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YOUR VOICE MATTERS: A DIALOG ON USA.GOV
OUTREACH PLAN (REFRESHED 12-15-09)

REACHING THE AUDIENCE

In a collaborative dialog, different levels of participants usually provide different types of input. A dialog with broad participation may contain a wide-ranging discussion that evolves in unexpected ways, while more narrow participation can focus the dialog on specific aspects of a topic. For the purposes of outreach, the audience has been defined within the three tiers listed below, which vary by level of expertise in online information delivery and familiarity with USA.gov:

- **Explicit experts**, who are closely familiar with the concepts and practice of information delivery and web management, and therefore are the most primed and enthused to participate;

- **Emergent experts**, knowledgeable people who are regular customers of USA.gov and are directly affected by changes to the site; and

- **The general public**, who is the least familiar with USA.gov, but still may be interested in participating with some additional information.

While all outreach will explain the purpose of this initiative, messages to each group will be tailored to each group's level of familiarity with USA.gov, the ways in which their community convenes and shares information, and how they might be expected to interact with the dialog.

PHASED ROLLOUT TO CUSTOMERS

Given the multi-week duration of this dialog, outreach will be "rolled out" over time, engaging a larger audience as the dialog progresses. During the week of December 7th, OCS invited members of the Federal Web Managers Council to visit the site as part of a "soft launch", in which these "explicit experts" offered suggestions on both how to improve USA.gov and how to enhance the outreach process and dialog platform. This served to pre-populate the site with ideas and discussion, providing the next wave of users with more and richer opportunities to jump into the discussion, but also helped beta test the site, allowing OCS to make revisions and tweaks as necessary before wider outreach to stakeholders. The soft launch set the stage for expanded outreach to the "power customers" of USA.gov, such as librarians and other researchers that frequent the site.

The following table outlines the different "tiers" of customers that will be invited to the Dialog. Current plans are to invite the broader community of customers, starting with the "power" customers of USA.gov, beginning the week of December 14th. The pace of this expansion and the depth of our outreach will depend on the robustness of the discussion.

Audience Grouping	Target Communities	Outreach Channels
"Explicit" Experts	Federal Web Managers Council	• Emails to members via Web Content Managers listserv – ***Completed week of December 7*** • Forum posts via Web Content Managers Forum (usa.gov/WebContent) – ***Completed week of December 7***
"Explicit" Experts	Academic experts (e.g., information and government IT programs)	• Emails to influential university departments and programs – ***Ownership TBD***
"Emergent" Experts	"Power" customers of USA.gov: librarians/library science professionals and other researchers	• GovGab post – ***Joanne has volunteered to write this, which should go up this week*** • Emails to associations representing these groups – **Ownership TBD** • Messages thru Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/USAgov) and Twitter (@USAgov) – ***Ownership TBD***
"Emergent" Experts	Government 2.0 community: bloggers, GovLoop members	• Social media outreach via Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/USAgov), Twitter (@USAgov), and GovLoop – ***Ownership TBD*** • Direct emails and social media contact to influential bloggers and thought leaders – ***Ownership TBD***
"Emergent" Experts	Transparency/openness advocates (e.g., Sunlight Foundation, Center for Democracy and Technology, Electronic Frontier Foundation)	• Twitter, GovLoop, and Facebook messages – ***Ownership TBD*** • Posts and/or emails to these organizations' blogs (depending on the level of exposure desired) – ***Ownership TBD***
"Emergent" Experts	Frequent internal customers of the site (e.g., GSA and other Federal employees)	• Emails to staff of GSA and other agencies actively using USA.gov – ***Ownership TBD***
"Emergent" Experts	Occasional customers of the site, particularly those who regularly register complaints	• Emails to any email lists in OCS's possession – ***Ownership TBD***
General Public	Constituencies of the most relied-upon government services and information (e.g., Social Security benefits, passports, business programs, employment, veterans benefits)	• Link on USA.gov that will be seen by these customers – ***Ownership TBD*** • Emails to influential associations representing these groups and relevant social media (Facebook, Twitter) communities – ***Ownership TBD***

