



Australian Government
Digital Transformation Agency

Reinventing the Style Manual

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Product Owner, Style Manual





The story so far...

Digital Service Standard

01

Understand user needs. Research to develop a deep knowledge of the users and their context for using the service.

Discovery of Alpha Research
Research done by Finance

02

Establish a sustainable multidisciplinary team to design, build, operate and iterate the service, led by an experienced product manager with decision-making responsibility.

MDF established
missing some key roles

03

Design and build the product using the service design and delivery process, taking an agile and user-centred approach.

Discovery of Alpha

now building & clarifying content in Beta

04

Understand the tools and systems required to build, host, operate and measure the service and how to adopt, adapt or procure them.

Looked at automation out of scope

Chose GovCMS for support - preferred gov. platform

05

Identify the data and information the service will use or create. Put appropriate legal, privacy and security measures in place.

Partly covered by GovCMS

Need to resolve copyright / cc licences

06

Build the service with responsive design methods using common design patterns and the style guide.

Using Design System Components

Used Content Guide as basis for style sheet

Checking all new components to make sure they are accessible

07

Build using open standards and common government platforms where appropriate.

Design System

GovCMS - sharing content & working in the open

Gov CMS

collaborating on Gov Content

08

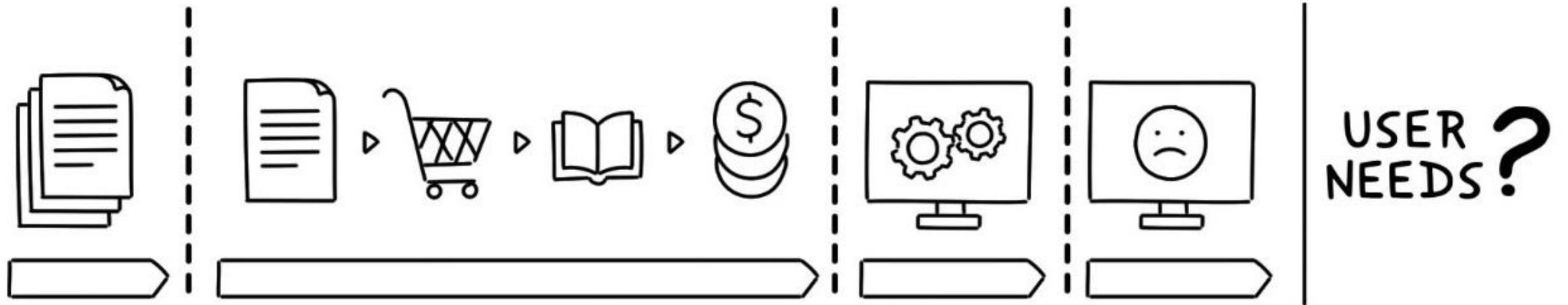
Make all new source code open by default.

