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RESULTS

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

E-GOVERNMENT SATISFACTION INDEX

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President and CEO, ForeSee Results

CITIZEN SATISFACTION INCHES UPWARD
FOR THIRD STRAIGHT QUARTER

For the third consecutive quarter, citizen satisfaction with federal government websites has risen, according to the fourth quarter 2005 release of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) E-Government Satisfaction Index. The aggregate score of 73.9 is a .6% increase from last quarter.

While the quarter-over quarter increase is relatively small, it is significant for several reasons. First, this quarter's increase is part of a larger trend upward in citizen satisfaction with government websites, which has risen 2.5% on aggregate since last year. This rise in satisfaction levels corresponds to the continued evolution of the federal government website as a responsive, user-friendly and convenient channel for many citizens to interact with the government.

This upward movement is especially significant when compared to citizen satisfaction with the federal government overall, which declined 1.1% on aggregate since this time last year to 71.3. Interestingly, both the overall government and e-government scores in fourth quarter 2004 were 72.1, so the 1.8-point difference between the two scores in fourth quarter 2005 shows that e-government is truly coming into its own.

"Federal e-government is continuing to make improvements to better satisfy users," said Professor Claes Fornell, director of the National Quality Research Center at the University of Michigan and founder of the ACSI. "Government websites still lag their private sector counterparts by a significant margin, but they are reducing the satisfaction gap with the private sector."

Further proof of the evolution of the web in support of effective government is the number of sites this quarter with citizen satisfaction scores of 80 or higher. Sixteen of the 89 measured sites (which equates to 18%) have scores of at least 80, putting these sites at the forefront of citizen-centricity.

It is also noteworthy that satisfaction rose during a quarter when many government websites were affected by external circumstances. The hurricanes that occurred during the measurement period could have negatively affected many federal government websites, which saw an influx of new visitors looking for information in a time of crisis. The fact that citizen satisfaction rose during this unusual situation is testament to the continued focus of many government websites on meeting the needs of online visitors.

Participation in the e-government index continues to grow, with a quarter-to-quarter increase in measured sites of 10%. The 89 sites participating this quarter are divided into four categories according to the primary function of the site: Portals/Department Main Sites, News/Information, E-commerce/Transactions and Recruitment/Careers.

Key Findings
- Citizen satisfaction is up .6% since last quarter, the third consecutive quarter of increased aggregate scores.
- Satisfaction with e-government rose 2.5% since last year while year-over-year satisfaction with government in general fell 1.1% during the same time.
- 18% of e-government sites this quarter achieved a satisfaction score of of 80 or higher, which indicates top-performing sites. Still, a slightly higher percentage (21%) rated scores of 70 or below.
- The E-commerce/Transactions category reported the highest quarter-over-quarter increase: 4.7%.

"Many e-government websites are achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction," said Anne Kelly, CEO of Treasury's Federal Consulting Group. "These successes reflect this Administration's emphasis on expanding electronic government by having citizens conduct more interaction through the internet."

THE ACSI METHODOLOGY

The ACSI E-Government Satisfaction Index is a special quarterly report of the ACSI, which is produced by the University of Michigan in partnership with the American Society for Quality (ASQ), ForeSee Results and the CFI Group. The ACSI is a cross-industry measure of offline customer satisfaction that measures the performance of approximately 200 private sector companies, as well as many government agencies. ForeSee Results collects and analyzes the data for the e-government websites included in the report.

ACSI e-government scores were calculated based on data gathered from voluntary online surveys of randomly selected site visitors. Each government website was rated by its visitors on various components of overall satisfaction. The ratings were converted to a score on a 100-point scale using the ACSI methodology.

The ACSI methodology identifies key drivers of satisfaction and quantifies their relationship to overall customer satisfaction. Going further, this cause-and-effect methodology predicts how customers will behave in the future and demonstrates the impact of website enhancements on customer satisfaction, customer behavior and ultimately, the bottom line.

