



Department
for Transport

Digital Strategy



Foreword

“This strategy will help us to deliver better quality, more responsive services to those who look to us for help and information.”

One of the most powerful messages contained in the Civil Service Reform plan is that digital is central to our becoming a modern and efficient Civil Service. This is as true for this department as it is for anywhere in government. Making the fullest possible use of the opportunities digital offers will help us to be more efficient, cut the cost of delivery, and make the department a better place to work.

Most importantly it will help us to deliver better quality, more responsive services to all those who look to us for help and information.

Wherever people are not able to use digital services, we will ensure they are not left behind. Sometimes we will need to provide services through a range of channels, but digital should always be our first choice.

We are good at delivering digital. We have a number of excellent and popular digital services such as online car tax renewal and we are one of the leaders in delivering digital services in the public sector. We must build on this record and take it to the next level. This will require us to do things in new and different ways. We need to re-think how we deliver services and take the pain out of dealing with our processes and procedures. Above all, we need to listen to feedback from users and act quickly to respond positively.

Making the best use of digital is an essential part of our being a modern, fit for purpose organisation, agile and ready to meet the challenges of the future.

This is where we want to be, need to be, and will be, by delivering this strategy.



Norman Baker MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State



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Executive summary

“The department will transform the delivery of services through the use of digital to put customers’ needs at its heart.”

This strategy sets out how the department will transform the delivery of services through the use of digital to put customers’ needs at its heart. This will mean:

Raising the bar for our digital services

We will continually improve our digital services based on customer feedback to offer our customers the best possible experience – easy, convenient and a pleasure to use.

Speeding up the move to digital

We will bring more services online and design new digital services to meet our customers’ needs, integrating these with other services.

Tackling barriers to entry

We will work to tackle and remove the barriers to our customers using digital channels, addressing legislative barriers and making it easier to prove identity online.

Leaving no one behind

We will put in place help for those customers who lack the skills or confidence to use digital services, or do not have access to technology.

Working digitally

We will use digital technology to support remote and flexible working and make smarter use of the information we hold. Digital will become an integral part of the way we all work.

Improving our digital skills and capabilities

We will increase our digital skills and capabilities, and champion the use of digital across the department.



Listening to and engaging digitally with our customers

We will use digital tools and techniques to engage with our customers and stakeholders.

Completing the move to GOV.UK and improving our supporting ICT platforms and systems

Our public facing digital transactions, information and services will be accessed through GOV.UK.

We will fundamentally change how we procure and manage ICT platforms and technologies to support our digital services and deliver cost savings.

Actions for delivering this strategy will be included in a delivery plan and in departmental and agency business plans. Progress will be reviewed regularly by the DfT Board and the strategy refreshed at least annually.



Introduction

“Central government where possible must become a digital organisation. These days the best service organisations deliver online everything that can be delivered online. This cuts their costs dramatically and allows access to information and services at times and in ways that are convenient to the users rather than the providers...”

Minister for the Cabinet Office Francis Maude,
Civil Service Reform Plan, June 2012

Why go digital?

Government wants to meet the needs of its customers:

- Research shows that 86% of businesses use the internet,¹ to interact with public sector bodies and 82% of people access the internet at least occasionally²
- Customers also like using digital services, with high take up and customer satisfaction rates for many of our current digital transactions.

Digital forms a central part of government's plans to transform public services set out in the Civil Service Reform Plan. The Government Digital Strategy was published on the 6th November 2012 (<http://publications.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/digital/>). This sets out the requirements for delivery of public sector 'digital by default' services under 11 linked themes and 14 actions. These are listed at [Annex A](#) and referenced throughout this strategy.

However, it is not enough for us just to provide our services digitally. They need to work well together and deliver a high quality experience that makes it easier for people to deal with government and helps them to comply with legal requirements. Research has shown³ that services are also usually cheaper to provide digitally than through other channels. Where we cannot deliver services digitally, we will use digital tools to improve our processes, increase efficiency, and reduce costs wherever we can.

Digital tools and techniques can help improve the ways we engage with and listen to our customers and stakeholders too. By increasing the use of digital tools we can improve the skills and efficiency of our staff and open up policy making and the design and delivery of our services. We will create a culture and way of working where, whatever we do, we are always thinking 'digital by default'.

Digital is all about using technology to make things easier – for our customers (businesses and citizens), for our stakeholders, our staff, our delivery partners and our suppliers.

“The government wants to meet the needs of its customers”

The department and its customers

The DfT comprises of the central department, six Executive Agencies (including two trading funds), and 18 other public bodies www.gov.uk/dftr

Transport impacts on almost every part of society. Our customers include private citizens, business and industry, transport stakeholders and the international community. Their needs will be different depending on their mode of transport, the information they want, and the types of customer they are. As public servants we need to address these needs.

1. ONS E Commerce and ICT activity Statistical Bulletin December 2011
2. GDS Digital Landscape Research September 2012
3. GDS Digital Efficiency Report October 2012

Scope

This strategy applies to **all transactions, information provision and exchange, and interactions** provided by the department. This includes Executive Agencies, NDPBs and other arms length bodies. It also includes contracted out services where we can specify levels of service and standards.

“Without looking again at our processes and platforms, digital skills and capabilities, we will not realise the full benefits digital offers.”

This strategy is not just about delivery of external services. Without looking again at our processes and platforms, digital skills and capabilities, and the ways we engage and communicate with our customers and stakeholders, we will not realise the full benefits digital offers.

Although some services cannot be delivered digitally, such as carrying out vehicle or driving tests or building a road, we can improve the processes supporting the delivery of these services through making use of digital tools. For example, the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) will be trialling the use of mobile devices to record and transmit the results of driving tests. This will remove the need for clipboard and paper.

This strategy sets out how we aim to meet the actions in the Government Digital Strategy. It will also contribute to meeting our vision for a transport system that is an engine for economic growth, is more environmentally sustainable and improves quality of life within our communities.

It aligns with other cross-government and departmental strategies, including the Civil Service Reform Plan, Capability Plan, Government ICT Strategy, Communications, and Open Data strategies, and with forthcoming departmental strategies on Transparency, ICT and Motoring Services.



Our digital aim

Our aim is to maximise the use of digital to deliver **high quality, customer focussed, services** that work for everyone.

“We will maximise the use of digital tools and technology to streamline and improve the ways services work.”