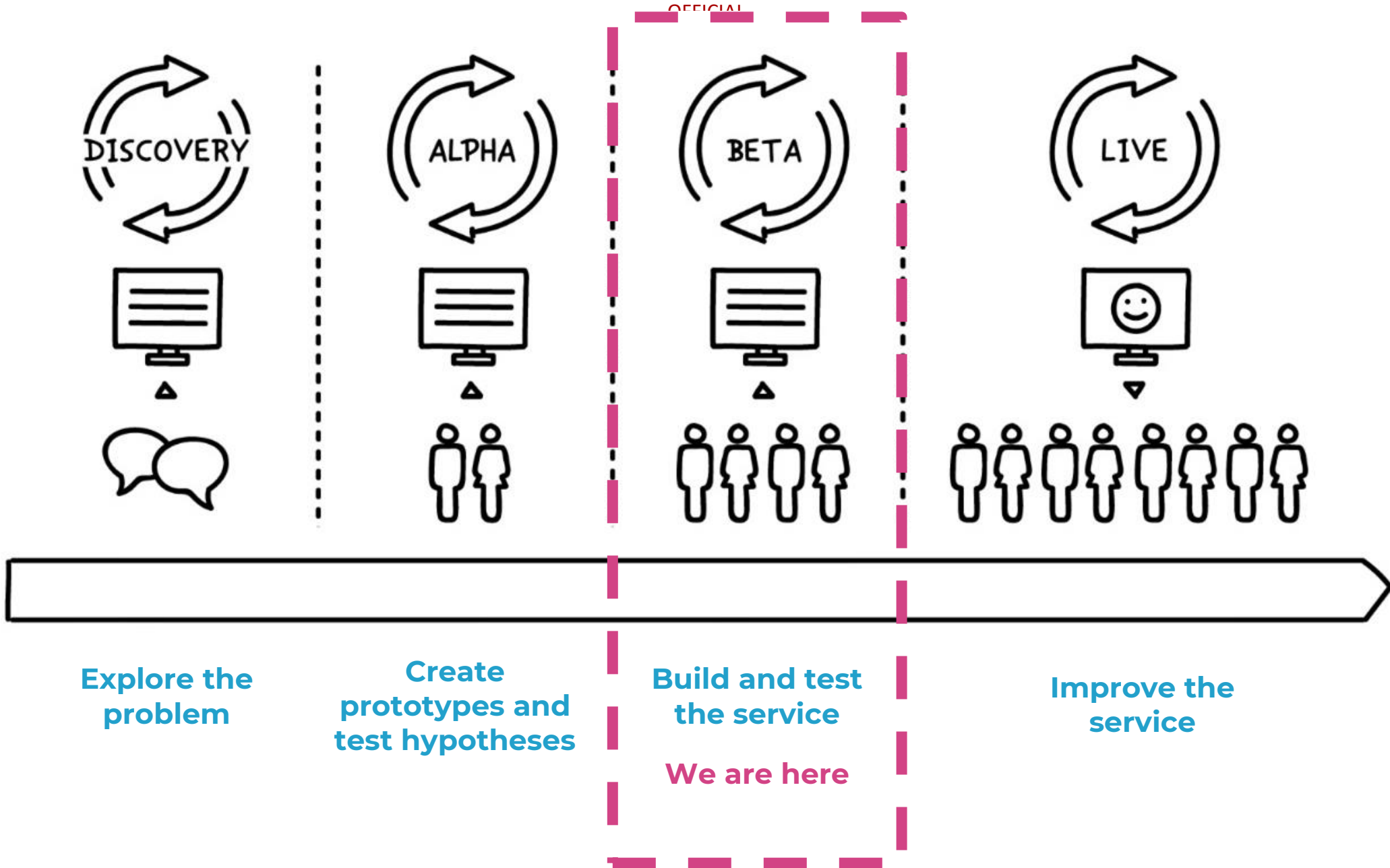
Can't make new source code open on GovCMS

09

Ensure the service is accessible to all users regardless of their ability and environment.

