

**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming
Federal Budget**



By: Adobe Canada

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The primary recommendation is that the Government of Canada allocate dedicated funding to departments so that they can acquire and deploy the digital tools they need to perform their duties remotely. The digitalization of services that would result from this funding would enable the public service, not only to deliver better services during the pandemic, but sets them up for improved service delivery after the current crisis is over.

Recommendation 2:

Our second recommendation is that the Government of Canada expand its Digital Standards so that the requirements are more specific. We recommend that these standards require that departments:

- That are not integrated within Canada.ca, maintain websites of specific quality, accessibility, security and user friendliness or that they are required to consolidate with the Canada.ca platform within a specific period.
- Identify a list of non-digital services with the greatest impact that could be made available to the public through an online, mobile-friendly digital service option and work towards adopting a digital model within a certain timeframe
- Adopt digital forms by default
- Leverage Digital Asset Management tools to enhance their ability to share and re-use content
- Leverage Digital Signatures by default for approvals under a certain threshold.

Recommendation 3:

The third recommendation is that the Government of Canada build on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariats' Directive on Service and Digital to require departments to align with the Government of Canada's Digital Standards within a certain timeframe. In our view, this Treasury Board directive could be used to accelerate the adoption of digital tools within departments. This type of model has been adopted in other Canadian jurisdictions such as Ontario, which, through legislation, implemented the [Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act](#) that set a certain bar for digital services and the [21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act](#) (IDEA) which was implemented in the United States. The 21st Century IDEA was effective as it required, through legislation, that federal departments adopt digital tools within a certain timeframe. We believe this same model could be adopted within the Government of Canada through legislation or Treasury Board directives.

Adobe Submission

Members of the Standing Committee on Finance,

On behalf of our CEO, Shantanu Narayen, and the entire Adobe team, I want to thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented time of need. Adobe's desire to support the Canadian federal government in maintaining and expanding business continuity and mission critical services during this national emergency is supported from the top. I also want to express that our thoughts are with those affected by and serving on the front lines of this global pandemic.

Overview:

Throughout the pandemic, Adobe has worked hand in hand with the Canadian public sector to facilitate the delivery of services to Canadians. This has been accomplished by working with your departments to ensure the integrity of the Government of Canada's website, Canada.ca, and that the proper digital technology is in place to enable the public service to deliver services in a timely fashion.

As the holder of the Managed Web Services contract, Adobe's Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) technology forms the basis of the Canada.ca platform. During the pandemic, there were over 26.4 million logins to the My Service Canada Accounts and 14 million claims for CERB processed through applications running on the Canada.ca platform. During this time, there was zero downtime and assistive technologies were incorporated to ensure that all Canadians could access their services online.

In addition to Canada.ca, Adobe has worked with the Government of Canada to expand the usage of other digital tools to enhance the ability of the public service to streamline internal processes and the delivery of services. These include:

1. Adobe Analytics is being used as the web analytics tool to capture and qualify data on citizen behaviour when interacting with Government of Canada web applications.
2. Adobe Creative Cloud continues to be the partner of choice for graphic design, video editing and photography with the Government of Canada.

Challenge:

Given the precedent context imposed on us by the pandemic, federal departments require digital channels to provide content on the fluid services and programs being developed in response to the pandemic. The challenge is multi-faceted with the requirement of collecting and qualifying the behavioural data returned through the experience of the digital channels to better understand how Canadian citizens are interacting with your content.

In a letter dated August 20th addressed to Adobe's Canadian President Salim Maherali, the acting Chief Information Officer of the Government of Canada confirmed that "The Government of Canada has made clear that Canada.ca is the Government of Canada's digital presence." Despite this affirmation, no departments or special operating agencies are scheduled to migrate to the platform this fiscal year. Canadian Digital Services is working on an Open Source replacement option for this platform. Systematic functionality gaps such as forms management, asset management and web personalization, aligned to

the “OneGC” long term vision, continues to be a challenge while the Government of Canada attempting to resolve the gaps with a non-federated approach.

Opportunity:

In 2015, Adobe Systems Canada Inc. was the only vendor to meet the requirements of the Managed Web Services Request for Proposal. The scope of the RFP was for the Managed Service to be the web presence for the Government of Canada’s more than one hundred departments and special operating agencies. The RFP allowed for this service to be delivered from abroad and limited the security classification to Protected A. In April 2019, Adobe’s Chief Executive Officer Shantanu Narayan came to the National Capital Region to visit the Service Canada team at Place du Portage. During the discussion, Shantanu committed to re-locating the service to be delivered from Canadian data centres taking the first step towards a higher security classification. Over the next six months, Managed Web Services will be upgrading from Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) version 6.2 to 6.5 and re-locating to be delivered from data centre residing in Canada. The combination of these two events present the Government of Canada with the opportunity to add security accredited functionality by using a federated approach to close the gaps and become a leader in the delivery of digital services within the public sector.

With the above in mind we proposed the following recommendations.

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We thank you for this opportunity to provide recommendations and to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance in their pre-budget consultations process. We understand these consultations will result in a report to be tabled in the House of Commons in December 2020, which will be considered by the Minister of Finance in preparation of the 2021 federal budget.