



NC.GOV Fall 2010 Survey Results

The State of North Carolina is redesigning its main website—NC.GOV—and is researching the public’s wants and needs. In a 10-question survey, we heard from over 5,500 people from all 100 counties who told us what is important to them. The results are reported here. This information will inform our efforts to build a site that makes it easier for everyone to obtain information about and perform transactions with N.C. state government.

Sixty percent of respondents identified themselves as state employees, so two versions of each response are presented. The first chart for each question has results from all, and the second filters out the state employees.

1. In general, what do you look for on NC state government websites?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Contact information	70.4%	3913
Department or agency information, including publications, reports and data	67.5%	3755
State government services	58.4%	3249
Licensing and registration information	42.1%	2338
North Carolina travel information	31.4%	1748
Information about public schools, colleges or universities in North Carolina	27.2%	1510
Governor’s Office information	23.8%	1324
Public health information	21.1%	1173
Information on arts, history, and libraries	20.6%	1144
Information about starting or managing a business or non-profit organization in North Carolina	16.9%	938
Other (please specify)	15.4%	858
I don't use NC state government websites.	5.6%	309
How to become a North Carolina resident	4.0%	221

Non-state employees:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Contact information	65.4%	1320
Department or agency information, including publications, reports and data	61.5%	1241
State government services	50.7%	1023
Licensing and registration information	50.4%	1017
North Carolina travel information	29.7%	599
Information about public schools, colleges or universities in North Carolina	28.4%	573
Other (please specify)	23.9%	483
Information about starting or managing a business or non-profit organization in North Carolina	22.9%	462
Information on arts, history, and libraries	21.8%	440
Public health information	20.6%	415
Governor's Office information	19.8%	400
How to become a North Carolina resident	4.6%	93
I don't use NC state government websites. [PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 4.]	1.4%	29

A few of the "other" responses were tax information, sex offender registry, press releases, jobs, voter registration, statutes and regulations, hunting and fishing, state bidding process and opportunities, and doing business with the state.

2. On average, how often do you visit the NC state government's main website (www.nc.gov)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Occasionally (once or twice per month)	50.9%	2703
Frequently (at least once per day)	24.5%	1301
Not often (once or twice per year)	20.5%	1091
This is my first visit	2.9%	153
I don't know	1.2%	63

Non-state employees:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Occasionally (once or twice per month)	54.2%	1094
Not often (once or twice per year)	27.1%	546
Frequently (at least once per day)	13.4%	270
This is my first visit	4.0%	80
I don't know	1.3%	27

3. Describe your role(s) when you visit the NC state government's main website (www.nc.gov). (Please choose all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
State employee	60.1%	3050
Private individual	45.0%	2283
Business/Company	24.5%	1244
Media representative	1.1%	57
Student	3.6%	181
Other (please specify)		440

Non-state employee:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Private individual	60.9%	1235
Business/Company	53.5%	1084
Student	5.5%	111
Media representative	1.9%	39
State employee	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		164

Some of the “other” responses were: local government employee, librarian, nonprofit employees, advocate, retiree, tourist, vendor, lawyer.

4. Which of these would you use if available on the NC state government's main website (www.nc.gov)? (Please choose all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
State government agency and department directory	76.0%	4202
A search function, for example searching by key words	64.3%	3552
Quick links to services and information I need	63.6%	3516
State employee address, email, and phone lists	55.5%	3068
Information on employment in North Carolina	49.6%	2743
Calendars (e.g., meetings, events, closings)	43.6%	2411
Confirmation that the site is an official NC state government website	43.3%	2392
Centralized submission of government forms and bills online (e.g., for licenses, employment, utilities, services, benefits)	42.9%	2372
Information about museums, historic sites, archives, and libraries	42.8%	2367
Tourism information	37.1%	2049
A forum for citizens to give feedback about state government	32.3%	1787
Live webcasts and podcasts from government agencies (including legislative activity, emergency alerts, and public events)	29.2%	1616
Opt-in access to secure state government resources with a single user name and password	27.4%	1512
Ability to personalize website with information, services, and resources of interest to me	22.4%	1240
A variety of options for receiving government news and event information (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, blogs, RSS feeds, email lists, YouTube)	21.8%	1202
Compatibility with mobile devices to view information and transact state business	17.0%	941
Information provided in languages other than English	3.8%	210
Other (please specify)	5.3%	291