Simple, clear and fast digital products and services



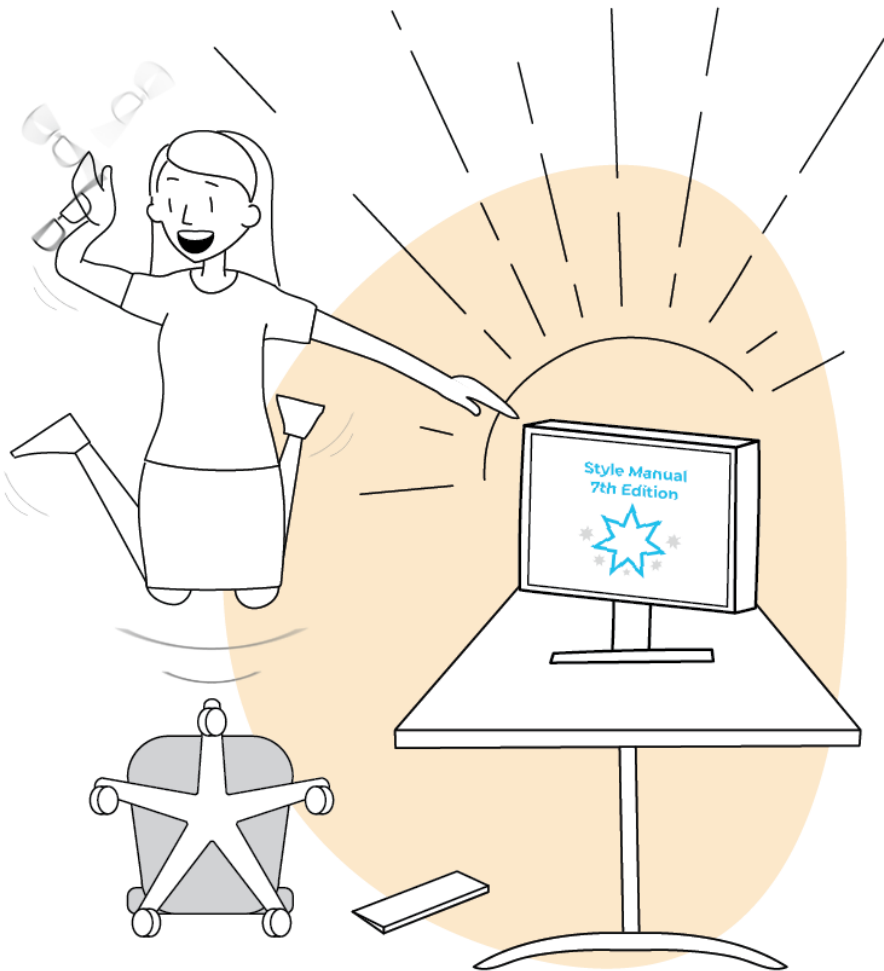


OFFICIAL

Style Manual user types

All-round wordsmith

'I don't use this often, but when I do, it's gold!'



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All-round wordsmith

Role: Comms, content design

The *Style manual* is: A safety net

Writing/editing expertise:



Interest in context:



Breadth of usage:



Usage frequency:



Format preference:

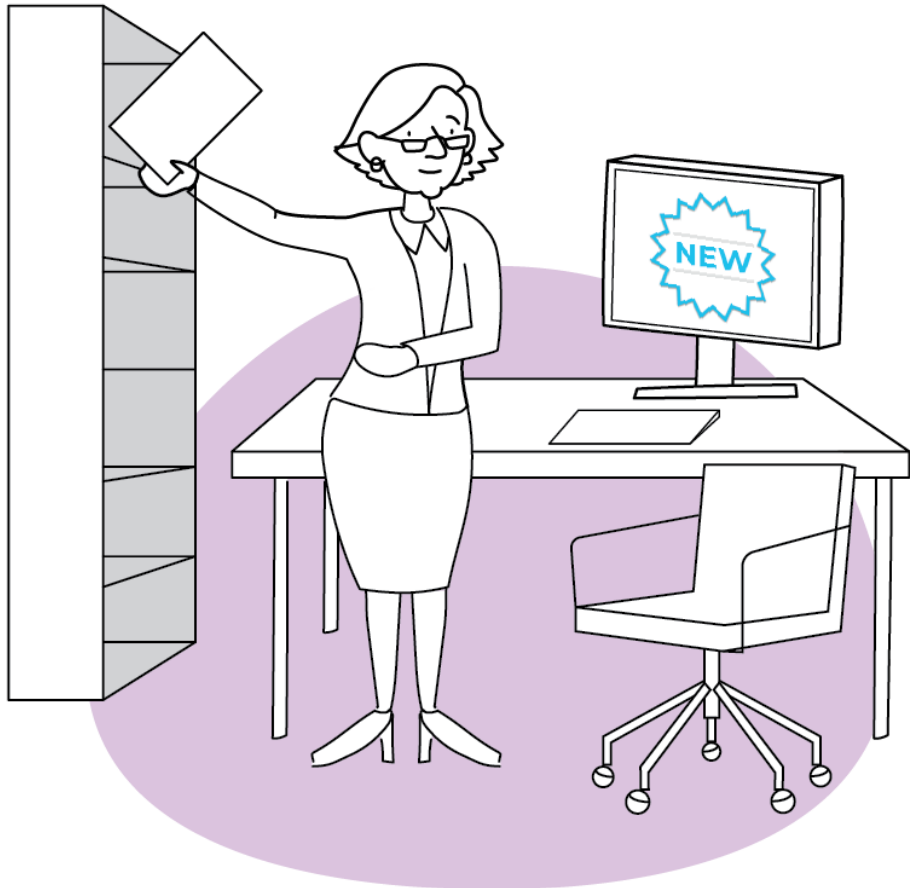


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Style Manual user types

Language pro

'I have a strong passion for language and correct usage'



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Language pro

Role: Professional editor

The *Style manual* is: An ally

•
Writing/editing expertise:



Interest in context:



Breadth of usage:



Usage frequency:



Format preference:



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Style Manual user types

Rule seeker

'Just tell me what I need to do.'

While writing...

✗ Don't

How do I?

Style Manual...

