Report on Progress Implementing the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act

2023

U.S. Small Business Administration
Prepared for the Office of Management and Budget and the public per the requirements of section 3(d) of Public Law 115-336

Background

Section 3(d) of the [21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act](#) (21st Century IDEA)[1]requires the head of each Federal executive branch agency to report annually (through 2023) to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the agency's progress to implement the requirements of the 21st Century IDEA. The information below details the efforts of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to modernize the Agency's websites and digital services in 2023.

SBA Efforts to Date

SBA is leveraging the 21st Century IDEA to streamline our digital footprint and deliver an easy online experience to customers and partners. SBA continued to build on work accomplished in 2022 to improve tools and experiences for small business owners. Major accomplishments for 2023 include:

SBIR.gov
https://beta.www.sbir.gov/

The Office of Small Business Innovation Research and Technology Transfer (SBIRTT) refreshed the SBIR.gov website to enhance the user experience, streamline their journey, and increase transparency of data on the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, including a monthly single file download of the entire population of award data. This file is updated monthly and serves as a tool for the public and researchers.

The beta SBIR.gov website uses Drupal Content Management System, USWDS, and Cloud Services. It continues to be modernized with Google Lighthouse testing improvements from an 88% to 98% Accessibility score.

National Women's Business Council
https://www.nwbc.gov/

The National Women's Business Council ("NWBC" or "Council") was created under Title IV of H.R. 5050, the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988, as amended (15 U.S.C. § 7105, et seq.). Authored by Congressman John LaFalce (D-NY) and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, H.R. 5050 established NWBC, which operates in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

The NWBC.gov website received a complete overhaul for its WordPress theme using USWDS elements to produce a 508 compliant website with a 100% score for the website and 97.81% score including PDFs using axe DevTools testing. NWBC.gov has a 100% Accessibility score using Google Lighthouse. 508 accessible PDFs are continuing to be improved.

---

[1] Public Law 115-336, 132 Stat. 5025-5028.

Certify Program
https://certify.sba.gov/

SBA's Certify.sba.gov application is a platform intended to provide a standardized, automated small business certification process for America's small businesses that would like to participate in SBA's Government contracting and business development programs that require certification. In 2023, SBA continues to improve the Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB)/Economically Disadvantaged WOSB application capability. This tool reduces the administrative paperwork burden on WOSB applicants and eases the SBA's review process.

The public facing portal uses a questionnaire-style method of data collection that easily walks the applicant through all requirements with a 92% Google Lighthouse accessibility score. Further improvement to the entire Government Contracting and Business Development (GCBD) Certification programs are in process to produce a single digital application for all SBA's certification programs as part of the MySBA Customer Experience Initiative.

SBA.gov
https://www.sba.gov/

SBA.gov is the main website of the SBA and had a complete overhaul of the frontend, middleware, and backend. The SBA.gov Content Management System (CMS) Upgrade Project improved the Content Management System (CMS) from Drupal 7/8 to Drupal 10 (soon to be Drupal 11). The React frontend was replaced with USWDS and the middleware was removed. The SBA.gov new site currently has an accessibility score of 99.88% using axe DevTools and a 100% Accessibility score using Google Lighthouse. Additional improvements are still being made to Spanish Translation, Search functionality, the Local Assistance Map, 508 compliant PDFs, the SBA Brand Guide, the SBA Size Standards tool, and other pages into the new CMS for both mobile and desktop use.

Capital Access Login System (CLS)
https://oauth.cls.sba.gov/accounts/login/

Under the umbrella of the MySBA Unified Experience Initiative, a Capital Access Login System (CLS) was developed for the Capital Access Financial System (CAFS), Veteran Small Business Certification (VetCert), Lender Match, Disaster Credit Management System (DCMS), and Disaster Loan Assistance Platform (DLAP) accounts into one login for multiple SBA programs. This effort was part of the development of the MySBA Loan Portal and Veteran Small Business Certification Program (VetCert) modernizations. Over 2 million customers can now login to multiple SBA programs through a single login portal with a Google Lighthouse Accessibility score of 100%.

