

Digital Service Standards

Delivering User-Centric Services



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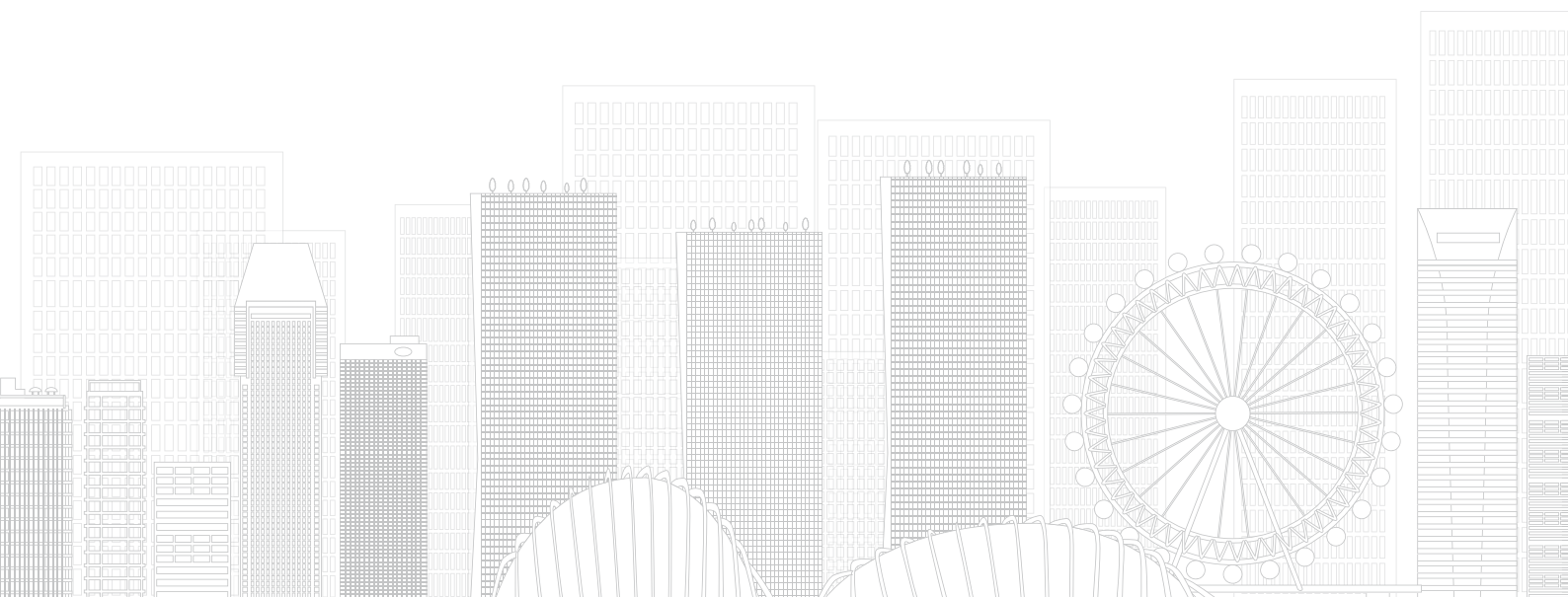
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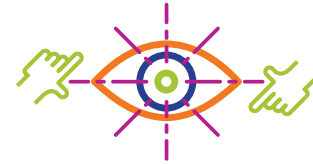
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1 INTUITIVE DESIGN AND USABILITY



As the government's digital 'shopfront', our digital services must be well designed so that citizens and businesses can interact and transact with us digitally in an intuitive and easy to use manner.

a) Find the service and understand how to use it

Standard 1.1
Intuitive Uniform
Resource
Locator (URL)

A single website with .gov.sg domain shall be used for each agency¹ (e.g. www.agency.gov.sg). The naming of the URL shall be intuitive (e.g. easy to remember and relate to real world) and suitable.

Standard 1.2
Easily Searchable

All .gov.sg digital services shall be easily searchable by search engines.

Standard 1.3
Listing of
Services Upfront

For all .gov.sg informational services, a listing of transactional services (if any) shall be provided upfront with a short description and any other useful information for each of the transactional services.

¹ "Government agency" refers to ministries, departments, organs of state, and statutory boards.

Standard 1.4
Prominent
Featuring of
Transactional
Services

All .gov.sg transactional services shall be easily discoverable (within 2 clicks from homepage/home screen) and viewable by user without prior login and be featured prominently.

