

# Applying top tasks to government

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Service Design in Government

February 2019

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[File Your Tax Return](#)[Get Your Refund Status](#)[Pay Your Tax Bill](#)[IRS.gov En Espanol](#)

#### Forms and Pubs

- [1040](#)
- [1040EZ](#)
- [W-4](#)
- [W-9](#)
- [1099-MISC](#)
- [More ...](#)
- [Pub 15](#)
- [Pub 17](#)
- [W-7](#)
- [Tax Table](#)
- [Find Forms](#)

#### Hot Topics

- [Key changes for 2017](#)
- [Get free tax preparation help](#)
- [Electronic filing options](#)
- [ITIN renewal](#)
- [Affordable Care Act](#)
- [More ...](#)

#### Tools

- [Get answers to your tax questions](#)
- [Free File tax software](#)
- [Apply for an online payment plan](#)
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- [More ...](#)

#### Filing & Payment

#### News

Scams request last-minute changes

New option for small businesses

Free Tax Preparation In Your

[Tax Info](#)

[Tax Time Guide](#)

[Scams](#)

[Unclaimed Refunds](#)

[Exempt Orgs](#)

\$1 Billion in unclaimed 2013 tax refunds  
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\$1,000 millones en reembolsos a la espera de

#### Social Media

**Some sites are managed as a dumping ground**

**Dangerous to produce content without understanding the tasks behind it**

**Much easier to add content than remove it**

**Every time you add content, you increase complexity**



“Every superfluous page we create is one more dead end for an angry, frustrated, confused user”  
Gov.UK

# What are top tasks ?

**Every site has a small set of tasks that deliver a huge value.**

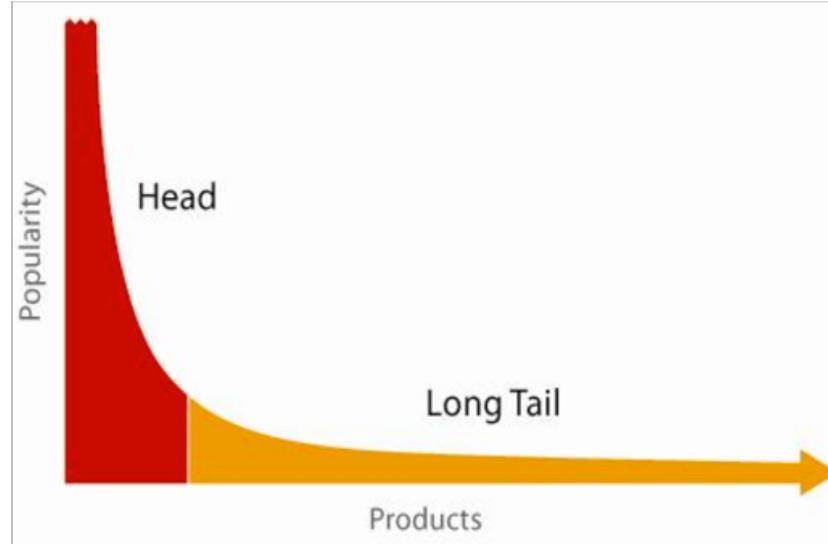
These are the Top Tasks and they exist in the Long Neck.

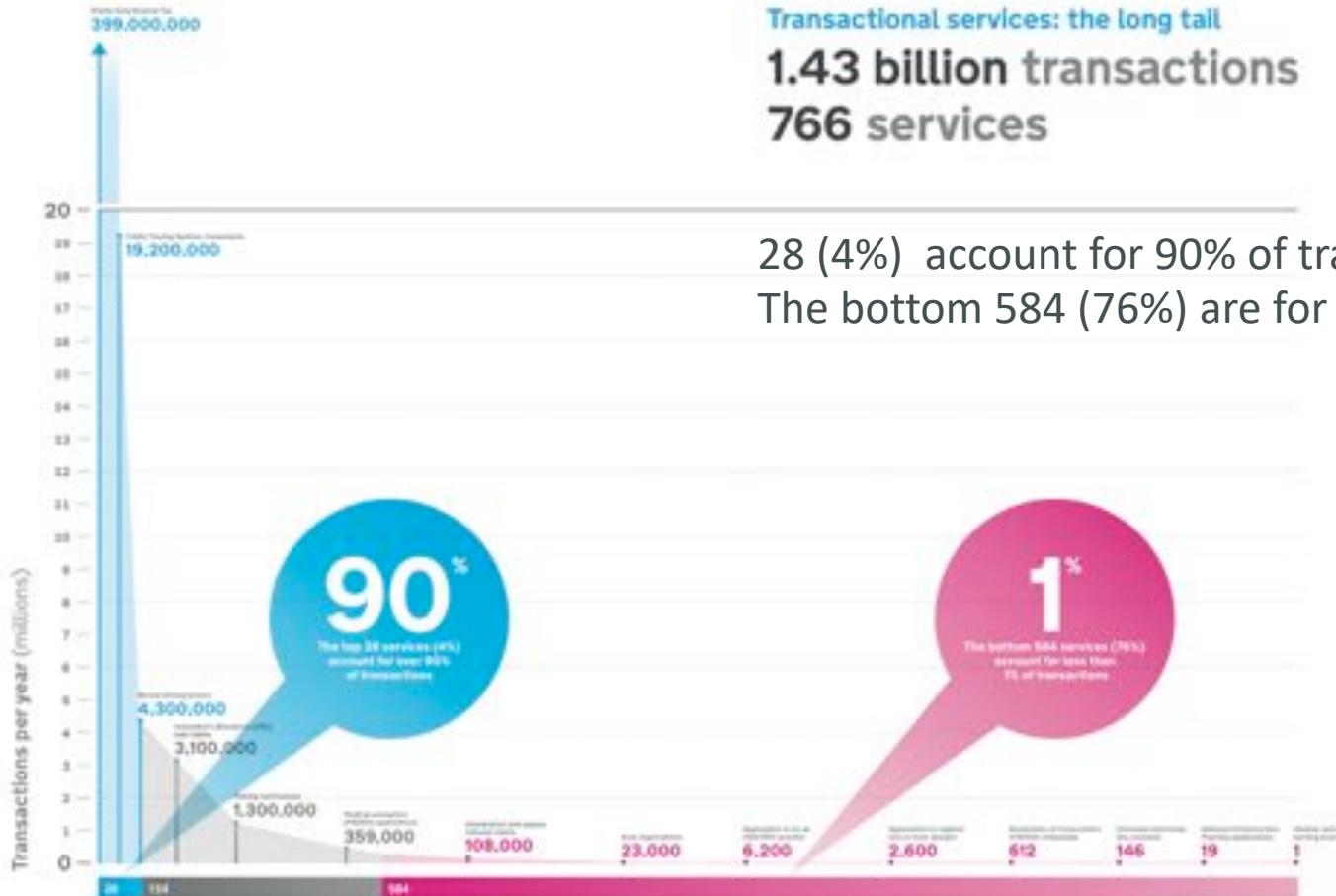
**Every site also has many Tiny Tasks.**

