

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

FACT SHEET: Building Digital Experiences for the American People

Today, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released [policy guidance](#) to Federal agencies which will transform the way government communicates with the American people digitally to ensure it is providing information that is easy to use, trustworthy, and accessible. The *Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience* (OMB M-23-22) guidance provides a robust policy framework for the next decade of digital modernization across government so agencies have common standards for delivering online tools and experiences that meet today's expectations.

President Biden and Vice President Harris believe government can and should deliver, whether that means rebuilding America's infrastructure or ensuring Americans can find the information that they need. This digital experience (DX) guidance builds on the Administration's efforts to improve Federal customer experience and service delivery, including President Biden's [Executive Order 14058, Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#) and the President's Management Agenda [Customer Experience Priority](#) to ensure every interaction between our government and the public delivers value, service, and efficiency.

The Federal Government is an enormous service provider. Some 430 Federal agencies and sub-agencies provide information and services to more than 400 million individuals, families, businesses, organizations, and local governments each year. Each month, there are nearly two billion [visits](#) to Federal websites, representing nearly 80 million hours of interactions with the public.



Digital is now the default way the public interacts with their government – and they expect their online experiences to be consistent with their favorite consumer websites and mobile apps. More than ever, digital experience is

central to Federal agencies' mission delivery and our government's ability to serve the American people.

Improving websites and digital services across the Federal Government will directly impact millions of people, including:

- 161 million individual tax filers each year, including 19 million individual IRS.gov online account users
- 66 million Social Security beneficiaries, including 3 million people who use SSA.gov's online replacement card service each year
- 66 million Medicare participants, including 3 million people with Medicare and their family members who visit Medicare.gov each month to explore and manage health coverage
- 45 million individuals with Federal student loans, including 17 million students and their parents who visit StudentAid.gov regularly to plan for college and apply for aid
- 21 million individuals issued new U.S. Passports each year, and 36 million individuals who use Travel.State.gov's online passport application status service each year
- 9 million Veterans receiving VA health care and benefits, including 828,000 individuals who use the VA Health and Benefits mobile app each month

What we need to fix

Today, Federal websites and digital services aren't meeting the public's needs and expectations:

- 45 percent of Federal websites are not mobile friendly
- 60 percent of Federal websites have a possible accessibility issue
- 80 percent of Federal websites do not use U.S. Web Design System code



And, many government forms and services still require paper processes, which add burden and a “time tax” on the public, as well as on the Federal workforce who serves the public:

- Only 2 percent of Federal Government forms to date have been digitized (offered as a dynamic online form, not just a fillable online PDF)
- The public spends more than 10.5 billion hours each year completing government paperwork
- About \$140 billion in potential government benefits goes unclaimed each year due to complicated or outdated processes

The pillars of government-wide digital experience

The guidance outlines numerous agency actions and standards for designing and delivering simple, seamless, and secure websites and digital services to the public. Among these actions, the Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer at OMB, with input from key technology organizations such as the Technology Transformation Services at the General Services Administration, is driving change across the key pillars of digital experience. In addition, we're building the shared technology infrastructure and standards needed for agencies to provide a more integrated online experience as users move across agencies, services, and channels to interact with government.

- **Analytics:** We're requiring the use of web analytics, standardized metrics, and participation in the government-wide [Digital Analytics Program](#) so agencies can gain insight into user behavior and optimize digital experiences. Agencies will also use government-wide [automated scanning tools](#) to identify usability issues and measure digital delivery progress.
- **Accessibility:** The Federal Government has an obligation to equitably serve all members of the public. We're underscoring the requirement to comply with [Section 508](#) accessibility standards and the recommendation to follow the most current [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) to maximize the public's ability to access government information and interact with government services online.
- **Brand:** It isn't always easy to tell the difference between official government and non-government sources of information online. We're requiring the use of [.gov domains](#) for Federal websites, digital services, and online communications to establish greater trust. We're also expanding Federal-wide website standards to include branding



guidelines which will help reinforce confidence and trust for users that they're interacting with official Federal agencies and service providers.

- **Content:** The public should not have to confront confusing jargon or decipher duplicative or conflicting sources of government information online. We're underscoring the requirement to follow [plain language guidelines](#) and also encouraging agencies to remove, consolidate, or re-write online content to ensure the public gets the answers they need.
- **Design:** Federal websites and digital services have an inconsistent look and feel as users navigate across websites, which causes a fragmented online experience. We're encouraging agencies to use the [U.S. Web Design System](#) to ensure a more consistent visual experience and easier wayfinding across websites.
- **Search:** The majority of users get to government websites and digital services through online search engines, which produce hundreds of thousands of results per query. We're requiring the use of an on-site search function (like [Search.gov](#)) for Federal websites and developing better search engine optimization (SEO) best practices so the public can find the information they're looking for more quickly and reliably.
- **Plus, digitization:** The public expects to be able to interact with the government through digital channels. We're driving the development of new digital options to get government services, like completing and signing government forms as well as completing common tasks. The [Digital Services Playbook](#) will continue to help agencies design and develop effective digital services.

Where we're already making progress

By making improvements to digital experiences, we can increase trust in and satisfaction with government. And we also have the opportunity to save taxpayer dollars by increasing self-service options for common tasks that you should be able to complete online. While we have a lot of work ahead of us over the next decade to design and deliver better digital experiences, the Administration is already making progress to improve the digital government experience for millions of people:



- **The Internal Revenue Service is digitizing services.** Expanded features in the [IRS.gov online account](#) make it possible to access tax records and make payments online.
- **The Social Security Administration is optimizing content.** The redesigned [SSA.gov](#) website is written in easy-to-understand language in both English and Spanish.
- **The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are improving design and information organization.** The updated [Medicare.gov](#) website highlights key tasks and information most frequently sought by people enrolled in Medicare, people nearing Medicare eligibility, and families of Medicare beneficiaries. A redesigned [Medicare Plan Finder](#) makes it easier to compare plan options online. As a result of these improvements, last year, user satisfaction scores increased up to 72 percent.
- **The Department of Veterans Affairs is serving its users digitally and improving accessibility.** The flagship [VA Health and Benefits mobile app](#) continues to release new, top-requested Veteran features. A recent update enables blind Veterans to read their VA benefits decision letters inside the app using assistive technology. With more than 1.8 million downloads, the 4.8-star-rated app is becoming a key digital tool for Veterans to access and manage their health care and benefits.

Learn more

Read the policy guidance: [OMB Memo 23-22](#)

Read the Federal CIO's blog post: [Why the American People Deserve a Digital Government](#)

Get digital delivery resources, best practices, and implementation updates: [Digital.gov](#)



Explore TMF project funding options: [\\$100M TMF CX Allocation](#)

Join us: [CIO.gov](#)

Questions? Contact ofcio@omb.eop.gov