Non-state employee:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
State government agency and department directory	69.2%	1379
A search function, for example searching by key words	65.9%	1312
Quick links to services and information I need	64.3%	1280
Centralized submission of government forms and bills online (e.g., for licenses, employment, utilities, services, benefits)	44.5%	887
Confirmation that the site is an official NC state government website	44.2%	880
Information about museums, historic sites, archives, and libraries	42.4%	844
State employee address, email, and phone lists	41.9%	834
Calendars (e.g., meetings, events, closings)	39.9%	795
Information on employment in North Carolina	37.1%	739
A forum for citizens to give feedback about state government	35.7%	711
Tourism information	34.1%	680
Opt-in access to secure state government resources with a single user name and password	25.6%	510
Live webcasts and podcasts from government agencies (including legislative activity, emergency alerts, and public events)	24.9%	496
A variety of options for receiving government news and event information (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, blogs, RSS feeds, email lists, YouTube)	20.3%	405
Ability to personalize website with information, services, and resources of interest to me	22.5%	448
Compatibility with mobile devices to view information and transact state business	16.0%	318
Information provided in languages other than English	3.2%	63
Other (please specify)	8.0%	159

Some of the “other” responses included obtaining residency status, report road problems to the Dept of Transportation, a searchable directory of services, hot topics across all agencies, live telecasts of legislative proceedings, fax numbers, online traffic citation application, fill out a form online.

5. How do you access the internet? (Please choose all that apply.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Through a wired connection other than dial-up (like DSL or cable)	79.8%	4415
Through a wireless connection (like Wi-Fi or satellite)	41.8%	2310
From a mobile device	20.8%	1150
A dial-up connection (using a modem)	5.3%	292
I'm not sure	4.5%	249

Non-state employee

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Through a wired connection other than dial-up (like DSL or cable)	80.4%	1619
Through a wireless connection (like Wi-Fi or satellite)	47.0%	947
From a mobile device	24.8%	500
A dial-up connection (using a modem)	4.7%	94
I'm not sure	1.0%	20

6. In general, how would you rate your own experience using the web (browsing, conducting transactions, reading articles, managing account information, etc.)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Advanced: I'm on the web all the time	50.9%	2829
Intermediate: I can usually figure things out	42.7%	2369
Novice: I only get on the web when I have to	6.4%	356

Non-state employee:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Advanced: I'm on the web all the time	59.6%	1203
Intermediate: I can usually figure things out	36.5%	736
Novice: I only get on the web when I have to	3.9%	78

7. Your age:

Average age for all respondents is 48.5, and non-state employees average age is 49.4.

8. What is the highest level of education you completed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Four-year college degree / B.A. / B.S.	30.5%	1652
Completed masters or professional degree	20.0%	1081
Some college, but did not finish	16.6%	897
Two-year college degree / A.A. / A.S.	12.6%	679
Some graduate work	8.2%	442
Completed high school	7.5%	404
Advanced graduate work or Ph.D.	4.3%	232
Some high school, but did not finish	0.3%	17
Elementary school only	0.1%	6

Non-state employees

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Four-year college degree / B.A. / B.S.	28.6%	562
Completed masters or professional degree	21.2%	417
Some college, but did not finish	17.9%	352
Two-year college degree / A.A. / A.S.	11.7%	230
Some graduate work	9.0%	177
Completed high school	6.5%	128
Advanced graduate work or Ph.D.	4.2%	83
Some high school, but did not finish	0.6%	12
Elementary school only	0.3%	6

9. Where do you live?

Responses came from all 100 counties, with the largest number (27% from Wake). For non-state employees, all 100 counties are represented with 21% from Wake.

10. Additional Comments:

All 300 comments are being examined by NC.GOV managers. A number of these comments, unedited, are provided below:

search is critical, and ways to narrow search space so it doesnt return lots of irrelevant data. dont waste your time with twitter, etc. do insure you website works for ipad/smart phones. would be nice to combine searches with municipal sites when i dont know if a road problem or other issue is nc or county or city responsibility.

Don't forget SEO and 301 redirects for your most accessed content.

Please include a quick link for emergency/disaster assistance. I have property in Windsor, NC that received damage and I can not find out any information from this site or FEMA.

Make portals. I need a business portal with CLEAR info and links to forms with single-click ability. Should have a business lookup to provide essential info. Please do NOT give me Twitter/FB, etc that leads solely to press releases. Would prefer breaking info alerts via SMS or email.

The website as I am viewing it today (10/11/10) looks heavy and gimmicky and does not look professionally designed...(not even a little). One of the links from your page looks more like the direction your site should be going: <http://www.ncrecovery.gov/> Best of luck!

make sure tourism & ALERTS work with iPhone (no Flash)

I "knew" to use the state website because of my profession; you'll need to really promote it to reach that public which aren't explorers by nature.

I must be able use google to find info. I do not want to navigate my way to information!!

Make sure it is compatible with multiple browsers! Specifically I use Firefox but opera, chrome, and mobile device browsers are also just as popular as Internet Explorer. Windows, Mac, AND Linux users should have no problem doing business at the site.