✓ Do

Example



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Rule seeker

Role: Report writer, policy writer

The *Style manual* is: A tool

Writing/editing expertise:



Interest in context:



Breadth of usage:



Usage frequency:



Format preference:

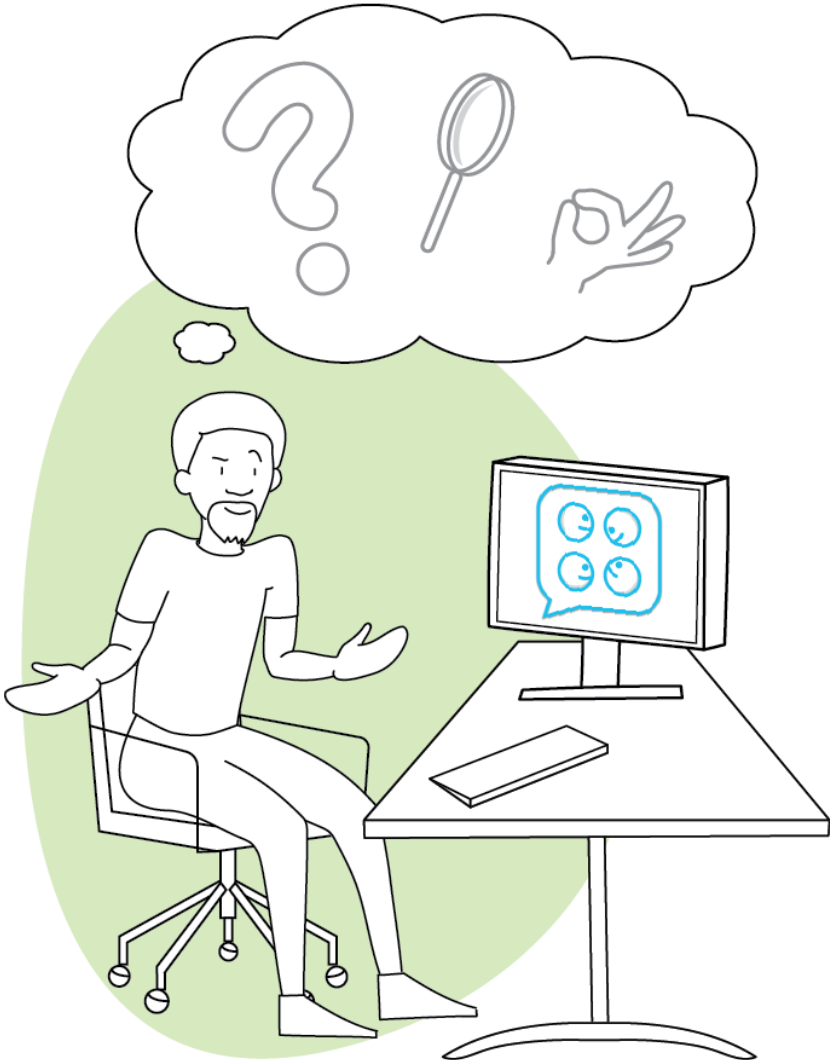


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Style Manual user types

Newcomer

'I need to know what I don't know'



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Newcomer

Role: Graduates, new to APS, new to writing/editing

The *Style manual* is: A textbook

Writing/editing expertise:



Interest in context:



Breadth of usage:



Usage frequency:



Format preference:



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User needs

A person with curly brown hair, wearing a dark blue sweater and a red lanyard, is seen from behind, looking at a large wall covered in numerous colorful sticky notes (yellow, green, blue, pink). The setting appears to be a meeting room or office hallway with a white door in the background.

Authority

Answers

Evidence

Emotional support

A photograph of a green metal fence with a padlock and chain, symbolizing restriction or barriers. The fence is made of chain-link metal and has a green metal post. A heavy metal chain is wrapped around the post and secured with a large brass padlock. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

