

Performance, Audit and Risk Committee (PARC) Report

General Information

Agenda item number		Subject	Website Performance Update
Portfolio /Programme	Regional Leadership	Report	Performance, Audit and Risk Committee
Programme Manager	David Perenara – O’Connell	Councillors	
Author	Ben Leith	Endorsed by	Katherine Trought

Website Performance Update

Purpose

To provide an update on the performance of Environment Canterbury’s new website – ecan.govt.nz as requested by the PARC meeting on 2 March.

Recommendations

That the Performance, Audit and Risk Committee:

Receive the website upgrade performance report for January and February 2017.

Proposal

Background

In late 2015 the main Environment Canterbury website (www.ecan.govt.nz) was determined to be no longer fit for purpose due to the instability of the platform (and lack of ongoing maintenance available from external providers due to the age of the platform). The upgrade project commenced in March 2016, taking the corporate site from 2,600 pages to 700 pages and involving a series of user-experience improvements. Phase one is now complete. Phase two is now in planning.

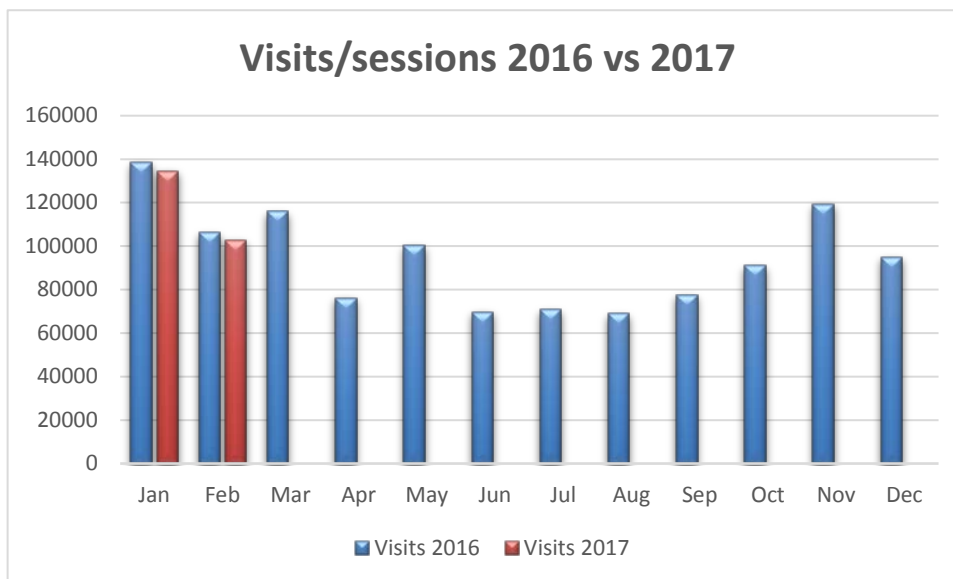
1. The upgraded Environment Canterbury website went live on 15 December 2016 at the end of Phase one work.
2. The key benefits delivered are:
 - improved stability
 - website transitioned to an ‘all-of-government’ platform (SilverStripe). Some 50 other local and central government agencies are now using this platform.

- server managed as part of the all-of-government agreement enabling greater server protection and stability
- improved usability
 - site developed applying 'mobile first' technology
 - site maximised for use on common devices, browsers and platforms
- improved design
 - a modern, user-friendly and welcoming design, which has been positively received by users
 - a reduction in pages on the site from 2,600 to ~700 has helped remove out-of-date and duplicate content.
- All documents are now accessible directly through HP Records Manager (only the second organisation in the world to do this) presenting our users with the most recent and accurate information.
- Reporting and detailed information is now available in the document library. Over 58,000 documents are available for public viewing compared to 15,000 on the previous website.
- Improved analytics, including the introduction of a targeted monthly Environment Canterbury website management report, so we can see where people are on the site and the kind of information that is being regularly accessed.
- Development within the website to enable management of content by staff (for example, alerts and meeting documentation). This has enabled efficiencies in publishing content and getting information to the users.

