

# Are You @?

## Website Analysis

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### Part 1—Focus on People

#### What to Look For

- Yes  No Does your home page (the first page of your website) have links taking different groups of citizens (new residents, families, employees, etc.) to the information they are most likely to need?
- Yes  No Is some of the information arranged in a question-and-answer format?
- Yes  No Is there a Frequently Asked Questions section?
- Yes  No Can people find out what procedures to follow for a variety of common problems? Test the website: Can they find out what to do about a stray dog? How to get a building permit? How to help an elderly relative apply for Medicare? How to dispose of paint and solvents?
- Yes  No Can people find schedules and agendas for public meetings?
- Yes  No Can people review the minutes of public meetings online?
- Yes  No Can people request services online? For instance, can they e-mail someone to obtain a duplicate copy of their tax statement online?
- Yes  No Can people make comments about the website? If they make comments, do they get replies?

### Part 2—Focus on Service

#### What to Look For

- Yes  No Can people download applications for an outdoor-fire permit? A driveway permit? A business privilege license? A county or city job? A marriage license?
- Yes  No Can people fill out and submit these applications online?
- Yes  No Can people access county or city ordinances?
- Yes  No Can people access county maps? Property records? Geographic information system (GIS) information?
- Yes  No Can people register to vote online? Reserve public facilities? Order copies of birth certificates?
- Yes  No Does the website give people the option of registering for community events?
- Yes  No Can people pay their local taxes online? Their water bills?
- Yes  No Is there a clear notice that financial transactions such as the foregoing are guaranteed to be secure?
- Yes  No Are privacy policies clearly announced on the site?
- Yes  No Does the website have a service that lets people request e-mail updates on certain topics?
- Yes  No Does the website include a survey or polling feature that solicits input on certain topics of public interest?
- Yes  No Can employees take care of government business online, such as filling out expense reports?

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## Part 3—Usability

### What to Look For

- Yes  No Does the look of your home page give a good first impression of your city or county? What does it tell people about your community?
- Yes  No Is the home page cluttered? Does it take more than a moment to see how the front page is organized and what the options are?
- Yes  No Can people look at the menu options on the home page and decide easily which menu to click if they need to talk to the city or county manager? Get a permit for a new well? Renew a book at the library?
- Yes  No Does your website have a sitewide search tool?
- Yes  No Does your website have an index?
- Yes  No Does the website load quickly?
- Yes  No Do all the links work correctly?
- Yes  No Print several pages from your website. Do they print correctly, without cutting off the words on the right margin?
- Yes  No Is general information for the public written in short, easy-to-read sentences and paragraphs? Does the website use bulleted lists to make information even easier to understand?

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## Part 4—Accessibility

### What to Look For

- Yes  No If you hold your mouse pointer over a photograph or an illustration, does a descriptive label come up?
- Yes  No If you go in Internet Explorer to View/Text Size/Largest, or in Netscape Navigator to View/Text Zoom/200%, does most of the text on the website get bigger? Does the page still work?

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## Part 5—Effective Content Management

### What to Look For

- Yes  No Does your website say when it was last updated? How recently was it updated?
- Yes  No If you have a calendar of meetings and events, are meetings and events posted for the next several months?
- Yes  No Think of the most recent personnel change at the department-head level. Is the new hire listed on the website?
- Yes  No If you have a News, or What's New?, or Current Events link, are the items posted current and relatively new?
- Yes  No Is there any place to post critical information such as weather-related closings?
- Yes  No Is there any information on your website about significant recent or upcoming events, such as tax due dates, property tax reappraisals, elections, and changes to ordinances? Is the information up-to-date?

### Outreach Question

- Yes  No Ask staff members what they do to make a change in or post information to the website. Can department heads get new information posted on the site within a week if they need to?

## Part 6—Costs and Benefits

### What to Look For

- Yes  No Can users download a job application form? An application for a building permit? Applications for social services? Requests for proposals (RFPs) for government purchases or contracts?
- Yes  No Can users fill in and submit any of the foregoing forms online?

### Outreach Questions

- Yes  No Ask a receptionist for the three most frequent questions from callers. Are the answers to these questions posted and easy to find on your website?
- Yes  No Ask your webmaster whether your website employs a monitoring tool to count how many users access the website and to keep track of which parts of the website they are using. Do your department heads use this information to plan revisions or expansions of online services?
- Yes  No Do you promote your website so that people know to look there first? Is the address posted on your tax mailings? On utility or water bills? On brochures and fliers you distribute? In your offices? Do receptionists know to encourage people to use the website?