Government Web Strategy

Updated January 2019

At a glance

Communications Nova Scotia

NOVA SCOTIA

Summary

This strategy guides the transformation of the provincial government's online presence of over 150+ domains, 1.9 million+ pages and 75,000 PDFs into a cohesive experience that better meets users' needs.

This strategy creates a shared vision, framework, tools and supports to inform, educate, and guide a consistent approach for re-building the site's content and experiences.

This strategy is illustrated by the launch of the 'beta' site. The first phase involves publishing web content. Government will continue to work on redeveloping transactions (like forms and web applications), documents, charts, visuals and other web assets. This first 'publishing content' phase includes "starter" web pages for current transactions and documents. The information on these pages makes it easy for users to understand where and how they can complete a task.

Implementation of this strategy will result in streamlining the provincial government's digital footprint — for end users visiting the site and the wide network of internal stakeholders who need to develop, update, and continuously manage content for the site.

Ultimately, we want to make information about government programs and services more accessible to all Nova Scotians online.

Facts about the website to 2018

About 3.5 million people viewed novascotia.ca in 2018, a 10% increase from 2017. 64% visited from search engines and 82% were looking for a specific task or topic (up from 70% in 2017). Website analytics demonstrate that the updated site is already starting to increase the access to government's programs and services and providing information that users are looking for; areas of focus for the updated site. For example; the updated site places higher in search engine results and visits per user have increased.
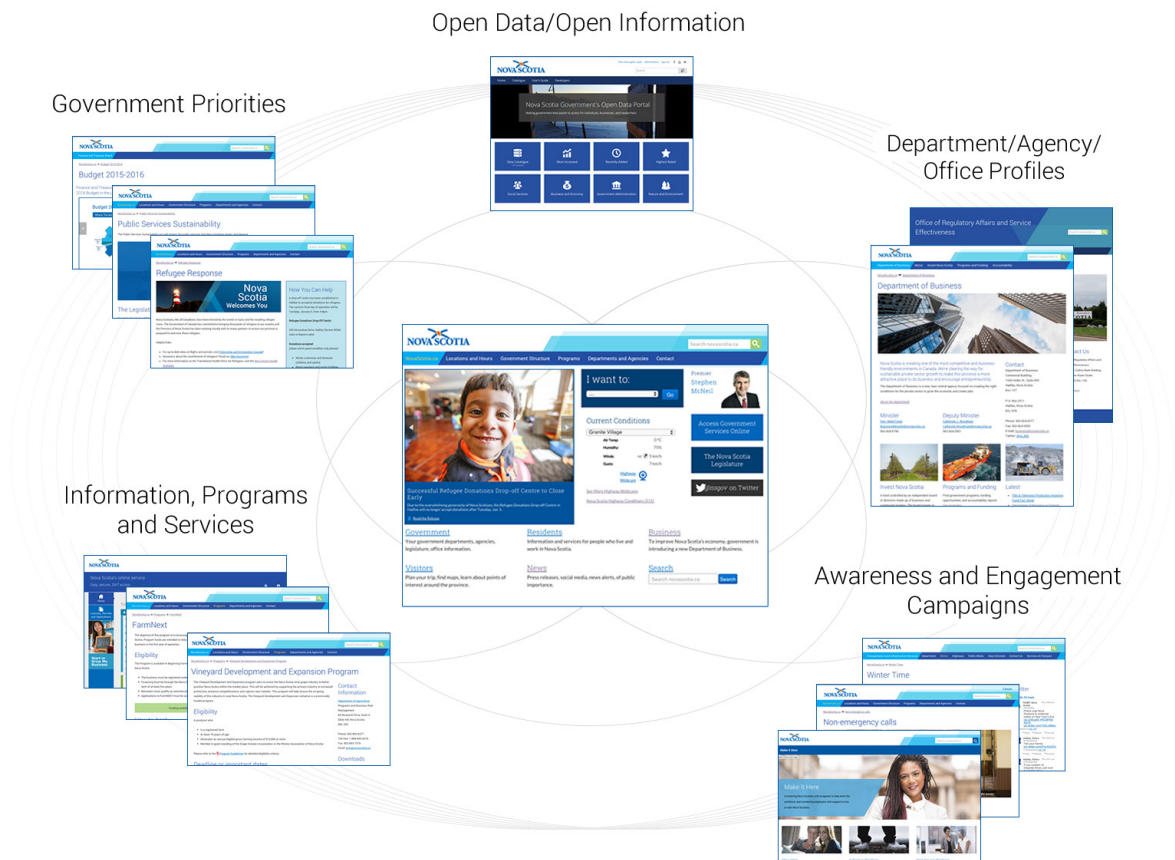
Website Goals

- To provide clearer and easier access to government programs and services

- To share information that individuals and businesses are seeking that can only be provided by the provincial government