This strategy sets out how we will meet this aim through:

- Shifting delivery from face to face, telephony, and postal/paper channels to self service and intermediary - provided digital channels wherever possible
- Re-designing and re-engineering our processes to better support our existing digital services and bringing more services online
- Collecting customer feedback to ensure we are meeting their needs when delivering digital services
- Using digital tools (such as social media) to help us engage with, and listen to, customers
- Providing assisted digital help to those who find it difficult to access services digitally
- Working more digitally ourselves
- Improving our ICT systems and platforms.

This will help us to:

- Reduce the cost of delivery
- Improve the quality of services, and
- Help more customers to access our services in ways that are both easy and convenient to them.



The promises made in this strategy need to be affordable and cost effective. In the current challenging financial climate, funding may not always be available. Wherever we can't provide services digitally, or where funding is not available, we will maximise the use of digital tools and technology to streamline and improve the ways those services work.



What we have delivered

“We are a leader in the digital delivery of public services across government, with high levels of take up for our digital services.”

We are a leader in the digital delivery of public services across government, with high levels of take up for our digital services such as renewing car tax or booking driving tests. We intend staying at the forefront of public sector digital delivery.

We currently deliver over 30 transactions and enquiry services digitally (see [Annex C](#)). Other services include:

- Transport Direct (a Great Britain multi-modal journey planner)
- Web tools that enable you to find details of fuel consumption and emissions and MOT history
- A fully computerised service enabling 21,000 MOT garages to record over 30 million MOT checks a year
- A service for the issue of Blue Badges, helping to cut fraud and supporting online applications.

The department’s online journey planning service, Transport Direct, helps people plan their journey from A to B by road, public transport, cycle, foot, or just about any combination of these. With over 100 million individual enquiries to date, it was the basis for the official Spectator Journey Planner for the 2012 Olympics, matching supply and demand to help millions of people get around during that busy time.

We also use social media channels to carry out consultations and campaigns and engage with and inform customers including:

- A number of successful apps including a ‘Hands Free Traffic Talker’ traffic information app for iPhones and Android phones
- Three iPhone apps covering different aspects of the car theory test
- An Official Highway Code iPhone app
- Youtube, Facebook and Twitter channels for the central department and agencies.

You can find more detail on some of these in the case studies at [Annex D](#).

We deliver around 90 million individual transactions every year, with half of transaction services currently available online. Many of these digital services are achieving high levels of use. Examples of some of our high performing services are shown in the table opposite.

Examples of DfT services with high take up

Service	Forecast take up 2012/13	
	Digital volume	%
Book a practical driving test	1,540,620	81%
Amend a practical driving test	694,170	81%
Book driving theory test	1,483,200	90%
Amend theory booking test	184,800	84%
Claim practical driving test pass	638,400	96%
Declare vehicle off road (SORN)	3,036,838	78%
First registration and licensing of a vehicle	2,147,299	89%
Notification of seriously damaged vehicle	531,786	99%
Notification of destruction of a vehicle	12,394	72%
Certificate of destruction of a vehicle	1,017,108	100%
Buy personalised number plate (Sale of Marks)	207,643	97%
Get a duplicate driving licence	542,651	51%
Exchange paper driving licence to new style	714,561	80%
Renew car tax	22,096,866	50%
Vehicle fee paying enquiries	2,465,459	88%
Non-Fee paying enquiries	7,772,517	97%
Vehicle enquiry service	19,452,584	99.9%
Drivers record enquires	2,609,481	71%
Commercial vehicle operator self service	191,237	70%
Obtain HGV test results	210,600	60%



Where are the opportunities?

“We will need to think and work differently across organisational boundaries.”

This is a real success story, but we cannot rest on our laurels and have more work to do in order to become a truly ‘digital by default’ department:

- Digital is not yet embedded into everything we do as an organisation. We will need to think and work differently across organisational boundaries and make sure we have the right processes, organisational structures, skills and tools in place
- Take up is levelling off for some of our high volume digital transactions such as car tax renewal. We need to understand the reasons for this and explore new ways to tackle these. For example, if we were able to increase the digital take up of car tax renewal to 80% this would mean another 13 million people transacting digitally
- Some of our services are not online at all (see [Annex C](#))
- Making changes to the way digital transactions work and designing new services can be slow and expensive under our current IT contracts
- Our technical platforms need to be updated and improved to better support delivery of digital services
- Many of our online motoring services work well for individuals, or large fleet owners, but not so well for those in between who may own or operate small numbers of vehicles



- Systems and transactions are not fully joined up and are often inconsistent in the way they work
- Some of our processes and requirements can act as a barrier to customers transacting online
- Not enough of our services have continuous customer feedback built in to inform ongoing improvements. It is often carried out as a one off exercise.

The next section sets out the high level actions we will take to address these and other issues, under a set of departmental themes linked to the 11 themes and 14 actions in the Government Digital Strategy (see [Annex A](#)).



How we will become a more digital department

Raising the bar for our digital services

Related Government Digital Strategy theme:

- Increase the number of people who use digital services
- Base service decisions on accurate and timely management information.

“We will review how well existing digital services work, improving these where necessary to help increase use.”

We want far more people to use our digital services. We will promote and encourage the use of digital channels, for example through opportunities offered by mail outs and leaflets, social media, newsletters, exhibitions, media and press, contact centre call waiting messages and other forms of publicity.

People should not have to learn how any of our digital services work. They should find them so easy and intuitive they will not want to use any other channel.

Simple and easy to use

We will move to a common digital service standard across the department, creating a common, simple, user experience inspired by GOV.UK. All existing digital services will meet the service design criteria set out in the Government Digital Service's (GDS) digital standard at [Annex B](#) wherever possible.

We will develop plans for increasing the take up of existing digital services to at least 80% wherever possible. A list of our current digital and non digital transactions is attached at [Annex C](#).

We will concentrate our initial effort on those services that offer the greatest benefit, either in cost savings or in added value to customers. Typically these will be the higher volume transactions or improvements that can be delivered quickly and affordably.

Citizens often want to carry out just one or two transactions with us, but intermediaries (such as fleet management companies) need to process tens, hundreds or even thousands of transactions. We will develop bulk transaction solutions and Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)⁴ so we can meet the needs of all our customers, large and small.

The number of people accessing the internet on devices other than desktop PCs is increasing rapidly. Government research⁵ has shown that more people use laptops and smartphones to access the internet than desktop PCs. We will design our online services so people can access them on a range of different devices. Wherever we can, we will open up APIs so that developers can develop 'apps' for smartphones and other digital devices.

We will join up our services with others in DfT and across government wherever possible to improve the user experience and to give customers the choice of carrying out a number of different transport transactions in the same place and avoid having to enter the same information many times over. We will also review how well existing digital services work, improving these where necessary to help increase use – for example by redesigning screens for the online car tax renewal service.

