



DIGITAL PRESENCE

COVID-19 Canada's Response

METADATA and SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Theme Management Committee meeting

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Government
of Canada

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du Canada

Canada



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PURPOSE

To support theme lead and partner departments to increase the business value of their web content through quality metadata.



INCREASING BUSINESS VALUE

Canada.ca/coronavirus provides access to the authoritative source of federal information about COVID-19. Content is spread across most, if not all, theme spaces. For effective management and increased findability of content, it is essential to appropriately tag content pages.

Applying complete and quality metadata will positively impact:

- Search results (Annex A)
- Content management efforts (Annex B)
- Performance measurement data (Annex C)
- Accessibility (Annex D)



METADATA GAPS ANALYSIS

Assessment of top level pages from the COVID landing page (Canada.ca/coronavirus) indicates that metadata is currently:

- too general (not specific to page content),
- incomplete, or
- copied from other pages.

Quality assurance checks are required, along with ability to go back to complete empty fields.

For more information on the analysis results email:

hc.cpab.health.theme-sante.dgcap.sc@canada.ca



APPLYING METADATA

Metadata can support visibility of content but also contributes to an accurate and robust content inventory for theme leads and departments to manage and optimize their web holdings.

Metadata fields:

- Metatitle (AEM & non-AEM Dublin Core)
- Description (AEM & non-AEM Dublin Core)
- Keywords (AEM & non-AEM Dublin Core)
- Primary topic / Additional topic (AEM)
- Content type (AEM)
- Audience (AEM)
- Owner organization (Confirm accuracy in AEM)
- Content provider (Beneficial for management of content internally to departments - AEM)



APPLYING METADATA

Populate priority fields:

Metatitle is the most important piece for your page

- it is your elevator pitch next to other search results
- must be unique, accurately summarize, and distinguish the page content
- 70 characters or less (longer ones are truncated in search display results)
- ensure COVID-19 or Coronavirus is found close to the beginning

Description complements the metatitle

- it elaborates on your metatitle and shouldn't simply be repeated title text
- text may be displayed in Google as the search result description for a page
- it is a boosted field in the Canada.ca search engine
- provides concrete summary (sentence or clause form) of what the user will find or do on the page (e.g. what task they can complete)
- 130 characters or less



APPLYING METADATA

Completing other metadata fields:

Keywords

- it supports users in finding your page using different but relevant search terms
- add common search terms, whether found in content or not, to heighten visibility in search results as relevant content
- do not repeat common terms unless necessary in relation to page content
- AEM space limit is 400 characters with spaces
- **First:** use Coronavirus, COVID-19, Canada, pandemic
- **Second:** apply most relevant words from the page (e.g. task or information-based)

Audience

- identifies who the content is written for
- select from controlled vocabulary



APPLYING METADATA

Content type

- describes the nature or genre of the content (not about the content of the page)
- select from controlled vocabulary (e.g. education and awareness)

Primary topic / Additional topic

- for content related to COVID-19 populate Primary topic with the value Health/ Diseases and conditions/Diseases/Coronavirus(COVID-19) from the pick list
- for additional topic value, select another topic tree value relevant to the content (as applicable)
 - In AEM, more than one additional topic value can be added



NEXT STEPS



STRUCTURED METADATA

Structured data is complicated but promises potential benefits. The adoption of structured data on Canada.ca is currently being explored.

When used, structured data can improve:

- Task performance
- Ranking on Google
- Visibility (rich snippets) on Google
- Results in voice search across Google and Alexa

If you are interested in participating in a pilot, please contact Principal Publisher via email: na-ai-ia@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca



SOCIAL MEDIA

There are many important messages being conveyed through web content on Canada.ca/coronavirus. Canadians could be provided with the opportunity to share correct and relevant information from web pages with friends and family through social media.

- Ensure your page has a good title and description, as they will be displayed when the page is shared.
- Pick an image to be used by social media
- Test how it appears on Facebook and Twitter
- Add metadata tags for Twitter and Facebook (e.g. Open Graph)
 - Og:title, og:type, og:url, og:image, og:image:alt, og:description



RESOURCES FOR DEPARTMENTS

COVID GC wiki: https://wiki.gccollab.ca/Covid_19.DTO-BTN

Includes guidance on:

- Digital strategy

- Crisis communication content design

- Alerts

- Vanity urls

- Branding (<https://gcconnex.gc.ca/file/group/61785806/all#>)

- Content mapping

- Metadata (instructions, tool and deck)**

- UTM codes

- Performance measurement



ANNEX



ANNEX A: IMPACTS ON SEARCH

Improved search results would come from including:

- well-written and well-structure content
- unique title and description clearly representing page content
- relevant search terms in keywords (Canada.ca search only)
- last modified date (boosts latest documents in Canada.ca only)
- added “robots” metadata to control search results (index, de-index)
- creator, audience or type to enable ability to filter search results (Canada.ca only)
- common naming convention for metadata
- keywords in URLs



ANNEX B: IMPACTS ON CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Through quality metadata, we see:

- more accurate content inventory, that can be leveraged by Theme Leads to be used for various purposes (e.g. filter content by owner, support IA mapping exercises, improve publications management)
- allows for bulk updates to pages
- ability to use this information to support decisions on optimization, reduction and retention of content (e.g. ROT efforts)



ANNEX C: IMPACTS ON PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Quality and complete metadata allows for:

- Canada.ca-wide performance measurement where analytics can then support decision making on content development and optimization
- establishing relationships between web pages and data to better enable analytics tracking (e.g. traffic patterns)
- quicker and more agile analytics reporting



ANNEX D: IMPACTS ON ACCESSIBILITY

Some considerations for accessibility:

- headings offer a quick overview for the screen reader user
- language attribute helps the screen reader to select the correct voice reader
- good descriptions help the screen reader user to select the appropriate search result from Google or Bing