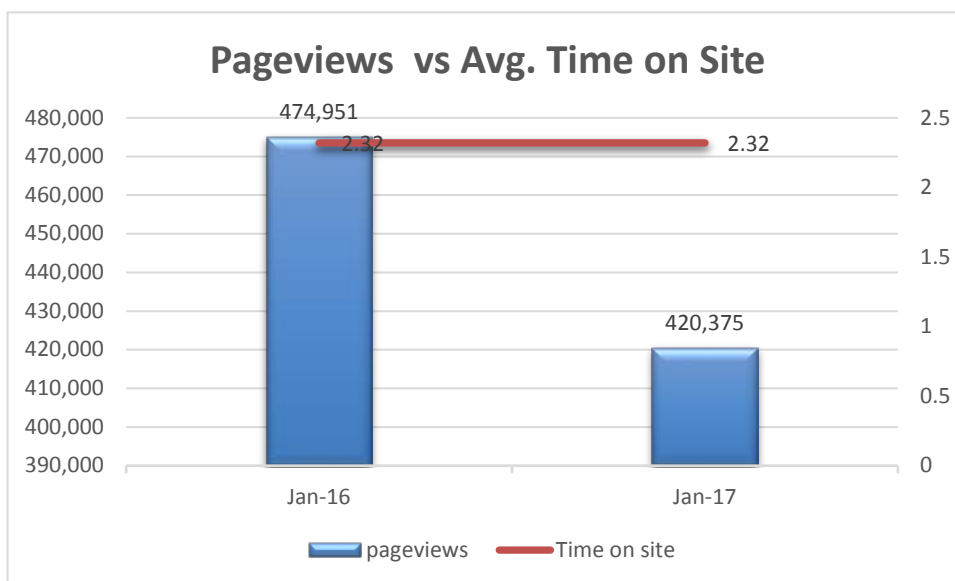
Overall performance

3. Site visits between January and February 2016 (old site) and 2017 (new site) remain consistent at approximately 100,000 for January and 140,000 for February each year.

Maintaining web traffic during the transition period means we are able to build interest in the content of the site from a solid foundation.

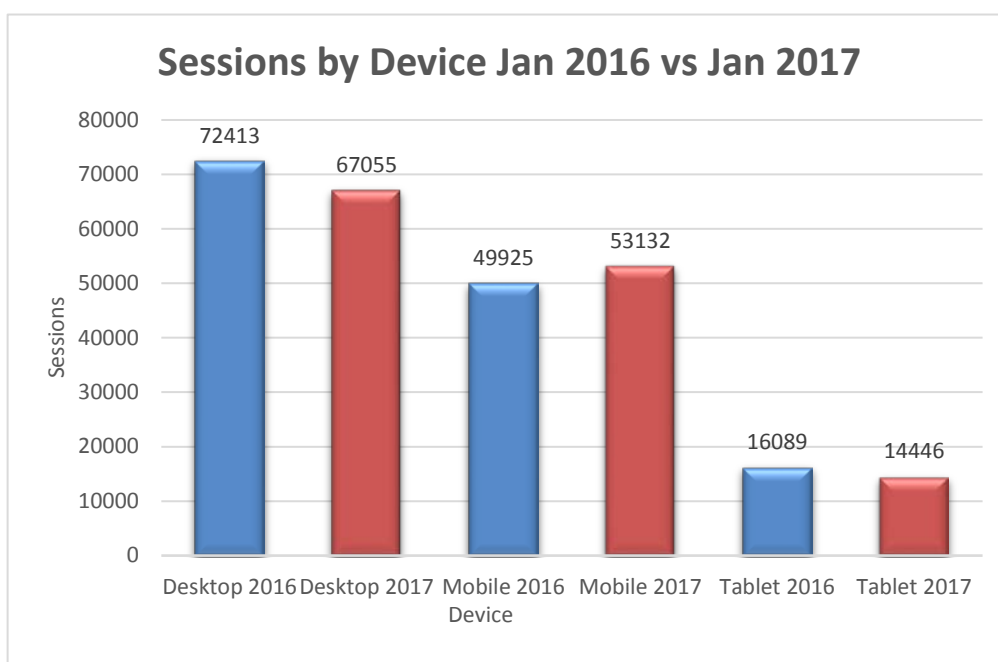


- While users are still staying on the site for the same average length of time per visit (2:32 minutes), the number of page views has reduced by 55,000 (12%). This indicates that users are navigating more efficiently by getting to the desired content quickly.



