index

The **Central Government** Website Index

Q3 2010/702

To compile this survey we used the Sitemorse automated website optimisation software (page content, templates and infrastructure) to review and rank each website.

This report presents a summary of the findings and is produced in association with Alterian.

ALTERIAN

www.alterian.com

“Sitemorse **cuts through** the hundreds of things that impact the **compliance and performance** of my website, giving me **control** and delivering **governance**.”

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Welcome to the latest issue of the Sitemorse Central Government Index. Our surveys provide independent, authoritative benchmarking to promote accountability and best practice online. In today's market, your website represents an essential interface with internal and external stakeholders and as such should be thoroughly checked on an ongoing basis to ensure it's always fit for purpose.

This broad-ranging analysis of the major Central Government sites provides a revealing snapshot of how a significant proportion of the UK's most visited websites are performing. In this Index we list the top 50 and the bottom 20 and while there are, as always, many risers and fallers it's notable that more than a few of the lowest-ranked sites from Quarter 2 are still mired at the bottom this time round. It's particularly surprising to see VisitBritain – a site that promotes Britain to the world – at the very bottom of the list.

In our view, the overall quality of Central Government websites still isn't high enough: too many sites are delivering a far from optimal user experience, and a worrying number fall well short of accessibility requirements. To highlight these concerns, we've added two new analyses in this issue: see Time to Wait on page 6 and Web Accessibility Denied on page 9.

For more information on Sitemorse surveys, and to see the full list of sites surveyed, visit our website at www.sitemorse.com/survey.

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Editor

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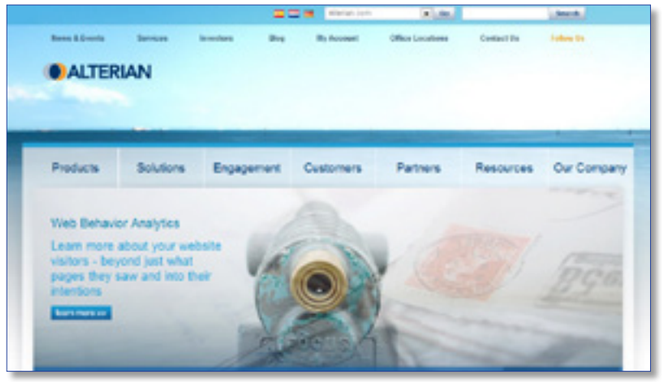
Web Content **(WCM)** Management – The **Next Level**

Alterian has a strong pedigree working with central and local government as well as other public sector organisations.

Web content management is constantly evolving, maturing and morphing into what now has to be considered an area of extreme importance for government and the public sector. There is plenty of scrutiny around government websites with the verdict being there are too many and it's too costly.

Initiatives like DirectGov, Transformational Government and the Power of Information Taskforce report are positively trying to make this area of government communication cost effective and operationally efficient. More recently Martha Lane Fox's appointment as Digital Champion is encouraging citizens to interact with local and central government electronically, which means public sector bodies will need a digital engagement strategy.



At Alterian we are leaders in future trends of marketing, engagement and communication solutions. We have been working with our customers to take our web content management solution to the next level, which can be classed as 'web engagement', or 'citizen experience management'.

The Future Trends of Web Content Management

It's all about talking and responding to your customers or citizens electronically, developing an understanding of their needs and behaviours, so that you can design your websites and social media channels to meet this demand. For web content management it can be broken down into three areas: access, experience and optimisation.

Experience – as with a good shop, library or recreation centre, people will keep coming back to your website if they have a fulfilling experience. If the content is personalised, relevant and easy to find then they will have a good experience, and an even better one if your website can proactively meet people's requirements.

Optimisation – are you able to build a relationship and treat people as individuals? Can you spot trends and then respond with information, content, and services? Alterian Content Manager has built in functionality to manage and optimise email campaigns and also monitor social media conversations, so that sentiment and feedback is instantly received, which can be used to alter communications and content delivery.