What we will do:

- Develop plans to improve the take up of our current digital services to 80% wherever possible, continuously evaluating how well they perform, adjusting and improving them as we go
- Simplify our online transactions and their supporting processes and platforms to ensure they are simple and look, feel and work in the same way, wherever in DfT they are delivered
- Develop a bulk transaction service for motoring services to help customers with more than one vehicle to transact easily
- Explore the viability of developing a 'DfT Customer Account' to give customers the choice to carry out similar transactions all in one place.

4. An Application Programming Interface (API) is a particular set of rules ('code') and specifications that software programs can follow to communicate with each other.

5. GDS Digital Landscape Research September 2012

“We will collect and analyse performance data on our services to help us identify opportunities for improvement.”

Opportunities in the telephone channel

We directly operate four award winning telephone contact centres answering 23 million calls every year at a cost of £25 million. The largest of these employs over 700 staff, the smallest 25.

With an average cost per call of just over £1, reducing the numbers of calls to contact centres can generate significant savings. We will look at how our contact centres can be redesigned to provide ‘assisted digital’ services. DSA will be the first to do this, closing their existing contact centre and replacing it with an assisted digital service over the telephone by 2015. We will look to move more initial customer contact to digital channels and explore the potential for consolidating DfT’s contact centre provision.

What we will do:

- Explore redesigning DfT contact centre provision to provide assisted digital services, including the use of web chat and other techniques, moving customer contact to digital channels wherever possible
- Review DfT contact centre provision to explore the opportunities for consolidating with each other and with other government departments
- Close the DSA contact centre, replacing this with a smaller assisted digital service over the telephone by 2015.

Delivering efficiencies and monitoring performance

To improve services we need accurate management information. We will collect and analyse performance data on our services to help us identify opportunities for improvement and report progress on delivering digital services. We are working with the GDS to automate this process from April 2013 using the Quarterly Data Summary. Data collected in this way will include take up rates, costs and customer satisfaction. This will give us an overview of our digital performance.

We will also publish our digital performance in annual reports.

What we will do:

- Automate the collection of digital performance data from April 2013 through the Quarterly Data Summary, and
- Publish our digital performance in annual reports.



Speeding up the move to digital

Related Government Digital Strategy themes:

- Increase the number of people who use digital services
- Redesign transactional services to meet the government's 'digital by default' standard.



“All new transactions will be designed to be digital wherever possible.”

We will make more of our services digital as quickly as possible, including using the opportunities offered by moving to new ICT arrangements. A list of current DfT transactions is attached at [Annex C](#). As part of this move we will carry out the end-to-end redesign of three 'exemplar' services by the end of 2015, including these in agency business plans for 2013/14. These are:

DVLA vehicles online (17 million transactions annually)

Currently when a customer sells or disposes of a vehicle, the log book needs to be posted to DVLA to be updated. We will digitise this process so it can be carried out self service or through an intermediary.

DVLA personalised registrations (approximately 1million transactions annually)

Currently the process for transferring or retaining a car number plate and related services is a paper transaction, often carried out at a DVLA local Office. This process will be digitised so the customer or an intermediary can do it online.

DVLA integrated enquiry platform (estimated 2 billion enquiries annually, with an estimated 10 million customer enquiries)

A new enquiry service to provide motor insurance industry and driver enquiry services, all delivered through a 'greenfield' IT procurement approach developed jointly with the GDS. This will see a move away from expensive legacy ICT systems, using an innovative 'agile' approach to designing services and platforms.

We will use the learning from these to help bring other services with more than 100,000 transactions a year online. We will do this within five years wherever it is cost effective and affordable to do so. All new digital services will meet the government digital standard and be accessed through the GOV.UK platform. We will also develop plans to get use to at least 80% as quickly as possible.

All new transactions will be designed to be digital wherever possible. Wherever we are developing a new tool or service in one part of DfT we will lead on that for the whole of DfT, looking for opportunities for joint working with other departments to maximise efficiencies.

One of the first steps in becoming 'digital by default' is being taken by DSA. In October DSA launched a new service enabling business customers to book practical driving tests and access additional booking information online. DSA has also made major improvements to the existing internet booking system to make it more accessible and useable and will provide a telephone assisted digital channel, closing the existing contact centre. They intend becoming a fully digital organisation by March 2015.

What we will do:

- Re-design three exemplar transactions by 2015
- Make all new transactions 'digital by default'
- Fundamentally redesign any services in excess of 100,000 transactions a year to become digital within five years, wherever it is cost effective and affordable to do so, putting in place plans to achieve 80% take up as soon as possible
- Transform the Driving Standards Agency into a 'digital by default' agency by March 2015.



“Third parties and intermediaries can help us to deliver services digitally if we give them the access and tools to do so.”

Delivering through third parties

We no longer have to deliver all our services ourselves. Third parties and intermediaries can help us to deliver services digitally through their websites if we give them the access and tools to do so. This means our services will be more accessible, with people able to go to a wider range of places on the web and elsewhere to find them.

This will mean taking a more ‘wholesale’ approach to the delivery of services, providing the data or the means for third parties to do this for us.

We will open our data and transactions to third parties through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). We will be building accessible APIs as part of every new transaction and are piloting a mechanism to add an API ‘wrapper’ to current DVLA services.

Many of our services are contracted out to service providers. We will ensure that wherever appropriate, we will require contractors to use open standards, provide open data, and offer publicly accessible APIs.

The department, working through Transport Direct, its agencies, and the wider industry already offers open and reusable data on public transport stops, timetables and real time travel information. This contributes to the government’s Open Data and Transparency agendas. We will build on this by making more information available for reuse through data.gov.uk, including on fares, accessibility and roads, all using common open standards to minimise costs and create opportunities for working with others.

What we will do:

- Put an API approach in place for all DfT digital services
- Adopt Open Data Standards for all new procurements wherever possible
- Make more information available for reuse through data.gov.uk.



Tackling the barriers to entry

Related Government Digital Strategy themes:

- Increase the number of people who use digital services
- Remove unnecessary legislative barriers.

“We will engage with customers to address their concerns over trust and identity, and explain the benefits of digital.”

There are a number of reasons some people choose not to use our digital transactions and services. Some of these are set out below. We will tackle these and other barriers as part of this strategy.