Standard 1.5
Key Information
on Transactional
Services

All .gov.sg transactional services shall clearly state the information that enables the user to understand the functionality of the services, when appropriate.



b) NAVIGATE THE DIGITAL SERVICE

Standard 1.6 Navigation

All web-based digital services shall implement navigation features that include reasonable number of links, familiar and consistent placement of navigation, and allow users to know where they are on the website.

Standard 1.7 Global Primary Navigation Panel

All .gov.sg informational services shall adopt a Global Primary Navigation Panel for every page in the informational service. It shall provide a link called “Who we are” and any additional links.

Standard 1.8 Global Footer Bar

All .gov.sg informational services shall adopt a Global Footer Bar for every page in the informational service. If any logo is used, it shall be placed above the Global Footer Bar. The Global Footer Bar shall include name of the digital service, contact information, etc.

Standard 1.9
Descriptive Links

All web-based digital services shall have links that are short, descriptive and identifiable, and ensure a clear distinction between visited and unvisited links.

Standard 1.10
Use of Frames

All .gov.sg digital services shall not have frames implementation, except for the use of inline frames (i.e. iFrame).



c) USE THE DIGITAL SERVICE

Standard 1.11 Digital Service Availability

All .gov.sg digital services and functionalities shall be made available anytime where applicable and shall not have broken links. Customers shall be informed in advance if the digital services would not be available (e.g. scheduled maintenance).

Standard 1.12 Display of Key Features and Contents

All web-based informational services shall display key features, featured content or announcements (e.g. alerts and notices) prominently on their homepages/home screen, with useful and critical content to be 'above the fold' (i.e. readily visible to the user without the need to scroll) and present visual cues for users to scroll down.

Standard 1.13 Search Field

All .gov.sg informational services shall place their search icons (e.g. a magnifying glass) at the top right side of the screen and in the same line as the Global Primary Navigation Panel.

Standard 1.14 **Element Design**

All web-based digital services shall use familiar design conventions that map closely to real-world concepts for their digital service elements (e.g. buttons, links, checkboxes). The elements shall make sense within the context of the task.

Standard 1.15 **Standard Font**

All .gov.sg informational services shall use Sans-Serif fonts / font family (e.g. Verdana, Arial, and Helvetica) in dark font colour on background that is white or light in colour for primary textual content.

The .gov.sg informational services shall adopt a minimum base font size of 16 CSS pixels, with the size to be adjustable.

Standard 1.16 **Hyperlink to non-HTML Documents**

All .gov.sg digital services and mobile applications with hyperlinks to non-HTML documents shall specify in text the type and size of the file, in parentheses beside the hyperlink.

For content of digital services that can be presented in a HTML page, they shall not be put in non-HTML documents (e.g. PDF file).

Standard 1.17
Saving as
Soft Copy

All .gov.sg informational services containing useful content that is likely or meant to be cited/used by users shall provide an option to save this content to a soft copy format and viewed using free viewer software. Serif fonts (e.g. Times New Roman) shall be used in the soft copy for optimum readability.

Standard 1.18
Use of
Multimedia

Images, audios and videos shall be relevant to the subject matter for all .gov.sg informational services, and be of adequate quality and with appropriate titles and descriptions.

Standard 1.19
Indication of
User Interface
(UI) Response

All .gov.sg digital services and mobile applications shall provide users with a visual indication of the UI response, minimise user interface response time, and provide response and feedback to user actions in a timely manner to acknowledge their actions.

Sound or graphics shall be used to indicate if an operation (e.g. keyboard input) has been accepted or an accepted input is being processed.

Standard 1.20 **Login Prompt**

Where SingPass or CorpPass login is required for a .gov.sg transactional service, the transactional service shall prompt for login only at the point prior to the start of the transaction and before entry of any data items that can be found in MyInfo².

Standard 1.21 **Display of User Name upon Login**

All web-based transactional services shall ensure that the logged in user's name is displayed on the website/digital service portal, where applicable, to provide visual cues that users are in a secure and personalised environment.

Standard 1.22 **Streamlining of Transactional Services**

Transactional services deployed in web-based or mobile applications shall be streamlined to have minimum number of steps and provide a "Save as draft" where appropriate.

² MyInfo is a one-stop data platform that saves time by automatically filling out government forms online.

Standard 1.23

User Assistance in Form Filling

All .gov.sg transactional services shall use MyInfo to pre-fill forms, so that users do not need to repeat the same information. In addition, the fields in the form shall be labelled using clear and common terms with mandatory and optional fields clearly indicated, include smart defaults (e.g. postal codes to retrieve address) and provide prompts to prevent data-entry errors.

