

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2005, 12:00 p.m. CT

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Gov. Heineman, Secretary of State Gale Unveil new Nebraska Web Site

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman was joined by Secretary of State John Gale to unveil the next generation of the official Web site for the state of Nebraska. The launch of Nebraska.gov is the fourth redesign in 10-year history of the state's official Web presence.

Available at <http://www.Nebraska.gov>, the new portal offers an easy-to-remember name and an enhanced, more accessible design aimed at easing the strain of locating information on state government and services visitors to the site need.

"As a former chairman of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission, I've seen first-hand how our online presence matters, both here at home and around the world," Gov. Heineman said. "This Web site is our front porch to the rest of the world, and Secretary Gale and the Nebraska.gov staff have worked hard to ensure it is not just an inviting, but also a more accessible site."

Nebraska.gov features an intuitive, common-sense design that serves as the centerpiece of Nebraska's e-Government initiative. The 300 online services available through the portal provide efficiencies and cost-savings for users and state agencies, including the ability to renew professional licenses, as well as hunting and fishing licenses online.

"Making state government more accessible and efficient is one of the primary goals of my administration," Gov. Heineman said. "Developing e-Government services through an enhanced state portal provides the means to achieve that goal. Through the Nebraska.gov portal, the state is open for business 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week."

The redesign of the Nebraska.gov portal, under the guidance of the Nebraska State Records Board, was based on feedback from hundreds of citizens and businesses across the state, in addition to state agency customer service personnel and various Web resources. The Nebraska state portal attracts nearly 762,000 visitors per month, and processed approximately 5.3 million transactions in 2004.

Secretary of State Gale, who chairs the State Records Board, said, “I am very pleased with the convenience and efficiencies that Nebraska.gov brings to the state. The latest portal enhancement builds on our previous success, and ensures that Nebraska’s e-Government services continue to maximize both user and government efficiency. The public will benefit greatly from the many user-friendly applications and services offered.”

The Nebraska.gov portal consolidates Nebraska’s former Web addresses, www.nol.org and www.state.ne.us. Users will still be able to access the state’s new site from the former addresses. The Nebraska.gov site incorporates new features designed to make finding information, communicating and interacting with government easier.

Live Help Customer Service provides assistance to users in real-time. By clicking on the Help Center’s Live Help link, visitors to the site are instantly connected with a Nebraska.gov operator who can direct them to the information they need.

Nebraska.gov’s robust search engine is powered by industry-leading Google technology to ensure that the most relevant search results are displayed quickly and prominently.

Nebraskans can utilize the statewide public meeting calendar, which lists activities and events of interest open to the public. In addition, NebAnnounce, the e-mail notification service, keeps Nebraskans informed and up-to-date on the activities of state agencies, boards and commissions.

Nebraska.gov is among the first portals in the nation to utilize Really Simply Syndication news feed technology to deliver up-to-the-minute news and information to user desktops or Web browsers. In addition, users have direct access all of Nebraska’s county Web sites via the ‘County Government’ section of the portal.

Rod Armstrong, general manager of Nebraska.gov, said, “One significant improvement is the ‘How Do I?’ section that provides direct links to frequently requested information and services. This feature allows users to quickly find answers to their questions without having to know specifically what government agency to contact.”

Nebraska.gov is managed and operated without tax funds through a public-private partnership between the state and Nebraska Interactive LLC, the Lincoln-based official e-Government partner for the state of Nebraska. Nebraska Interactive is a subsidiary of e-Government firm NIC, Inc.

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