

G R E A T

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Anne Sutton
Director General
Corporate Review Branch
Department of Canadian Heritage
100 Competition Dr. Suite 302
Ottawa
M4T 3J7

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Subject: Evaluation of Canada Place Web Site

Dear Ms. Sutton

We are pleased to receive your invitation to submit our ideas for the evaluation of the Canada Place web site. We are hereby submitting this framework for your consideration.

From our review of your request and the Canada Place initiative and picture document, as well as Canada Place web site and various comparable websites we believe that we have a clear understanding of the goals, objectives and requirements of this important project. We have every confidence in our ability to provide a quality, innovative and avant-garde evaluation framework that will meet your stated goals and objectives.

Though G.R.E.A.T. Associates is a young company, our team does have collective experience in web design and evaluation techniques and services. Among our recent projects was the design and continued assessment of a local elementary school website. We have also evaluated the web site of our local economic development office.

G.R.E.A.T. Associates team looks forward hearing from you and to meeting you in Montreal in May during the CES National Conference.

Sincerely

G.R.E.A.T Associates

Introduction

This report identifies general criteria for evaluating internet sites and examines this framework specifically in relation to the Canadaplace web site. It is organized as follows:

- objectives against which performance can be evaluated
- which indicators are appropriate to assess the degree to which objectives are being met.
- how to collect data on the proposed indicators
- conclusions

Criteria for Evaluation

For the purposes of this report the following list of criteria is based upon a "toolkit" published by the Department of Information Studies, New Zealand. (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/~agsmith/evaln/>)

Some key factors which should be examined in assessing a web site are:

Scope:

What subjects are included? In what depth? Does the information span a limited time frame? Does the resource match the expectation of target audiences? Are appropriate internet resources included?

Content:

Is the content factual or opinion? Is a clear distinction made? Does the content consist of original material or only links? Has content integrity been maintained in transition from other sources? Is the content accurate, authoritative, current and unique?

Graphic Design:

Is the resource attractive and interesting? Are multimedia capabilities such as audio and video used appropriately for intended audiences?

Purpose:

Is the purpose clearly stated and is it fulfilled?

Critical Review

Are critical reviews available from users?

Workability:

Is the site convenient and effective to use? Are content and navigation for each page clearly understood? Is help available? Is the context of each section apparent in relation to other major sections of the site?

Technical Environment

Does the site require specialized technology or software? Is the information logically organized to facilitate browsing with minimal frustration. Does it include a search capability? Does the site allow interactivity and connectivity, both nationally and internationally?

Cost Effectiveness

Is there a cost to users? What is the cost of operation? Does the site generate revenue?

In applying these criteria to the Canada Place web site, we consider the following factors to be important in assessing the performance of this site:

The Scope of Canada Place

Once one has entered the Canada Place web site, is the extent of the content readily understood? Is this simply a menu, or rather clearly descriptive?

Do the subject headings found in the overview link the user to this information within Canada Place? Is the information of the appropriate detail for the subject and the intended user. Since some parts of the site are to be used by the youth, this level of detail will alter accordingly.

Is information supplied by the web site up to date and relevant to Canadians at the time of viewing.

Is Canada Place accessible by all known search engines?

The Content of Canada Place

Is there a clear distinction between fact and opinion?

the fact that the linked information is external to Canada Place, must be made clear to the user. Avoid creating links to material that is copyrighted.

Is the Canadian Federal Government clearly identified as a sponsor?

Are updates evident?

Is software required for viewing or activation of multimedia readily available for download in the Canada Place web site.

Graphics

Are graphics on the Canada place website interesting to look at. Are visuals useful, and appropriate? Are the graphics, and the video clips complimentary or distracting to the actual content.

Are multimedia effects and content such as video and interactivity appropriate to target audiences such as youngsters, teenagers or seniors?

Workability

Canada Place has an objective of serving Canadians. These are young people senior citizens, new

Canadians, Canadians who enjoy a long history in Canada as well as culturally diverse Canadians. The website should be convenient and efficient to use for all members of this target audience.

The site then should be:

- User friendly
- Compatible to standard equipment and software.

Aspects of being user friendly include:

- Ease of access to information.
People going to the site should be able to find the sought for information quickly and easily without being entangled in numerous links and relocated sites.

- Logical and appropriate organization of information

Canada Place is going to be displaying information from several ministries and departments in view of their need to satisfy the informational needs of their targeted audience. This information should be arranged in a logical and organised format based upon appropriate topics and departments.

- Useful and effective search engine
Can the search engine accept Canadian terminology as key words and phrases to locate the information being sought.
- Compatible to standard equipment and software
- Technology is varied across Canada and so the site must be readily adaptable and accessible by all standard software and computer equipment.

Cost of information to users

Cost is an important consideration in the design of a website.

Some costs might directly affect the users such as the cost to access a certain piece of information. Other costs might simply involve the price of the right to use copyrighted information.

While some website owners might pass on such costs to the users of the website, as a government organisation aimed at providing free and timely

information to all Canadians, Canada Place might not have this option of charging to access information.

Security

In the CanadaPlace situation, users might be conducting transactions requiring the use of credit cards, for example, reserving camping sites. Canada Place site designers then have an obligation to ensure that proper security measures are in place on the website too reduce or negate the risk of having sensitive information stolen or misused.

Key Objectives

Based on the above information the following are a list of the key objectives that should be measured

- * Provide information on government services
- * Ensure that participation in Government increases
- * Consolidate Canadian identity
- Ensure that Canadian diversity is expressed
- * Create information that is relevant to all target audiences
- * Create a website that is convenient to all Canadian and worldwide users

Indicators and Measurements

The following are the different measurement tools that would assist in determining whether the objectives of the website are being followed and to what extent.

Information on Government Services

How many departments/ministries/Agencies are represented on the Canada Place Website?

How many services are available for each ministry?

Participation in Government should increase
 Volume of traffic in general (i.e. the number of hits to Canada Place website).
 Volume of business transactions per department if appropriate.
 Volume of business transactions overall.

Information on Government Services

How many departments /ministries / Agencies are represented on the Canada Place website

How many services are available on-line from each ministry?

Citizen participation in Government should increase

Measure volume of traffic in general (I.e. the number of hits to Canada Place website)

Measure volume of business transactions per department if appropriate

Measure volume of business transactions and revenues overall

Consolidate Canadian Identity

Who visits the website and where are they from? Are visitors representative of all regions of Canada? (Measure this by attaching cookies to specific pages)

Measure attendance at locations mentioned on the website (did you visit our website)

Reflect Canadian Diversity

Measure the type of and the number of events listed on-line for the different culture within Canada

Relevant to Audience

Measure traffic from different sources such as schools, libraries, businesses, foreign internet servers (attract young and old, business and travelers)

The actual content (animations, graphics, written descriptions)

The variety in links, video clips

Miniature questionnaire at the end of the site asking if there age and if they liked the site, and why or why not.

Convenience

Measure length of connection per visit.

Track whether a visit ends in a transaction such as e-mail, download.

Measure the number of searches and the number of searches per visit.

Conclusion

In summary, the key criteria for assessing the Canada Place web site are Scope, Content, Workability, and Cost. The key objectives and indicators were developed from the these criteria, in the context of Canada Place. These are the vital tools for evaluating the Canada Place website.