- The devices people use to view the site is changing with a shift towards mobile being the device of choice. Mobile usage has increased by 6% from January 2016 to 2017. Desktop usage has decreased by 7%.

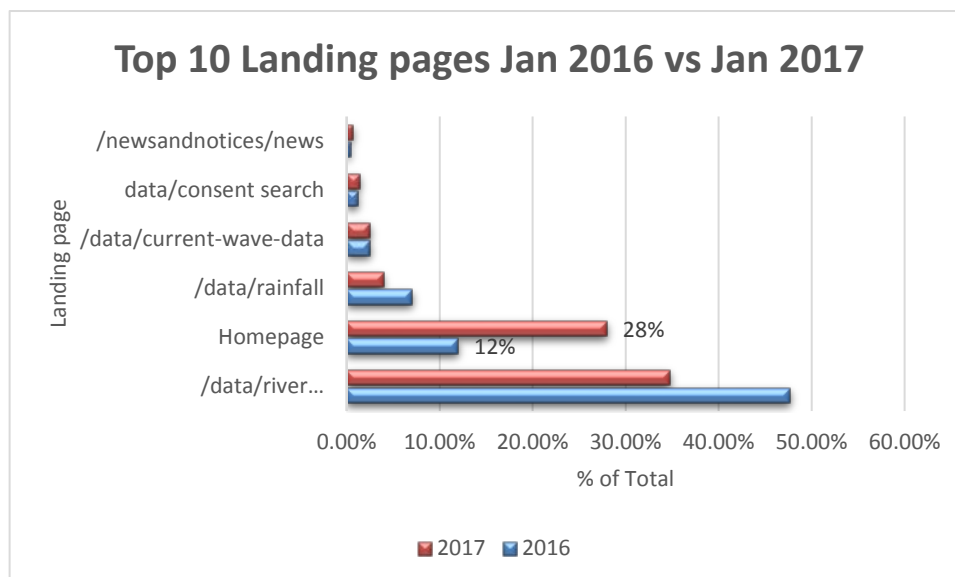
We would expect mobile usage to continue to trend upwards but recognise a number of our customers will continue to operate from a desktop. The website has been designed so our users can get the information they require on different devices and browsers.



Homepage engagement is up

- January 2017 shows an increase in users entering the site using the homepage. This is a positive outcome as featured content, news and digital channels can be promoted on the homepage to maintain user interest.

It also shows that the key functions of the site are easily found on the homepage.



