across social safety net

The COVID Wave

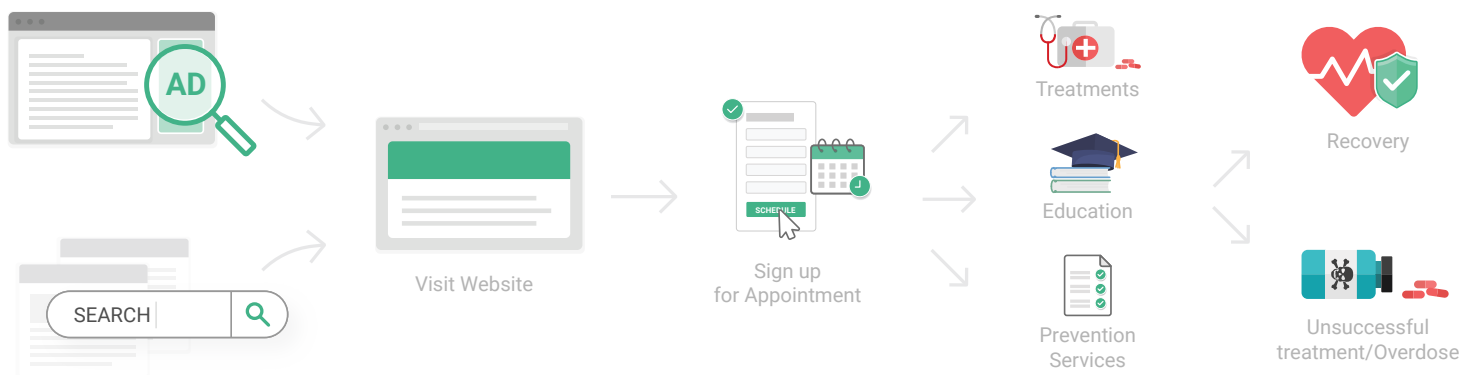
COVID-19 is also creating unprecedented demand across the social safety net. This demand is impacting the ability of constituents to access important benefits at a time of great need, while also impacting the state's ability to balance the budget. This trend will continue as:

- High caseloads persist even after communities fully reopen and vaccines become available.
- The drastic reduction in state revenue require agencies to leverage technology to serve constituents more efficiently with limited or reduced resources.
- Despite the likely availability of additional Federal funding at some point in the future, existing bottlenecks created by high caseloads make it essential that agencies understand, codify, and accurately predict future demand and ultimately realign and redesign service delivery.

Rising Importance of Digital Platforms

Your digital presence is comprised of your websites, mobile apps, social media accounts, digital advertising accounts, other connected devices (like testing and medical equipment), and call centers. This digital platform provides two major functions. First, it provides education and knowledge for those seeking information. Second, it enables your constituents to take action to get prevention services or treatment services for themselves or a loved one.

When your constituents interact with your digital properties, they leave breadcrumbs in the form of website, app, and device data. Because this data is being generated by digital properties that you own, it is called *first-party digital data*. This data is an untapped source that provides more relevant insights for your state and your program, and in the age of COVID, **it's a blind spot that can no longer be ignored.**



The Power of Digital Journeys

This first-party digital data can be stitched together into a journey to show the websites, pages, and subsequent actions each constituent followed on their path. For example, some may start by searching on Google, then come to your home page, and then browse to a page focused on prevention services. Others may see an advertisement, click on the ad to be taken to a page focused on treatment services, and request an appointment with a treatment provider. Later they might seek prevention services, ask for treatment, or overdose.

When the journeys for all of your constituents are combined, they provide new insights into behavior within your state, helping you quantify how many are interested in prevention, seeking treatment, and caring for loved ones. Analyzing these journeys reveal which pages and topics your constituents are frequently browsing, the type of information they are searching for, and the city and county they are visiting from.

Combined with outcomes and public data

Your outcome data provides a connection to, and measurement of, how effectively your activities accomplish your mission. By incorporating data feeds from treatments, prescription monitoring, medical examiners, naloxone distribution, and other surveillance and consequence data, it becomes easier to build a comprehensive view for various cohorts, including city, age, race, and ethnicity. You can see how behavior varies in more granular geographical locations with different demographics, risk factors, and vulnerabilities. And your digital behavior serves as a leading indicator for the outcomes you care about most – enabling you to get insights much faster than before.

