

Introductory Guideline to Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index (2024)

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1. Introduction

Reference to the Council of Ministers Resolution No. (418) dated 25/07/1442 AH, establishing the Digital Government Authority (DGA), the decision stipulates, “the authority is in charge of all matters related to digital government, and it as the national reference in its affairs”. In addition, the Fourth Article stipulates in its fourth and fifth paragraphs, that the DGA is mandated to “Coordinate with the competent authorities to assume the task of regulating the work of the digital government, platforms, websites, digital government services, government networks, and the unified national portal as well as developing plans, programs, indicators, and metrics related to digital government business, and joint digital government services”. In addition, the DGA is asked to “to issue measurements, indices, tools and reports; to measure the performance and capabilities of the digital government entities in relation to digital government, and beneficiary satisfaction”.

Furthermore, driven by the DGA responsibility to enhance digital performance, expedite the digital transformation, raise the efficiency of websites and improve the quality of their content, in alignment with the national and global digital government strategic directions, and Saudi Vision 2030.

Based on the best practices and international indicator, the Authority has developed “Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index”; to measure the efficiency of government websites and the quality of digital content, and optimize their appearance on search engine results. This guideline reviews the definition of the index, the methodology used, and the criteria for selecting the target government websites for this year, in addition to the perspectives and themes on which the methodology is based, and according to which government websites are assessed.

2. Guideline Objectives

This guideline aims to provide the necessary support to government agencies to raise the efficiency of their websites and digital content, through the following:

- Introducing the website and digital content efficiency index methodology and the assessment mechanism used.
- Contributing to raising the level of efficiency of websites and improving the quality of digital content by applying the index perspectives and themes referred to in this document.
- Enhancing transparency and enabling government agencies to comprehensively understand the index perspectives and themes, and the website classification levels.

3. Guideline Scope

This guideline introduces the concepts related to the “Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index”, the mechanism for updating and developing the index, and an introduction to the basic components of the index, including the following:

- An overview of the concept of website and digital content efficiency.
- Introducing the website and digital content efficiency index and its objectives.
- Strategic alignment of the index with Saudi Vision 2030 and digital government trends.
- The methodology of the index in its first cycle, 2024 cycle, including the criteria for selecting the government websites targeted in this cycle, clarification of the perspectives and themes included in the index and the assessment mechanisms followed, in addition to clarifying the efficiency levels on which the websites will be classified.
- Timeline of the index cycle during the current year 2024 AD.

4. Target Audience

This guideline targets government agencies, digital transformation leaders, specialists responsible for managing websites and digital content, in addition to operators responsible for managing business related to government agencies' websites.

5. Guideline Statement

5.1 Overview of the Concept of Website and Digital Content Efficiency

The Internet has become an essential part of the lives of beneficiaries, and it is also considered a key enabler of excellence in government performance with major impact on how governments communicate with their beneficiaries. Today, government websites have become the main source for providing information and launching digital services for beneficiaries.

With the acceleration of the transformation in the digital landscape, and the need of beneficiaries for immediate and effective access to information, the website performance can play a direct role in enhancing confidence and raising satisfaction among its various types of beneficiaries locally or globally. Here lies the importance of improving the beneficiary digital experience and improving their journey, starting with their search for data and information using international browsers, through making this information and digital services available with high quality and efficiency, and ending with them obtaining the information or service smoothly, achieving their aspirations, and even exceeding their expectations.



Search engine optimization is a set of procedures to improve the website's appearance in the first search results on the search engine to achieve a high visit rate on the government agency's website.

Monitoring and improving the technical efficiency of the website is essential to provide website visitors with a fast, reliable and easy-to-use experience, where improving the efficiency of websites begins with the preparation to improve appearance on global search engines such as "Google" search engine, that is called "Search Engine Optimization (SEO)". This means ensuring that the website appears among the first search results, which leads to an increase in the growth of the number of visits to websites.

There are several important factors that contribute to improving the efficiency of websites, and they can be referred to as “Technical SEO” or technical procedures for search engine optimization. They are a set of procedures and steps that are followed for the purpose of improving the technical aspects of the website in order to make it easier for search robots to crawl the website (Crawling) and assess its pages based on several factors that would affect the user experience, such as: the speed of loading the page. The importance of improving it lies in not negatively affecting appearance in search results, the length of time visitors stay on the website, and overall traffic.