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Comparison of ACSI Aggregate and E-Government Scores	Q4 2003	Q4 2004	Q4 2005
ACSI E-Government Aggregate	69.1	72.1	73.9
ACSI Offline Government Aggregate (Annual Measure)	70.9	72.1	71.3

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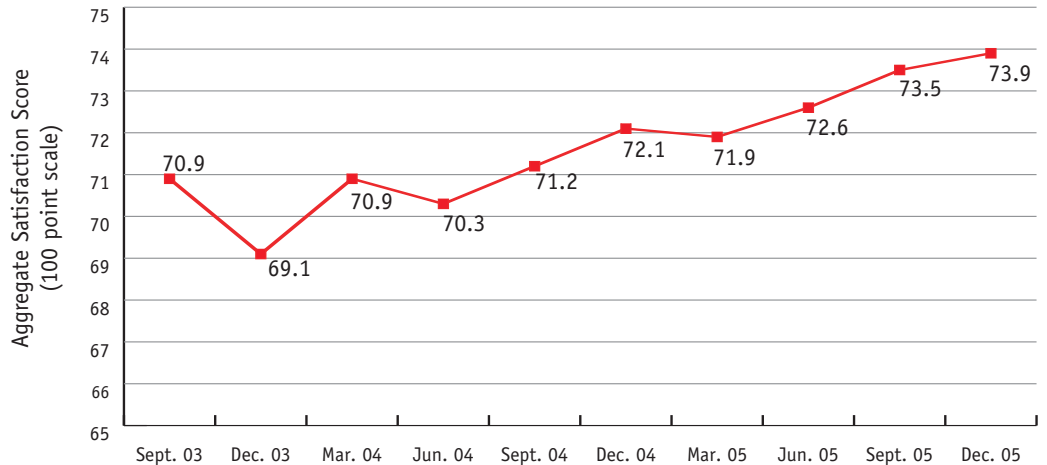
The chart above shows the steady incline of customer satisfaction scores for the ACSI E-Government Satisfaction Index over the past three quarters.

THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

Continued improvements in e-government citizen satisfaction are not surprising, considering that federal websites are continuing to evolve into critical channels for good government. This evolution is akin to the evolution of retail sites from mere online catalogs to full-service transactional sites that are key to multi-channel success. Likewise, government websites continue along the evolutionary path to becoming truly citizen-centric while serving as critical success factors in the achievement of the department or agency's objectives.

Unlike retail sites, which much evolve or die, many government sites have no outside competition. They may face channel competition from branch offices, call centers or other non-web channels. Another obstacle to realizing the full potential of the government website is resources; many sites struggle to find the people and monetary resources necessary to completely respond to the needs of the citizens they serve online.

The various sites measured in the ACSI E-Government Satisfaction Index are at different stages of the evolution process. But, all are farther along in meeting the needs of citizens than sites that haven't taken the first step: capturing "voice of customer" feedback.

The graphic on the next page illustrates how government websites continue to evolve:

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ACSI logo

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Evolution of Government Websites

Ongoing process—sites must continually evolve to meet changing needs and standards

Web Presence	Trial and Error	Voice of Citizen Input	Citizen-Centric Approach	Web Supports Good Government
• President mandates online presence • Internally-focused	• Try different approaches to site improvement (e.g., best practices, expert opinion, etc.)	• Begin to gather "voice of citizen" and identify what site visitors want and need	• Site decisions guided by "voice of citizen" feedback • Department/ agency commits resources to making citizen-centric improvements	• Citizen-centric approach results in more efficient delivery of services and information • Website helps agency/ department achieve performance objectives

TOP-PERFORMING SITES AND THE EVOLUTION PROCESS

This quarter, 16 sites, or 18% of the total number of measured sites, have scores of 80 or higher. Of these, 11 are part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including three sites that are part of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. Three of the sites in this group of top performers belong to the Social Security Administration, including the two highest-scoring sites in the index: Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs and Internet Social Security Benefits Application, both of which scored an 88 this quarter.