Including publicly available data about searches (Google Trends) and social posts (Twitter) extends your reach beyond your digital presence, giving you broader visibility into attitudes, interest,

and intent. These data sources help you keep your ‘finger on the pulse’ of your communities and provide the seeds for more sophisticated analysis of first-party digital data. And adding other public data sources, like census and social determinants of health, **provides a richer view of the areas with the greatest need** – not just the most residents.

The Syntasa Advantage

Syntasa’s team is comprised of first-party digital data experts – highly proficient in collecting, measuring, analyzing, visualizing, and interpreting data. Our team is exceptionally skilled at exploring each data source independently, proposing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics, building dashboards and visualizations, combining data sources into cohorts, and configuring data pipelines to keep your data updated on a continuous basis. Our experts can dive deeper into interesting or anomalous areas, explore the underlying data in more detail, interpret results, look for interesting or unexpected behavior, formulate the questions for further exploration, add context to aid understanding, and recommend actions.

Syntasa Analytics and Insights Services provides the bridge between data and understanding, supporting your objectives, plans, and actions. Our deep expertise in data, cloud technology, and machine learning delivers insight which in turn suggests appropriate actions. We help you measure what matters to support your objectives with measurable outcomes. Working side-by-side in an iterative fashion, together we identify the most relevant KPIs and build customized dashboards. Our team of data scientists assess time-series trending of digital journeys and build predictive models to identify increasing risk levels for cities, counties, age groups, and ethnicity-based cohorts.

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Syntasa has partnered with Google to apply their world-class technologies to the opioid and substance abuse crisis. We leverage Google's Looker Analytics Platform to provide self-service dashboards and analytics capabilities. And our advanced data management and processing software platform quickly and efficiently makes the underlying data available within Looker to extract actionable insights and create value. Our software runs natively within your private Google Cloud Platform account, keeping sensitive data inside your firewall. In today's environment it is mandatory to treat Personally Identifiable Information (PII) responsibly to comply with regulations such as HIPAA, GDPR, and CCPA, and Syntasa enables encryption of PII data at the time of ingestion to ensure that all analysis and algorithms comply with these regulations. Syntasa was named a Cool Vendor by Gartner and a leading UK retailer was awarded *Best Use of AI* for their use of our software with digital journeys.

