



## U.S. General Services Administration

Public Law 115-336, "21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act"

December 2019 Report

Prepared for the Office of Management and Budget and the Public per the requirements of section 3(d) of Public Law 115-336.

## **The U.S. General Services Administration's Progress in Implementing 21st Century IDEA**

### **2019 Annual Report**

## **Background**

The [21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act](#) (21st Century IDEA),<sup>1</sup> section 3(d), requires Federal executive branch agencies to report to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the public on the agency's progress to implement the requirements of the Act and modernize their websites and digital services. This report is required once per year for 5 years beginning in December 2019. The information below details the efforts of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to modernize the agency's websites and digital services in 2019.

## **GSA Efforts to Date**

GSA is using the 21st Century IDEA to create a better customer experience for Federal agencies, industry, and the public. GSA aims to provide its customers with an easy online experience and has taken multiple steps to implement the requirements of the 21st Century IDEA to improve customer interactions with its websites and digital services.

GSA has improved coordination across the agency around its digital strategy, conducted research and analysis on the agency's websites and digital services, and trained staff. To lead these efforts, GSA established an agency-wide team to ensure coordination with stakeholders across the GSA enterprise. This team is working collaboratively with managers of high-impact websites and digital services to prepare modernization plans and implement the requirement of the 21st Century IDEA. In addition, GSA established a Digital Governance Senior Steering Committee to ensure that executives understand, support, and provide consistent direction on agency-wide modernization activities.

To meet the requirements of the 21st Century IDEA, GSA compiled a comprehensive inventory of the agency's public-facing websites and digital services, using tools such as dotgov.gov and the Digital Analytics Program.<sup>2</sup> From this list, GSA then worked with the

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<sup>1</sup> Public Law 115-336, published at 132 Stat. 5025-5028.

<sup>2</sup> High-level data on how people interact with Federal public websites and digital services is available at <https://analytics.usa.gov>. More detailed data—including a list of the most-viewed websites and digital services, and trend data—is available via an application programming interface (API) at

website owners and business managers to determine the baseline compliance of each website with the requirements in section 3(a) of the Act.<sup>3</sup>

Since passage of the 21st Century IDEA in December 2018, GSA has identified immediate and long-term actions the agency will take to modernize agency websites and the digital customer experience. Those efforts include updating GSA's internal guidance on digital experience to align with the 21st Century IDEA and launching an internal community of practice to provide training, share information, and deliver more effective digital services and information.

In 2019, GSA saw improvements in all areas required under section 3(a) of the Act. In particular, GSA began an effort to establish an agency-wide Trusted Tester cadre to improve the accessibility of digital content and services, created agency-wide guidelines on the use of the U.S. Web Design System to offer a more consistent user experience across GSA, began developing an enterprise-wide information architecture and content strategy aligned around a single "services catalog," and issued agency-wide guidance on the use of search.gov to improve findability of digital content.

GSA also directed agency web managers to ensure compliance with industry standard secure connection requirements, undertook efforts to ensure participation in the Federal Digital Analytics Program to encourage the use of performance metrics to better understand user needs, researched the potential of GSA websites to offer customization to users, and promoted the use of free and low-cost tools to optimize websites and services for use on mobile devices.

In addition to GSA's internal efforts to improve its websites and digital services, GSA strives to deliver value and savings across the entire Federal Government. GSA plays a leadership role in modernizing how the Federal Government delivers technology products and services. As GSA works through its own implementation of the

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<https://open.gsa.gov/api/dap/>. The data can be filtered by [agency](#) and [domain](#).

<sup>3</sup> Section 3(a) of the Act requires Federal agencies to "ensure to the greatest extent practicable that any new or redesigned website, web-based form, web-based application, or digital service—(1) is accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d); (2) has a consistent appearance; (3) does not overlap with or duplicate any legacy websites and, if applicable, ensure that legacy websites are regularly reviewed, eliminated, and consolidated; (4) contains a search function that allows users to easily search content intended for public use; (5) is provided through an industry standard secure connection; (6) is designed around user needs with data-driven analysis influencing management and development decisions, using qualitative and quantitative data to determine user goals, needs, and behaviors, and continually test the website, web-based form, web-based application, or digital service to ensure that user needs are addressed; (7) provides users of the new or redesigned website, web-based form, web-based application, or digital service with the option for a more customized digital experience that allows users to complete digital transactions in an efficient and accurate manner; and (8) is fully functional and usable on common mobile devices."

requirements in the 21st Century IDEA, the agency is committed to tracking its efforts and reporting the agency's lessons learned.

Finally, as required by section 7 of the Act, GSA has made available under the GSA Schedules program the systems and services necessary to fulfill the requirements of this Act. The Schedules program will ensure interoperability between executive agencies, compliance with industry standards, and adherence to best practices for design, accessibility, and information security.

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