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
Top Scores			
SSA	Social Security Administration	Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6z/i1020/main.html	88
SSA	Social Security Administration	Internet Social Security Benefits Application https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6a/ISBA/main.html	88
NHLBI DCI	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI Diseases and Conditions Index www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/index.html	85
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	MedlinePlus http://medlineplus.gov	85
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	MedlinePlus en español http://medlineplus.gov/esp/	84
HHS, NIDDK	National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIDDK Clearinghouses http://www.niddk.nih.gov	83
HHS, OSE	Office of Science Education, National Institutes of Health, HHS	Office of Science Education website http://science.education.nih.gov	82
NHLBI	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI main website http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov	82

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
Top Scores Continued			
NHLBI AIM	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI Aim for Healthy Weight www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt	82
GSA	General Services Administration	Federal Citizen Information Center www.pueblo.gsa.gov/	82
FSA	Federal Student Aid, Education	Free Application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA website, www.fafsa.ed.gov	81
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Business Services Online http://www.ssa.gov/bso/bsowelcome.htm	80
HHS, NIAMS	National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIAMS Public Website http://www.niams.nih.gov/index.htm	80
HHS, OWH	Office on Women's Health	National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) Main website, www.4woman.gov	80
NCI	National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	National Cancer Institute main website www.cancer.gov	80
NIDCD	National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIDCD Website http://www.nidcd.nih.gov	80

Government sites are often viewed as having a disadvantage against private sector sites, which typically have more money and resources to devote to meeting the needs of their customers. This makes it even more impressive that the percentage of government sites with scores of 80 is approaching 20 percent, or one in five.

Sites that underperform compared to the aggregate score of 73.9 tend to be those in the early stages of evolution. Typically, they are just beginning to measure citizen satisfaction or may have not have the resources and institutional support to leap to the third stage of evolution, taking decisive action to become more citizen-centric.

In addition, as citizens' standards continue to increase based on private sector online experiences, e-government sites must continue to improve at meeting citizen needs and expectations or risk stagnation or a decline in satisfaction scores. Experiences on private sector sites such as Google, Yahoo, Amazon and others shape citizens' expectations of what can and should be done via the web channel.

WHAT DRIVES SATISFACTION

From last quarter to this, the scores and priorities of the different online elements that drive satisfaction have not changed substantially. Search and Navigation, which are perennial challenges for government sites, remain the lowest-scoring elements, despite a one-point score increase to 74 for Search. Making improvements to these two critical areas would have the greatest impact on improving satisfaction and behavior for a large number of sites. For 85% of sites measured this quarter, Search is the first or second priority for improvement, while Navigation comes in as number one or two for 38% of measured sites.

Once again, Content, Site Performance and Privacy (which happen to be top priority for a limited number of sites) are the highest-scoring elements. In other words, making great improvements to these elements will not have a great deal of impact on increasing overall satisfaction. Although it is important that agencies meet and exceed visitor expectations on these fronts, it is critical for them to focus on and improve the areas that are most essential for improving visitor satisfaction, which are unique for every site.

Interestingly, the data is quite different for the top 10 scoring measured sites. On the aggregate level, this group of sites outperforms all of the average element scores, especially Functionality, Look and Feel, Navigation and Search which are the highest-impact elements for the largest percentage of sites. These top 10 sites are top performers because they excel at the things that matter most to citizens.

THE RESULT OF SATISFACTION:
BEHAVIORS TIED TO CHANNEL LOYALTY

Satisfaction drives desired future behaviors of citizens and the E-Government Satisfaction Index looks at three future behaviors measured by many participating sites: Likelihood to Return, Likelihood to Recommend the site and Likelihood to Use the Site as a Primary Resource. Aggregate scores for Likelihood to Return and Recommend stayed consistent since last quarter at 83 and 79, respectively.

The score for Likelihood to Use the Site as a Primary Resource is 75, down one point from last quarter. The fact that this is the lowest of the three measured future behaviors illustrates that citizens are still using other channels to find information and interact with the government, despite the strides that the government has taken in driving traffic online. By further improving satisfaction, agencies can secure even more loyal website users and benefit from the resulting cost efficiencies.

