2017

CLARITY INDEX

CANADA

WEBSITE CLARITY INDEX

VisibleThread™
Clarity Index

The VisibleThread Clarity Index: 100 Canadian Government, Financial & Energy Websites -- 2017

Executive Summary

A modernized country cannot function without an effective relationship between government and its country's financial and energy sectors. The financial sector is the driving force in moving and growing the economy. The energy sector powers the nation, keeping the lights on and the engines running. The government – when run well – sets the conditions for the financial and energy sectors to operate. Its goal is to ensure that the benefits of these sectors are shared by all citizens through proper regulations and market controls.

These sectors can only work together effectively through clear communication. Clarity in communication leads to better understanding, less ambiguity, and smoother operation. This also applies to how these sectors connect and communicate with citizens and customers. People should be able to easily access clear, understandable information. Plain language allows them to know where their money is going and the benefits they receive in return.

Canada is a large, dispersed, and diverse country. It recognizes two official languages and has wide variances in educational levels. Services need to be provided to both the large municipal areas and remote regions. The Canadian Government has long recognized its challenges and implemented plain language standards for written communications. Government written communications are guided by three rules:

- Supports users in completing tasks
- Supports audience needs
- Provides an equivalent experience to the user in both official languages (2)

But the energy and financial sectors have not yet adopted standards like these. It would make sense – both for business and service – for these sectors to adopt plain language practices, too.

VisibleThread focused on 100 websites across the government, financial, and energy sectors. This list was ranked based on measurements from our Clarity Index. We included 37 Government websites, 37 Financial websites, and 26 Energy websites. These websites cover the span of country, from Montreal to the Yukon territory.

We measured the websites across these four internationally accepted dimensions. We then took an average of those four scores to determine an overall Clear Writing score:

- Readability – How readable is the content?
- Passive Language – Active Language communicates clearly. What proportion of sentences is passive?
- Long Sentences – What proportion of all sentences are too long?
- Word Complexity Density – Complex words make web pages hard to understand. Density rating is the percentage of complex words relative to total word count.

What did we find?

Analysis suggests that written copy across all three sectors needs improvement. Complexity, Readability, and Long Sentences are all issues and apply to all sectors. Only the use of passive tense falls within acceptable levels. Putting more focus on clear language use will help the public engage with services more efficiently and effectively. A more detailed analysis appears below in this report.

Key Findings

Clear Language:

The following guideline definitions will help you understand the information we present in the Key Findings section:

- Readability – a score of 55 or above is ideal.

- Passive language – 4% or less is ideal.

- Long Sentences – 5% or less across all content is ideal.

- Complex language density – complex words/total words*100 – lower is better.

You can find detailed definitions of ranking criteria in the Methodology section.

Top Performers

Websites that rank as Top Performers have scores below 30 on overall Clear Writing. There is a 21.5-point difference between the highest and lowest ranked websites within this category. A total of 15 out of 100 surveyed websites rank as Top Performers. The average Readability score for websites in this category is 54, just 1 point below the recommended level of 55.

- The City of Montreal had the best average Clear Writing score (7.75) across the entire index.

- All three sectors are represented in the Top 3 Performers.

    - http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/ (1)

    - http://www.scu.mb.ca (2)

    - http://www.enmax.com (3)

- Financial sector websites account for 7 of the 15 websites in this category.

- All websites in this category fall within the acceptable range for Passive Language use.

		Government Financial Energy	Num	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Readability Rank	Passive Score	Passive Rank	Long Score	Long Rank	Complex Score	Complex Rank	Num
1	City of Montreal	http://ville.montreal.qc.ca	100	7.75	54	14	0%	2	12%	14	0.29	1	27364
2	Steinbach Credit Union	http://www.scu.mb.ca	100	12	61	1	3%	10	7%	2	1.82	35	34854
3	ENMAX	http://www.enmax.com	100	16	61	1	6%	30	10%	8	1.67	25	84113
4	Scotia Bank	http://www.scotiabank.com	101	18.5	58	8	3%	8	7%	3	2.36	55	60767
5	TD	http://www.tdcanadatrust.com	100	20.75	59	6	5%	19	15%	24	1.81	34	66917
5	Hydro Quebec	http://www.hydroquebec.com	100	20.75	46	48	0%	2	16%	29	0.64	4	53943
7	Industrial Alliance	http://www.ia.ca	100	22.75	48	40	3%	6	12%	12	1.79	33	50937
8	Via Rail	http://www.viarail.ca	100	23.5	58	8	5%	18	13%	19	2.18	49	46257
9	City of Charlottetown	http://www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/	100	25	49	34	7%	46	9%	7	1.34	13	46387
10	City of Chiliwack	http://www.chilliwack.ca	101	25.25	51	26	6%	32	5%	1	2.01	42	47149
11	Coast Capital Savings	http://www.coastcapitalsavings.com	100	26	52	22	5%	23	15%	23	1.91	36	48844
12	Sun Life	http://www.sunlife.ca	100	26.75	55	11	5%	22	13%	16	2.46	58	64840
13	Manulife	http://www.manulife.ca	100	27.5	53	19	5%	20	16%	32	1.97	39	43082
14	Quebec City	http://ville.quebec.qc.ca/en	100	28.5	46	48	2%	5	20%	59	0.46	2	30370
15	City of Hamilton	http://hamilton.ca	103	29.25	61	1	4%	12	8%	5	6.51	99	103534

