



Victorian Government Website Management Framework

Print friendly web pages

Guideline

This guideline provides advice on implementing print friendly web pages as required by the Consistent User Elements standard.

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Overview

The Consistent User Elements standard (WEB/STD/06) requires all websites to be print friendly. This guideline provides advice on the three methods of implementing print friendly web content.

Rationale

Print friendly websites allow users to easily print web pages that are:

- readable – independent of detail or complexity; and
- free of unnecessary layout items – highlighting the content and reducing the amount of ink used in printing.

Derivation

- WoVG Consistent User Elements Standard (WEB/STD/06).

Context

Providing print friendly web pages contributes significantly to the usability of a site by allowing users to read content offline at their leisure.

Further, implementation of print friendly web pages that eliminate navigation, banners and large blocks of colour or shade also provides environmental benefits in the reduction of ink used in printing.

Methods to generate print friendly web pages

Print friendly web pages can be created with one of the following three methods.

Cascading style sheets

The preferred method for creating printer friendly pages is through the implementation of CSS. CSS:

- eliminate the need to create wholly separate, printer friendly versions of a web page;
- enable pages to be laid out and formatted specifically for printing, independent of their appearance in a web browser; and
- are applied site-wide and require little maintenance.

Single source publishing

Server-side technologies can be used to generate a standard web page and a printer friendly version from a single source. Some content management systems (CMSs) facilitate this feature.

Parallel versions

Print friendly pages can also be maintained by implementing two, parallel versions of each web page (one standard, one print friendly).

This approach is resource intensive, prone to error and difficult to manage. Consequently this should be considered a last resort approach for creating a print friendly website.



Steps

To implement print friendly web pages websites should:

- select and implement a method to generate print friendly pages (see Context) with appropriate inclusions and exclusions of content/web page items;
- (if not implementing print friendly CSS) display a print friendly icon in the utility navigation (as defined in the Consistent User Elements standard); and
- ensure they are compliant with the WMF standards.

Inclusions

Print friendly web pages should include:

- relevant Government branding;
- the name of the department, agency or business unit – placed below, or immediately to the right of, the slogan, aligned left;
- the title of the page as it appears on the website – placed below the name of the department, agency or business unit, aligned left;
- the Page Last Reviewed reference – placed at the bottom of the page, aligned right;
- an appropriate copyright statement e.g. © Department of Treasury and Finance, State Government of Victoria – placed at the bottom of the page, aligned left;
- the URL of the web page – placed below the copyright statement, aligned left; and
- links to the privacy statement and copyright and disclaimer notices – placed below the URL – in the following format:
 - Privacy Statement: <URL>
 - Copyright Notice: <URL>
 - Disclaimer Notice: <URL>

This guideline acknowledges that some browsers automatically include the URL of the web page in the header/footer of the printed page.

Exclusions

Print friendly web pages should not include the:

- primary content navigation;
- utility navigation;
- header banner;
- secondary banner;
- footer (with the exception of the required elements noted in Inclusions, above)
- breadcrumbs; or
- search box

References and toolkits

Victorian Government standards:

- <http://www.enterprisesolutions.vic.gov.au/business-systems/online-and-mobile/>

Governing standard

- Consistent User Elements (Web/STD/06)

Governing requirement

- Websites must provide a print friendly layout icon (a link to a print friendly format). This rule does not apply if the site utilises print friendly CSS



Related requirements

- None

Related guidelines

- Page Last Updated (WEB/GUIDE/04)

Related policies and standards

- Accessibility (WEB/STD/05)
- Privacy (WEB/STD/04)
- Legal Compliance (WEB/STD/03)

Related resources

- W3C – information and tutorials for developing cascading style sheets and details about browsers supporting CSS (<http://www.w3.org/Style/CSS/>)
- Accessibility toolkit for Victorian Government websites (<http://www.egov.vic.gov.au/victorian-government-resources/manuals-and-toolkits-victoria/accessibility-toolkit.html>)

Further information

For further information regarding this standard, please contact the Department of State Development and Business Innovation, at enterprisesolutions@dpc.vic.gov.au

Glossary

Term	Meaning
CSS	Cascading Style Sheets – a coding language used to set the look and formatting of HTML.
CMS	Content Management System – a computer application that manages the content and media of a website.
Server-side	An operation that occurs on the server side of the client-server relationship in computer networking.
WMF	Website Management Framework.
WMT	Website Management Taskforce. Each department and inner-budget agency (Environmental Protection Agency, State Revenue Office, VicRoads, and Victoria Police) maintains a WMT to manage their internal web activity and administer the WMF.
CSS	Cascading Style Sheets – a coding language used to set the look and formatting of HTML.



Version history

Version	Date	TRIM ref	Details
1.0	3 August 2005		First published
2.0	21 August 2009		
2.1	February 2014		Updated branding