For information on
7 November 2002

Legislative Council Panel
on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Common Look and Feel for Government Web Sites

Introduction

This paper briefs Members on the Government's initiative to adopt a Common Look and Feel (CLF) for government web sites in order to project a consistent online brand image, provide for a consistent user experience and to improve the navigability and usability of the web sites of the HKSARG.

Background

2. Web services to the public are currently provided through about 200 web sites and portals of government bureaux and departments and 60 web sites and portals of government-related organisations (e.g. tertiary institutions, Electronic Service Delivery). The sites vary greatly in how they look and how information is organised and presented. There is little commonality. This is far from ideal for users.

3. We commissioned surveys to get feedback and suggestions from the public, from web service providers (i.e. government bureaux/departments and government-related organisations hosting the web sites) and from corporate web service users (i.e. IT bodies). The consensus was that CLF would be an important first step in projecting a consistent online brand image and improving the navigability and usability of government web sites. Members of the public and IT bodies wished to see improvements in the accuracy and timeliness of information, consistency in web layout and navigation logic - and more linkages between web pages. Government departments indicated a strong preference to retain some departmental identity and independence in what information to present and how to present them; and that they would normally revamp their web sites every 2-3 years. Government-related organisations indicated that CLF should not be mandatory for them.

4. We also looked at six leading E-government countries. The results showed that governments have made considerable progress and commitment towards the development and introduction of CLF to enhance web-users' experience. Canada has made the highest resource and funding commitment towards the establishment, maintenance and implementation of CLF across government organisations, followed by UK, Australia, USA, Taiwan and Singapore. Hong Kong's position is between Taiwan and Singapore.

CLF Designs, Standards and Guidelines

5. In order to give government web sites and portals a consistent online brand image; to improve navigation and information presentation from the users perspective so as to enable citizens to navigate our web sites with ease and find what they want; and in overall terms, to inspire confidence in users when using our web services, we have developed the CLF web page designs at Annexes I – III. The designs have taken into consideration ease of navigation, flexibility to cater for the wide variety of existing designs, implementation effort, image of Government, conformity with existing standards, and the ability for individual bureaux/departments to maintain their unique identity.

6. The salient improvements of the CLF designs are summarised below:-

Cover page (Template at Annex I)	– Consistent use and positioning of the Brand Hong Kong logo, HKSARG emblem or departmental logo will help to promote the online brand name of the HKSARG; – Availability of language and viewing device selection will facilitate web users, particularly overseas users; and – Retention of departmental logo and freedom to choose background design/photo as display of departmental identity.

Content page (Template at Annex II)	– CLF header, with • Consistent use and positioning of Brand HK logo, HKSARG emblem or departmental logo; and • Mandatory horizontal bar to facilitate navigation. – CLF footer, with • Important notices including disclaimer and that of copyright to clarifying the legal liability of the Government; and • Last update date to indicate timeliness of the information. – Standardisation and rationalisation of common functions in the vertical bar to provide structure for information presentation and facilitate navigation. (Template at Annex III)

7. To facilitate adoption, we have developed specifications on colour code, logo size, background finish, font type/size etc; and guidelines on navigation, information presentation and links provision for reference by bureaux and departments.

Implementation

8. Government bureaux and departments will adopt the CLF designs during their normal web site revamping exercise over the coming two to three years. However, in order to have a meaningful launching impact, we will accord priority to the highly utilized sites of Labour Department, Information Services Department and Hong Kong Observatory. We shall carry out follow-up surveys to gauge public response and obtain feedback.

9. Government-related organisation will be asked to use the Brand Hong Kong logo and to link to the Government Homepage of the Government Information Centre (GIC) on a voluntary basis.