Middle of the Pack

Websites are classified in this category based on Clear Writing scores between 30 and 49.75. 30 of the 100 surveyed websites fall into this category. Those ranked in this group can move up with some adjustments in some key categories. The average Readability score is 50. This is 5 points below the benchmark of 55, but still within a college level. Ten members of this group come within 5 points of the goal. A reduction in the use of long sentences can also boost scores. This group is dominated by websites in the financial sector, accounting for 17 of the 30 entries.

- http://www.burlington.ca (16)

- http://www.cooperators.ca (45)

		Government Financial Energy	Num	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Readability Rank	Passive Score	Passive Rank	Long Score	Long Rank	Complex Score	Complex Rank	Num
16	City of Burlington	http://www.burlington.ca	101	31	59	6	7%	44	7%	4	2.66	70	63716
16	First West Credit Union	http://www.firstwestcu.ca	101	31	54	14	4%	17	23%	85	1.11	8	53075
18	Yukon Govt	http://gov.yk.ca	100	32	48	40	4%	16	21%	67	0.88	5	26015
19	EPCOR	http://www.epcor.com	100	32.75	48	40	7%	40	14%	20	1.76	31	25143
20	Ivari	http://www.ivari.ca	100	33.75	51	26	6%	36	19%	52	1.62	21	52890
41	Affinity Credit Union	http://www.affinitycu.ca	100	43.75	55	11	6%	34	16%	33	4.91	97	17446
42	Bank of Montreal	http://www.bmo.com	101	44.75	54	14	8%	54	17%	37	2.79	74	101624
43	Montreal Metro	http://www.stm.info/en	100	46	60	5	11%	85	12%	13	3.14	81	27196
43	Quebec Govt	http://gouv.qc.ca/EN/Pages/Accueil.aspx	100	46	39	78	5%	24	21%	71	1.24	11	37555
45	Co operators Group	http://www.cooperators.ca	100	46.75	43	65	7%	48	20%	54	1.61	20	38866

Room for Improvement

This is the largest group in our survey, accounting for 42 of the 100 websites. The bulk of the government and energy sectors are represented in this category. Readability, sentence length and complexity heavily contribute to lower scores. This category comprises websites that range from 50 to 68 on Clear Writing scores. The average score is 60. This is 37.5 points higher than the average of 22.5 for our Top Performers.

		Government Financial Energy	Num	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Rank	Passive Score	Rank	Long Score	Rank	Complex Score	Rank	Num
46	City of West Vancouver	http://www.westvancouver.ca	101	52.5	50	29	9%	61	14%	22	4.91	98	24569
46	Aviva	http://www.avivainsurance.ca	36	52.5	44	58	7%	47	20%	65	1.99	40	23019
48	Nova Scotia Govt	http://novascotia.ca	101	53	44	58	8%	59	15%	26	2.61	69	19147
49	City of Red Deer	http://www.reddeer.ca	100	53.25	54	14	14%	98	18%	47	2.35	54	20470
50	Power Financial	http://www.powerfinancial.com	100	54	7	100	4%	13	43%	100	0.63	3	145387
83	BC Govt	http://gov.bc.ca	100	66.25	40	75	8%	52	19%	51	3.29	87	26670
84	Pengrowth	http://www.pengrowth.com	100	66.5	36	83	7%	42	18%	49	3.69	92	15410
85	Capital Power Corporation	http://www.capitalpower.com	100	67.5	10	99	8%	55	21%	66	2.20	50	37652
86	City of Kitchener	http://kitchener.ca	100	67.75	45	52	13%	93	23%	81	2.03	45	32826
87	Nexen	http://www.nexencnoocltd.com	100	68	34	87	11%	82	24%	86	1.46	17	38205

Worst Performers

The worst performers in this survey are ranked based on Clear Writing scores of 70 or higher. Out of the 13 websites in this group, five are in the energy sector. This translates to, 19% of all energy sector websites surveyed qualify as worst performers. This group is plagued by poor readability and long, complex sentences. The best rank in any category comes from Pacific International, which ranks 38th in Complexity.