Examples of reasons given for not using digital channels

- The need to prove identity or provide physical evidence, wet signature or photograph
- Lack of a bank account or other means or make an online payment
- Unwillingness to provide personal details online
- Distrust/fear of digital technology and government
- Transactions are infrequent so it's not worth the effort of going online
- Preference to speak to a person rather than deal online
- Loyalty to non digital channels for social reasons (e.g. the Post Office®)
- Perception that traditional channels may offer a higher level of services (e.g. when booking driving tests, or changing details on a licence)
- Lack of access to IT (for example a lorry driver/driving instructor who spends most of his time on the road)
- Low digital skills.

Many of our transactions require users to prove who they are, for example to apply for or change a driving licence, to update their records, or to apply for a permit or permission. These processes can be cumbersome and bureaucratic, discouraging people from doing these transactions online.

We will work with the GDS to develop a new approach to users proving their identity online. This will replace the existing reliance on the Government Gateway, ensuring that it is compatible with the federated approach to identity currently being developed by the GDS. This will simplify the process of proving identity and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy by re-using existing proofs of identity.

We will engage with customers to address their concerns over trust and identity, and explain the benefits of digital and that it is safe and convenient to deal with us online. To maximise take up we will remove any unnecessary processes, regulation and legislation and reduce the requirements for identity to the minimum, whilst ensuring services remain secure.

We will also work with the GDS to identify legislative barriers to digital and identify ways to remove these.

DVLA currently process 90% of all card payments to government. However, some still find it difficult to pay for our services online. We will explore ways to enable more customers to pay online, including the use of Direct Debit.

We will:

- Develop plans to remove the barriers that make it difficult for people to do things digitally, working with the GDS to identify any changes needed in legislation
- Make it easier to pay online by exploring the use of Direct Debit, pre-pay cards and accounts and other payment methods
- Actively encourage those who could easily use our digital channels to do so, working with partners and other parts of government to promote digital channels and ways to get online
- Set entry requirements to digital services to the minimum level required for security
- Develop a new approach to identity assurance for DfT customers, working with the GDS to align with the cross-government federated identity assurance approach
- Review and streamline processes to ensure that digital channels offer a simple and easy to use experience every time so users won't want to go back to non digital.

Leaving no one behind

Related Government Digital Strategy themes:

- Increase the number of people who use digital services
- Provide consistent services for those who have rarely or never been online.



“We will provide help and assistance for those who need it so that we do not leave anyone behind.”

Whilst many users are able to access digital services but choose not to, some will simply not be able to access them. Government research⁶ shows that 18% of people rarely or never use the internet. We will actively encourage those who could use digital services to do so, considering what incentives we can provide, and put in place help and assistance for those that can't so that we do not leave anyone behind.

We will also ensure that those who need to comply with legal and regulatory requirements can do if they are unable to do so digitally.

We will ensure that access to digital is as inclusive as possible, assessing the equality impacts whenever developing new digital services and policy.

All DfT digital services, existing and new, will have help in place for those who need it. This help does not have to be separate for each service, but should be targeted at the users of that service. We will also apply this to communications and policy development - for example by ensuring people can respond to consultations if they do not have access to digital.

We will explore ways to discourage the use of non digital channels where users are able to use the digital alternative, but provide targeted assisted digital help for those that need it with digital access and assistance available either at the point of customer contact, by telephone, or through an intermediary. We will also work with the GDS and other departments to develop a procurement for a new cross-Government assisted digital service.

Our staff will be encouraged to contribute by helping people who have never been online to do so, for example by taking part in events such as the 'silver surfer' day held at DVLA in April 2012 (see case study at [Annex D](#)). We will seek opportunities to work with other organisations to do so.

We will:

- Ensure all new DfT digital services and policies include provision for assisted digital and assess the impact of digital improvements on equality
- Ensure all existing digital services offer assisted digital provision
- Work with the GDS and other departments to develop a cross-government procurement for assisted digital services
- Work with other organisations to help those who have never been online to do so.

6. GDS Digital Landscape Report September 2012



Working digitally

Related Government Digital Strategy theme:

- Develop digital capability throughout the civil service.

“We want to create the capability for all staff to work more flexibly.”

To help us work in a more flexible, efficient, and joined up way and reduce costs we need to better exploit technology, mobile devices, collaboration tools, and video and teleconferencing. Working more flexibly using digital tools will help us to improve our internal communication, make better use of our estate, reduce our travel costs and carbon footprint, and increase staff job satisfaction and skills.

Many of our staff are currently tied to the office rather than being able to work in the location that best fits theirs, and their customers', needs. We want to change this, and eliminate the 'digital deficit' where the technology staff use in their personal lives is often superior to that they have available at work.

We want to create the capability for all staff to work more flexibly, with increased mobile and home working, and to encourage a culture where staff are able to work from a wider range of locations, dropping in and out of offices as required.

The central department is currently undertaking a series of pilots to identify how best we can do this. We will use the findings from those pilots to embed new ways of working, reconfiguring our office accommodation and IT to support these new ways.

The current online recruitment system is also cumbersome and can be difficult to use for both applicants and managers needing to recruit. We will make full use of digital to improve our internal Human Resource processes and services. This includes:

- Moving to common 'shared service' systems and making fuller use of cross-Whitehall digital platforms such as Civil Service Jobs and Resourcing and Civil Service Learning
- Working with Civil Service Resourcing and Shared Services to implement an improved e-recruitment system by the end of 2013/14.

This will help deliver more customer focussed, digital self-service interfaces and



provide managers with easy to access management information.

What we will do:

- Foster a digital culture and create greater digital expertise in-house
- Carry out a trial of flexible working within our central London HQ
- Review the specification and mix of 'end-user' devices (such as PCs and laptops) that we provide
- Following the modernisation of IT security across the civil service, consider a 'bring your own device' policy for the DfT family
- Review the department's intranets with a view to providing a common modern, collaborative platform across the department
- Train staff in the use of digital technology to support flexible working
- Implement an improved online recruitment system by the end of 2013/14.

We will also improve internal processes to support digital, including:

- Reviewing organisational boundaries where necessary so that services are based on the requirements of those who use them, not around the structures of those who deliver them
- Building systems and processes that are easy to adapt to changing technologies, user needs and cultural shifts
- Designing more of our internal processes to be digital from start to finish, eliminating duplication, reducing the use of paper, and ensuring they are easy and intuitive to use.

Improving our digital skills and capabilities

Related Government Digital Strategy themes:

- Improve departmental digital leadership
- Develop digital capability throughout the civil service.

“We need to ensure we have the right skills and capabilities available wherever we need them.”

Our senior leaders will champion the use of digital in the workplace, leading by example. They will undertake the necessary training to improve their digital skills and have expert help in place to support them in the use of digital.

The department's digital leader will ensure that delivery agencies have senior board champions for digital and that there is a digital champion sitting on the DfT board.