As a result of higher satisfaction, the top 10 scoring measured sites score higher on the future behaviors tied to channel loyalty. Likelihood to Recommend is 9.2% above the aggregate score, while Likelihood to Return and Primary Resource top the aggregate score by 5.3% and 5.2%, respectively. These numbers indicate that a highly satisfying online experience will lead to gains in channel loyalty, resulting in better government, great cost efficiencies and the ability of sites to better meet the needs of all citizens.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION TOPS ORGANIZATIONS
TAKING AN ENTERPRISE APPROACH TO SATISFACTION

Once again this quarter, seven departments or administrations have five or more sites in the E-Government Satisfaction Index. Enterprise-level scores for each are shown on the next page:

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Department Comparison	Aggregate Score
Social Security Administration	79.0
National Institutes of Health (part of HHS, below)	78.2
Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)	78.0
Department of State	72.1
GSA	71.5
USDA	68.5
Treasury	68.3

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION BY TYPE OF MEASURED SITE

The 89 sites measured in the fourth quarter 2005 fall into four categories: Portals/Department Main sites, News/Information, E-Commerce/Transactions and Recruitment/Careers. The aggregate satisfaction score increased most significantly, 4.7%, for E-Commerce/Transaction sites and declined the most for Career/Recruitment sites, which saw a 1.5% dip since last quarter.

Category	Q3 2005	Q4 2005	Change
ACSI E-Government Aggregate	73.5	73.9	0.6%
Portals/Department Main Sites	73.9	74.2	0.4%
News/Information	73.2	73.3	0.1%
E-commerce/Transactions	71.9	75.3	4.7%
Recruitment/Careers	77.2	76	-1.5%

Portals/Department Main Sites

The aggregate score for the 27 sites in this category increased a slight .4% since last quarter. Scores range from 67 to 82, with the Office of Science Education (http://science.education.nih.gov) and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute main website (http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov) leading the category with scores of 82.

Search is a high priority element for 84% of sites in this category, which is not surprising considering the vast amounts of information accessible on and via many of these sites. Look and Feel and Navigation came in as first or second priorities for 50% and 46%, respectively, of Portals/Department Main Sites.

The U.S.General Services Administration's main website (www.gsa.gov) continues to better meet the needs of its customers as reflected in an upward trend in its satisfaction scores. This quarter's score of 67 is three points higher than last quarter, and a full 12 points above the site's score at this time last year. After a series of improvements to the site during the past year, guided by GSA's Office of Citizen Services and Communications (OCSC) where the site is housed, it was relaunched on November 1 (the satisfaction data in this quarter's Index reflects primarily pre-launch site activity). Post-launch satisfaction scores continue the upward trend, according to GSA.

"We've found the ACSI data to be very helpful in identifying areas that improve the online experience for our site visitors," noted M.J. Pizzella, OCSC's Associate Administrator. Ms. Pizzella also said that, "The secret of our continued improvement can also be credited to

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the mandates of the President's Management Agenda to make government more citizen-centric and results-oriented. We have used that guidance as we improved the site and the evidence of our progress is in the increased scores and use of the site."

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
Portals/Department Main Sites			
NHLBI	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI main website http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov	82
HHS, OSE	Office of Science Education, National Institutes of Health, HHS	Office of Science Education website http://science.education.nih.gov	82
NCI	National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	National Cancer Institute main website www.cancer.gov	80
HHS, NIAMS	National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIAMS Public Website http://www.niams.nih.gov/index.htm	80
GSA	General Services Administration	FirstGov.gov website (Spanish) http://firstgov.gov/Espanol/index.shtml	79
DOD	Department of Defense	Department of Defense main site http://www.dod.mil	77
HHS, NHGRI	National Human Genome Research Institute National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHGRI Website www.genome.gov	77
NPS	National Parks Service, Interior	National Parks Service main website, www.nps.gov	77
HHS, NEI	National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	National Eye Institute main website http://www.nei.nih.gov	76
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology, Commerce	NIST main website www.nist.gov	76
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, HHS	NLM main website, www.nlm.nih.gov	75
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	CDC main website, www.cdc.gov	74
HHS, NIDCR	National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIDCR Website http://www.nidcr.nih.gov	74
SBA	U.S. Small Business Administration	SBA main website, www.sba.gov	74
Treasury	United States Mint,Treasury	U.S. Mint main website, www.usmint.gov	74
GAO	Government Accountability Office	GAO main public website, www.gao.gov	73
HHS, NIGMS	National Institute of General Medical Sciences, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIGMS Website http://www.nigms.nih.gov	73
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Online (Main Website) www.socialsecurity.gov/	73
FDIC	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	FDIC main website, www.fdic.gov	72
GSA	General Services Administration	FirstGov.gov website, www.firstgov.gov	72
State	Department of State	Department of State main website, www.state.gov	71
HHS, NIH	Fogarty International Center, National Institutes of Health, HHS	Fogarty International Center http://www.fic.nih.gov	71
Treasury	Department of the Treasury	Treasury main website, www.treasury.gov	71
IRS	Internal Revenue Service, Treasury	IRS main website, www.irs.gov	68
NARA	National Archives & Records Administration	NARA main public website, www.archives.gov	68
GSA	General Services Administration	GSA main website, www.gsa.gov	67
USPTO	United States Patent & Trademark Office	USPTO main website, www.uspto.gov	67