		Government Financial Energy	Num	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Rank	Passive Score	Rank	Long Score	Rank	Complex Score	Rank	Num
88	City of Alberta	http://alberta.ca	100	71.5	34	87	9%	69	24%	87	2.01	43	30695
89	Saskatchewan Govt	http://saskatchewan.ca	100	72	44	58	14%	97	21%	70	2.56	63	51582
90	Canaccord	http://www.canaccordgenuity.com	101	72.25	29	95	7%	49	23%	84	2.53	61	27346
91	Bruce Power	http://www.brucepower.com	100	72.5	39	78	9%	67	26%	92	2.29	53	42560
92	Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro	http://www.nlhydro.com	100	73.5	40	75	15%	99	23%	79	2.00	41	22744
93	City of Port Coquitlam	http://www.portcoquitlam.ca	100	75	43	65	14%	96	17%	43	4.88	96	49590
93	Cenovus	http://www.cenovus.com	100	75	37	82	9%	62	30%	96	2.51	60	52232
95	Assiniboine Credit Union	http://www.assiniboine.mb.ca	101	78	40	75	10%	79	28%	94	2.57	64	37604
96	Pacific International	http://www.pifinancialcorp.com/	100	79.25	34	87	13%	94	31%	98	1.93	38	27304
97	City of Toronto	http://toronto.ca	44	79.75	38	81	12%	91	20%	64	3.15	83	41171
98	ATCO	http://www.atco.com	100	84.25	18	98	11%	87	27%	93	2.47	59	46590
99	Economical Mutual	http://www.economical.com	100	84.5	28	96	11%	80	30%	97	2.57	65	74509
100	Husky Energy	http://www.huskyenergy.com	102	88.5	32	92	14%	95	23%	81	3.26	86	37653

Factors making these the worst performers were:

- Poor readability: Members of this group have an average Readability score of 35, a full 20 points below the recommended level.

- High proportion of long sentences: This group's Long Sentence Use average is 25%, a full 20% greater than the recommended level of 5% or less. This example is from Economical Mutual's Code of Business Conduct:

  "A whistleblower incident is a good-faith concern related to wrongdoing, questionable accounting, internal controls, disclosure controls or auditing matters, contraventions of the integrity provisions of The Code, workplace health and safety, and human resources matters occurring at Economical."

- High level of complexity: Worst Performer websites have an average Complexity score of 2.67. This makes it difficult for people with lower levels of education to fully understand the text. Service providers should reduce complexity to engage all audiences.

Takeaways:

1. **Some changes in financial sector language can lead to big gains**

   The financial sector has the largest percentage of entries in the Top 2 categories. It can make some significant overall gains with some adjustments in language. Cutting down on complexity and long sentences will lead to an increase in Clear Writing scores. Companies dealing in investments or financial instruments would benefit from using written language that the broader public can more easily read and understand.

   - The disparity in Clear Writing scores between the financial sector's best and worst performers is 72.5.

   - The financial sector average Readability score of 47 is two points higher than the overall average of 45.

   - Use of long sentences in this category is slightly higher (20%) than the combined average of 19%.

2. **Energy websites perform poorer on average**

   23 of the 26 scanned energy websites rank as "Needs Improvement" or "Worst Performers." This means that 88% of this sample need significant improvement in its written communication. The average Readability score for this low-performing group is 39. This is opposed to the overall Readability average of 45.

   - Nearly one-third of energy websites rank in the bottom 20% of indexed websites.

   - Only two energy websites have a Readability score of 55 or greater. Only two others have a score over 50.

3.   **Long sentences and complexity are a problem**

Two manageable issues across all sectors is the use of long sentences and complex language. Our surveyed websites average 19% use of long sentences in their text. This is a frequency of almost 4x the recommended level of 5% or below. All three of these sectors provide various types of services to the public. There will be increased efficiencies and better public perception of these entities if clear language becomes the standard.