Carefully managed, these can potentially deliver value but they also can destroy value by getting in the way of Top Tasks.

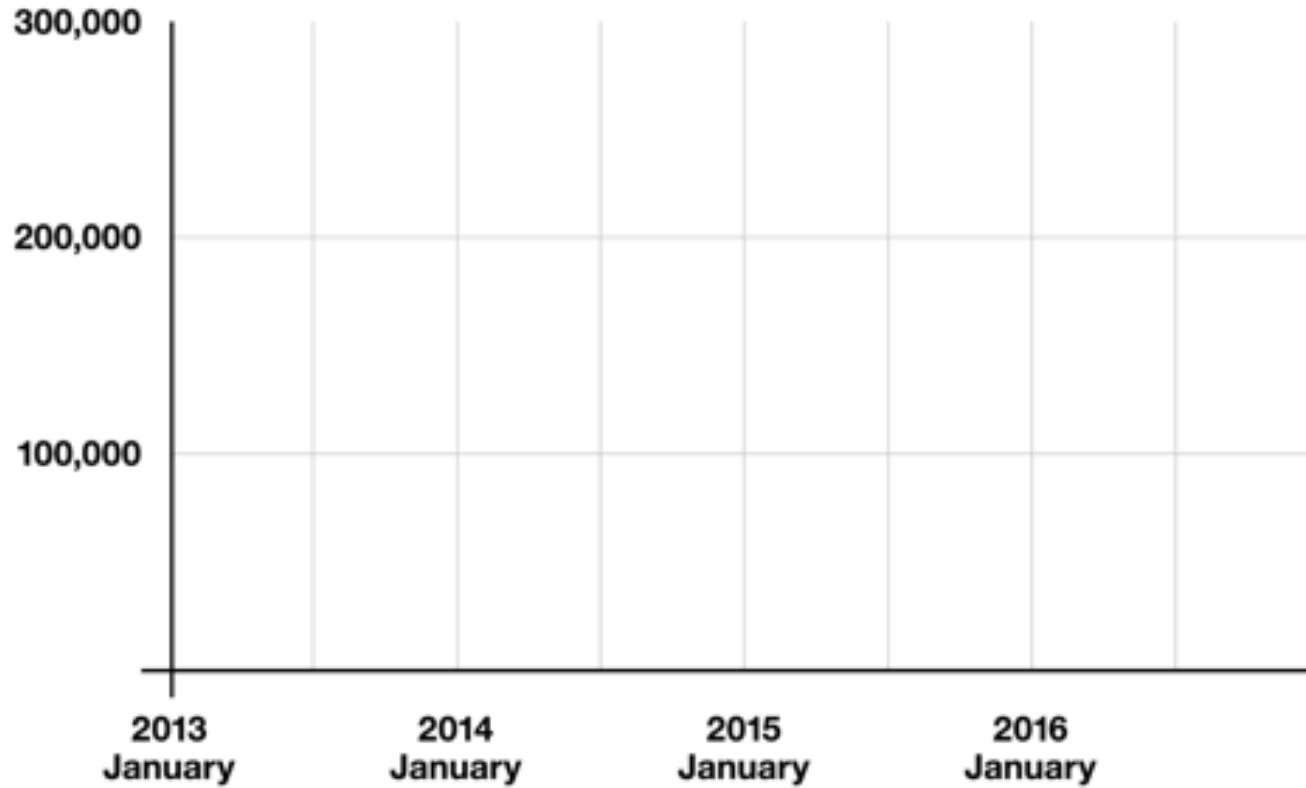
**Manage the Top Tasks, not the content, the Departments / silos or the technology.**

Focus on helping your customers complete the Top Tasks as quickly and easily as possible.