Search engine optimization is one of the most important elements of building an effective digital presence. Also, search engines are tools that help users discover the content of a specific website. Therefore, care must be taken to prepare reliable and positive content as it is considered the first attraction to achieve the aspirations of users and to make them interested in browsing the website, and the means through which we can achieve the purpose of creating websites, portals and applications and realizing their strategic objectives towards the target groups.



Digital content is information related to digital services that a government agency provides to its beneficiaries.

The content must be unique, valuable and compatible with the agency's scope of work and image, it also must be easily accessible to the various target groups and achieves good interaction with them. There are several types of content, such as: information pages, articles, news, short videos, statistics, presentations, and illustrations.



Informative content is information that the government agency publishes through its digital channels to give an overview of the agency and what it does, such as: its latest news, its initiatives and its mechanism of action.

Likewise, the content must be sustainable and meet the aspirations of the target audience, and it must contain a high value in terms of originality and modernity and being written exclusively for the same agency. In addition, care must be taken on the correctness and accuracy of the content as it fulfills the needs and objectives of the beneficiary or visitor, as well as the comprehensiveness and relevance to the target public, so that the information covers what the website visitor is searching for while maintaining complete sequence, objectivity and narration. It is also worth noting the importance of the way the content is presented and designed, for example when browsing an agency's website it is necessary to have a section on the website dedicated to making the reader or the browser familiar with the agency through content that expresses the agency's history of its establishment, tasks, objectives, activities and responsibilities, as well as interest in the technical and visual quality of the website.

Therefore, the website is seen as an essential instrument to meet the needs of beneficiaries and information seekers. It is extremely important to improve the website in various aspects to suit the beneficiaries' experience is extremely important, hence, it is necessary to monitor the performance of government websites with the aim of improving them and raising their efficiency to achieve the desired effects in line with the Saudi Arabia's ambitious vision.

5.2 Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index

The Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index is launched annually, and during the cycle it measures the efficiency and quality of government websites, according to a number of main perspectives, themes and detailed criteria that are determined based on best national and international practices, in addition to the latest experiences and mechanisms used to improve the appearance of websites.

The importance of the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index lies in the fact that it is an effective instrument for enhancing the digital presence of Saudi Arabia, in addition to enabling the government agencies to improve the level of performance of their websites by focusing on a number of themes and criteria affiliated with the index, with the aim of enhancing the efficiency of such websites, highlighting their content on a systematic basis, and ensuring continuity in improving its' appearance on the first search engine results pages.

5.3 Objectives of Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index

Through this index, the Authority seeks to achieve several objectives:

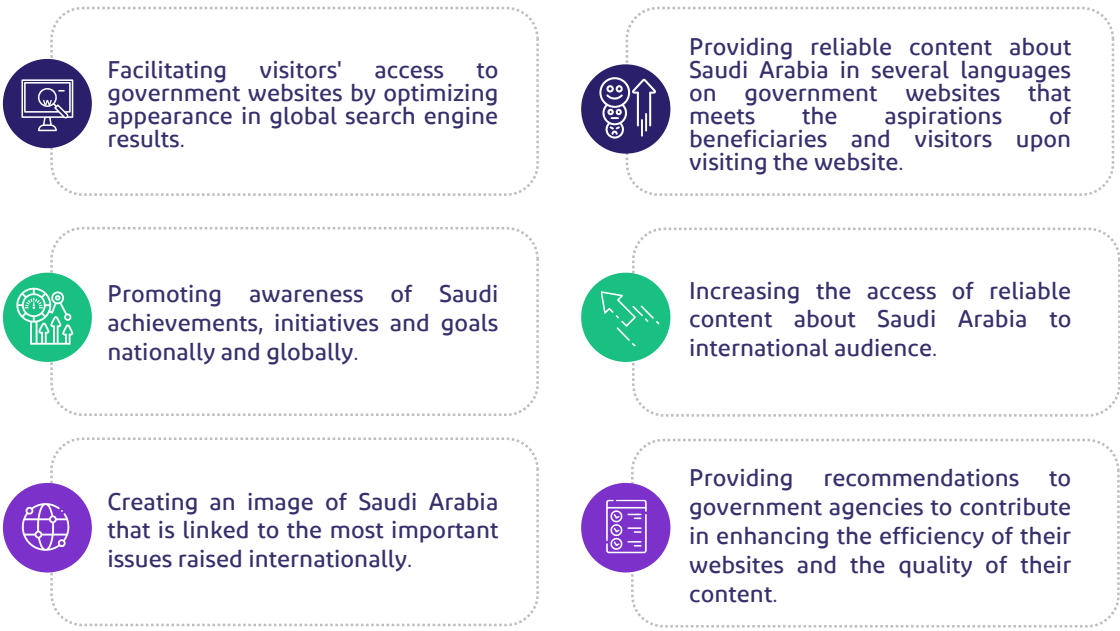


Figure (1): Objectives of Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index

5.4 Strategic Alignment of Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index

5.4.1 Alignment with Saudi Vision 2030

The Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index is linked to the following goals of the “Saudi Vision 2030”:


Main Aspect		
Ambitious Nation		
Frist Level	Second Level	Third Level
5.2.4 Enhance Government Effectiveness	5.2 Improving the Performance of the government ecosystem.	5 Develop the E-Government

Figure (2): Goals of Saudi Vision 2030

5.4.2 Alignment with Strategic Directions of Digital Government

The Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index is linked to four out of six pillars that are numbered according to their appearance in the Digital Government Strategic Directions Document: Satisfied Citizen, Effective Government, Regulated Ecosystem and Expedited Transformation.

1	Satisfied Citizen	G2C	Provide websites containing seamless and effective government services to all beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will have a more personalized experience.
3	Effective Government	G2G	Empower government by adapting unified business model, launching national initiatives of digital government services.
5	Regulated Ecosystem		Provide policy and legislation guidance and review to ensure future-proofing for an ever-changing digital government ecosystem.
6	Expedited Transformation		Enable the entire digital government strategy by leveraging an efficient communication approach, enhancing the digital infrastructure, as well as upskilling the digital workforce. Also, we can ensure a seamless integration in the government ecosystem by leveraging a robust governance model.

Figure (3): Alignment with the Relevant Digital Government Strategic Directions

5.5 Methodology of Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index (2024 AD)

In the first cycle of the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index, the Authority has developed the index methodology in accordance with national and international best practices. The index in (2024 AD) consists of two main perspectives: The technical efficiency perspective and the content quality perspective, which include (11) themes covering various aspects of website performance. The index in its (2024 AD) cycle targets (250) government websites that were selected according to specific criteria and assessed according to this methodology and the assessment mechanisms adopted within it.

5.5.1 Methodology for Developing the Website and Digital Content Index

The Authority was keen to develop the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index by following a scientific and structured methodology through multiple stages of research and development within three main stages, Figure (4), in alignment with international indicators and relevant international best practices, and the digital government strategic directions, to gradually achieve its objectives and accelerate the pace of digital transformation journeys in Saudi Arabia and realize the expected impact.



Figure (4): Stages of Index Development

5.5.2 Selecting Criteria of Targeted Websites in the Index (2024 AD)

The Authority identified and selected the target websites in the index cycle (2024 AD) at (250) government websites based on the selection criteria as shown in figure (5):



Figure (5): Criteria of Selecting Targeted Websites

5.5.3 Perspectives and Themes of the Index (2024 AD)

The Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index consists of two main perspectives, each of which has a set of themes with a total of (11) themes and includes detailed criteria through which the website’s performance is assessed. The table below summarizes the components of the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index:



Perspective	Themes	Assessment Mechanism
First Perspective Technical Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domain and hosting strength.• Website quality.• Search optimization.• Digital security.• Accessibility.• Availability	 Technical tools
Second Perspective Content Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added value of the content.• Content editorial quality.• Presentation and design.• E-participation.• Open data.	 Content expert assessment with websites browsing.