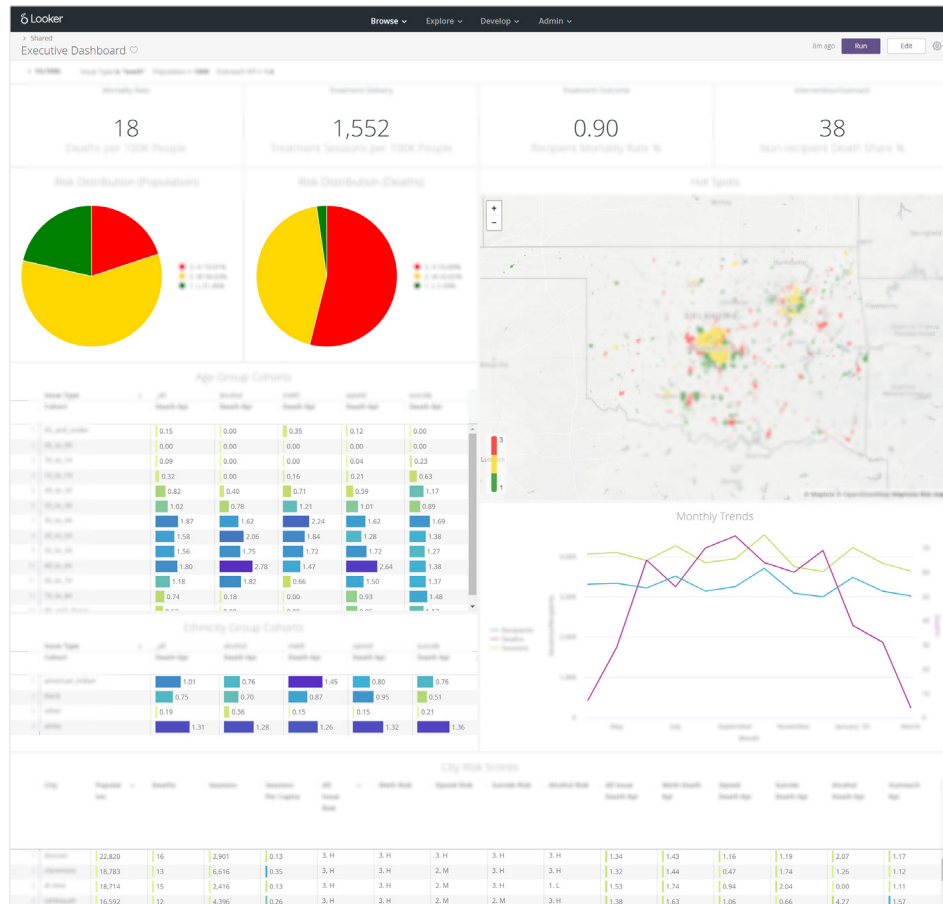


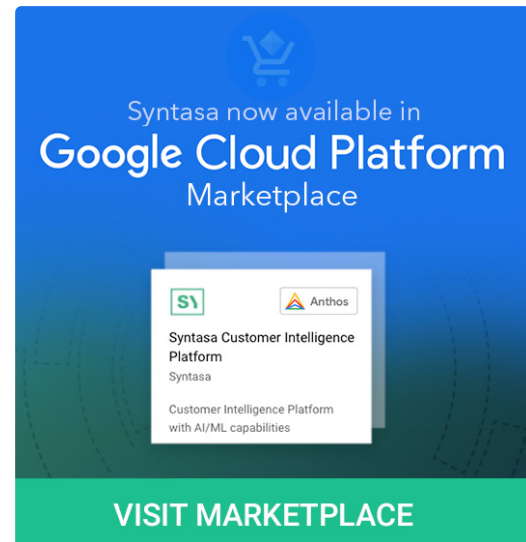
Figure 2 - Sample dashboard

The Capabilities You Need	looker	cloud	SY
Provides national and local administrators and planners with ability to see what matters most to them, making data actionable and driving efficiencies	✓	✓	✓
Self-service tool provides highly consumable and easy-to-use data visualizations	✓		
Delivers more granular geographic visibility (cities vs. counties)	✓		✓
Insights can be offered to providers, local governments, and community partners in the form of published reports and interactive dashboards	✓	✓	
Provides framework to pilot and measure results			✓
Data is combined (medical + public + digital) and refreshed automatically		✓	✓
Pre-built cohorts (e.g., city, age, race, and ethnicity) speeds insights and actions			✓
World-class performance and scalability of Google Cloud		✓	
Training is included to speed productivity	✓	✓	✓

Together, our industry-leading software and expertise help you accelerate your response. Every day there are new developments that require the most timely and relevant data to make the best decisions. And this same data can be harnessed to **power more effective outreach to your citizens** and improve your agency's digital strategy. The Opioid and Substance Abuse Solution from Syntasa includes several components to get up and running in a few short weeks:

1. Pre-built adaptors to ingest first-party digital data from websites, apps, devices, and other martech and adtech systems
2. Common schema with pre-defined attributes and metrics to speed KPI selection and dashboard creation
3. Syntasa can be installed quickly and easily in the

[GCP Marketplace](#)



Office of the Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services

As the opioid epidemic continues to devastate many parts of the country, identifying fraudulent activity has become critical in stopping the crisis. Looker helped the Office of the Inspector General leverage data to identify opioid fraud in Medicare spending. Leveraging Looker, a team of 1,600 investigators can now track down fraud, waste, and abuse related to opioid fraud. This is all done by empowering investigators to explore their data - and really dive into it in near real time - to connect and map fraud among doctors, patients, and pharmacies. For a deeper dive into this use case see [Fighting Opioid Fraud with Data Analytics](#).

Visit our public sector page to learn more at www.syntasa.com/public-sector and contact us to [request your trial](#).