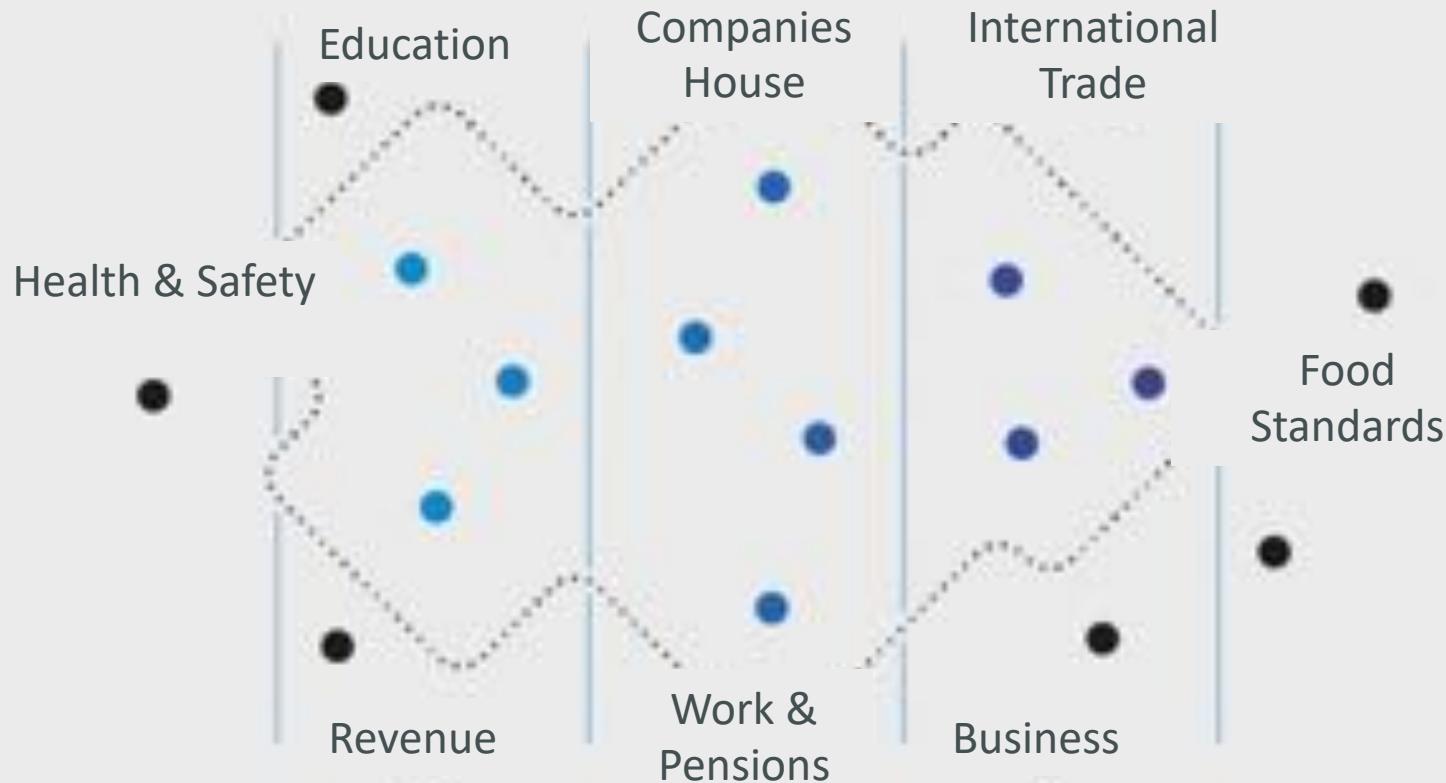




## Items in the search index

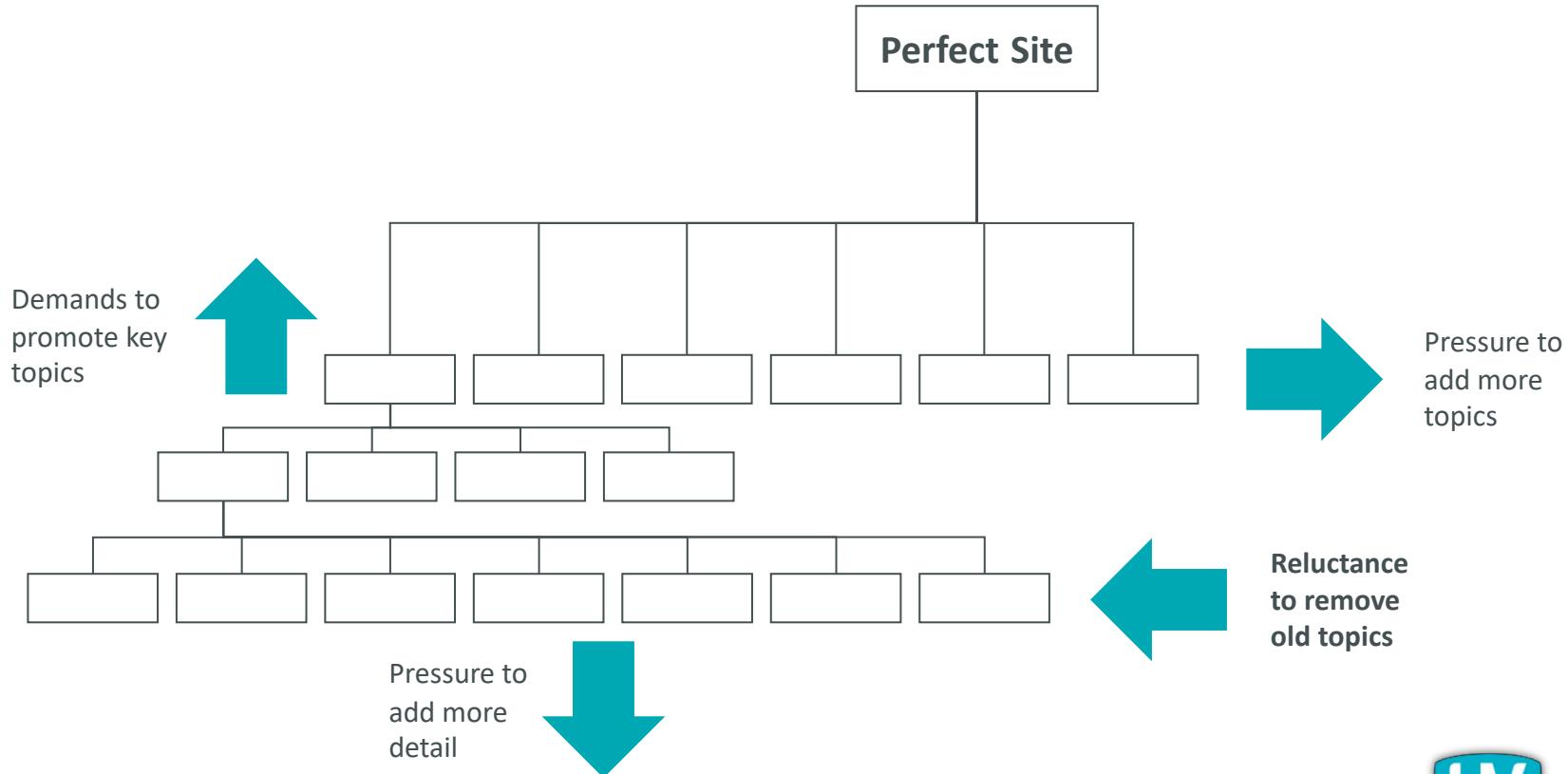


# GOV.UK: Starting a Business



No one intends to create a site that's hard to navigate.

Often sites that were initially OK evolve ....



Theme Park

Over Populated  
Area

More stores

Upmarket part  
of town

417 WEST/OUEST  
Arnprior  
Pembroke

417 EAST  
EST  
Ottawa

Fab new  
Shopping Mall





**Useless Links**

**Slow Links**

**FAQ**

**Tools**

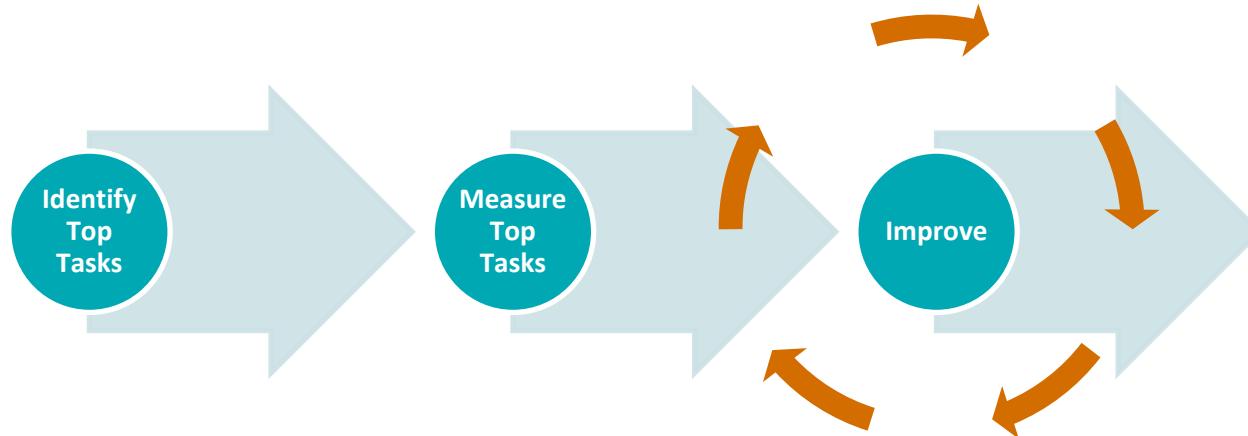
**Infinity &  
Beyond**

**Content**

**Quick  
Links**

# Top Tasks - A management model for Continuous Improvement

**Top Tasks management applies evidence on what's most important to site visitors to form a solid basis for customer centric-website development and content management.**



# Top Task Identification Process

# Phase 1: Top Task Identification

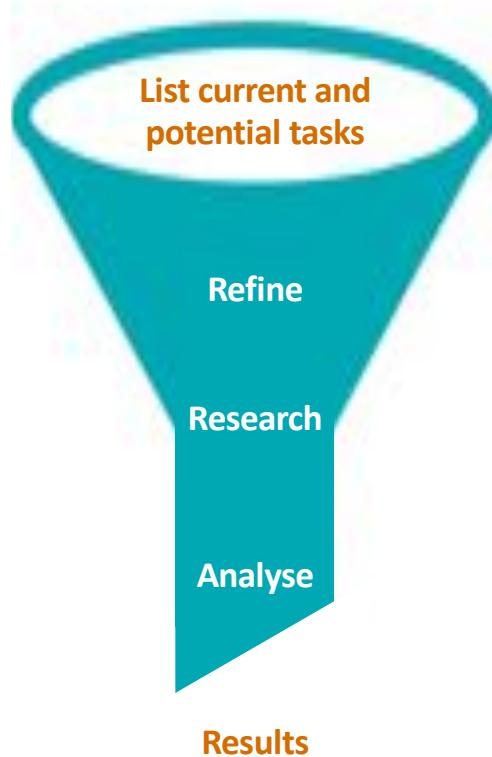
## The process:

List all of the possible tasks

Workshops to refine into a short list of tasks

Use short list in a survey with users, vote for the top five tasks

Analyse to identify what are most important tasks and how best to design for this





# Top Tasks – the process

Current website



Customers and stakeholders

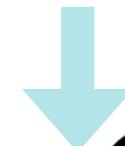


Competitors and other sources

Workshops to sanitise the long list into a short list



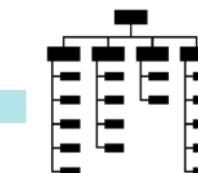
Survey of the task list  
n=400



Analyse results



Monitor, improve



Revise & test IA



# Potential sources of 'Long list' tasks

- ▶ Top 50 annual searches (internal, external)
- ▶ Top 50 Website most visited pages
- ▶ Surveys and research on customers in last 2-3 years
- ▶ Top 50 annual support, help, feedback
- ▶ Competitors / peers
- ▶ Social media, blogs, communities
- ▶ Task collection survey
- ▶ Corporate philosophy, strategy, mission, vision
- ▶ Stakeholder interviews and reviews