4.   **Canada's government should be leading the way**

The energy and financial sectors would be well served to increase clarity in their written language. The Canadian Government has a legal obligation to do so. It should be setting the standard for plain language use by example. Instead, the government sector has an average score of 47 in Readability and has the worst average score on Complexity across the three sectors. It also uses long sentences in 17% of its text – more than 3x recommended levels. There need to be improvements if it expects to see the intended efficiencies of the legislation.

Detailed Results Tables

We show the full detailed tables below.

We color-code, green to red, each score in the Index. Green indicates best, red indicates worst. Color-coding helps us to understand sites where one or two specific scores may be dragging down the overall ranking. Flagging specific areas (for instance, passive language) pinpoints areas for improvement.

	VisibleThread Web Index	Government Financial Energy	Pages	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Readability Rank	Passive Score	Passive Rank	Long Score	Long Rank	Complex Score	Complex Rank	Words
1	City of Montreal	http://ville.montreal.qc.ca	100	7.75	54	14	0%	2	12%	14	0.29	1	27364
2	Steinbach Credit Union	http://www.scu.mb.ca	100	12	61	1	3%	10	7%	2	1.82	35	34854
3	ENMAX	http://www.enmax.com	100	16	61	1	6%	30	10%	8	1.67	25	84113
4	Scotia Bank	http://www.scotiabank.com	101	18.5	58	8	3%	8	7%	3	2.36	55	60767
5	TD	http://www.tdcanadatrust.com	100	20.75	59	6	5%	19	15%	24	1.81	34	66917
5	Hydro Quebec	http://www.hydroquebec.com	100	20.75	46	48	0%	2	16%	29	0.64	4	53943
7	Industrial Alliance	http://www.ia.ca	100	22.75	48	40	3%	12	12%	12	1.79	33	50937
8	Via Rail	http://www.viarail.ca	100	23.5	58	8	5%	18	13%	19	2.18	49	46257
9	City of Charlottetown	http://www.city.charlottetown.pe.ca/	100	25	49	34	7%	46	9%	7	1.34	13	46387
10	City of Chiliwack	http://www.chilliwack.ca	101	25.25	51	26	6%	32	5%	1	2.01	42	47149
11	Coast Capital Savings	http://www.coastcapitalsavings.com	100	26	52	22	5%	23	15%	23	1.91	36	48844
12	Sun Life	http://www.sunlife.ca	100	26.75	55	11	5%	22	13%	16	2.46	58	64840
13	Manulife	http://www.manulife.ca	100	27.5	53	19	5%	20	16%	32	1.97	39	43082
14	Quebec City	http://ville.quebec.qc.ca/en	100	28.5	46	48	2%	5	20%	59	0.46	2	30370
15	City of Hamilton	http://hamilton.ca	103	29.25	61	1	4%	12	8%	5	6.51	99	103534
16	City of Burlington	http://www.burlington.ca	101	31	59	6	7%	44	7%	4	2.66	70	63716
16	First West Credit Union	http://www.firstwestcu.ca	101	31	54	14	4%	17	23%	85	1.11	8	53075
18	Yukon Govt	http://gov.yk.ca	100	32	48	40	4%	16	21%	67	0.88	5	26015
19	EPCOR	http://www.epcor.com	100	32.75	48	40	7%	40	14%	20	1.76	31	25143
20	Ivari	http://www.ivari.ca	100	33.75	51	26	6%	36	19%	52	1.62	21	52890
21	Royal & Sun Alliance	http://www.rsagroup.ca	100	34.25	49	34	4%	15	22%	73	1.40	15	29481
22	CIBC	http://www.cibc.com	100	34.5	53	19	5%	21	11%	9	3.38	89	40705
22	Canada Post	http://www.canadapost.ca	100	34.5	52	22	6%	28	8%	6	3.14	82	36645
24	RBC	http://www.rbcroyalbank.com	100	35	61	1	7%	38	15%	25	2.89	76	48369
24	Suncor	http://www.suncor.com	100	35	42	70	3%	7	20%	57	0.95	6	49741
26	Ontario Power Generation	http://www.opg.com	100	36	44	58	7%	41	16%	27	1.47	18	33066
27	Manitoba Govt	http://manitoba.ca	100	36.75	48	40	3%	9	26%	91	0.99	7	15884
28	Toronto Transit Commission	http://www.ttc.ca	101	37.25	54	14	9%	67	11%	11	2.44	57	21666
29	Desjardins	http://www.desjardins.com	104	37.5	42	70	0%	1	20%	60	1.49	19	91845
30	PC Insurance	http://www.pcinsurance.ca	100	39.5	53	19	16%	100	16%	30	1.17	9	92230
31	Meridian Credit Union	http://www.meridiancu.ca	100	39.75	45	52	8%	53	13%	17	1.93	37	38427
32	Cambrian Credit Union	http://www.cambrian.mb.ca	100	40	57	10	7%	39	20%	55	2.40	56	21735
33	Vancity	http://www.vancity.com	102	40.25	51	26	6%	29	13%	18	3.32	88	24782
34	Canada Life	http://www.canadalife.com	100	40.5	44	58	6%	35	19%	53	1.41	16	27007
35	Servus Credit Union	http://www.servus.ca	100	41.25	52	22	8%	56	14%	21	2.57	66	29981
36	City of Vancouver	http://vancouver.ca	100	41.75	45	52	7%	45	18%	46	1.64	24	37685
37	Tangerine	http://www.tangerine.ca	101	42	52	22	6%	33	25%	90	1.64	23	90977
37	London Life	http://www.londonlife.com	100	42	49	34	6%	27	23%	78	1.74	29	37345
39	BC Hydro	http://www.bchydro.com	100	43	55	11	8%	58	25%	89	1.35	14	48819
40	Federal Govt	http://canada.ca	101	43.5	42	70	1%	4	25%	88	1.24	12	57370
41	Affinity Credit Union	http://www.affinitycu.ca	100	43.75	55	11	6%	34	16%	33	4.91	97	17446
42	Bank of Montreal	http://www.bmo.com	101	44.75	54	14	8%	54	17%	37	2.79	74	101624
43	Montreal Metro	http://www.stm.info/en	100	46	60	5	11%	85	12%	13	3.14	81	27196
43	Quebec Govt	http://gouv.qc.ca/EN/Pages/Accueil.asp	100	46	39	78	5%	24	21%	71	1.24	11	37555
45	Co operators Group	http://www.cooperators.ca	100	46.75	43	65	7%	48	20%	54	1.61	20	38866