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News/Information Sites

The aggregate score for the 47 sites in this category remains virtually unchanged from last quarter (73.3 in the fourth quarter vs. 73.2 in the third quarter). Scores range from 54 to 85; this 31-point range between the low and high scores is the largest of the four categories. Medline Plus (http://medlineplus.gov) and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's Diseases and Conditions Index (www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/index.html) top the News/Information category with scores of 85.

For News/Information sites, Search is a high priority element for 93% of the sites measured, and its score of 73 is among the lowest of the four categories. Functionality, Look and Feel and Navigation also play important roles.

The NARA Libraries site (http://archives.gov/presidential_libraries/index.html) experienced a significant five-point leap in citizen satisfaction from last quarter. This quarter-over-quarter score increase from 73 to 78 corresponded to a complete redesign of the site based on "voice of citizen" data.

"Our ForeSee/ACSI surveys, especially responses to our customized questions, help us better understand the elements of our sites to improve, and those to maintain. We use the surveys to help us design to our customers' needs and expectations," said Jennifer Nelson, Web Program Director for the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service's main site (http://www.fsis.usda.gov) has evolved over the last 18 months since relaunch, largely based on changes driven by ACSI data. Since mid-2005, FSIS has launched a new search engine, customizable email subscription service, and intranet site as part of a comprehensive audience-driven web strategy. The site's score has increased by nine points since relaunch and has increased four points to a 72 from last quarter's score of 68.

"Data from the ACSI enabled us to identify the customer groups who visit our site, what information they want most, and how they use our site's navigation and tools. This knowledge is driving our ongoing web strategy and supports our agency's performance measures and strategic goals," said Janet Stevens, PMP, Director, Web Services Staff.

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ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
News/Information Websites			
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	MedlinePlus http://medlineplus.gov	85
NHLBI DCI	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI Diseases and Conditions Index www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/index.html	85
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	MedlinePlus en español http://medlineplus.gov/esp/	84
HHS, NIDDK	National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIDDK Clearinghouses http://www.niddk.nih.gov	83

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
News/Information Websites Continued			
GSA	General Services Administration	Federal Citizen Information Center www.pueblo.gsa.gov/	82
NHLBI AIM	National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NHLBI Aim for Healthy Weight www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt	82
NIDCD	National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIDCD Website http://www.nidcd.nih.gov	80
HHS, OWH	Office on Women's Health	National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) Main website, www.4woman.gov	80
HHS, NIH	National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIEHS Main website www.niehs.nih.gov	79
HHS,NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	AIDSinfo http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/	78
NARA	National Archives & Records Administration	NARA Presidential Library websites http://archives.gov/presidential_libraries/index.html	78
HHS, NIH	NIH Senior Health, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIH Senior Health http://nihseniorhealth.gov	78
HHS, NIH	National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIH Stem Cell Information http://stemcells.nih.gov	78
State	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, State	State Alumni website https://alumni.state.gov	78
HHS, NLM	National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, HHS	TOXNET http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov	78
DOL	Bureau of Labor Statistics	BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook http://www.bls.gov/oco/	77
HHS, NIH	NIH Health Information, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIH Health Information http://www.health.nih.gov	77
HHS, NIH	NIH Office of Research Facilities, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIH Office of Research Facilities http://orf.od.nih.gov	77
DOJ	National Institute of Justice, Justice	NIJ main website, http://www.ojp.gov/nij	77
DOJ	National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Justice	NCJRS website www.ncjrs.gov	76
HHS, NIH	NIH Office of Research Services, National Institutes of Health, HHS	NIH Office of Research Services http://www.ors.od.nih.gov	76
HHS	Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, HHS	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality www.ahrq.gov	75
GSA	General Services Administration	Consumer Action Website, Federal Citizen Information Center	75
Commerce	U.S. Department of Commerce	National Geodetic Society, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/	75
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Online: Answers to Your Questions http://ssa-custhelp.ssa.gov	75