# Refine the Long list through workshops

## Removing:

Repetition

Jargon

Overlaps

Parent/child

Channels

Brands

Demographic

Audience specific

1 Select the 5 tasks / resources (from the list below) that are MOST IMPORTANT to you when ...							
2 Tasks	Overlap	Sub-Group	Group	Source	Internal Source	Del ?	Notes
3 Adoption and fostering		Children	Masterlist				
4 Adult abuse (safeguarding, protecting)		Social care and health	Masterlist				
5 Adult education		Schools and colleges	Masterlist				
6 Alcohol, drugs and substance abuse		Social care and health	Masterlist				
7 Animals (health, welfare, boarding, dangerous)		Environment and waste	Masterlist				
8 Anti-social behaviour and discrimination		Crime and emergencies	Masterlist				
9 Archives and records office		Libraries	Masterlist				
10 Benefits		Benefits and grants	Masterlist				
11 Births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships		Births, deaths, marriages	Masterlist				
12 Building (control, alterations)		Business	Masterlist				
13 Business advice		Business	Masterlist				
14 Business premises (rates, inspections)		Business	Masterlist				
15 Carers and home help		Social care and health	Masterlist				
16 Child protection		Children	Masterlist				
17 Childcare		Children	Masterlist				
18 Commercial waste collection and management		Environment and waste	Masterlist				
19 Committees		About the Council	Masterlist				

# End product of shortlisting – survey question

The screenshot shows a web page from the OECD Survey of Business Strategy. At the top left is the OECD logo. Below it, a blue bar contains the text "OECD Survey of Business Strategy". The main content area has a white background with black text. It starts with a redacted question number, followed by a redacted answer field. The text reads: "Please look at the following list and choose the top 10 measures you consider the most important to your business". Below this, another redacted question number is followed by a redacted answer field. The text reads: "Please rank your first measures and spend no more than 10 minutes on this section". Underneath these instructions, there is a list of five items, each with a redacted answer field next to it:

- Planning, monitoring and review (operations)
- Strategic planning
- Review of what OECD does
- OECD in the news

40-100  
tasks  
Random  
order

Issue library software - maintenance, updates, enhancements

Develop a database to store library materials

Issue an online catalog of books

Develop a library website and database

Produce e-books and e-readers

Mobile devices access

Site maintenance

Print entries receive via email, mobile

Monitoring public circulation

Use of library material statistics

Automatic notifications

Issues issue library statistics

Book a book library - library book lending

Automated

Interlibrary loan system and statistics

Online reservations, book reviews, etc.

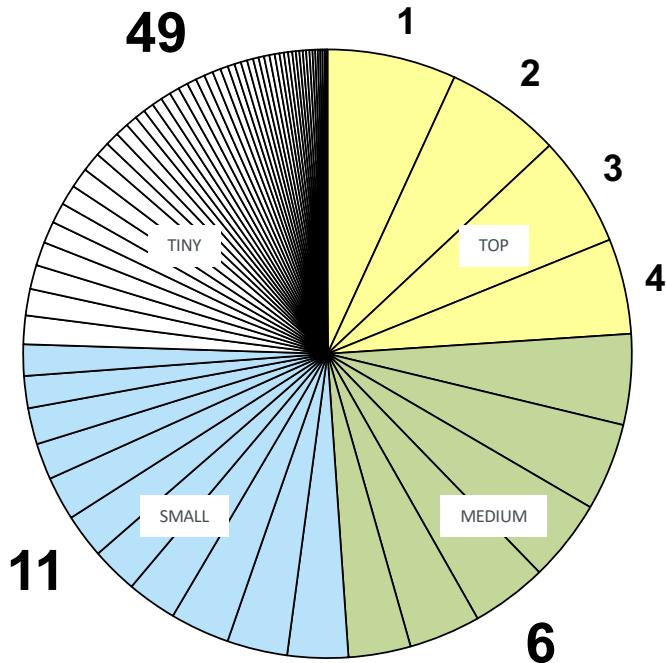
Protein for young children



And more...



# The Results - OECD



The Top task has as many votes as the bottom 28 tasks

1. Country surveys / reviews / reports
2. Compare country statistical data
3. Statistics on one particular topic
4. Browse a publication online for free

That's just top level – there are many ways to slice and dice the data

# Empathy

Tasks	% Customer Vote (2381)	% Team Vote (223)	Empathy
<b>Statistics on one particular topic</b>	5.9%	9.6%	163%
<b>Surveys / reviews / reports</b>	6.8%	5.4%	79%
<b>Compare country statistical data</b>	6.2%	5.2%	84%
<b>Publication by topic</b>	4.6%	5.1%	109%
<b>Statistical forecasts / projections</b>	3.8%	4.7%	124%
<b>Overview of what &lt;org&gt; does</b>	1.2%	4.7%	407%
<b>Browse a publication online for free</b>	5.1%	4.6%	91%
<b>International guidelines and standards (corporate governance, tax havens, etc.)</b>	3.2%	4.5%	141%
<b>Basic facts, summaries and overviews</b>	4.3%	4.0%	92%
<b>Statistics on one particular country</b>	4.0%	3.9%	98%