Standard 1.24

Progress Information

All transactional services deployed in web-based or mobile applications that require multiple steps to complete shall include key instructions and progress information (e.g. Page x of y, progress indication bar, labels, visual icons) to inform user which stage he / she is currently at, in relation to the entire transaction.

Standard 1.25
Intuitive Error
Message

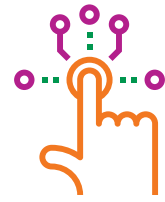
All web-based digital services and mobile applications shall provide meaningful and actionable error messages which are intuitively placed, where applicable.

Standard 1.26
Last Updated
Date Stamp

All .gov.sg digital services pages shall display a last updated date stamp to indicate the currency of the content at the end of each page.

Standard 1.27
Official Design
Specification
for Mobile
Application

Mobile applications shall be designed to cater to the needs of the users with a clear call to action, and be developed according to the official design guidelines and specifications released by the platform provider. Touch-based gestures shall follow commonly-used patterns and guidelines provided by respective platform providers.



d) COMPLETE THE INTERACTION OR TRANSACTION

Standard 1.28 Allowing Review and Confirmation

All web-based transactional services shall allow the users to review, confirm and correct their inputs/information before submission, where applicable.

Standard 1.29 Digital Payment

Where inbound and/or outbound payments are required, .gov.sg transactional services shall provide digital payment options. The inbound payment collection shall include the payment collection screen, bill information, and digital payment modes.

Standard 1.30 Exception Handling and Refund Process

All web-based transactional services shall clearly communicate the processes relating to exceptions handling, and payments, refunds and reconciliations in the event of a failed transaction (before the user makes the payment).

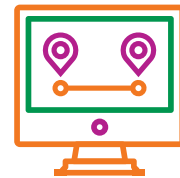
These processes shall include appropriate procedures for handling exceptions (e.g. interruptions), digital payments, as well as procedures for handling refunds and reconciliations.

Standard 1.31 Digital Signature

All .gov.sg transactional services shall provide digital alternatives to wet ink signatures.

Standard 1.32 Transaction Acknowledgement

All transactional services deployed in web-based or mobile applications shall provide acknowledgement to the user upon concluding the transaction, with the relevant transaction details.



e) TRACK THE TRANSACTION

Standard 1.33 Status Tracking

For all .gov.sg transactional services, where the outcomes may not be immediately available (e.g. approval of application), the transactional services shall allow users to track status and be informed of any updates.

2 ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY



Government digital services must be designed to benefit all population segments, including persons with disabilities. We embrace the international accessibility standard, Web Content Accessibility Standards (WCAG), and is also aligned with local standard, SS618: Guidelines on User Interface Design for Older Adults.

Standard 2.1 Web Content Accessibility

All web-based digital services, including those accessed via mobile devices, shall adhere to Level A and Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 specifications, except for WCAG clauses on “Provide alternatives for time-based media” for which all digital services need only adhere to Level A.

Standard 2.2 Speech Videos and Captions for Pre-recorded Multimedia

All .gov.sg digital services with speech videos and pre-recorded multimedia shall include the use of signposts, lower thirds, subtitles, footage and captions.

Standard 2.3

Mobile Responsiveness

All web-based informational services shall adopt Responsive Web Design to ensure mobile responsiveness. Web-based transactional services that are assessed as not suitable for mobile access shall be disabled for access on mobile devices, and users shall be informed and advised accordingly.

Standard 2.4

Web Rendering

All web-based digital services shall be designed to adapt for best viewing and adjusted to fit according to the user device's screen resolution, width and orientation without the need for horizontal scrolling.

They shall be compatible³ with the latest versions⁴ of commonly used web browsers. All supported browsers and versions, as well as required plug-ins shall be displayed on the web pages.

All web-based digital services shall be HTML W3C and CSS W3C valid. HTML, CSS and JS files shall be minified, where possible, to ensure acceptable page loading.

³ To be deemed 'compatible', users shall be able to access the information they need or be able to complete their task without layout issues causing any problems (for example vital information or form fields becoming less visible).⁴ 'Latest versions' refers to the latest stable version released by the browser software manufacturer and the version immediately before that.

Standard 2.5
**Common
Language**

All web-based digital services shall be offered in English. Additional languages should be offered to better serve the target users if required.

If other languages for the digital services are offered, all relevant information needed to complete the transaction shall also be made available in the other languages.

