Hosting Requirements

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The council's public web presence

Requirements for hosting systems with detail about domain names and security considerations.

Council staff	●	Service managers	
Suppliers	●	Project managers	○
		System implementers	●
● *target audience*		System developers	●
○ *awareness desirable*		Content authors	

Document history

Version	Section	Date	Name	Comments
0.1	ALL	01/09/08	Andrew Jones	Working version.
3.0	ALL	15/10/08	Andrew Jones	1st released version to account for restructuring of the overall pack.
3.2	ALL	11/11/09	Adam Newman	Cosmetic alterations & title updates
3.3	None	17/10/10	-	n/a

Associated documents

Reference	Document	Version	Date

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Council	South Gloucestershire Council
Supplier	The 3rd party supplier of a web application or service

Contents

1   Overview

This document explains our expectations when hosting public-facing web services. There are two key factors determining how much of this is relevant to a particular site or system: whether the service is being delivered by the council alone or in partnership with other authorities or organisations; and, whether the system is hosted by us or with a 3rd party supplier.

1.1   Other documentation in the pack

We have produced a pack of documents that explain our requirements and offer additional guidance. Use this document in the context of the others within the pack.

1. An introduction to our package of guidance – **Introduction.doc**

   Here we explain what the pack contains and why we have created it.

2. A guide for content authors that has relevance to everybody – **Content.doc**

   Guidance for writing good quality web-based content that is also in the council style.

3. Web standards requirements - **Standards.doc**

   Requirements for meeting web standards, specifically in areas of accessibility and usability.

4. Implementing our website skin – **Skin.doc**

   Guidance for a consistent approach to implementing the council brand and site navigation.

5. Hosting requirements – **Hosting.doc**

   Requirements for hosting systems with detail about domain names and security considerations.

APPENDIX: Supplier specific guide – **Appendix-{Supplier}.doc**

A supplement to the pack that is tailored to the individual system being provided by the supplier.

2   Domain name

2.1   Choosing domain names

2.1.1   Services delivered directly by the council

We would expect the site or system to be hosted under the name **{service}.southglos.gov.uk** where {service} is a sensible and concise way of labelling the service from a public perspective. (It should not be the brand-name of the system itself.)

> *Using a domain name that begins {service}.southglos.gov.uk provides the customer with confidence that they are dealing with our organisation and not 'disappearing' off onto the internet somewhere to deal with some other random company. It also protects our brand identity.*

2.1.2   Services delivered by the council in partnership with an organisation

We would want to discuss the most appropriate name in the circumstances. It may be appropriate still to use the **southglos.gov.uk** domain, but it is more likely that we would want to use a more specific **.org.uk** name.

> *There may be other suitable domain suffixes but .org.uk is our normal recommendation. Most services delivered in partnership with the council are through organisations so this is an appropriate use of the suffix. We are in the UK, so the full .org.uk is more appropriate than .org alone. Use of .info is also acceptable but we see use of .com and .co.uk as only suitable for commercial enterprises as intended.*

2.1.3   Services delivered by the council in partnership with other authorities

In this case we would probably want to use the same terms as for services delivered in partnership with an organisation. Again, any choice of domain name would need to be mutually acceptable to all parties.

Alternatively the project may decide it is more appropriate for each authority to use its own name to point to the single site or system.

2.2   Registering domain names

Council staff should never register domain names themselves. This causes expensive problems when making hosting arrangements and when renewals occur, especially when staff leave the council.

The council's ICT department will register domain names as part of any implementation project. The only exception to this is where the supplier is hosting the system and we are not using a southglos.gov.uk name. Suppliers should only register domain names when we have mutually agreed an appropriate name.

> *We always wish to avoid using shared domain names that contain a supplier or 3rd party host's name (e.g. www.mysupplier.com/southglos is not desirable.*

> *Using a southglos.gov.uk domain name has the added benefit of being able to use our SSL wildcard certificate if SSL is appropriate to the application.*

2.3   Implementing domain names

If the council's ICT department register the name via our ISP we arrange for the public DNS records to point to servers where the system or site is hosted. If the hosting is to be with the 3rd party, we need to know the IP address of your server or load balancer.

3   Security considerations

3.1   *Implementing SSL*

We insist that any system captures personal information also implements SSL. This provides the customer confidence that we are taking the protection of their data seriously. This is always our policy whether we are implementing a system ourselves or in conjunction with another authority or organisation.

> *We feel that in today's environment, this is a position of best practice that should also be a standard implementation decision for suppliers.*

We can discuss implementation with individual suppliers according to hosting arrangements. Ideally externally hosted systems will be using a southglos.gov.uk domain name which means it will be possible to use our **SSL wildcard certificate**.

4   Our hosting environment

This section is due to be added to the document in a future version.

It will contain details about how suppliers will be able to use the council's infrastructure for hosting web applications.

5   Change control expectations

This section is due to be added to the document in a future version.

It will contain details about how we expect suppliers to deal with change control and release management when making use of our hosting environment or hosting a system on our behalf.