Top 25%



26-50%



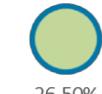
51-75%

# Category / demographic questions

	Tasks	17 or younger	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	Total
1	Wash clothes	3.4%	4.7%	4.8%	5.5%	6.1%	4.7%	5.9%	4.9%
2	Clean house	6.8%	6.4%	4.7%	4.2%	4.0%	3.5%	2.3%	4.5%
3	Cook meals	3.4%	5.6%	4.6%	4.3%	4.0%	3.1%	3.2%	4.0%
4	Take care of children	1.4%	3.2%	3.8%	3.4%	3.7%	3.7%	2.5%	3.6%
5	Drive car	2.7%	2.7%	2.8%	3.1%	2.8%	3.6%	3.0%	2.9%
6	Get groceries	5.5%	4.0%	3.3%	3.2%	2.7%	1.8%	1.1%	2.9%
7	Work part-time	4.1%	3.4%	3.3%	2.8%	2.2%	2.1%	3.0%	2.8%
8	Work full-time	0.7%	2.6%	2.3%	2.7%	2.9%	2.5%	2.5%	2.6%
9	Go to school	4.8%	2.0%	2.9%	2.8%	2.2%	2.4%	1.3%	2.5%
10	Get exercise	0.7%	2.2%	3.1%	2.5%	3.0%	2.8%	3.8%	2.5%
12	Use computer	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%	5.1%	2.4%
11	Use mobile phone	5.5%	2.2%	2.8%	2.2%	1.8%	2.0%	2.1%	2.4%
13	Use social media	1.4%	1.8%	2.9%	2.6%	2.5%	3.0%	0.9%	2.4%
14	Use internet	2.7%	2.0%	1.9%	2.1%	2.5%	3.1%	1.3%	2.2%
15	Use email	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%	1.9%	2.1%
17	Use laptop	0.7%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%	1.7%	2.2%	1.1%	1.8%
16	Use smartphone	1.4%	1.7%	2.1%	1.6%	1.9%	2.3%	2.3%	1.8%
18	Use tablet	0.0%	2.1%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%	1.0%	0.6%	1.7%
19	Use computer at work	1.4%	2.1%	2.2%	1.8%	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%	1.7%
20	Use computer at home	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%	1.9%	1.8%	2.5%	1.7%



Top 25%



26-50%



51-75%

# Typical timescales



# Phase 2: Information Architecture design & testing

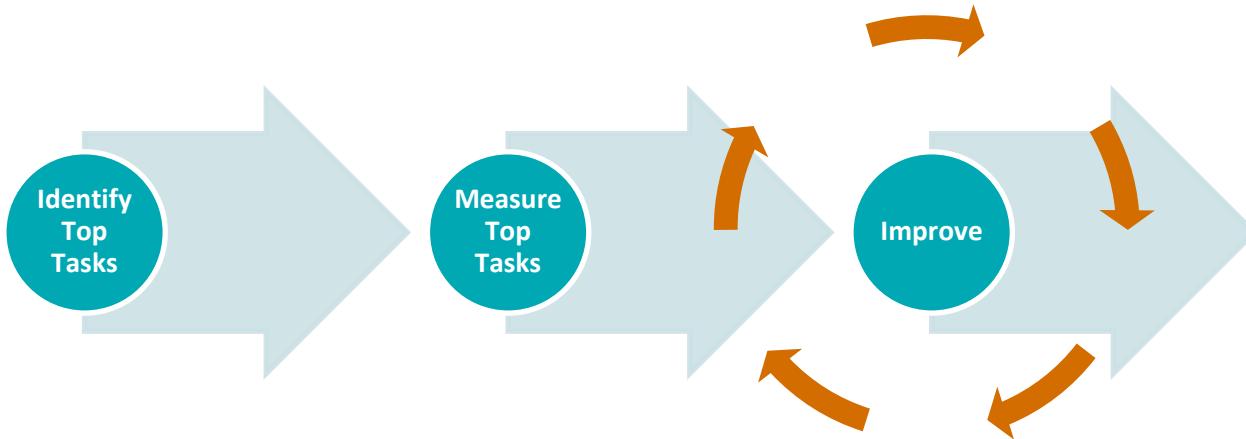
**Based on the top tasks data, design and test an information architecture and navigation system to facilitate your users to do what they want quickly and efficiently.**

Process:

- ▶ Take around 20 top tasks, ask your intranet/site users to group them into logical categories
- ▶ Analyse the categories that participants have created, create a proposed IA using methods such as card sorting.
- ▶ Conduct tree testing using online testing.
- ▶ Develop a customer-centric information architecture and navigation system.



# The Next Steps



Success rate  
Identify barriers  
Time to perform

# Hourly forecasts

100%

80%

60%

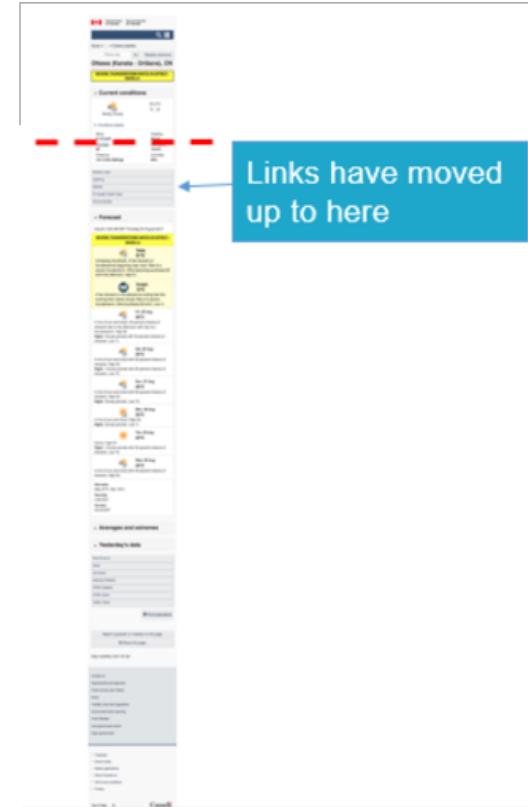
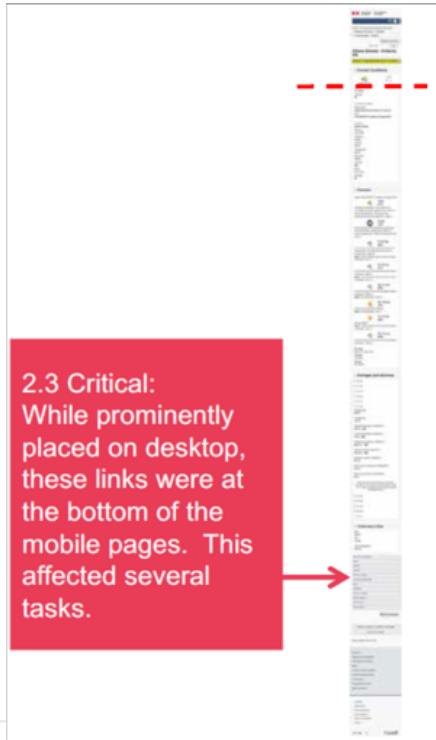
40%