We also need to ensure we have the right skills and capabilities available wherever we need them, building on existing skills and bringing these in from outside if necessary. These may be in programming and code writing for websites and apps, technical skills for ICT, digital communications skills, use of social media, running digital consultations, campaigns, and use of collaboration tools. Our digital product managers and transaction owners need to ensure that they either have the required skills themselves, or have ready access to specialist skills to help them design and improve our digital services. More generally, all our people need to have an appropriate level of digital skills and be able to access relevant technical and specialist digital skills whenever they need them.

To do this we need to know what skills we already have within the Department, and whether these are being used effectively, so we can plan what additional skills may be needed or how we can better use the skills we have. We will carry out a scoping exercise to determine this, working with the GDS to identify where new skills are needed.

Managers and staff will also use the competency framework to identify the skills and experience required in each role to think and work digitally, developing those skills wherever necessary.



We will:

- Determine what digital skills are required by DfT, working with the GDS
- Identify individuals who have high-end digital skills that could be deployed across the department
- Put digital skills training in place where required
- Ensure that all staff and their managers use the core competency framework to set appropriate objectives related to digital skills.

Listening to and engaging with customers

Related Government Digital Strategy theme:

- Improve the way that government makes policy and communicates with people.



“Digital can help us to communicate and engage more effectively with our customers.”

Developing policy digitally

Good policy cannot be developed in a vacuum. Digital offers us a wider range of options to help us engage with our customers and stakeholders to develop better policy solutions.

With many of our customers and stakeholders regularly using digital means to communicate, we need to make full and effective use of social media, collaboration, and messaging tools to engage with them, alongside traditional methods. Digital will help us to target specific customer groups, such as younger drivers, that traditional methods may not reach effectively.

Digital collaboration tools can help us to develop policy more effectively by enabling closer working across different parts of the business. We will seek out the policy opportunities digital offers, such as opening up data and joining up services. We will ensure we consider digital and the need for assisted digital whenever we develop new policies.

We will:

- Use digital collaboration and engagement tools to help us develop policy more effectively
- Design policy take account of digital and assisted digital considerations
- Include the use of digital tools in policy training.

Engaging with customers

We will harness the benefits of digital to actively communicate and engage with customers and drive improvements to services based on sound customer and stakeholder insight and feedback.

We will increase the use of social media and digital collaboration tools to encourage and enable our customers to get more involved with the department. This will help services to be developed in an open and accessible way, and mean more of our customers and stakeholders can influence, comment on and contribute actively to the decision making process.

We will open up the use of social media and collaboration tools for our staff, supporting and encouraging them to use these effectively. This will increase the ways they can listen to peoples' views and concerns and enable them to engage, communicate and respond more effectively with a wider group of customers and stakeholders.

We will:

- Make full use of digital channels to provide information, engage with and consult our customers and stakeholders
- Embed customer insight and journey mapping into the design process for all new digital schemes and policy development
- Co-ordinate information on our customers needs centrally to provide a joined up cross-DfT view
- Open up the use of social media to all staff, publishing an updated DfT social media policy
- Make social media training available to all staff and Improve senior staff skills in the use of social media and collaboration tools
- Establish metrics for measuring the benefits of social media, working with the Government Digital Service.

Completing the move to GOV.UK and improving our ICT platforms and systems

Related Government Digital Strategy theme:

- Complete the transition to GOV.UK
- Build common technology platforms for 'digital by default' services
- Broaden the range of those tendering to supply digital services, including more small and medium sized enterprises.

“GOV.UK will make it easier for users to transact and find information on our services and the department.”

Everything in one place

The move to the single government website, GOV.UK for mainstream and corporate online information and transactions ensures a consistent style and approach to digital delivery. It will make it easier for users to transact and find information on our services and the department.

The department has already made significant progress, having successfully moved its citizen and business facing web content onto GOV.UK and become the first department to move its corporate web content across to GOV.UK.

We will:

- Move all departmental, agency and arms length body corporate content to the GOV.UK publishing platform by March 2014
- Ensure that customer insight and feedback are part of developing new areas of policy content, policy tools and specialist guidance, ensuring that user evidence is in place to support new content before it goes onto GOV.UK
- Utilise the usage data and user journey information provided by the GOV.UK platform to review content and make changes to deliver improvements



- Review all corporate stand alone sites and tools and move them to the GOV.UK platform or move them to a cost effective central hosting platform, as appropriate by March 2015
- Streamline and centralise hosting capability as far as possible to benefit from cost savings, utilising open source and the provision of cloud services.

“For us to deliver high quality customer services we need to change the way we source our ICT and improve the level of in-house expertise.”

Improving the department’s ICT

To deliver effective services, we need the right people, processes and platforms. Historically, the department has outsourced much of its IT functions and has little in-house IT expertise. For us to deliver high quality customer services – and reduce the cost to the taxpayer – we need to change the way we source our ICT and improve the level of in-house expertise.

Our large ICT outsourcing contracts for DVLA, DSA and VOSA come to an end over the coming years. Working with the GDS, we are:

- Moving to a multi-source procurement model to open the market to small and medium sized enterprises, drive market competition and make it easier to replace underperforming suppliers
- Piloting a fundamental shift to a flexible (agile) and iterative approach to development. We have pilot projects operating across the DfT family with the initial results being very promising
- Working closely with the GDS and DVLA to pilot how we can progressively move from legacy ICT systems to a new ‘greenfield’ platform on a flexible and iterative basis.

We will build interoperability in to our digital systems so that information can be easily migrated from one technology to another when it changes and use open, commonly used standards wherever possible to improve compatibility between systems and services.

We will:

- Move away from large ICT contracts to a multi-source model using smaller providers
- Build on the outcome of the DVLA/GDS pilot, accelerating our migration away from outdated legacy ICT platforms
- Embed an ‘agile’ and iterative approach to delivering ICT projects
- Review our ICT operating models to support improved working methods and changes in contractual arrangements
- Review and, where necessary, redesign our in house IT organisation to more effectively support the department.

Monitoring delivery

Metrics for delivering this strategy will be set in business plans, with performance monitored by a senior cross-department group. Regular reports on progress will be made to the DfT executive board and the GDS.

This strategy will be reviewed by the DfT board and refreshed at least annually.



Annex A: Government Digital Strategy themes and actions:

Theme: Improve departmental leadership

Action 1: Departmental and transactional agency boards will include an active digital leader

Action 2: Services handling over 100,000 transactions per year will be redesigned, operated and improved by a suitably skilled, experienced and empowered service manager. The GDS requests “Service managers will be in place for new and redesigned transactions from April 2013”.