Getting this right will save valuable budget, increase your reputation and allow you to get to know your customers / citizens. Alterian Content Manager can achieve this today.

"Alterian Web Journey provides the type of analysis that enables you to understand how to maximise the effectiveness of your website."

"No-one has complained to me about our web site..."

No-one does; they move to your competitors and often don't come back. 85% of consumers say they would have reservations about buying from a business with a poor quality website.

The **Top** Fifty

Are you in the top fifty for quality, compliance and performance?

Rank	Company	Index	Previous	Change
1	Estate Agent Appeals	8.90	2	1
2	Health and Safety Executive	8.27	4	2
3	Northern Ireland Citizens	8.13	10	7
4	UK Intellectual Property Office	8.13	65	61
5	Passenger Focus (Rail Passengers Council)	7.86	25	20
6	UK Atomic Energy Authority	7.69	9	3
7	Equal Opportunities Commission	7.61	229	222
8	HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	7.60	19	11
9	Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee	7.43	14	5
10	Northern Ireland Policing Board	7.37	57	47
11	info4local	7.30	12	1
12	10 Downing Street	7.30	7	-5
13	Business Link	7.12	17	4
14	Railway Heritage Committee	6.92	16	2
15	Countryside Council for Wales	6.90	8	-7
16	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council	6.80	6	-10
17	Business Gateway	6.72	177	160
18	Liberal Democrat Party	6.70	11	-7
19	Design Council	6.67	227	208
20	Consumer Credit Licensing Appeals	6.61	3	-17
21	Child Support Agency	6.60	15	-6
22	Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation ...	6.50	21	-1
23	Care Quality Commission	6.40	182	159
24	Department of Health: Advisory Bodies	6.39	42	18
25	Forensic Science Service	6.34	38	13
26	The Adjudicator's Office	6.34	24	-2
27	Strategic Investment Board	6.29	93	66
28	National Gallery	6.29	66	38
29	National Audit Office	6.25	74	45
30	Royal Naval Museum	6.24	28	-2
31	Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)	6.15	53	22
32	Sentencing Guidelines Council	6.15	299	267
33	Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)	6.09	67	34
34	Identity and Passport Service	6.07	31	-3
35	Parole Board	6.06	18	-17
36	The Scottish Government	6.06	30	-6
37	Ordnance Survey	6.06	32	-5
38	Public Guardianship Office	6.06	33	-5
39	Royal Armouries Museum	6.04	52	13
40	Royal Air Force Museum	6.04	35	-5
41	Construction Industry Training Board	6.03	39	-2
42	Industrial Injuries Advisory Council	6.01	37	-5
43	Boundary Commission for England	6.01	27	-16
44	Natural Environment Research Council	6.00	23	-21
45	Compensation Agency	6.00	40	-5
46	UK Border Agency	5.99	55	9
47	Parades Commission for Northern Ireland	5.98	45	-2
48	Sport England	5.97	41	-7
49	Committee on Standards in Public Life	5.97	26	-23
50	Social Security and Child Support Appeals	5.88	46	-4

76%

of sites that have errors will have people that will not return

“We've been advised that the issues you find don't affect our site.”

Yes they do! Accessibility failures break the law, missing metadata loses you Google rankings and faulty email or links cause a loss in visitor confidence.

Time to **Wait**

Slow pages are a major cause of user dissatisfaction. Leaving a user waiting more than 6 seconds seriously damages online confidence. You definitely don't want your site to appear in this table!