Table (1): Perspectives and Themes of the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index

First Perspective: Technical Efficiency

This perspective is concerned with measuring the effectiveness and quality of the website and its technical readiness to appear in the first results of search engines based on its compatibility with algorithm requirements, in addition to assessing its accessibility and availability.

This perspective includes (6) themes, which are: Domain and hosting strength, website quality, search optimization, digital security, accessibility and availability.

Technical Efficiency Perspective Themes







	Domain and hosting strength	Measuring domain strength and website authenticity, in addition to ensuring that the domain is registered correctly and reliably.
	Website quality	Assessing the website performance and quality in terms of ensuring no downtime, measuring web traffic, page size, etc.
	Search optimization	Measuring the effectiveness of the website's appearance in search engine results (SEO) by measuring page loading speed and others.
	Digital security	Verifying the safety and security of the website by ensuring the integrity of the protocols and others.
	Accessibility	Verifying the provision of equal access to information and digital government services for all segments of society, including people with disabilities and the elderly.
	Availability	Measuring the website's compatibility with all screen sizes and browser types, in addition to the website's availability for browsing at all times.

Figure (6): Technical Efficiency Perspective Themes

Perspective Assessment Mechanism

Using technical tools to measure the domain quality and measure the efficiency of the website in appearing on search engines, and the accessibility of various segments of beneficiaries.

Second Perspective: Content Quality

This perspective is concerned with measuring the content quality on the website, its editorial and drafting quality, its comprehensiveness, the consistency of its presentation, and the availability of open data sources and electronic participation methods.

This perspective includes (5) themes, which are: Added value of the content, content editorial quality, presentation and design, e-participation, and open data.

Content Quality Perspective Themes

	Added value of the content	Verifying the originality, modernity, validity and accuracy of the content, in addition to assessing its comprehensiveness and relevance to the agency.
	Content editorial quality	Measuring the spelling and linguistic integrity of texts, in addition to the use of terminology appropriate to the context.
	Presentation and design	Measuring the technical and visual quality of the website, in addition to verifying the presentation, design and consistency of the content in line with the most important relevant standards.
	E-participation	Assessing the effectiveness of e-participation as well as interaction on social media platforms.
	Open data	Verifying that the website includes an open data section and display statistics, while providing the ability to request data.

Figure (7): Content Quality Perspective Themes

Perspective Assessment Mechanism

Content expert assessment of websites by browsing the pages of such websites.

5.5.4 Efficiency Levels of Websites and Digital Content

The results of the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index for each website are monitored based on an analysis of the inputs and data for all perspectives and the themes that fall under them in accordance with the approved mechanisms. As a result, the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index classifies the targeted websites into (5) levels, which are determined based on their assessment as follows:

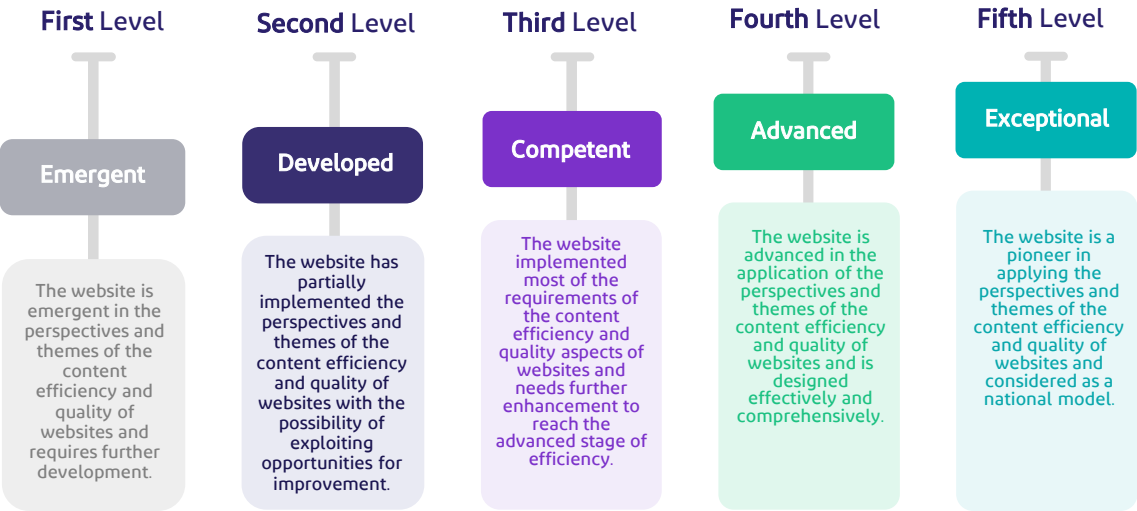


Figure (8): Levels of Website and Digital Content Efficiency

5.5.5 Stages of implementing the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index Cycle

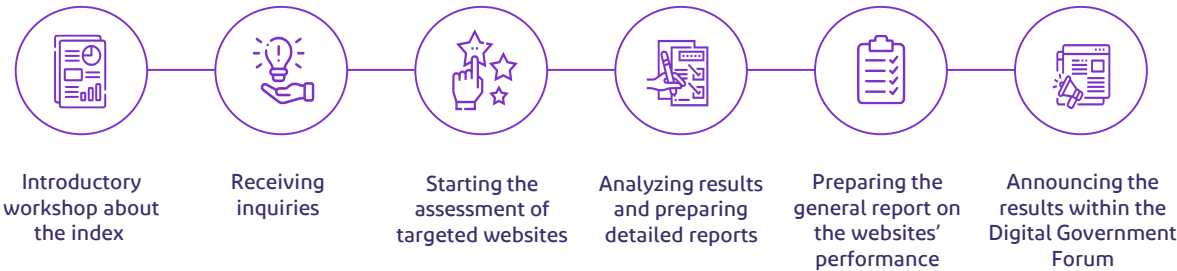


Figure (9): Stages of implementing the Website and Digital Content Efficiency Index cycle

6. Table of Definitions

The following terms and expressions, wherever mentioned in this document, have the meanings assigned to them respectively, unless the context requires otherwise:

Term	Definition
Authority	The Digital Government Authority.
Beneficiary	Citizens, residents, visitors, government agencies, private sector or non-profit organizations, inside or outside Saudi Arabia that require to interact with a government agency to receive any of the services offered in Saudi Arabia.
Digital Transformation	Digitally and strategically transforming and developing business standards and models that would rely on data, technologies, and ICT.
Digital Government	Promoting administrative, organizational and operational processes between the various government agencies in their transitioning to a comprehensive digital transformation to allow easy and effective access to government digital information and services.
Government Agency	Ministries, authorities, public institutions, councils, national centers including any additional form of a public agency.
Digital Channel	A digital means of communication to display information or offer digital services and products to beneficiaries, such as: websites, digital portals, smart device applications, email, self-service kiosks, call center services, social networking sites and applications or Chabot. Services may be provided on all channels, or selectively on some of these channels.
Accessibility	Ensure easy access to services by all beneficiary segments, including inclusiveness, equality, and accessibility guidelines (W3C).
Website	Non-interactive web pages that provide information and news content available to everyone without the need to log in to the website. It can also demonstrate the available services and products catalog, but without the ability to request them, meaning that they are non-interactive services.
Search Engine	It is a program that operates according to certain algorithms that access website pages, index them, and show them to the search engine, such as: Google, Bing, Yahoo, and other search engines.
Search Engine Optimization	A set of procedures to improve the website’s appearance in the first search results on the search engine to achieve a high visit rate to the government agency’s website.
Algorithms	A group of factors that make up systems for ranking hundreds of billions of web pages in the Google search index in order to provide useful and relevant results in a split second.
Website Content	All data, information and files that are presented on the website, including text content, images, videos, charts, tables, etc.
Digital Content	Information related to digital services that a government agency provides to its beneficiaries
informative Content	information that the government agency publishes through its digital channels to give an overview of the agency and what it does, such as: its latest news, its initiatives and its mechanism of action
User Experience	The process that designers use to create products that provide meaningful user-centered experiences. This involves designing the entire experience including design for value and functionality as well as ease of use, content, navigation, branding, and interface design.
Crawling Robot	It is what is used in international search engines to automatically detect and check websites by tracing links from one webpage to another.

7. Table of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
SEO	Search Engine Optimization



هيئة الحكومة الرقمية
Digital Government Authority