Theme: Develop digital capability

Action 3: All departments will ensure that they have appropriate digital capability in-house, including specialist skills

Action 4: Cabinet Office will support improved digital capability across departments

Theme: Redesign transactional services to meet a new ‘digital by default’ standard

Action 5: For “transactional departments” three exemplar services will be selected. Redesign starting April 2013, implemented March 2015 (to be included in relevant business plans). Following this, departments will redesign all services handling over 100k transactions a year.

Action 6: From April 2014, all new or redesigned transactional services will meet the ‘digital by default’ service standard.

Theme: Complete the transition to GOV.UK

Action 7: Corporate publishing activities of all 24 central government departments will move onto GOV.UK by March 2013, with agency and arms length bodies’ online publishing to follow by March 2014.

Theme: Increase the number of people who use digital services

Action 8: Departments will raise awareness of their digital services so that more people know about them and use them

Theme: Provide consistent services for people who have rarely or never been online

Action 9: We will take a cross-Government approach to assisted digital. This means that people who have rarely or never been online will be able to access services offline, and we will provide additional ways for them to use the digital services

Theme: Broaden the range of those tendering to supply digital services, including more small and medium sized enterprises

Action 10: Cabinet Office will offer leaner and more lightweight tendering processes, as close to the best practice in industry as our regulatory requirements allow.

Theme: Build common technology platforms for ‘digital by default’ services

Action 11: Cabinet Office will lead in the definition and delivery of a new suite of common technology platforms which will underpin the new generation of ‘digital by default’ services

Theme: Remove unnecessary legislative barriers

Action 12: Cabinet Office will continue to work with departments to remove legislative barriers which unnecessarily prevent the development of straightforward and convenient digital services

Theme: Base service decisions on accurate and timely management information

Action 13: Departments will supply a consistent set of management information (as defined by the Cabinet Office) for their transactional services

Theme: Improve the ways that Government makes policy and communicates with people

Action 14: Policy teams will use digital tools and techniques to engage with and consult the public

Annex B: Proposed government ‘digital by default’ service standard

Introduction

The ‘digital by default’ standard will set the bar for what is considered high quality for a new or redesigned digital transactional service. It will be used across Government to ensure that all digital services are of a consistently high standard.

The guidance and tools supporting the standard will help service owners to design trusted, cost-effective Government services that are embraced by users and meet their needs first time. Government Digital Service will ensure there is a common understanding across Government of what outcomes are required to meet the standard. This understanding must be shared by everyone involved in the development and life of a new or redesigned digital service.

The standard will be accompanied by:

- A programme of guidance and toolkit’s that help service teams to achieve outcomes which meet the standard throughout the development and life of the service. This guidance will build and expand upon previous Government Digital Service best practice, including:
 - Government Digital Service design principles
 - Performance framework
 - Visual and interaction design toolkits
 - Content style guides.
- A reporting tool that makes it simple to demonstrate the performance of new and redesigned services against the standard, and provides service owners with an easy to use dashboard to monitor the progress of a service’s redesign against the capabilities required to pass the standard.
- A governance structure detailing what level of assessment against the performance outcomes is required at different stages of a redesign project and who will conduct that assessment, according to the size and/ or impact of the service being redesigned.
- A programme of communications that explains the standard, provides training and support and encourages effective knowledge sharing between departments.

The standard

Judgements about the quality of a redesigned service should ultimately be made by it’s users. The ‘digital by default’ standard will set out key metrics for monitoring and evaluating how well user needs are being met by redesigned services, and a capability checklist to guide service owners and designers in building the transactions to meet those needs.

Government Digital Service will consult with departments on the details of the standard over the next six months. At a high level, to meet the ‘digital by default’ standard all new and redesigned services must perform across a range of areas.

Service uptake

- Redesigned transactional services must demonstrate they are following a downward trajectory for the average cost per completed transaction. This will be defined as per the quarterly data summary (QDS) guidance, ie by dividing the total number of transactions by the full cost of the transactional service.
- Performance will be monitored against achieving a fixed baseline cost per transaction (which the GDS will determine) within five years of launch. Government Digital Service will analyse QDS data returns for Q3 and Q4 2012/13 to set the baseline cost and trajectory.
- Progress against the cost per transaction trajectory will be monitored at least quarterly, in line with the QDS reporting cycle.



Cost per transaction

- Redesigned transactional services must demonstrate they are following a downward trajectory for the average cost per completed transaction. This will be defined as per the Quarterly Data Summary (QDS) guidance, i.e by dividing the total number of transactions by the full cost of the transactional service.
- Performance will be monitored against achieving a fixed baseline cost per transaction (which the GDS will determine) within 5 years of launch. Government Digital Service will analyse QDS data returns for Q3 and Q4 2012/13 to set the baseline cost and trajectory.
- Progress against the cost per transaction trajectory will be monitored at least quarterly, in line with the QDS reporting cycle.

Transaction success rate

- Redesigned transactional services must achieve at least a baseline level of transaction success, defined as users successfully fulfilling their needs by using the service.
- Government Digital Service will work with web analytics experts to develop a detailed definition of service success to be included in the standard, and set the baseline level of performance according to industry-recognised best practice.

User satisfaction

- Redesigned transactional services must be designed to meet identified user needs, and consistently achieve a satisfaction rate of at least 70%. This score will be based on a common survey sampling methodology and set of questions.
- Government Digital Service will work with user testing experts and departments to build an established methodology for redesigned transactions, ensuring that all services have customer satisfaction data which is automatically collected and easily comparable between different services and over time.

Operational capability

Redesigned transactional services will be:

- Managed by a suitably skilled and empowered service manager.
- Designed to work seamlessly through digital and non-digital stages of a process
- Measuring and monitoring performance against key indicators from the point of launch
- Improved at least monthly based on qualitative feedback from users and quantitative measures from analytics.

Design

Redesigned transactional services will be:

- Simple and intuitive enough for users to succeed first time, unaided
- Designed for inclusion, so all who could use it do use it
- Make use of common design and user experience tools, so once people have done something once, they will be able to do it elsewhere
- Redesigned using feedback received from a private or public alpha phase, and a public beta phase.

Development and technology

Redesigned transactional services should be:

- Developed using agile, iterative, user-centric digital development methodologies, using open source code by default
- Make use of common cross-Government technology platforms
- Make use of and meet open standards
- Offer high quality APIs, enabling reliable reuse by third parties, and integration with other government services
- Capable of working on all common browsers and a wide range of web-enabled devices, including mobile phones⁷
- Impartially, robustly and regularly tested throughout the design and lifetime of the service.