SUGGESTED MESSAGES

Overarching Messages (to be included in outreach to all groups):

- **USA.gov's Role in the Changing Environment:** The recent explosion of new online tools is helping people find information better and quicker than ever before. Nowhere is this better known than USA.gov, the Federal government's main portal for providing citizens like you with government information that impacts your life on a daily basis. As one of the most visited sites on the Internet, USA.gov helps connect Americans to the information and services they need, from

obtaining passports to applying for small business loans to crunching data for scientific studies. **Now is your chance to log on and shape the future of citizen services!**

- **Purpose of the Dialog**: From now until Friday, January 8th, OCS will host an online dialog to get your input on how USA.gov can be improved

- **Participating in the Dialog:** While the dialog is live, you will be able to read and respond to proposals and questions posed by GSA officials, and submit your own comments for discussion with other users. We want your input on how you use USA.gov, how you expect to receive government information and services, and what channels we should use to provide information where and when you need it most.

- **The Value Exchange:** The best part of all this is that GSA is listening. Officials from the agency will be actively participating along with users, periodically posting new topics for conversation and responding to your ideas. By logging on repeatedly and contributing your thoughts, experiences, and feedback, you will help shape the next generation of this resource that is important to so many Americans.

- **Spread the Word:** Please help spread the word about this dialog to those in your network whose input would be valuable in this conversation. You can also help by doing the following:

  1. Write about the Dialog on your agency's blog or website, or your GovLoop or personal blog.

  2. Follow us on Twitter at @USAgov

  3. Post the following message in your own Twitter feed:

     Your Voice Matters: A Dialog on USA.gov has begun! Learn more @ http://dialog.usa.gov, follow @USAgov, pls RT

  4. **Most importantly**, please set aside time soon after the dialog goes live to visit http://dialog.usa.gov, log in and participate.

- **Next Steps in this Process:** GSA has a long history of listening and responding to its customers in working to improve government services. To this end, this effort is more than just a "one and done"—it is a continuous process where we will need your input and ideas to help improve how the government serves you. This feedback will help kick-off an ongoing discussion about how we continuously improve USA.gov to meet citizens' needs and expectations.

Suggested Group-Specific Messages (to be integrated into outreach to each group):

Audience Grouping	Target Communities	Central Messages and Themes
Explicit Experts	Federal Web Managers Council	As a leader in the Federal IT community, your expertise in and perspective on this issue will be invaluable to this discussion. We hope you will not only join this conversation, but *lead* it by offering your ideas and engaging with other participants early and often.
	Academic experts (e.g., information and government IT programs)	As an expert in this field, you have a unique perspective that will add great value to this discussion. We hope you will not only join this conversation, but *lead* it by offering your ideas and engaging with other participants early and often.
Emergent Experts	"Power" customers of USA.gov: librarians/library science professionals and other researchers	USA.gov provides a rich resource of government information upon which researchers and government partners depend. By sharing your ideas about what changes should be made to the site, you can help us better deliver the information and services you need.
	Government 2.0 community: bloggers, GovLoop members	This dialog marks a big step in our commitment to increasing civic participation—powered by technology—in government. Input from knowledgeable, passionate people in the Gov 2.0 community—whether you are a frequent patron of USA.gov or not—will help us discover the most innovative and new ideas for USA.gov.
	Transparency/openness advocates (e.g., Sunlight Foundation, Center for Democracy and Technology, Electronic Frontier Foundation)	This dialog marks a big step in our commitment to increasing civic participation—powered by technology—in government. As someone who is passionate about government openness, your participation in this dialog--whether you are a frequent patron of USA.gov or not--is critical to its success.
	Frequent internal customers of the site (e.g., GSA and other Federal employees)	As a Federal partner and customer of USA.gov, your input is critical to ensuring this site better delivers the information you and your agency need.
	Occasional customers of the site, particularly those who regularly register complaints	This is a new effort to get your input on how we can better deliver to you the information you need.
General Public	Constituencies of the most relied-upon government services and information (e.g., Social Security benefits, passports, business programs, employment, veterans benefits)	The dialog offers you the opportunity to help shape how you get this information.