It looks like you've transitioned away from the **www.ncgov.com** URL - good! I try to teach my students to be on the lookout for "spoof" sites and the .com part was certainly suspicious!

Very difficult to search NC legal questions.

would like to be able to do trasnaction with Secretary of state online; upload documents for filing

Take a look at teh Surry County NC Public Safety Web Portal , something like the WebEOC info box found there would be a great public service.

Definitely figure out how to integrate social media and please, please explore options for open source solutions (Red Hat, Drupal, etc.). You will probably find the standards to be more open and less expensive, more predictable subscription fees.

It would be good to allow cities and counties to have connectivity to the site, i.e., someone searches on how to obtain a business permit, then allow them to reach their county website through the state site.

Please make the website simple and clean. Many people get very distracted by lots of extra stuff on websites and never find what they actually want.

Would strongly suggest that you create a "Plain English" form of a search engine so that the average citizen can find information and make the appropriate contacts.

Get rid of all the "scenic" pictures and huge page headers. Scrolling sucks and they are a total waste of space.

I would like every state agency available thru one main page, DMV, SBI, DOC, DOT, etc.

I like that Mecklenberg county allows you to see a map of crime statistics. I wish that was available for the entire state. I'd like to see everything more consistent at a state level rather than a county level.

When an employee leaves an agency personnel should remove them from the contact list. When an employee joins another agency the new contact information should be added immediately

Navigation and the entire information architecture behind the website needs to be redesigned.

Keep it simple and uncluttered.

Clear graphic design, i.e., no clutter, is extremely important, although I know it is hard with so much content to present. Good luck!

Board of Elections with full details regarding the entire electoral process.

I do not found the current website to be user friendly.

Directions to NC buildings or Wake County buildings and info on parking

Have blogs about legislative bills people are trying to get passed into law. That way the public knows what bills are being submitted and can voice their opinion on it.

I find the existing nc.gov site quite straightforward, accepting the vast amount of information it has to manage. Any steps taken to streamline it further will be very much appreciated.

You left out vocational and/or technical under education.

I think that it would be a very good idea to make information more accessible to the voters.

Tax information would be helpful, especially live tax advisor chats during tax season.

search function is horrible. Used to live in Cali --- check out there sites. One username etc

Lists of representatives in legislature, school boards and Congress. Also local govt reps in counties and municipalities.

It would be nice to have a special "portal" where municipalities could access all of the shared revenue reports that come through the state - 1 place to go for all

Make sure the web page opens and downloads quickly. It seems most of the NC web pages take forever to open and navigate between windows.

I would like to see when I click on find jobs, a list of jobs are provided instead of being redirected to a different site and then you have to do another search!!

use LARGE easy to read print

The site is not ADA compliant. The site uses "color on color" which does not help those with visual limitations. The window does not resize automaticly.

Please make it user friendly. Use plain language and use language like people think.

ability to download forms for the general public is needed from all state areas.

Really need a means to find current NC laws for citizens and businesses, maybe with its own page designed for easy searching.

Add a "Report Fraud, Waste and Abuse" link and/or page in order to report mismanagement.

Add live video of the NC Legislature in session in addition to any and all committee meetings

in order to increase transparency.

RVer's, Campers. We need a list of all camping facilities statewide that can be accessed by computers. Not a easy task, but would certainly be appreciated by RVer's and Campers nation-wide.

Definitely needs better graphics as well. Visitnc.com is visually appealing; I would use it as a model for your redesign.

I would welcome a map of North Carolina, perhaps interactive so that one could quickly search for counties, towns, points of historic interest, etc?

Always be open 24/7 for answers in your Website.

When one makes a suggestion for improvement, it would be nice to receive confirmation that the right person actually received it.

Make sure the website is user friendly for young as well as older persons

The number one thing that needs to be done...have a better search engine thru-out the sight. need ratings of early childhood education by county in order to attract new families.

I feel that criminal records should be more easily available.

More focus on the arts please -- especially traditional/folk arts!

Thank you for asking for comments. It is difficult to find things on the site. Visually the way the site is designed it can make it difficult to navigate as well. It could be more functional and visually appealing. Need a calendar and good solid contact information on the people who are in the departments who are there to assist citizens.

make it user friendly, but not too busy (e.g. no ticker tapes running below main screen)

I read in the Star News about issues in various committees in the general Assembly and would like to be able to comment on these issues to the committees.

keep up the good work!

Came to find Official State items such as state flower, etc. Didn't find yet.

I am a tourist and was looking for information and could not find it using your site very frustrating!

please provide a larger database to contact state employees and officials. I conduct ESC hearings, and it can be very difficult to find the hearing officers' contact information.