Legal, security and resilience

Redesigned transactional services will be:

- Robustly protective of the security of sensitive user information
- Maintain the privacy and security of all personal information
- Resilient, to ensure continuity of service to users and departments.

⁷ Stand-alone mobile apps will only be considered once the core web service works well on mobile devices, and if specifically agreed with the Cabinet Office.



The guidance

Government Digital Service will actively support transactional service owners in helping them to commission, design, build and iteratively improve services that meet and maintain the ‘digital by default’ standard.

i) Guidance

Government Digital Service has already produced a number of best practice guidance documents to support departments looking to improve the quality of their transactional service and digital offering, including the design principles and performance framework. Building on and incorporating these products, Government Digital Service will develop a ‘handbook’ to support the ‘digital by default’ standard, with practical steps and best practice examples to bring the steps redesigned services will take to life. This will include information to cover all core capability requirements set out in the standard.

Government Digital Service will work closely with departments on the development of the guidance and ensure it remains a working document. We will seek to iteratively improve it as further examples of good practice come to light, and encourage service owners to inform future versions.

ii) Training and tutorial programmes

To accompany the written guidance, Government Digital Service will set up a series of training and tutorial opportunities for service owners. These will be based around a core curriculum that covers the capabilities as set out in the standard, and focussed on areas which the service owners themselves raise as being particularly valuable in terms of targeted support and expert advice.

Government Digital Service will bring in Government and external experts from areas like web analytics, data visualisation and user testing to support this curriculum, and give service owners the networks, opportunities and forums to share knowledge between themselves.

iii) Hands-on project support

Where departments have nominated specific large transactional services for redesign, Government Digital Service will seek to provide targeted project support. The terms and level of involvement will be decided on a case-by-case basis, according to the level and type of transformation in scope.

How services will be assessed

For all new and redesigned services, progress should be continually measured against performance outcomes by service owners, using the reporting tool built by Government Digital Service. Government Digital Service will monitor at intervals according to the size of the service.

	‘Alpha’ build	‘Beta’ build	Version 1.0 build	Iterative improvement
Fewer than 100,000 transactions per year	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams and GDS challenge function	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams
More than 100,000 transactions per year, not nominated	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams and GDS challenge function	Joint GDS/departmental pre go live assessment against standard	Self assessment against standard by departmental service management teams & annual GDS review
Top 3 services nominated for redesign by departments	Joint proposition assessment against standard by departmental teams and GDS	Joint assessment against standard by departmental teams and GDS	Joint GDS/departmental pre go live assessment against standard	Joint GDS/departmental pre go live assessment against standard

Fig. ‘digital by default’ standard assessment process by transactional service type and build stage.

All services will undergo a formal review ahead of launch. After launch, they will continue to be continually monitored by service owners and by Government Digital Service at regular intervals to ensure that the standard is being maintained and services are iteratively improved.

Annex C: Current DfT transactions (including applications)

Agency	Annual volume (from the GDS published list)	Forecast e-take up 2012-13	Online?	Milestone date to come online	Comments
DVLA					
Driver licensing					
First application for a provisional driving licence	1,031,950	323,793	Yes		
Exchange a paper licence for a photocard licence	Fewer than 750,000	Not currently available	Yes		
Foreign exchange a licence from a designated country for a UK licence	77,490	N/A	No	N/A	Currently no online system available for checking against overseas drivers databases.
Renewal at aged 70 or over	1,498,220	417,396	Yes		
10 year photo renewal	2,405,994	388,922	Yes		
Renewal after disqualification	84,294	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Medical renewal	131,612	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Vocational renewal	147,648	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Duplicate licence (where lost or stolen)	1,091,853	542,651	Yes		
Removal of expired endorsements from the physical licence.	no info held but fewer than 750,000	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Change of address on a driving licence	1,940,990	791,680	Yes		

Change of name on a driving licence	344,223	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Replacement licences	131,973	N/A	No	N/A	Not a public facing service. Replaces incorrect licences or those lost in the post
Tacho card first application	311,565	N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Tacho card renewal		N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
Tacho card replace lost or stolen		N/A	No	Post 2015	To be considered as part of ICT transformation
First Registration and Licensing in SSS	46,011,117	23,395,642			
VED/Relicensing (Car tax)	43,629,899	21,859,684	Yes		
Duplicate tax disc	316,448	N/A	No	Under review with HMT	Under review with HMT
SORN	3,930,799	3,070,763	Yes		
Refund of a tax disc	2,852,766	N/A	No	Under review with HMT	Under review with HMT
Transfer of a registration mark from one vehicle to another	312,158	N/A	No	Q1 2014 for electronic intermediary Q4 2014	
Remove a registration mark from a vehicle to a retention certificate	303,796	N/A	No	Q1 2014 for electronic intermediary Q4 2014	
Assign a personalised registration mark to a vehicle	431,434	N/A	No	Q1 2014 for electronic intermediary Q4 2014	



Purchase a personalised registration mark	217,525	Already over 99%	Yes		
Extend the entitlement and/or change the nominee of the registration mark (V778)	178,102	N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Extend the entitlement and/or change the nominee of the registration mark (V750)	149,834	Not available	Yes		
Change an address on a retention certificate (V778)	422	N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Change an address on a personalised registration certificate (V750)	3,735	Not available	Yes		
Duplicate retention certificate (V778)	fewer than 750,000		Yes		
Duplicate certificate of entitlement	4,824	N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Change of keeper/owner	17,592,152	N/A	No	Q1 2014 for electronic intermediary Q4 2014 online self service	
Change of keepers address		N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Minor change of address		N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Change of name for keeper of vehicle		N/A	No	Q4 2014	
Disposal scrapped (COD/NOD)	1,641,240	1,029,502	Yes		
Duplicate V5/logbook (when original lost/stolen)	1,170,698	N/A	No	Q4 2014	
First registration	2,381,218	2,110,814	Yes		
DSA					
Book practical driving test	2,000,000	1,540,620	Yes		
Amend practical driving test	900,000	694,170	Yes		