20%

0%

19%

Before



# Benefits

## For large websites/intranets:

- ▶ Better customer experience – do most important things easier and quicker
- ▶ Prioritise your development efforts
- ▶ Produce less redundant content
- ▶ Improved search results

So Who's doing it?

## Top Tasks works best when:

- ▶ Complex environment – many pages, sites, tools, visitors
- ▶ Content out of date, low quality, no direction
- ▶ Management egos, departmental agendas
- ▶ Top tasks not agreed across the organisation – no hard data to support opinions

Organisations: [Government Digital Service](#)

Search blog



## Benchmarking and performance measurement of content transformation

We've been working to formulate a process for government to define Top Tasks alongside Gerry McGovern, an expert on digital user experience and developer of the Top Tasks management model.

information they are looking for. And we need to find a simple way to measure

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## Inside GOV.UK

A blog about running and improving the GOV.UK website, for people who create or manage content on the site, frequent users and anyone else who is interested. Written by the



# INFORMATION PROVIDERS GUIDE

## The EU Internet Handbook



European Commission > IPG > Basics > EC EUROPA web rationalisation

**RESOURCES:** Our tools | Our services | Library | Standards | Quality assurance | Procedures | Training | Rules

**SEARCH**

FOLLOW THE STEPS:

HOME

BASICS

PLAN

CONTENT

DESIGN

BUILD

GO LIVE

MAINTAIN

### Basics

What is EUROPA?

Structure of EUROPA

Web addresses/URLs

Management

Legal requirements

EUROPA digital transformation

Methodology

Top level architecture EC

Class architecture and

## Top user tasks EC

### What is a task?

A task is what people come to do on our website.

A task could be transactional, eg applying for a research grant but it doesn't have to be about transactions. Finding details on a new legislative proposal on public health is also a task. Finding people (eg contacting a Commissioner), looking for information about recruiting staff abroad is also a task.

A major survey of the Commission's online presence was carried out in May and June 2014. The goal of the survey was to find out the main reasons why people want to interact with our organisation.

» [EC-wide top tasks: factsheet with 77 ranked tasks](#) (618 kB)

### On this page

- » Identifying potential user tasks
  - » Full details on the top task identification process
  - » Presentations used in workshops with DGs
- » Top task polling and results
  - » Polling: How did we organise the survey?
  - » Results of EC-wide top task user survey

"People on their deathbed don't say to themselves 'I wish I had spent more time with the government!'"

Last week, public servants and members of the community gathered for a bracing master class with Gerry McGovern, a leading global expert on the digital customer experience.

- The Honourable Scott Brison  
President of the Treasury Board

#Canadadotca #GCDigital



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada



Canada

# Case studies

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Reembolsos de 2013 por reclamar  
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## Social Media





IRS

Search



Help

News

Language ▾

Charities &amp; Nonprofits

Tax Pros

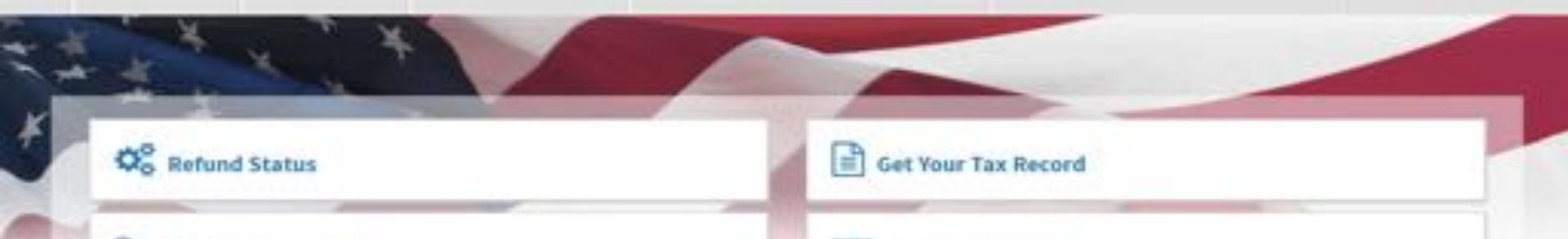
File

Pay

Refunds

Credits &amp; Deductions

Forms &amp; Instructions



Refund Status



Get Your Tax Record



View Your Account



Make a Payment



Get Free Tax Preparation Help



Employer ID Number (EIN)



Get Answers to Your Tax Questions



File Your Taxes for Free

## Forms and Instructions

### 1040 and Schedules 1-6

Individual Tax Return

### Other 1040 Schedules

Information About the Other Schedules Filed With Form 1040

### W-4

Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate

Search Forms &amp; Instructions

# Liverpool City Council

Fragmented  
Navigation



FRIDAY 26 February 2010

Home

## Business

- Community and living
- Contact
- Council, government and democracy
- Education and learning
- Environment
- Feedback
- Health and social care
- Housing
- Jobs and careers
- Legal services
- Leisure and culture
- News
- Policing and public safety
- Social and equality issues
- Transport and streets
- Your life

Access tools: A A Text

Advanced search

A - Z | Site map | Accessibility help | Contact us

The screenshot shows the Liverpool City Council website's homepage. It features a large orange sidebar on the left containing the text "Fragmented Navigation". The main content area includes a header with the council's logo and navigation links. Below the header is a large image of a building with the word "Liverpool" on it. The page is filled with various sections and links, such as "Latest news & events", "Get in touch 24/7", "Benefits advice", "Most popular", and "News from icLiverpool". Each section contains text and small icons. A sidebar on the right is titled "Do it online" and lists categories like "Report it", "Pay it", "Find it", "Say it", and "Apply". At the bottom right is a logo for "UV".

