

Memorandum on Electronic Government December 17, 1999

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive
Departments and Agencies*

Subject: Electronic Government

My Administration has put a wealth of information online. However, when it comes to most Federal services, it can still take a paper form and weeks of processing for something as simple as a change of address.

While Government agencies have created “one-stop-shopping” access to information on their agency web sites, these efforts have not uniformly been as helpful as they could be to the average citizen, who first has to know which agency provides the service he or she needs. There has not been sufficient effort to provide Government information by category of information and service—rather than by agency—in a way that meets people’s needs.

Moreover, as public awareness and Internet usage increase, the demand for online Government interaction and simplified, standardized ways to access Government information and services becomes increasingly important. At the same time, the public must have confidence that their online communications with the Government are secure and their privacy protected.

Therefore, to help our citizens gain one-stop access to existing Government information and services, and to provide better, more efficient, Government services and increased Government accountability to its citizens, I hereby direct the officials in this memorandum, in conjunction with the private sector as appropriate, to take the following actions:

1. The Administrator of General Services, in coordination with the National Partnership for Reinventing Government, the Chief Information Officers’ Council, the Government Information Technology Services Board, and other appropriate agencies shall promote access to Government information organized not by agency, but by the type of service or information that people may be seeking; the data should be identified and organized in a way that makes it easier for the public to find the information it seeks.
2. The heads of executive departments and agencies (agencies) shall, to the maximum extent possible, make available online, by December 2000, the forms needed for the top 500 Government services used by the public. Under the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, where appropriate, by October 2003, transactions with the Federal Government should be available online for online processing of services. To achieve this goal, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall oversee agency development of responsible strategies to make transactions available online.
3. The heads of agencies shall promote the use of electronic commerce, where appropriate, for faster, cheaper ordering on Federal procurements that will result in savings to the taxpayer.
4. The heads of agencies shall continue to build good privacy practices into their web sites by posting privacy policies as directed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and by adopting and implementing information policies to protect children’s information on web sites that are directed at children.
5. The head of each agency shall permit greater access to its officials by creating a public electronic mail address through which citizens can contact the agency with questions, comments, or concerns. The heads of each agency shall also provide disability access on Federal web sites.
6. The Director of the National Science Foundation, working with appropriate Federal agencies, shall conduct a 1-year study examining the feasibility of online voting.
7. The Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, Veterans Affairs, and Agriculture, the Commissioner of Social Security, and the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, working closely with other Federal agencies that provide benefit assistance to citizens, shall

make a broad range of benefits and services available through private and secure electronic use of the Internet.

8. The Administrator of General Services, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Commerce, the Government Information Technology Services Board, the National Partnership for Reinventing Government, and other appropriate agencies and organizations, shall assist agencies in the development of private, secure, and effective communications across agencies and with the public, through the use of public key technology. In light of this goal, agencies are encouraged to issue, in coordination with the General Services Administration, a Government-wide minimum of 100,000 digital signature certificates by December 2000.
9. The heads of agencies shall develop a strategy for upgrading their respective agency's capacity for using the Internet to become more open, efficient, and responsive, and to more effectively carry out the agency's mission. At a minimum, this strategy should involve:
 - (a) expanded training of Federal employees, including employees with policy and senior management responsibility;
 - (b) identification and adoption of "best practices" implemented by leading public and private sector organizations;
 - (c) recognition for Federal employees who suggest new and innovative agency applications of the Internet;
 - (d) partnerships with the research community for experimentation with advanced applications; and
 - (e) mechanisms for collecting input from the agency's stakeholders regarding agency use of the Internet.
10. Items 1-8 of this memorandum and my July 1, 1997, and November 30, 1998, memoranda shall be conducted subject to the availability of appropriations and consistent with agencies' priorities and my budget, and to the extent permitted by law.
11. The Vice President shall continue his leadership in coordinating the United States Government's electronic commerce strategy. Further, I direct that the heads of executive departments and agencies report to the Vice President and to me on their progress in meeting the terms of this memorandum, through the Electronic Commerce Working Group in its annual report.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner December 17, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me, first of all, say how profoundly grateful I am to be ending 7 years in the Presidency with the support of people like you, in the home of my great friends Terry and Dorothy, with allies like Patrick Kennedy and Dick Gephardt. This is a holiday season, and it's most important for us to express our gratitude. And I am grateful, and I want to say thank you.

I also will give you a gift: a brief speech. [Laughter] All of you heard it before, anyway. [Laughter] That reminds me of a great moment in my political education. In the mideighties, Tina Turner came to Little Rock to give a concert; she was making her comeback. And she had just put out that "Private Dancer" album.

And she had a saxophone player who was a weight lifter. I don't know if you remember that. The guy could bench press me on a cold day. [Laughter]

So I went to this concert, and I took a bunch of friends of mine. And I was sitting on the front row because the guy that ran the place knew I liked her. So she sings all her new songs, and she does real well, and the crowd goes crazy. And in the end, the band starts playing her very first hit, "Proud Mary." And she comes up to the microphone, and the crowd goes crazy, and she said, "You know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it." [Laughter] So maybe you'll