RULES AND REGULATIONS ON MIGRATING TO THE GOVERNMENT WEB HOSTING SERVICE (GWHS) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY&RSQUO;S INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY OFF...

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Adopted: 27 April 2015
Date Filed: 15 June 2015
1. Background

1.1

The development of ICT infrastructure under Chapter 5, Accelerating Infrastructure Development, of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011-2016 is being pursued to support e-government systems that will allow more effective exchange and processing of data across national government agencies and enhance the capability of the government to deliver services electronically directly to citizens.

1.2

Under Section 2 (b) of Executive Order (EO) No. 47 (s. 2011), the DOST- ICT Office is mandated to provide information and communications technology infrastructure, information systems and resources to support the speedy and efficient enforcement of rules and delivery of accessible public services to the people.

1.3

The government recognizes the need for greater security and robustness in the Internet technologies it uses as shown by the recent attacks on its websites at all levels of the government.

2. Definition of Terms

2.1

Agency – refers to any of the various units of government, including executive branch departments, an office, instrumentality or government- owned and/or controlled corporation (GOCC), which performs important tasks and cover a nationwide area of concern.

2.2

Content – refers to data, either in the form of text, images, presentations, audio or visual files or both, or any other information-bearing medium that may be accessed by site visitors.

2.3

Content Manager – refers to an individual who is in charge of determining the content to be uploaded into the agency website.

2.4

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CMS – refers to Content Management System, which is a computer program that allows publishing, editing and modifying content, as well as maintenance from a central interface.

2.5

Informational Websites – websites that present basic and limited information, including public policy and governance information, which are stored and accessible online. This refers to the Emerging Presence and the Enhanced Presence stages in the UN Web Index.

2.6

Instrumentalities – refers to agencies under the administrative or technical supervision of national government agencies.

2.7

Sub-agency – an entity under an agency that derives its budget directly from the agency.

2.8

Subdirectory – refers to a directory below another directory in a hierarchy.[1]

2.9.

Subdomain – refers to an Internet domain that is part of a primary domain.[2]

2.10

Transactional Websites – refers to websites that transact with citizens and clients through web applications or services. It also refers to websites that fall under the Transactional Presence or Connected Presence stages in the UN Web Index.

2.11

UN Web Measure Index – an index used by the United Nations to determine the level of sophistication and online presence of a given country. The Web Measure Index has four progressive stages: a.) Emerging Presence, where websites present basic and limited information; b.) Enhanced Presence, where public policy and governance information are stored and accessible online; c.) Transactional Presence, where bilateral interaction between the government and the citizen is possible; and d.) Connected Presence, where G2G, G2C and C2G interactions are all possible.[3]

2.12

Webmaster – refers to the individual who shall administer and take responsibility for account access to the agency website.

2.13

Website – refers to a set of related pages on the Internet. A government website makes use of the gov.ph domain, and includes those that are equipped with online applications, services and databases.

3. Purpose

This Memorandum Circular is being issued to prescribe the rules and regulations on:

3.1

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Migrating to the web hosting service of the DOST-ICT Office.

3.2

Delineating the responsibilities of agencies covered with respect to GWHS.

3.3

Compliance with technical guidelines issued as part of this Memorandum Circular.

3.4

Schedule and order of priority for migration to GWHS.

4. Coverage

The current General Appropriations Act shall serve as a guide in classifying agencies.

This Memorandum Circular is mandatory for the websites of:

4.1

National Government Agencies (NGAs), including instrumentalities under their control.

4.2

Government Financial Institutions (GFIs).

4.3

Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations (GOCCs).

4.4

Inter-agency collaborations, programs and projects.

The following bodies are encouraged to adopt the Memorandum Circular:

4.5

Constitutional bodies.

4.6

Local Government Units (LGUs) and other instrumentalities under the LGUs' control.

4.7

Other autonomous branches of the government, including State Universities and Colleges (SUCs).

5. GWHS Services

5.1

Web Hosting

5.1.1

Web Hosting shall include the provision of the necessary computing and network resources to government agencies, including inter-agency collaborations, programs and projects, to establish their Informational and/or

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Transactional Websites, including the provision of online services.

5.1.2

All websites hosted under the GWHS shall be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week (24/7) under all foreseeable conditions.