Conclusion

10. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Information Technology and Broadcasting Branch
Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau
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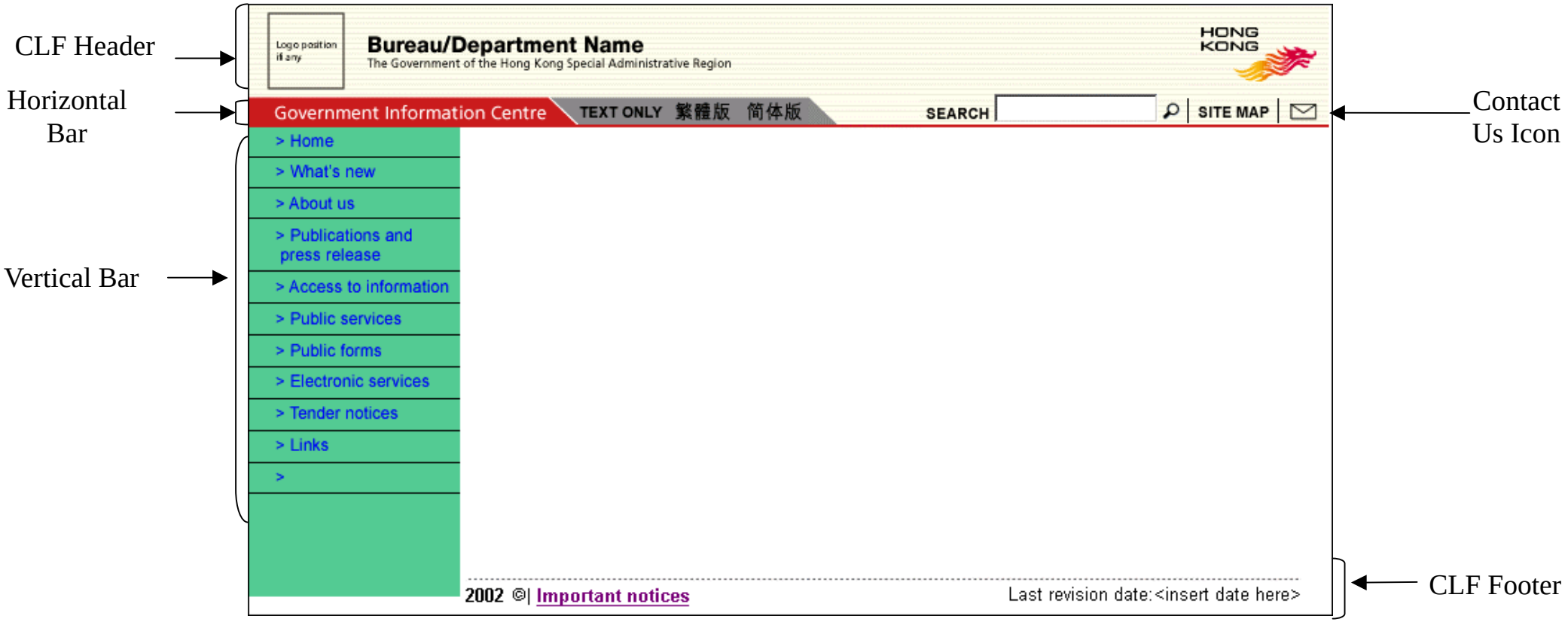
Annex I : Cover Page

Annex II : Content Page



Annex III : Common Functions in the Vertical Bar

Level 1 sections	Level 2 sub-sections	Suggested Contents
Home (主頁)		Links to the first content page.
What's New (最新消息)		Highlights of important events, notices etc with link to relevant web page as necessary.
About Us (關於我們)	Welcome Message (歡迎辭)	
	Organisation (組織結構)	CV of Chief Official, organisation charts, details of the organisation.
	Vision and Mission (抱負和使命)	Vision, mission and value statement of bureaux / departments.
	Policy (政策大綱)	
	Performance Pledges (服務承諾)	Performance Pledges and the extent to which they have been met.
Publications and Press Releases (刊物及新聞公報)	Publications (刊物)	Annual reports, research reports.
	Consultation Papers (諮詢文件)	
	Press Releases (新聞公報)	
	Speeches and Presentations (重要演辭及資料)	

Level 1 sections	Level 2 sub-sections	Suggested Contents
Access to Information (公開資料)	Code on Access to Information (公開資料守則)	
	List of Available Information (可提供的資料一覽表)	List of information either published or otherwise made available.
	List of Records by Category (按類別劃分的紀錄一覽表)	List of categorised records to which the public may have access.
	Procedures and Charges for Access to Information not routinely published (查閱非按慣例公布的資料的程序及收費)	Application form for Access to Information request.
Public Services (公共服務)	(Public Services provided by bureaux / departments)	List of services, such as Transport in Hong Kong, Traffic Notice, Advice to Road Users for Transport Department.
Public Forms (公用表格)	Download Forms and E-forms	All public forms available.
Electronic Services (電子服務)		
Tender Notices (招標公報)		
Links (相關網址)	Related Government Departments / Organisations (相關政府機構)	
	Related Sites (相關網站)	