



U.S. Department of the Treasury

Public Law 115-336, "21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act"

December 2021 Report

Prepared for the Office of Management and Budget and the public per the requirements of section 3(d) of Public Law 115-336.

U.S. Department of the Treasury's Progress to Implement the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act

2021 Annual Report

Background

Section 3(d) of the [21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act](#) (21st Century IDEA)¹ requires the head of each Federal executive branch agency to report annually (through 2023) to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the public on the agency's progress to implement the requirements of the Act, and modernize their websites and digital services. The information below details the efforts of the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury or the Department) to modernize the agency's websites and digital services in 2021.

Treasury Efforts to Date

Treasury is using the compliance mandates and standards of 21st Century IDEA across the Department to increasingly improve and deliver an enhanced online experience to customers and partners. Building on the work Treasury began in [2019](#) and [2020](#), the focus in 2021 was to consolidate and update websites and digital content, digitize high-impact services and projects, and streamline internal management systems, policies, and governance models. Efforts to deliver against IDEA requirements completely align to the second pillar of the [Biden-Harris Management Agenda Vision](#). Major accomplishments for 2021 include continued progress in design standardization, website and application modernization, forms digitization, and incorporating IDEA principles in economic recovery efforts.

Accomplishment #1: Consolidate and Improve Websites and Digital Content

In 2021, Treasury made demonstrable progress in improving its websites and enhancing its solutions to better serve the American public. Accomplishments, as outlined below, span the Department, and are aligned to key websites and services Treasury prioritized in 2019 and 2020.

- Departmental (Headquarters) Offices (DO) migrated its public-facing websites to a modern content management system (CMS). This included an innovative "multi-site" structure in which the main Treasury.gov website and seven adjacent sites (E.g., [SIGTARP](#); [OIG](#); [Community Development Financial Institutions Fund](#); [Making Home Affordable](#); [MyMoney](#)) share a reusable codebase with common theming, features, modules, and user roles, with "enclaves" for each site that enable individual configuration. This reduces manual labor and operational risks of separate codebases while enabling a consistent look, feel, and experience for users.
- The Bureau of the Fiscal Service (Fiscal Service) completed the full [TreasuryDirect.gov](#) redesign to improve navigation and focus on transactional features. The new site uses the US Web Design System (USWDS) including reusable components and a responsive

¹ Public Law 115-336, 132 Stat. 5025-5028.

design. Fiscal Service is incorporating plain language content to facilitate customer transactions and the information needed to purchase Treasury securities. Fiscal Service also redesigned arc.fiscal.treasury.gov with improved navigation, reusable, and responsible design components. Fiscal Service expanded the number of datasets on fiscaldata.treasury.gov to meet the goal of having all datasets maintained by the Fiscal Service in one easy-to-use website.

- The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) built comprehensive design systems utilizing USWDS to facilitate an accessible, mobile-friendly, consistent appearance for digital services and web content. The TTB Design System provides reusable elements that serve as building blocks for new digital services and web content. IRS expanded its Online Design Guide (ODG), a tool that provides web design and user experience standards for digital applications, products, and services.
- The United States Mint (Mint) re-architected ccac.gov, Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee website, providing greater accessibility and usability for users on multiple displays.
- The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) completed a website modernization and usability update for the [Bank Secrecy Act \(BSA\) E-Filing System](https://banksecrecyact.fincen.gov) which allows members of filing organizations to file electronically, receive and send secure messages to and from FinCEN, and read FinCEN issued advisories, supporting Treasury's mission of safeguarding the U.S. financial system. The BSA system update focused on aligning the site with the look and feel of [FinCEN.gov](https://fincen.gov) and adheres to federal website design principles.
- The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) began efforts to modernize its MoneyFactory.gov website with an improved look and feel using the Treasury standard template and migration to Treasury's shared services hosting platform.

Accomplishment #2: Comply with Requirements for Federal Websites and Digital Services while Improving Internal Management Systems, Policies, and Governance Models

Treasury continues to apply a standards-based approach in the design and development of websites and applications across the Department. In July 2021, Treasury chartered a Low Code Community of Practice with enterprise-wide representation to share best practices around planning, design, configuration, development, and sustainment of low code platforms and products.