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ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
News/Information Websites Continued			
DOJ	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Justice	OJJDP website http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org	74
State	Department of State	U.S. Department of State Education USA http://educationusa.state.gov	74
USDA	Economic Research Service, Agriculture	ERS main website, www.ers.usda.gov	73
HHS, NIAID	National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, HHS	NIAID main website www.niaid.nih.gov	73
HHS, NCI	Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER), National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, HHS	SEER Website http://seer.cancer.gov	73
USDA	Food Safety and Inspection Service, Agriculture	FSIS main website www.fsis.usda.gov	72
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Disability Internet Users http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/	71
Commerce	Bureau of Economic Analysis, Commerce	BEA main website, http://www.bea.gov	70
USDA	Foreign Agricultural Service, Agriculture	FAS main website, www.fas.usda.gov	70
State	International Information Programs, State	IIP main website, http://usinfo.state.gov	70
State	Department of State	Student website, http://future.state.gov	70
State	Bureau of Cultural Affairs, State	Bureau of Cultural Affairs website http://exchanges.state.gov/	69
NRC	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission website www.nrc.gov	69
Treasury	Financial Management Service, Treasury	Financial Management Service, www.fms.treas.gov	68
USDA	National Agricultural Library, Agriculture	NAL main website, www.nal.usda.gov	68
USDA	Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Agriculture	CSREES main website www.csrees.usda.gov	65
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency, Homeland Security	FEMA Mitigation Division website www.fema.gov/fima/	65
USDA	Forest Service, Agriculture	Forest Service main website, http://www.fs.fed.us	63
GSA	General Services Administration	GSA E-Library http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/ElibHome	58
DOD	Military Health System, Defense	TRICARE, www.tricare.osd.mil/	58
NARA AAD	National Archives & Records Administration	NARA AAD - Access to Archival Databases www.archives.gov/aad/index.html	54
Treasury	Department of the Treasury, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau	USTTB website www.ttb.gov	54

E-Commerce/Transaction Sites

The aggregate citizen satisfaction score for the 12 sites in the E-commerce/Transaction category increased significantly more than the score of any other category: 4.7%, from 71.9 to 75.3. This increase puts the government sites in this category closer to the private sector ACSI e-commerce aggregate score of 78.6.

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This increase in satisfaction from last quarter is a result of increases in most of the elements driving satisfaction, particularly Tasks/Transactions, which increased six points from a 76 to an 82 and is now one of the highest-scoring elements for this category. Achieving high scores in Tasks/Transactions is important as it is top priority for 80% of the sites measuring it. Functionality stands out as an area of opportunity for a majority of the e-commerce sites in the Index.

Two sites affiliated with the Social Security Administration—Internet Social Security Benefits Application (https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6a/ISBA/main.html) and Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs (https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6z/i1020/main.html) lead this category—and the Index as a whole—with scores of 88. They are focusing on what is most important to citizens and are being rewarded for it.

The United States Mint Catalog (http://catalog.usmint.gov) took customer feedback to heart when it saw its score decline after making some changes to the site's technical structure. Based on ACSI data, the United States Mint continued to upgrade the site and saw a subsequent quarter-over-quarter satisfaction score increase of five points: from 72 to 77.

"The ACSI data helped us quickly identify and correct customer service issues with our site," said Gloria Eskridge, Associate Director, Sales and Marketing for the United States Mint. "We're happy to see increased citizen satisfaction as a result."

Scores for E-commerce/Transaction sites range from 65 to 88.