# Liverpool City Council

## Actions

Identified Top Tasks & took steps

Reduced site pages from **4,000** to **700**

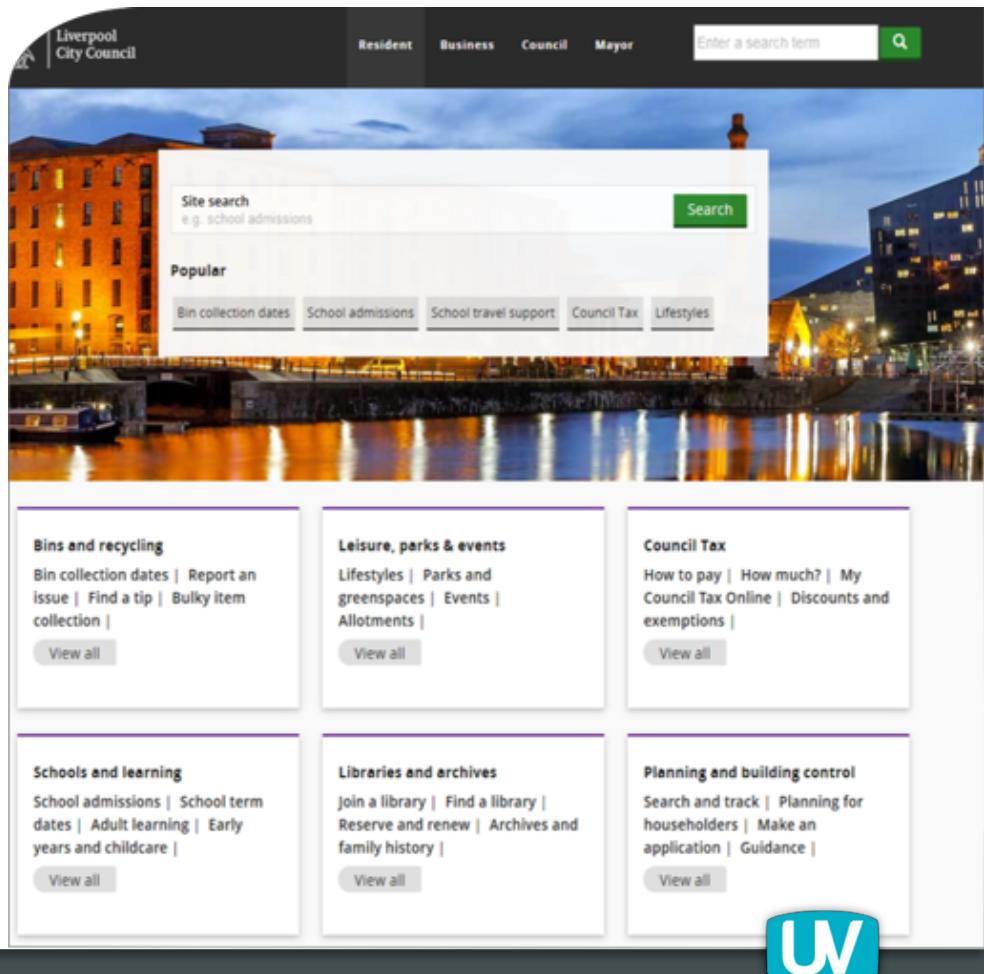
Implemented a new site architecture

Revised the content on key pages

## The Outcome

Reduction in support call volumes

**400%** increase in online reporting, leading cost reductions



The screenshot shows the Liverpool City Council website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Resident, Business, Council, Mayor, and a search bar. Below the navigation is a large banner image of a waterfront at night with buildings and lights reflected in the water. Overlaid on the banner is a search bar labeled "Site search" with placeholder text "e.g. school admissions" and a green "Search" button. Below the search bar is a "Popular" section with links for Bin collection dates, School admissions, School travel support, Council Tax, and Lifestyles. The main content area is divided into several sections: "Bins and recycling" (Bin collection dates, Report an issue, Find a tip, Bulky item collection), "Leisure, parks & events" (Lifestyles, Parks and greenspaces, Events, Allotments), "Council Tax" (How to pay, How much?, My Council Tax Online, Discounts and exemptions), "Schools and learning" (School admissions, School term dates, Adult learning, Early years and childcare), "Libraries and archives" (Join a library, Find a library, Reserve and renew, Archives and family history), and "Planning and building control" (Search and track, Planning for householders, Make an application, Guidance). Each section has a "View all" button.

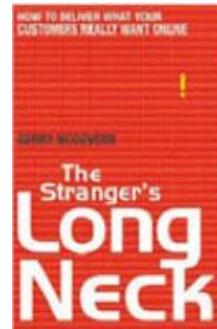
## Where to learn more



### Gerry McGovern blog New Thinking often on Top Tasks

Drop me a line

- [chris@uservision.co.uk](mailto:chris@uservision.co.uk)
- [@crourke](https://twitter.com/crourke)



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 [hello@uservision.co.uk](mailto:hello@uservision.co.uk)  
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