MySBA Loan Portal
https://lending.sba.gov/

Also, under the umbrella of the MySBA Unified Experience Initiative, the lending systems of the SBA have been improved tremendously through a new customer-facing portal called the MySBA Loan Portal that has a Google Lighthouse Accessibility score of 100%. This effort has involved modernizing multiple different systems into a single system and portal for over 2 million customers including the:

- Capital Access Login System (CLS) for the Capital Access Financial System (CAFS) and Veteran Small Business Certification (VetCert) accounts into one login for multiple SBA programs
- Disaster Credit Management System (DCMS) Users (old system deprecated)
- Disaster Loan Assistance Platform (DLAP) Users (old system deprecated)
- Lender Match Users (old system deprecated)
- 1502 Next Project (ongoing work)

The MySBA Loan Portal offers many customer features:

- Simplified enrollment - Borrowers can register through the MySBA Loan Portal enrollment page at https://lending.sba.gov, which has been redesigned to improve customer experience.
- View loan details - Borrowers will be able to view all their COVID-19 EIDL, disaster, PPP and 7(a) loan details in one easy-to-use dashboard.
- Make payments - Borrowers can make new payments on the MySBA Loan Portal.
- Apply for Hardship Assistance – COVID-19 EIDL borrows can apply for disaster hardship assistance through the portal.
- Access statements - Borrowers can now access their statements and tax forms in one convenient place.
- Contact the SBA - The MySBA Loan Portal allows borrowers to send messages to the SBA directly through the portal.
- Contacting Lenders – SBA's Lender Match tool for small businesses to connect to capital through SBA's network of approved banks and private lenders.
- Disaster Eligibility – Through a Disaster Declaration Search, customers can find their eligibility for SBA Disaster Loans.

Recovery Center Scheduling
https://appointment.sba.gov/

The SBA created the SBA Recovery Center Appointment Scheduling website for SBA recovery centers. This website enables customers to reduce or eliminate wait times at local recovery centers by scheduling appointments to receive assistance from Customer Service Representatives who are both friendly and well-informed that are ready to help in various ways, such as answering inquiries, guiding through the process of applying for an SBA Disaster Loan, aiding in document upload, checking the status of applications, and offering support in completing reconsideration requests for the SBA Disaster Loan Programs.

Disaggregated Federal Contracting Data

https://www.sba.gov/disaggregated-data/2022/

The SBA has continued to release contracting data that is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, which will serve as a baseline for evaluating our government-wide performance within each of the socio-economic categories. The website was made instead of generating additional PDFs with a Google Lighthouse Accessibility score of 100%.

Open Data System
https://data.sba.gov/

The open data system is an instance of the Comprehensive Knowledge Archive Network (CKAN), which is recommended by Data.gov. The Agency hosts its open data sets through this system. In 2023 additional data sets were added for both monthly and annual reports resulting in 28 data sets across 11 SBA organizations, and the system is being upgraded from CKAN 2.9 to 2.10.

Agency Procurement Scorecards
https://www.sba.gov/agency-scorecards/

Each year, the SBA releases a Scorecard on how the 24 Cabinet and other agencies performed on their small business and socio-economic business contracting goals. Instead of creating PDFs and attaching them to the SBA.gov website, the SBA created an interactive data visualization for all scorecards to simplify the data displayed, to reveal patterns, and to increase the accessibility of the Scorecards to agencies and the public.

Veteran Small Business Certification Program
https://veterans.certify.sba.gov/

Also, under the umbrella of the MySBA Customer Experience Initiative, the Veteran Small Business Certification (VetCert) program is the SBA's primary certification vehicle to expand federal contracting opportunities for all Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs). Since the VetCert Program's transfer to the SBA in January of 2023, VetCert approved more than 10,400 applications from VOSBs and SDVOBs, averaging a remarkable 15-day average processing time, a 95% application approval rate, and a new modernized Cloud-based call center and FAQ for customer service with more than 42,525 VetCert customer service responses completed. The customer login is integrated into CLS preventing duplication of authentication portals.

Women-Owned Small Business Certification Program

https://wosb.certify.sba.gov/

The Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contract Program (WOSB Program) is to help provide a level playing field for women business owners. The federal government limits competition for certain contracts to businesses that participate in the WOSB Program. These contracts are specific industries where WOSBs are underrepresented. Some contracts are restricted further to economically disadvantaged women-owned small businesses (EDWOSBs). SBA maintains a list of those eligible industries and their NAICS codes.

The WOSB website was graduated out of its beta phase and is now a sub-domain of the Certify.sba.gov program which centralizes SBA certification programs. Further customer enhancement in the MySBA Customer Experience Initiative will enable customers to apply through a single application to multiple SBA programs. The new WOSB website also has a Google Lighthouse Accessibility score of 97%.

Douglas Robertson   05/10/2024

Douglas Robertson

Chief Technology Officer – SBA DX Delivery Lead, DX Council Member

STEPHEN KUCHARSKI
Digitally signed by STEPHEN
KUCHARSKI
Date: 2024.03.22 15:24:14 -04'00'

Stephen Kucharski

Chief Information Officer (Acting)