Organisation	Avg of 10 slowest pages (secs)	Slowest page (secs)
UK Hydrographic Office	81.66	87.52
Boundary Commission for Wales	47.03	88.18
South West of England Regional Development Agency	42.20	52.76
English Partnerships	25.82	26.19
VisitBritain	25.75	30.37
Government Office Network	20.64	20.92
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	19.27	63.13
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)	16.02	25.07
Royal Mint	13.81	29.08
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)	10.43	76.49
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister	9.56	29.71
Welsh Assembly Government	9.45	10.57
Audit Commission	9.43	22.16
Conservative Party	9.33	25.41
Forestry Commission	9.24	65.01
Competition Appeal Tribunal	9.07	10.47
Buying Solutions	8.42	9.75
National Gallery	8.15	10.60
National Assembly of Wales	7.93	30.66
HMIC	7.34	53.86
East of England Development Agency	7.20	8.39
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	7.04	44.14
School Food Trust	6.80	19.37
Victoria and Albert Museum	6.79	9.16
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	6.66	42.75
Gangmasters Licensing Authority	6.63	50.53
Olympic Delivery Authority	6.62	10.09
Football Licensing Authority	6.59	61.57
Advantage West Midlands	6.04	29.34
Scottish Executive Health Department	5.98	9.58
Department for Transport (DfT)	5.88	43.67
Stabilisation Unit	5.79	12.19
NHS	5.69	11.60
Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment	5.61	10.85
Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)	5.53	42.84
One North East	5.19	18.46
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority	5.01	14.80
National College for School Leadership	4.87	10.12
Security Industry Authority	4.84	21.02
Scottish Parliament	4.82	6.96
Your Freedom	4.76	8.36
Department for Regional Development	4.61	10.01
UK Trade & Investment	4.57	5.57
Horticulture Development Council	4.52	11.86
The Scotland Office	4.52	13.54
North West Development Agency	4.44	11.81

69%

Reduction in cost of page testing with Sitemorse

iconnyx

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“**Flexibility** and willingness to grasp and **work within** our business model as well as **our budget** are all important.”

Can you honestly say that your organisation's IT, Internet and data communications offer you value for money and the most efficient solutions?

If the answer to this question is ‘No’, you should be speaking to Iconnyx – we provide Internet and MPLS Connectivity, Managed Hosting and Managed IT Services to UK businesses.

We have a reputation for delivering high quality value-for-money solutions that fit the requirements of both UK businesses & the public sector. We offer experience across multiple vertical markets, including Retail, Finance, Technology, Legal, Media and many others.

Iconnyx delivers tailored data connectivity solutions in combination with 100% availability hosting services for a variety of uses including web development and e-commerce.

Our Managed IT Services offer the complete solution for businesses using a combination of Microsoft technology, your own applications and our own systems, powered by our VITAL technology platform. This delivers an IT solution either on-site at your offices or hosted in the cloud, or both!

“The quality of connection and support has been second to none ... I don't recall one minute of downtime over the four years. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Iconnyx.”

“I see only a few problems...”

Even 1% of errors is too high, what if one of the problems is your stock price feed, your buy button not working, or email address failure?

This quarter's **Top** site

www.estateagentappeals.tribunals.gov.uk/

Most **Improved**

http://yourfreedom.hmg.gov.uk/

Who's **Up** Who's **Down**

Rank	Company	Index	Previous	Change
55	Your Freedom	5.77	389	334
32	Sentencing Guidelines Council	6.15	299	267
107	Council for Science and Technology	5.08	338	231
7	Equal Opportunities Commission	7.61	229	222
112	National College for School Leadership	5.03	322	210

Rank	Company	Index	Previous	Change
213	Independent Living Funds	4.15	49	-164
363	HM Government	2.65	176	-187
252	Consumer Council for Water	3.82	63	-189
301	Medical Research Council	3.42	112	-189
356	Boundary Commission for Wales	2.7	124	-232

Bottom **Twenty**

Company	Company
Independent Housing Ombudsman Ltd	Scottish Executive Health Department
Northern Ireland Police Fund	English Partnerships
British Educ. Comms and Technology Agency	Labour Party
HM Government	Darwin Advisory Committee
Committee on Radioactive Waste Management	Olympic Lottery Distributor
OPPPA	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
Advisory Panel on Country Information	Investors in People UK
Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission	Royal Naval Submarine Museum
Museum of London	UK Hydrographic Office
Insolvency Service	VisitBritain

67%

Improvement in natural search with Sitemorse

“Our own CMS does all the checking we need thanks, including spelling, metadata, links and accessibility.”