5.1.3

Client agencies may add their machines to the GWHS to avail of dedicated capacity, provided that administrative control is transferred to ICT Office and subject to additional guidelines to be issued by the ICT Office.

5.2

Content Management Systems

5.2.1

A selection of standard Content Management Systems (CMSs) for use under the GWHS shall be made available as listed in Annex A[*].

5.2.1.1

The selection of standard CMSs shall be updated and expanded as necessary to include both open source and proprietary CMSs.

5.2.2

All CMSs shall provide and use templates that conform with the Government Website Template Design (GWTD) specified in Annex C[*].

5.2.3

All standard CMSs shall implement an Application Programming Interface (API) to use the online services of DOST-ICT Office.

5.2.4

Existing custom platforms may be integrated into the GWHS subject to the qualifying process prescribed in Annex B[*].

5.3

Security Audit and Assessment

5.3.1

All websites not using the prescribed CMSs shall undergo security audit and assessment before being migrated and hosted under the GWHS. The security audit and assessment shall cover web applications, modules, extensions, plug-ins, and web services used by the agencies.

5.3.2

Adverse findings during the security audit and assessment shall be forwarded to the agency for appropriate remedial action.

5.3.3

The ICT Office shall also prescribe a list of allowed modules, extensions and plug-ins, which can be found in the project website (www.i.gov.ph/ao39). Agencies that would like to use extensions not in the allowed list shall submit the name or a copy of the extension to the ICT Office for a security assessment.

5.3.4

The security audit and assessment is a continuing activity. The ICT Office shall conduct a security inspection of each GWHS-hosted website and its attached services or applications to ensure that compliance with security standards is maintained. Both periodic and random checks shall be applied.

5.3.5

The ICT Office reserves the right to install website monitoring and auditing tools to be used for checking and ensuring that overall website security is maintained at all times.

5.4

Service Training

The ICT Office shall provide the necessary capability building assistance relative to the implementation of AO 39, such as:

5.4.1

Training for agency Content Managers for content creation, migration and maintenance.

5.4.2

Training for agency Webmaster for the setting up and management of websites.

5.4.3

Technical training workshops for accredited developers and trainers.

6. Responsibilities of Agencies

6.1

Information and Communications Technology Office

6.1.1

The ICT Office shall ensure the 24/7 operation of the GWHS under all foreseeable conditions.

6.1.2

The ICT Office shall develop and implement policies, rules and regulations related to the implementation of migration to GWHS.

6.1.3

The ICT Office shall provide technical and capacity building assistance to hosted government agency websites. It shall develop the Capability Building Guidelines for hosted agencies, which shall be attached as Annex E to this Memorandum Circular.

6.1.4

The ICT Office shall encourage constitutional bodies, local government units and other autonomous branches of

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the government to get their websites under the GWHS. But it shall be undertaken at the instance of the said entities.

6.1.5

The ICT Office shall be responsible for server administration and the maintenance of the GWHS. Hosted agency websites shall be accessible to the webmasters of the respective agencies, but the management of the server, appliances and other equipment, as well as other server maintenance procedures, shall be performed by the ICT Office.

6.1.6

The ICT Office shall be responsible for compiling and uploading instructional materials and guidelines related to GWHS.

6.1.7

The ICT Office shall be responsible for the security of the hosted websites. Any intrusion, defacement, unauthorized access or any other form of illegal access to the hosted website shall be the responsibility of the ICT Office.

6.1.8

The ICT Office, through its operations team, shall facilitate the formation of a stakeholders group which shall serve as the forum for all stakeholders to raise issues, concerns, queries and recommendations regarding the service quality, operations, policies and any other matter related to the GWHS. The stakeholders group shall be composed of representatives from the ICT Office and the agencies with websites hosted under the GWHS.

6.1.9

The ICT Office shall annually assess the websites under the GWHS to determine the websites' categorization under the UN Web Index.

6.2

Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office

6.2.1

The OP-PCDSPO shall be responsible for drafting the Unified Web Content Policy.

6.2.2

The OP-PCDSPO shall be responsible for monitoring the content posted in GWHS-hosted websites.

6.2.3

The OP-PCDSPO shall be responsible for content creation, migration and maintenance training.

6.3

Agencies Covered by AO 39 and Other Hosted Agencies

6.3.1

The agencies shall ensure compliance with AO 39 (s. 2013) and migrate their websites to the GWHS.