- TTB launched a public [guidance portal](#) providing a searchable collection of formal public guidance, including rulings, procedures, delegation orders, industry circulars, and other publications to help stakeholders understand TTB regulations, policies, and other requirements. TTB also developed the MyTTB portal page, which enables acceptance of claims submissions online with validation and security features and includes a new file upload feature, improved error handling, a simplified form, and 508 compliance. This portal will be launched publicly in January 2022.
- BEP implemented new intranet features to improve the employee experience and awareness of programs and activities, including pandemic response content.
- The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) implemented Google Custom Search

on all its public-facing websites and Google Translate on [HelpWithMyBank.gov](https://www.helpwithmybank.gov) with ten commonly used languages for the public. Additionally, OCC implemented GovDelivery to broadcast OCC's News and Issuances to over 60,000 subscribers.

- Mint enhanced the user experience of customers purchasing popular coins such as the American Eagle or the Air Force silver medal on the catalog.usmint.gov website by implementing a web robots tool that automates and secures tasks over the Internet. The solution provides behavior-based bot management to enhance protection of Mint websites and safeguards online inventory from automated bot purchases that previously caused site interruptions. Mint utilizes the bot defender solution to reduce the risk of bot attacks and avoid costs associated with traditional bot-related security and inventory issues, which provides a better eCommerce experience for the public.

Accomplishment #3: Digitize High-Impact Services and Projects within the Agency Customer Experience Action Plans

In 2021, the IRS was the Department's sole designated High Impact Service Provider and focused on digitizing services and projects identified in their published customer experience action plans in alignment with 21 Century IDEA. Details on Treasury's (IRS) efforts are noted below:

- Redesigned the [Tax Withholding Estimator](#) by streamlining user flows to present results to taxpayers more quickly and clearly, differentiate between refundable vs. non-refundable tax credits, and account for hourly jobs and varying incomes.
- Launched [Tax Pro Account](#) in July 2021 as a secure self-service online portal for tax professionals to establish and manage pro/taxpayer authorization relationship, the first all-digital platform fully integrated with electronic signature service and real-time end-to-end authorizations processing.
- Redesigned the [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) homepage based on extensive analytics and qualitative user testing to deliver a more customized digital experience for taxpayers in compliance with IDEA and Taxpayer First Act, with a homepage that is accessible to people of all abilities and optimized for mobile devices. IRS also updated the IRS.gov web writing practices guide to encourage more consistent, user-centered content. The guide includes best practices and research-based understandings of cognition and literacy, human behavior, and web content usability such as findability, readability, and structure.
- Expanded use of secure text chat offerings throughout FY21. Support for payment issues was expanded to a number of high-traffic pages on IRS.gov. Additionally, it added features such as identity authentication to enhance assistors' ability to address taxpayers' specific needs, Spanish language support, automated assistance, and the ability for taxpayers to exchange digital attachments with the IRS when setting up payment agreements. Taxpayer use rose along with these service expansions; the one millionth chat was connected in June 2021. The service has been consistently popular, with an average taxpayer experience rating of 4.3 out of 5 stars.
- As part of the Taxpayer First Act (TFA) objective to improve communication, education, transparency, trust, and access to quality products and services, the IRS initiated a multilingual initiative that resulted in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Assistant application being available in eight languages. The successful deployment in August 2021 of the multilanguage translation of the English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese

(Traditional), Chinese (Simplified), Korean, and Haitian Creole makes it the first online application on IRS.gov to support all available languages.

Accomplishment #4: Economic Recovery Efforts

Treasury played a key role in building public-facing IT solutions to support pandemic relief and economic recovery efforts. This was made possible by investing in adaptable and modern low code IT platforms and content management systems. By investing in these platforms in recent Fiscal Years, Treasury was able to rapidly respond and deliver on myriad IT needs in the mission-critical pandemic relief scenario. These efforts, as detailed below, collectively contributed to the distribution of billions of dollars of stimulus funding to impacted industries and State, Local, and Tribal governments.