Improve search engines for finding various State rules, laws, and policies.

Housing for seniors, disabled, mentally challenged, etc.

Very difficult to find forms on Secretary of State's site. Unable to find forms on Employment Security Commission's site.

when i, a nc resident, contact state offices i would like to receive a confirmation message from the department of receipt of my communication.

Updates on state budget issues and ARRA info is helpful as a small business owner. Continue to offer that info through the site... Thank you for asking for input.

I only use the Purchase and Contract web content, the search feature for bids closed but not awarded is poor at best, this may be your design, but not very transparent

when providing licensee information, it would be helpful to show date license was earned, licensee #, date license expires

Web sites are only as good as their maintenance. Old information that no longer applies is not just useless, but also a great irritation. Demand accountability from all agencies that post web pages to keep them current.

Public bid info needs to be clearer

Sites I normally use for business are somewhat antiquated and often have out-dated information for rules, regulations, etc. (water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, etc.) Would like them to be formatted somewhat similarly in order to make them user-friendly and consistent in being able to find things without having to re-learn each time you go to a website.

Most of the Agency Web Sites are difficult to navigate. Almost impossible to find things we need. The State Construction Office Web Site has improved. The Department of Insurance is one of the worst.

Please provide more information for businesses.

A source of copyright-free photos of NC that anyone can use. Also any copyright-free artwork or graphics created by the state that can be used without charge. Same with maps, graphs, etc. Thank you!

I would like to suggest that the site become more accessible for people who use assistive technology like screen readers.

Extensively promote the new website through all agencies involved (e.g., DOC, Dot, etc.). Provide for review and proposed edits of the website as it is built. Invite critiques from website development firms that are not contractors for development of the website (peer review). Use other departments' address lists to solicit completion of this form.

With schools purchasing through the state procurement it would be helpful to create a catalog upload system for businesses that sell to school districts. We use system like this in New York that works really well and it allows businesses to offer a larger discount to the schools as businesses do not have to send out catalogs.

Web site should be W3C-compliant with progressive enhancement for less-capable browsers (e.g., Internet Explorer). Accessibility is also a must.

It is still difficult to find the Register of Deeds. Why isn't there a direct link on the homepage?

I access state sites for demographics, employment and other data for my economic development clients. Some of these sites are user-friendly, some are very difficult. In general making such data easier to find from a central directory would be much appreciated.

website is not presented in a user friendly design. The graphics for the links is not friendly at all - too business oriented.

Through my work, I visit a variety of government sites and find a great many are hard to navigate. I often utilize the site search option for general information about the agency or departments.

I use state agency web sites frequently in my work. The biggest problems, in my opinion, are the lack of standardization across sites and the fact that it is difficult to search for information; plus, if you find something, it is unlikely to be in the same place on a subsequent visit.

When I lived in Colorado we could file our income taxes online through the colorado.gov/mytaxes website. I am still surprised that I cannot do the same in NC. Come on folks! If you want people to e-file, make it easy!

Please keep your sites simple without a lot of video or graphic introductions.

The state's website should exude a sense of pride about the state. Please be sure to include pictures of the small towns as well as the better known places in North Carolina that make

this state so wonderful. Interesting facts about the state, profiles of NC residents, etc... showing crafts made in NC would be nice as well

Provide a two-way (we can talk back to you and you can update us) portal with an option for a rich-media experience

A green section, to highlight advances toward greening the NC government itself, public buildings, local industries, anything at all that is impressive, to track our progress into the future.

I would like to see a how to be self reliant guide in NC. Suggestions for living a good and productive life in NC.

Any new school laws.

I think this website needs to be a central information portal for the state of North Carolina, not only for the state residents, but for the people outside the state, or even outside the country as well, such as international students and investors.

The email addresses of all public servants in the State would be helpful.

Have a section that allows citizens to offer suggestions/complaints/comments/feedback with a reasonable expectation of having it read and receiving a reply.

If your site is going to be set up with access to procurement information, please make it easy to use.

ability to view bid items is very helpful when accessing bids or RFPs.

The employee directory of email addressess needs to be updated with the correct email address of DCC employees.

In searching for NC Historic Sites info, it took at least 4 click thrus for me. Not sure if that could be made easier to find or not.

Make it easier to find out about open bids for contracts on general work for the state.

More Business to business access.

the bid opportunities website is very inefficient and doesn't allow you to track the particular opportunity, view other vendors interested in opportunity for teaming opportunities or award information.

emailed bid opportunities are great - NC offers more opportunities than other states I've tracked. A way to easily filter the parameters from the email would be very useful.

Don't spend a lot of money on any upgrades!
