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Gov. Heineman Unveils New Look for Nebraska.gov

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman today unveiled the new look of the official Web site for the state of Nebraska. The site underwent a complete redesign and launched on June 2.

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.

"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 I want to commend the work of Chief Information Officer Brenda Decker, Secretary of State John Gale and the Nebraska.gov staff, who have produced a more streamlined, inviting and more accessible Web site for our state."

Nebraska.gov features an intuitive, streamlined design that serves as the centerpiece of the state's e-Government initiative. The site provides enhanced navigation, connecting users with more than 300 online services in two clicks, and helps direct users to information they may be looking for using a collection of links targeted to Nebraska residents, those moving to Nebraska, visitors from out of state, and those starting a business in the state.

The Web site also offers brighter and larger images, including a series of photographs promoting Nebraska attractions and destinations. Clicking on the image takes the user to information about the site on the state's tourism and travel Web site.

Users can now access a mobile version of Nebraska.gov, designed for users accessing the site from PDAs and smartphones. The site also uses Google technology to translate information into 12 languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

While Nebraska.gov site was designed to give visitors access the most used services, it also provides an expanded area to highlight new services. The previous site featured up to three services. The new version puts featured services in a scrolling bar allowing any number of services to be featured.

The site currently highlights 12 services all available in one click, including: links to storm recovery information, pay speeding tickets and order specialty license plates, access one-stop business registration services, and find a downloadable version of the Nebraska Travel Guide.

Under the guidance of the Nebraska State Records Board, the new design offers improved functionality for the visually impaired, the option of viewing a text only version of the site

Secretary of State John Gale, chairman of the State Records Board, said, "I am very pleased with the convenience and efficiencies this redesign has created. This site builds on our previous success by making it easier to find information and interact with state government."

Traffic and use of the state portal to conduct business has continued to increase. Last year, the Nebraska.gov securely processed nearly 8.5 million online service transactions and attracted more than 48 million hits, up from 6 million transactions and 40 million hits in 2005.

Some of the most popular destinations from Nebraska.gov include: tax information and access to the Department of Revenue, those associated with Nebraska courts, links to state maps, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) driver license exam and other DMV services, information on local government, searches for rules and regulations, and the Secretary of State's Web site.

Chief Information Officer Brenda Decker said, "The new design of the web site is centered on increased accessibility and focuses on user activity. Over the past three years, we have continued to make improvements to the electronic front door of Nebraska government in both the areas of online services and accessibility. With each new revision of the site, we try to make it one step easier for our visitors to navigate, and we are always looking for new ways to provide the services Nebraskans would like to see."

Visitors are invited to offer feedback to web developers. The portal has a link to an online user survey, as well as a link to an idea box allowing visitors to voice suggestions. Nebraska.gov was among the first portals in the nation using Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feeds to deliver information to subscribers, and the site is one of only two states offering a 24/7 Online Live Help option to answer user questions in real time.

Brent Hoffman, general manager of Nebraska.gov, said, "Our efforts are centered on building successful user centric and efficient government services for the State of Nebraska. Through the collaboration of all our state partners, we are proud to be able to consistently showcase the latest services combined with advanced technology."

The new version of Nebraska.gov is the fifth redesign in the 13 year history of the state's official Web presence. Nebraska.gov is managed and operated without tax funds through a public-private partnership between the state and Nebraska Interactive LLC. Nebraska Interactive is a subsidiary of e-Government firm NIC, Inc.

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