- DO (headquarters) deployed [SIGPR.gov](https://www.sigpr.gov) for Treasury's Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery (SIGPR), which aided Treasury in carrying out pandemic relief by serving as an authoritative source of information for the public, businesses, and state, local, and Tribal governments.
- The CARES Act and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act established nine COVID relief programs for which DO (headquarters) built public-facing [portals](#) to manage applicant and recipient information, collect data for reporting impact of relief funds to Congress and the public. The use of low code platforms allowed Treasury to quickly build and modify these portals to reflect changes to legislation and reporting requirements a common and reusable technology stack reduced development time and created a consistent user experience.
- DO (headquarters) used API solutions to support pandemic relief data management and technical integration, resulting in the ability to automatically ingest third-party loan data, streamlined quality checks for payment data posted to USASpending and Treasury.gov. To maximize transparency, Treasury not only recorded nearly 9,000 COVID relief-related transactions in USASpending in FY21 but also created web pages with payment information and downloadable CSV data files available on [Treasury.gov](https://www.treasury.gov).
- As part of the American Rescue Plan Act online information portal requirement, IRS accelerated the launch of Secure Access Digital Identity (SADI) from a small-scale pilot to a full-scale production solution capable of supporting a large, diverse user population to protect the [Child Tax Credit Update Portal](#) (CTCUP) application that went live in June 2021. SADI was designed and implemented as the next-generation identity proofing solution to improve taxpayer access to IRS online services.

Accomplishment #5: Digitization of Forms

As required in Section 4(d) of IDEA, Treasury continues to digitize all paper-based forms to serve the public and centralize access.

- The BEP Mutilated Currency form has been completely digitized, improving the experience of 22,000+ customers per year who submit ~\$35 million in annual requests, and expediting processing time to realize labor efficiencies.
- Treasury rapidly developed and deployed pandemic relief forms needed to collect, review, and adjudicate submissions for relief funds. 35,000+ users access specialized forms (Payment Information forms for State, Local, and Tribal Recipients; Supplemental Tribal Information forms; and Payroll Assistance Application forms for hard hit industries).

- IRS has digitized all paper forms related to serving the public. The Internal Revenue Manual section 1.17 was also updated to ensure new forms would also be made available in digital format. IRS forms are accessible at [irs.gov/forms-instructions](https://www.irs.gov/forms-instructions). In 2021, IRS also initiated efforts to prototype an adaptive form template with the goal of providing expanded mobile-responsive forms for taxpayers.
- Treasury continues to make incremental progress to organize forms Department-wide.

Implementation Challenges

Funding and resource prioritization are among the greatest challenges in supporting initiatives aligned with the 21st Century IDEA. Ensuring that existing websites and digital services are brought into alignment with 21st Century IDEA, and that new offerings are built to the Act's requirements, necessitates sustained support and coordination of resources. Many digital products and services have been improved during 2021 including the related security, maintenance, and operations processes. However, the velocity with which agencies can engage in new efforts relies on the availability of resources, consistent funding, and prioritizing service delivery in line with increased urgency in addressing cybersecurity requirements. A notable example of the digital transformation that is possible with dedicated funding and resources is Treasury's response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Treasury produced comprehensive, highly visible, and effective IT solutions in record time. This example suggests that with similar prioritization of funding and resources, significant digital transformation at a faster pace is possible.

Protecting Treasury's infrastructure and applications against ongoing cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities is the Department's top Information Technology priority. This comes at a financial cost. Treasury has coordinated a Department-wide budget strategy to align additional technology budget requests that directly support compliance with the Presidential [Executive Order 14028 on Improving the Nations Cybersecurity](#) and [M-21-31](#) (maturing event logging Memorandum). Note, as of December 2021, Treasury has not received supplemental funding to address the Executive Order, Memorandum, SolarWinds incident response, and most recently the Emergency Directive 20-02 to mitigate the Apache Log4j Vulnerability, all which demonstrate a significant challenge in maintaining a high level of security to protect our financial systems and the public.

Treasury will continue focusing efforts on implementing 21st Century IDEA in line with the FY 2022-2026 [Treasury Strategic Plan \(to be published in early 2022\)](#), [President's Management Agenda](#) and new [Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#), and balancing that with the ongoing cybersecurity efforts.

/s/ Tony Arcadi

Treasury Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information Systems and Chief Information Officer