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
E-Commerce/Transaction			
SSA	Social Security Administration	Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6z/i1020/main.html	88
SSA	Social Security Administration	Internet Social Security Benefits Application https://s044a90.ssa.gov/apps6a/ISBA/main.html	88
FSA	Federal Student Aid, Education	Free Application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA website, www.fafsa.ed.gov	81
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Business Services Online http://www.ssa.gov/bso/bsowelcome.htm	80
SSA	Social Security Administration	Social Security Retirement Planner www.socialsecurity.gov/r&m1.htm	78
Treasury	United States Mint, Treasury	Online Catalog, http://catalog.usmint.gov	77
GSA	General Services Administration	GSA Global Supply website https://www.globalsupply.gsa.gov	72
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency Homeland Security	FEMA Flood Map Store http://store.msc.fema.gov	70
GSA	General Services Administration	GSA Advantage website https://www.gsaadvantage.gov	69
GSA	General Services Administration	GSA E-Buy, http://www.ebuy.gsa.gov	69
Treasury/ BPD	Department of the Treasury, Bureau of the Public Debt	TreasuryDirect www.treasurydirect.gov	66
PBGC	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	PBGC main website, www.pbgc.gov	65

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Recruitment/Career Sites

The aggregate score for the three sites in the Recruitment/Careers category decreased 1.5%, from 77.2 to 76 in fourth quarter 2005. Scores range from 73 to 79.

Navigation is top priority for all of these sites.

ID	E-Government U.S. Agency/ Department/Office	Website	12/05 Score
Recruitment/Careers Websites			
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency	Recruitment website http://www.cia.gov/employment	79
OPM	Office of Personnel Management	Recruitment website, www.usajobs.opm.gov	76
State	Department of State	Recruitment website, www.careers.state.gov	73

CONCLUSION

This quarter marks a significant change: online satisfaction with e-government has eclipsed the ACSI offline government score. This isn't surprising as more citizens embrace the web channel as a convenient, efficient, and increasingly satisfying way to interact with the government. What separates the high scoring and improving e-government sites from the lower performing sites tends to be an assertive approach to leveraging voice-of-customer feedback to make site improvements. While the biggest gains this quarter were due to website redesign efforts, many sites achieve satisfaction increases through smaller, incremental improvements that address citizens' needs.

As more federal websites move through the evolutionary stages of e-government development, they will see advancement toward agency goals from providing more consistent, convenient, cost-effective service to the citizens. Evolution not only furthers agency objectives but helps improve the quality and lower the costs for good government.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Larry Freed is an expert on Web Effectiveness and Web Customer Satisfaction. He is also President and CEO of ForeSee Results, a market leader in customer satisfaction measurement on the web, which utilizes the methodology of the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

ABOUT THE ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is the only uniform, national, cross-industry measure of satisfaction with the quality of goods and services available in the United States. In 1999, the Federal government selected the ACSI to be a standard metric for measuring citizen satisfaction. Over 100 Federal government agencies have used the ACSI to measure citizen satisfaction of more than 200 services and programs. The Index is produced by the University of Michigan, in partnership with the American Society for Quality (ASQ) and CFI Group, an international consulting firm. ForeSee Results sponsors the e-commerce, e-business and e-government indices.

ABOUT FORESEE RESULTS, INC.

ForeSee Results is the market leader in online customer satisfaction measurement and management and specializing in converting satisfaction data into user-driven web development strategies. Using the methodology of the University of Michigan's American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), ForeSee Results has created a model that scientifically quantifies the elements that drive online customer satisfaction and predicts future behaviors, including the likelihood to return to the site or recommend the site to others. ForeSee Results, a privately held company located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, can be found online at www.ForeSeeResults.com.

ABOUT THE FEDERAL CONSULTING GROUP

The Federal Consulting Group, a franchise of the Department of the Treasury, serves as the executive agent in the government for the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), and holds generic clearance from the Office of Management and Budget that enables agencies to utilize the ACSI without having to obtain a separate clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act to conduct customer satisfaction surveys. Agencies can participate in the ACSI through an arrangement between the Federal Consulting Group and ForeSee Results.

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