- To convey what Government of Nova Scotia is doing and why

- To redevelop content so that it is nimble and adaptable, meaning that content can be grouped and re-grouped over time depending on evolving user needs

- To build a one government—one brand website by taking a consistent approach for re-building the site's content and experiences and moving away from the fragmented experience caused by the current department-by-department structure

- To upgrade the content management system to support government's new standard (Drupal)

Beta site objectives

Government's new beta site:

- Features content organized to reflect the one government—one brand initiative

- Demonstrates a user-first approach

- Showcases the new information architecture, including five common ways to find content

- Demonstrates the consistent application of the online writing guide

- Demonstrates the consistent application of the French translation guide

- Demonstrates the consistent development of visual aids based on universal design

- Avoids content duplication

- Ensures that all content is assigned appropriate metadata so that content is searchable

- Ensures that all content is assigned an appropriate lifecycle date so that content is regularly reviewed

- Meets legal requirements (copyright and permissions)

- Enables testing with users on the new content structure, presentation, and user experience

Open Data/Open Information

Government Priorities

Department/Agency/
Office Profiles

Information, Programs
and Services

Awareness and Engagement
Campaigns

Information architecture

The beta site will reflect that users search for content in one of five ways:

- By Google search engine
- By department or office
- By topic

- By program and service
- By global navigation consistently displayed on all government pages
- By conducting a search within government's website

Targeted content

Content targeted for the beta site must fall within at least one of the following 10 categories:

- Government service
- Government program
- Official information
- Legally required to publish
- Response to a major event

- Policy, act, and regulations
- Engaging citizens
- Raising awareness
- Helping citizens follow the law
- Explaining how government works

Implementation

Content from seven departments -- Business, Communications Nova Scotia, Finance and Treasury Board, Internal Services, Office of Workplace Mental Health, Public Service Commission and Service Nova Scotia – has moved onto the new site. Other departments are working on finalizing their content, which will be updated and will go online in phases through 2019 and 2020.

Tool and supports for departments

Recognizing that departments and offices will need support to identify and redevelop targeted content for the beta site, CNS is providing the following:

• Content development workshops

• Content criteria tool

• Content templates

• Online writing guide

• French translation guide

• Visual aids guide

• Google Analytics

• User testing feedback

These tools and supports are housed on a Sharepoint site for universal access internal to government.

The publishing model

The new model recognizes the strengths that three key groups play in the development of targeted content for government's beta site as follows:
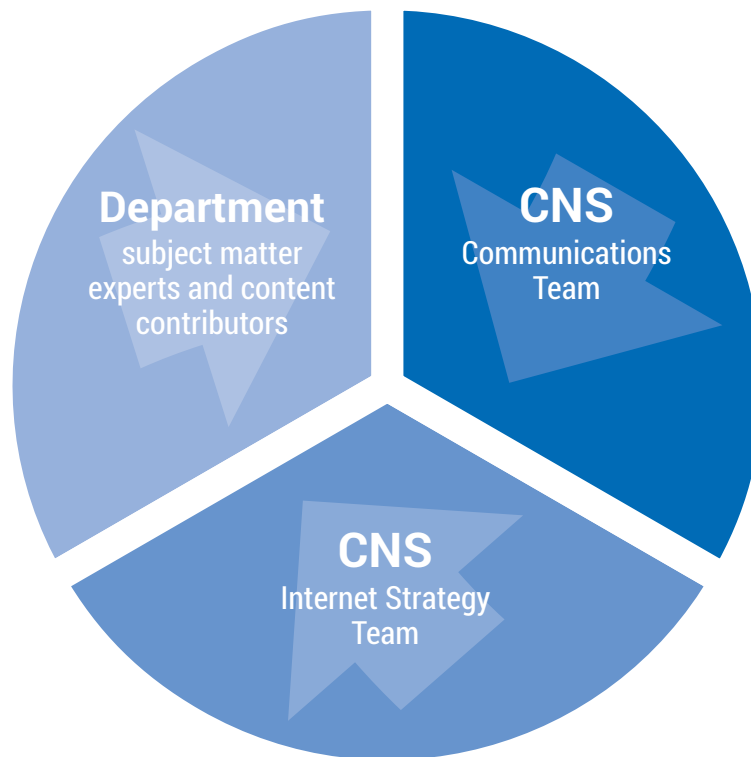
A department or office offers content experts and content contributors who ensure that the content published on the beta site is accurate.

The communications team assigned to a department or office ensures that content is published according to the priorities outlined in the annual communications plan and manages the online profile on behalf of their department or office.

The CNS Internet Strategy team manages the presentation of the content and ensures that the content and technical standards are met as laid out in this strategy, including information architecture and measures and evaluation.

The publishing model reflects that CNS is the publisher and therefore the final authority for what is published on all of government's public-facing websites. CNS will be held to account as such.