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6.3.2

Any new work on their websites of any kind shall be implemented without prejudice to or interference with AO 39.

6.3.3

The agencies shall produce and regularly update the content of their websites. Any information or content posted in the websites shall be the responsibility of the respective agencies.

6.3.4

The agencies shall develop their own online services to be offered through their respective websites, subject to prevailing policies, rules and regulations of the government.

6.3.5

The agencies shall implement the use of digital signatures in compliance with EO 810 (s. 2009) in the online services of government agencies.

6.3.6

The agencies shall provide the ICT Office with the names and contact information of their designated webmasters, which the respective agencies shall keep updated at all times.

6.3.7

The agencies shall employ and designate their webmasters with regular plantilla positions.

6.3.8

The agencies shall report to ICT Office all cyber security incidents detected, suspected or reported by third parties or through regular monitoring activities performed by their MIS or equivalent unit.

7. Migration Procedure

7.1

General Procedure

7.1.1

The migration to GWHS shall be for hosting the websites of agencies covered in Section 4 of this Memorandum Circular.

7.1.2

Migration shall be accomplished within one (1) year from the effectivity of AO 39 (s. 2013).

7.1.3

Before migration, agencies shall fill out the Website Migration Survey issued by the ICT Office. The Website Migration Survey shall be used to determine the specifications and needs of each website migrating to the GWHS.

7.1.4

Agencies must meet the Technical and Security Guidelines for GWHS, which shall be issued by the ICT Office and attached to this Memorandum Circular as Annex D, and the GWTD.

7.1.5

Agencies that do not have websites from the time AO 39 was issued shall use the prescribed CMSs for their websites.

7.1.6

Agencies migrating to the GWHS shall be responsible for transferring their data into the ICT Office CMSs. The website shall then be transferred by the agency and ICT Office personnel to the ICT Office data center, which shall store the website in its staging server while at the same time subjecting it to security audit and assessment.

7.1.7

Any problems or issues resulting from the security audit and assessment shall be forwarded to the agency concerned. The agency shall be given 15 days to comply with the recommendations, subject to such extensions as the ICT Office may provide. Once the agency has complied with all recommendations and the website has passed the security audit and assessments, the website shall be published online.

7.1.8

Agencies equipped with their own servers and equipment may co- locate the same with the ICT Office, subject to guidelines to be developed by the latter. The ICT Office shall have access to servers and equipment for purposes of monitoring. The server security and content shall be the responsibility of the agency.

7.1.9

The ICT Office shall regularly conduct backups and shall implement redundancy mechanisms to ensure that the websites and the data are secure and protected. Agencies, however, may choose to maintain their own separate website and data backups.

7.1.10

The ICT Office will coordinate with the agency’s designated webmaster or chief information officer, or their designated representatives.

7.1.11

Existing sub-agency websites shall be migrated to the GWHS. These shall be presented as separate subdirectories of their agency website. These sub-agency websites may be separately managed by different webmasters, depending on the existing agency policies. If the sub-agency websites are managed by separate webmasters, the sub-agencies must provide the ICT Office with an updated document containing the contact information of the sub-agency webmasters.

7.1.12

Agencies with transactional websites that cannot be migrated using the CMSs identified by the ICT Office in Annex A may use their custom platform, subject to the vetting process in Section 5.3. If the transactional website requires licenses to install and run the platform, the licenses shall be provided by the agency to the ICT Office.

7.2

Migration Schedule

7.2.1

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All agencies covered by this Memorandum Circular are required to completely migrate their websites to the GWHS within one (1) year from the effectivity of AO 39 (s. 2013).

7.2.2

Agencies with existing contracts with web hosting service providers shall not renew their contracts and are required to notify the ICT Office about their circumstances. They must also refrain from entering into any new web hosting contracts.

7.2.3

Agencies currently in the process of procurement of services for website development and website hosting or any other work that may impede migration or interfere with the implementation of AO 39 (s. 2013) shall determine whether the Terms of Reference (TOR) governing the procurement prescribes liabilities for termination at the current stage of procurement, as of the time this Memorandum Circular is issued. If no liabilities shall be incurred, the agency must terminate the contract. If a.) liabilities may be incurred by terminating the procurement, b.) if rights have already been vested on the web hosting contractors or c.) if the contract or obligations have already been perfected, the existing contract and its corresponding rights and obligations shall be respected.