‘There isn't a CMS that offers anywhere near the level of a Sitemorse audit. Quite simply, if the problem doesn't exist... then we can't find it. That's why we call our service ‘building web confidence’.

44%

Improvement in page response with Sitemorse

Web accessibility **denied**

It's a legal requirement for websites to be accessible. Listed below are those with the worst scores: 100% means **every page tested had failures**.

	% of pages that fail	
Company	**A**	**AA**
Advisory Panel on Country Information	100.00%	100.00%
Animal Procedures Committee	100.00%	100.00%
Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland	100.00%	100.00%
British Forces Post Office	100.00%	100.00%
British Potato Council	100.00%	100.00%
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	100.00%	100.00%
East of England Development Agency	100.00%	100.00%
Firebuy	100.00%	100.00%
Get Safe Online	100.00%	100.00%
Government Legal Service	100.00%	100.00%
Investigatory Powers Tribunal	100.00%	100.00%
Investors in People UK	100.00%	100.00%
Low Pay Commission	100.00%	100.00%
National Heritage Memorial Fund	100.00%	100.00%
Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission	100.00%	100.00%
Northern Ireland Police Fund	100.00%	100.00%
Office of Police Oversight Commissioner	100.00%	100.00%
Office of Surveillance Commissioners	100.00%	100.00%
Olympic Lottery Distributor	100.00%	100.00%
OPPPA	100.00%	100.00%
Treasury Solicitor's Department	100.00%	100.00%
National Savings and Investments	99.20%	99.20%
Invest to Save Budget	99.20%	100.00%
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	99.20%	100.00%
Office of Fair Trading (OFT)	99.20%	100.00%
Insolvency Service	98.40%	100.00%
Royal Naval Submarine Museum	98.40%	100.00%
Royal Parks Agency	98.40%	100.00%
The Pensions Advisory Service	98.40%	100.00%
Independent Housing Ombudsman Ltd	98.39%	100.00%
Legal Services Commission	97.60%	100.00%
Labour Party	96.80%	100.00%
Farm Animal Welfare Council	96.00%	100.00%
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory	95.20%	100.00%
Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission	95.00%	100.00%
Horticulture Development Council	92.00%	100.00%
Service Children's Education	92.00%	100.00%
Government Art Collection	90.40%	100.00%
Standards Board for England	85.60%	100.00%
Darwin Advisory Committee	82.40%	100.00%
Scottish National Party	80.00%	99.20%
Planning Portal	69.60%	100.00%
Independent Reconfiguration Panel	64.00%	100.00%
Scottish Executive Health Department	61.60%	100.00%
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel	58.40%	83.20%

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building web confidence

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92% of sites **will be affected** – what's really **on your site**?

With just a few months to go until the new EU regulations on cookies come into force, web management teams are already working hard on a strategy to stay on the right side of the law.

For many, the first challenge is to find out whereabouts in their vast web estates cookie-setting content is actually located. Easier said than done — especially when cookies from third-party providers are factored in.

Sitemorse routinely locates and lists website cookies, so our clients are already one step ahead of the game. If you're a client, we can remind you where to look in your existing site reports — and you're welcome to have one or more other sites checked out too.

While the debate continues on how this will affect the way you run your online affairs, one thing is clear: you MUST be 100% aware of every single instance where your sites are setting cookies - including any from third party providers.

Setting cookies without gaining a user's prior consent will put you in breach of the law, with potentially serious legal and financial consequences. As in all things to do with the law, pleading ignorance will be no excuse! For more information, visit http://www.cookies.sitemorse.com

"The implications for repeated user logins, customised content delivery, analytics and advertising are potentially enormous."

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