Book theory driving test	1,700,000	1,483,200	Yes		
Amend theory driving test	230,000	184,800	Yes		
Driving instructor change of details	54,000	14,300	Yes		
Driving instructor first application	11,000	6,200	Yes		
Apply for pass plus pack	5,000	850	Yes		
Apply for driving instructor trainee licence	3,000	160	Yes		
Driving instructor registration	4,000	250	Yes		
Driving instructor renewals and re-registration	9,000	4,500	Yes		
Record driver CPC training online	169,000	167,310	Yes		
Claim practical test pass (ADLI)	680,000	638,400	Yes		
HA					
Number of notification communications sent via ESDAL	516,372	Not available	Yes		
Part 1 claims compensation claims received	471	Not available	Yes		
MCA					
Voluntary identification system (CG66)	1,600	Not available	Yes		
Small ships register	3,500	10,600	Yes		
VOSA					
Operator self service	259,700	191,237	Yes		
Statutory update of bus registrations with operator licensing	19,000	6,012	Yes		
Application to be an HGV/PSV operator	7,000	N/A	No	2017	Will be considered under ICT modernisation programme/contract re-let when current contract expires



Application to be a MOT scheme authorised examiner	2,500	N/A	No	2017	Will be considered under ICT modernisation programme/contract re-let when current contract expires
Update of MOT scheme authorised examiner (AE) record	2,500	N/A	No	2017	Will be considered under ICT modernisation programme/contract re-let when current contract expires
Application to be a MOT scheme nominated tester (NT)	6,000	N/A	No	2017	Will be considered under ICT modernisation programme/contract re-let when current contract expires
Continued authorisation update for NT and AE (manual training)	20,000	N/A	No	2017	Will be considered under ICT modernisation programme/contract re-let when current contract expires
Annual HGV PSV test booking	695,000	272,882	Yes		
HGV test results accessed digitally	351,000	210,600	Yes		
MOT test results accessed digitally	33,000,000	8,000,000	Yes		
MOT bookings/payments	191,674	186,503	Yes		



Annex D: Case studies

- DfT success stories

DVLA Electronic Vehicle Licensing (EVL)

The collection of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), commonly known as ‘car tax’ on behalf of HM Treasury is a high volume, high profile DfT transaction, with some 45 million transactions carried out each year. There are currently three ways the customer can tax their car – online through the digital Electronic Vehicle Licensing (EVL) channel; through an intermediary such as a car dealer or the Post Office®; and in person at a DVLA local office (though this channel will be closed by December 2013).

Prior to 2004 the majority of car tax transactions were carried out through an intermediary, mainly Post Offices®, with a small number of the more complex transactions carried out at DVLA local offices. That all changed following the introduction of the digital service in 2004. These link to MoT and insurance records to check these automatically for you and are also available as an automated telephone service – meaning you can do it from anywhere there is a telephone. Customer testing ensured the service was designed to be user friendly, all of which resulted in a rapid increase in use each year up to the current level of over 50%.

This is forecast to increase still further as part of the DfT Digital Strategy.

The introduction of EVL is a government success story and has proved to be hugely popular with customers, with satisfaction rates exceeding 90%. It is also cheaper to run. It takes just four minutes on average to complete the transaction, which is available 24/7, saving customers both time and effort.

DSA use of social media to promote the Highway Code

December 2011 saw the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) and The Stationery Office (TSO) launch of the Highway Code on Twitter and Facebook, turning it from a hard copy only book into a multi-platform road safety service,

This included:

- Launching an eBook version of the Highway Code in May 2012. In the first month 570 copies were downloaded.
- Launching a Highway Code iPhone app in May 2012. DSA are researching making the app available on other platforms, e.g. Android
- Opening a Twitter channel followed by over 12,000 people and organisations. Followers are sent daily reminders of the rules of the road relating to that day’s weather conditions or a topical issue;
- Hosting discussions on DSA’s Facebook page, helping DSA keep in touch with customers’ views and enabling them to correct any false or unsafe assumptions before they spread too widely. The Highway Code page typically posts a rule each day of the week to over 9,700 fans;
- Sending weekly email reminders of road rules, optimised for display on smartphones, tablets and desktop PCs. These are also offered by 14 central and local government organisations. Over 10,000 people to date have signed up for reminders.
- A Highway Code widget and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed, which can be used for free on any website or intranet site. The widget and feed pull through the latest tweets from Twitter.
- The Highway Code is subject to an Open Government Licence, meaning that anyone can reuse it’s content to create their own apps, tools and services.



Use of web chat to engage with customers

When the DfT Local Directorate launched a 'devolving local major transport schemes' consultation in January 2012, it was felt that more engagement was required with local authorities to help explain the consultation, its objectives and identify where the Department may need to do more to assist.

The DfT Digital Engagement Team suggested a web chat as a way to achieve this.

A hosted web chat was then set up and took place through the corporate DfT website.

Helping customers get online: DVLA silver surfer event

In April 2012 DVLA hosted an event in partnership with the Lifelong Learning team from Swansea City Council. This was part of the national Spring Online and the government supported Race Online 2012 campaign. The event was designed to give older people a taste of how to use computers and the internet, as part of the drive to improve the lives of the 8.2 million people who have never been online.

Digital Unite, organisers of Spring Online events held across the UK, awarded DVLA a special 'Best event in government 2012' commendation for the event.

Saving costs through YouTube

DSA used to send candidates a DVD explaining what to expect and how to prepare for their driving test. Replacing this with a YouTube video DSA saved £450,000 a year.

YouTube analytics also showed that the theory test video was losing viewers. In the first 20 seconds a quarter of all viewers had browsed away, and two minutes later half of all viewers had gone. Using this information, DSA made an improved version of the video. Where only 38% of viewers finished watching the previous version, this jumped to 57% for the new version.

Using social media to engage with younger drivers

In 2008, DSA and DfT undertook a major consultation about learning to drive. It covered all aspects of how people learn to drive, the theory and practical driving tests and how people continue to develop their driving competence once they have passed their test. One of the aims of the consultation exercise was to reach out to young people.

As well as the traditional approach of a full consultation document explaining the proposal, ideas and seeking responses, DSA produced a shortened version of the consultation proposals and launched an innovative discussion on social media about the proposals.

The traditional format full questionnaire received 1,200 responses.

The shortened questionnaire received 5,600 responses, mainly from young people. What's more, the cost of the online elements of the consultation was less than 10% of the overall cost of the consultation exercise.

Later in the campaign DSA co-ordinated the first ever cross-government re-tweet to increase awareness of independent driving. This led to the tweet being featured on Twitter's homepage, and attracting thousands of extra views to DSA's information. This was all done at no cost. The work on independent driving was shortlisted for a prestigious Chartered Institute of Public Relations award in 2011.

DSA then took the lessons from the Twitter campaign to introduce a Facebook page for learner drivers, called 'I can't wait to pass my driving test'. Since its launch, it has grown to have over 22,000 fans. DSA also uses the page to share information held on GOV.UK and YouTube and to promote the use of other digital channels.