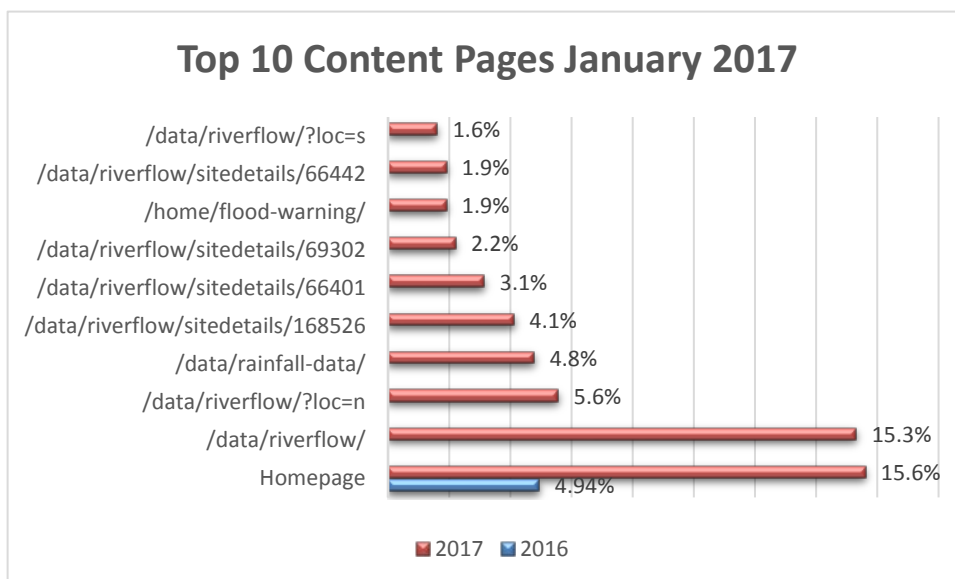
User feedback and testing results

- The river flow information and rainfall pages in the old site had particularly high levels of traffic. Users of this data were surveyed on the changes to the pages. The following results were captured:
 - Eighty-nine percent of users responded that the **river flow** pages are an improvement from the previous site (7% were undecided and 4% responded 'no').
 - Ninety-two percent of users responded that the **rainfall** pages are an improvement from the previous site (4% were undecided and 4% responded 'no').
- During user experience testing in December 2016, almost two thirds of participants used the large icons on the front page to navigate to frequently used pages. This compared with 21% who used the feature boxes further down the page and 18% who used the menu.
- The new home page was rated 8/9 out of 10 for initial impression, visual impact, images and content, compared to 4/5 out of 10 for the old site homepage.

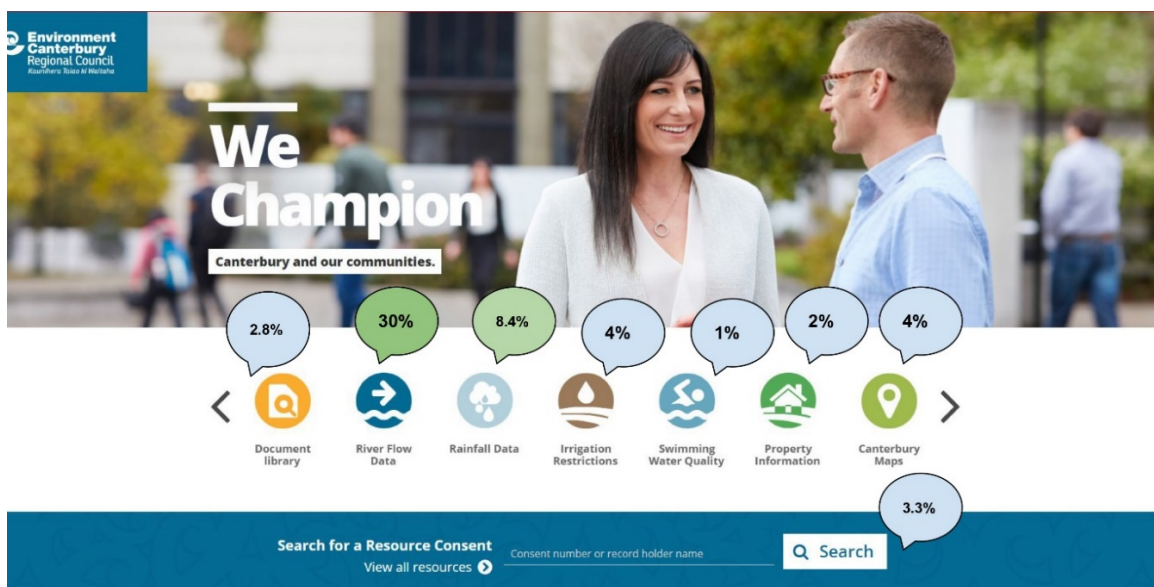
Frequently used pages are easier to find

- The site was designed for users to access frequently used pages easily and directly from the home page, using the large icons or navigation tools/menu.

- River flow and rainfall pages are consistently the most viewed pages on the website. Seven of the top ten pages viewed in January 2017 were river flow pages.



- The large icons on the home page for river flow and rainfall are the ones used most frequently – with 30% (river flow) and 8% (rainfall) of home page visitors using these icons to move immediately to the information they are interested in.



Future opportunities – Phase one tidy-up and Phase two

- Planning information is currently being transitioned from the old website to the new site. This is expected to be completed by May 2017.
- Continued customer and business feedback has led to a number of enhancements being introduced. Examples include a) introducing map icons to differentiate between

stage and flow river sites; and b) enabling users to download historical river flow and rainfall data from data.ecan for their personal use.

15. Site enhancements are continuing to be developed to improve the functionality and customer experience on the site.
16. An action plan is being developed to promote the viewing of news stories and usage of digital channels across the site. The execution of this plan will be incorporated into business as usual for the communications team.
17. The contact form located at the foot of each page of the website has resulted in approximately 200 contacts to Customer Services each month for January and February. The enquiry types are being analysed and feedback about the website itself is being used to inform future development/enhancements.

Attachments

- There are no attachments

Additional information

File reference	
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