Satisfaction with e-Government Reaches New Highs under Obama but is Stalling, According to ForeSee

E-Government Beats Overall Federal Government in Satisfaction; e-Gov Superstars Rival Private Sector


According to customer experience analytics firm ForeSee, which produces the Index in partnership with ACSI, the E-Government Satisfaction Index ends the year at 75.1 on the ACSI's 100-point scale, just shy of its record highs set in the second and third quarter of 2011. Meanwhile, the overall federal government scored 66.9 in ACSI's annual U.S. Federal Government report, also released today. Citizens remain considerably more satisfied when they interact with the government online than they are with their government experiences overall.

Since President Obama took office in 2009, his administration has made e-government and government efficiency a priority. The President launched an open government directive aimed at increasing transparency and accountability, and he appointed the nation's first Chief Technical Officer. These efforts seemed to pay immediate dividends as e-government satisfaction climbed to new highs. But as election season gets into full swing, e-government satisfaction appears to be stalling.

“We are going to hear a lot about big government throughout the campaign season, but it would be a mistake to curb e-government initiatives in the name of cutting government waste,” said Larry Freed, president and CEO of ForeSee. “There are a number of benefits to high satisfaction with e-government, including increased trust, higher participation, and greater usage of the web channel, which leads to more efficiency.”

Though e-government still lags private sector e-commerce and e-business, several federal government websites score as high or higher than the best companies and websites measured by ACSI. Two websites from the Social Security Administration top all websites and companies measured by ACSI. SSA’s iClaim website scores 91 and its Retirement Estimator scores 90. The highest scoring company on ACSI is H.J. Heinz (89), while the highest scoring private sector website is the online behemoth Amazon.com (87).
“While the federal government still trails the lowest-scoring private segment in the ACSI, some agencies and agency websites prove that government can equal or even exceed the private sector,” said Claes Fornell, ACSI founder.

The website experience is comprised of several different elements, but a few stand out as having more impact on satisfaction than others. While every site may have different priorities, the aggregate results show that the elements, or drivers, with the greatest impact on satisfaction are search, functionality, and transparency.

ABOUT FORESEE
As a pioneer in customer experience analytics, ForeSee continuously measures satisfaction across customer touch points and delivers critical insights on where to prioritize improvements for maximum impact. Because ForeSee’s superior technology and proven methodology connect the customer experience to the bottom line, executives and managers are able to drive future success by confidently optimizing the efforts that will achieve business and brand objectives. The result is better business for companies and a better experience for consumers. Visit www.foresee.com for customer experience solutions and original research.

ABOUT THE ACSI
The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is the only uniform, national, cross-industry measure of satisfaction with the quality of goods and services available in the United States. In 1999, the federal government selected ACSI to be a standard metric for measuring citizen satisfaction. Over 130 federal government agencies have used ACSI to measure citizen satisfaction with more than 200 services and programs. The Index was founded at the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business and is produced by ACSI LLC. ForeSee sponsors the E-Government Satisfaction Index.

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