7.2.4

Agencies covered by existing contractual obligations with third party web hosting providers and agencies that have perfected their contracts for procurement have the option to undertake parallel web hosting. Under parallel web hosting, the agency's website shall be hosted by the third party contractor, while simultaneously being migrated to the GWHS. Upon termination of the existing contract, the migrated copy of the website under the GWHS shall be hosted online.

8. Cost Related Concerns

8.1

GWHS Operations

8.1.1

The GWHS shall be managed, operated and maintained by the ICT Office, without prejudice to the exercise of its powers to contract with competent third parties that may provide services for or related to the GWHS.

8.1.2

The ICT Office shall provide help desk services to agency websites hosted by GWHS.

8.2

Cost of Operation

8.2.1

The cost of operating the GWHS shall be included by the ICT Office in its annual appropriations for personnel services, capital outlay and its maintenance and other operating expenses.

8.2.2

Capital expenditures for additional servers and other equipment, licenses, consulting services, training and other expenses related to the GWHS, depending on the needs of the migrated sites, shall be provided by the ICT Office

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and shall be included in its budget.

8.2.3

The ICT Office may charge fees from the hosted agencies for the use of its facilities and services. The fees shall be limited to a cost recovery basis to fund its variable expenses, in accordance with AO 31 (s. 2012) and AO 39 (s. 2013). Any fees that may be charged shall be applied during the succeeding annual budget. If the succeeding annual budget has already been deliberated, the fees shall be applied in the next succeeding annual budget.

8.3

Use of Migration Fund

The ICT Office shall set aside a Website Migration Fund to be sourced from the e-Gov Fund, for use in assisting government agencies in migrating their websites to the GWHS. Subsequent guidelines will be issued to govern the disbursement of the migration fund.

8.3.1

Agencies with existing budget appropriations for the maintenance of their websites shall use their available funds, to be supplemented by the Website Migration Fund only as necessary.

8.3.2

Procedure for Availing Funds

8.3.2.1

Only agencies availing of the GWHS may apply for the funds.

8.3.2.2

The Website Migration Fund shall only be used as payment for services of the ICT Office to be performed relative to migrating the website.

8.3.2.3

The migration survey and migration checklist shall be used as the basis for the costing plan governing the use of funds. The costing plan shall be made by the ICT Office on behalf of government agencies availing of the fund and shall detail the amount to be reimbursed to the ICT Office from the fund for services rendered by the ICT Office.

8.3.2.4

Prioritization shall be based on the date of application for the funds. In allocating funds for the agencies, the type of website being migrated shall be taken into consideration.

8.3.2.5

Emerging Presence and Enhanced Presence websites may avail of up to Php20,000.00.

8.3.2.6

Transactional Presence and Connected Presence websites may avail of up to Php150,000.00.

9. Issuance of Technical Guidelines

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9.1

The ICT Office may issue other technical guidelines relative to website migration and the GWHS as may be necessary.

9.2

Compliance with the Government Website Template Design, Technical and Security Guidelines and Capability Building Guidelines, or Annexes C, D and E, respectively, as well as other guidelines that may be issued relative to the GWHS, is mandatory for all agencies covered by this Memorandum Circular.

10. Domain and Naming Convention

All websites hosted by the GWHS will be hosted under the domain name of gov.ph and its various subdomains and subdirectories as may be defined by existing Memorandum Circulars and future issuances.

11. Repealing Clause

All Memorandum Circulars, rules and regulations or parts thereof issued by the Commission on ICT (forerunner of ICT Office) and the National Computer Center (made part of ICT Office) that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Memorandum Circular are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

12. Separability Clause

If any provision of this Memorandum Circular is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions unaffected shall remain valid and subsisting.

13. Effectivity

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect 15 days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Recommending Approval:

(SGD) DENIS F. VILLORENTE
Deputy Executive Director for E-Government

Approved by:

(SGD) USEC. LOUIS NAPOLEON C. CASAMBRE
Executive Director

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[1] “Subdirectory.” Oxford Dictionary. Oxford University Press. Web. 23 October 2013.

[2] “Subdomain.” Oxford Dictionary. Oxford University Press. Web. 23 October 2013.

[3] “Web Measure.” UN Public Administrations Programme. United Nations. Web. 23 October 2013.

[*] Text Available at Office of the National Administrative Register, U.P. Law Center, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City.

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