Standard 2.6
**Use of
Infographics**

All web-based informational services shall use infographics to explain complicated data and statistics, for greater clarity and inclusivity.

Standard 2.7
**Search and
Assistance**

All web-based digital services shall provide different forms of search and assistance to the user such as site search, contextual help, phone, chatbot, etc. to the user, so that the interaction or transaction can be completed easily.

3 RELEVANCE AND CONSISTENCY



Our digital services must be relevant to the needs of our citizens and businesses, and provide a consistent experience across the government. They shall carry a 'branding' that uniquely identifies them as government digital services, in keeping with the ethos of one public service.

Standard 3.1 Digital End-to-End

All government services shall be completed online (end-to-end), except those where physical presence is uniquely required (e.g. marriage).

Citizens and businesses shall be able to transact digitally with the government from start to finish, without having to deliver a document (i.e. paperless) to the agency or show up in person (i.e. presence-less).

Standard 3.2 Web-based Digital Service Prioritisation

Mobile applications shall be implemented only if the same objectives cannot be met with web-based digital services.

Standard 3.3
Digital Service
Lifespan

Digital services for programmes or initiatives shall be terminated as soon as the programmes or initiatives cease to exist, or are consistently low in traffic.

Standard 3.4
Digital Service
Review

All digital services shall be reviewed at least once every three years to stay relevant with changes in business needs and technology.

Standard 3.5
Adoption of
.gov.sg Domain

All web-based digital services shall use the .gov.sg domain except for those in the area of education which may use the .edu.sg domain.

Standard 3.6
Clear Content

The content of digital services deployed in web-based digital services or mobile applications shall be relevant, up-to-date, useful and easy to understand.

Standard 3.7
Archived
Information

All .gov.sg digital services shall provide archived information online, if the archived information is still relevant.

Standard 3.8
Official
Government
Banner

All .gov.sg digital services shall adopt the Official Government Banner (containing the Singapore Government Online Logo) for every page in the digital services.

Standard 3.9
Service Identity

All .gov.sg digital services shall adopt a Service Identity (containing the agency/ service name and logo) for every page in the digital services.

Standard 3.10
Footer Panel

All .gov.sg digital services shall adopt the Footer Panel (containing the “Privacy Statement”, “Terms of Use”, etc.) for every page in the digital services.

Standard 3.11
Application
Store Content
for Mobile
Application

The name of agency and pre-requisites shall be shared in the application store for all mobile applications.

Standard 3.12
Basic Information
of Mobile
Application

All mobile applications shall include an “About”, “Information” or equivalent screen to provide basic information about the mobile application.

Standard 3.13
Icon for Mobile
Digital Service

All mobile applications and .gov.sg digital services rendered on mobile devices shall provide an icon containing the logo of the digital service or name of the digital service.

Standard 3.14
Content
Ownership

All web-based digital services shall display content that is either owned by, or under the control (i.e. being able to edit or delete the content at the source) of any agency. The digital service shall indicate clearly if the agency has partial or full ownership of the content.

Standard 3.15
Commercial
Advertisements

All web-based digital services shall not show commercial advertisements or endorsement of products and services of private sector organisations.

However, hyperlinks to private-sector digital services can be provided if it is beneficial to the target users to package the information together, but the .gov.sg digital services shall indicate clearly that the hyperlinks do not mean endorsement of the products or services mentioned in these services.

Standard 3.17
Digital Service
Feedback

All web-based digital services and mobile applications shall provide a means for the user to provide feedback. Procedures for handling customer queries and feedback for their digital services shall be put in place.

Standard 3.19
Link to REACH
and GOV.SG
Websites

All .gov.sg informational services shall provide a link to the REACH and WWW.GOV.SG websites.



GLOSSARY

Government digital service refers to any public service that is delivered digitally. A digital service can be categorised as informational service or transactional service.

An informational service is a digital service that publishes content or provides information to help users understand and connect with the government or its programmes/initiatives.

A transactional service is a digital service that requires explicit user exchanges. A transactional service allows the user to participate in the transaction and typically involves an exchange of information, such as money, licenses, etc.

Web-based means browser-accessible. Web-based digital service refers to a digital service that can be accessed via a web browser software, regardless of the hardware used, and this includes microsites.

Microsite refers to an individual web page or a cluster of web pages which are designed to meet specific objectives different from the parent website.

Mobile digital service refers to a digital service such as mobile application, webpages, etc. accessed on a mobile device (e.g. tablets, smartphones, etc.) that is deployed by the agency.

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