Pain points

Access

Findability

Content gaps

Grey areas

Personal preferences



Numbers

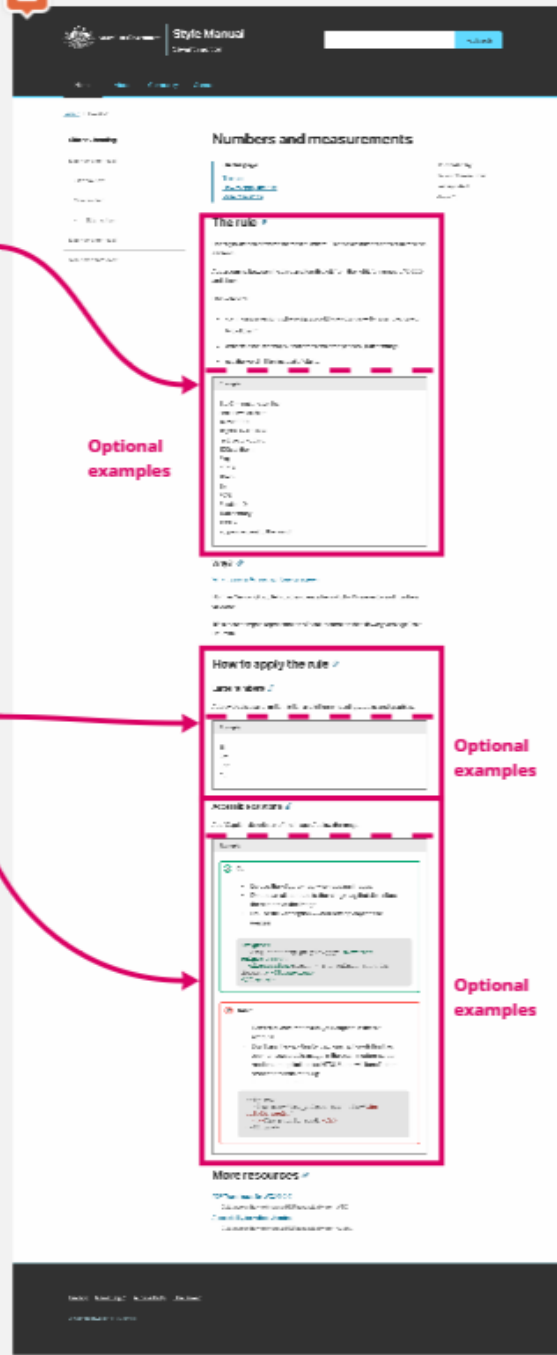
Learn how to write numbers in text and tables. This includes a list of rules for numbers and a table of examples.

Rules for numbers

Number separator Use a comma to separate thousands in numbers.	Thousands separator Use a space to separate thousands in numbers.	Uncounted zero Do not use a zero as a unit of measurement.
Number alignment Align numbers to the right in tables.	Decimal separator Use a period to separate the decimal part of a number.	Measurement units Use the full name of the unit of measurement.

100 x 100	100 x 100	100 x 100
100 x 100	100 x 100	100 x 100
100 x 100	100 x 100	100 x 100

Design System < Card components >



Rule

Optional examples

Optional examples

Optional examples

Writing for search engines

Learn how to write content for government websites with users and search engines in mind. Use search engine optimisation (SEO) writing techniques to help users find the information they need.

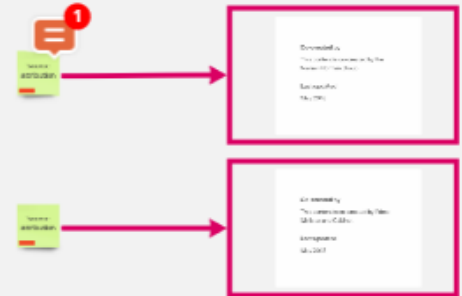
- Contents
- [Search engine optimisation \(SEO\)](#)
 - [Keywords](#)
 - [On-page optimisation](#)
 - [Useful SEO tools](#)
 - [Quick SEO checklist](#)

Search engine optimisation (SEO)

SEO helps government websites get better results in search engines. Content that contains relevant keywords leads to a better user experience and brings more of the right users to your website.

Include keywords that users search for in your content. This raises the authority and relevance of your content.

Successful SEO happens when you write concise, authentic, user-focused content. Focus on creating high-value content that helps answer the questions people are asking.



Alpha: prototyping

Minimum viable product: Digital Style Manual

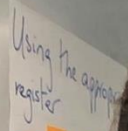
1. Iterate and build on Style Manual 6
2. Digital by default
3. Implementation support for agencies

Just editing
government content,
I want to
understand how
to make it direct,
Calm & understated
So that it reflects
the contemporary
government tone of
voice.

Government tone of
voice



Using the appropriate
register



Content partner – Ethos CRS

Digital Service Standard

Choose obvious over clever, every time

Not, we can't. How might we?

Show the thing