#	Government Financial Energy	URL	Pages	Clear Writing Index	Readability Score	Readability Rank	Passive Score	Passive Rank	Long Score	Long Rank	Complex Score	Complex Rank	Words
46	City of West Vancouver	http://www.westvancouver.ca	101	52.5	50	29	9%	61	14%	22	4.91	98	24569
46	Aviva	http://www.avivainsurance.ca	36	52.5	44	58	7%	47	20%	65	1.99	40	23019
48	Nova Scotia Govt	http://novascotia.ca	101	53	44	58	8%	59	15%	26	2.61	69	19147
49	City of Red Deer	http://www.reddeer.ca	100	53.25	54	14	14%	98	18%	47	2.35	54	20470
50	Power Financial	http://www.powerfinancial.com	100	54	7	100	4%	13	43%	100	0.63	3	145387
51	Enerplus	http://www.enerplus.com	55	55	35	85	6%	26	22%	77	1.77	32	34965
51	Fortis Inc	http://www.fortisinc.com	100	55	35	85	9%	65	20%	60	1.19	10	407309
53	City of Edmonton	http://edmonton.ca	101	55.25	47	45	10%	74	17%	35	2.58	67	45365
53	City of Ottawa	http://ottawa.ca	100	55.25	43	65	8%	57	21%	72	1.68	27	135003
55	City of Mississauga	http://mississauga.ca	100	55.5	43	65	9%	64	18%	45	2.08	48	23855
56	Equitable Life Insurance	http://www.equitable.ca	100	55.75	45	52	4%	14	23%	80	2.99	77	42300
57	Allstate Insurance	http://www.allstate.ca	100	56	47	45	11%	81	22%	76	1.64	22	89173
58	City of Barrie	http://www.barrie.ca	101	56.5	49	34	12%	89	16%	31	2.70	72	64925
59	Progress	http://www.progressenergy.com	100	56.75	26	97	6%	25	17%	43	2.55	62	21040
60	TransCanada	http://www.transcanada.com	102	57	34	87	7%	51	17%	39	2.24	51	43706
61	Toronto Hydro	http://www.torontohydro.com	100	57.25	43	65	9%	65	13%	15	3.16	84	46765
62	AIG Insurance	http://www.aig.ca	100	57.5	31	94	4%	11	37%	99	1.67	26	40790
63	Libro Credit Union	http://www.libro.ca	100	58.75	48	40	8%	60	23%	83	2.26	52	63860
63	City of North Vancouver	http://www.cnv.org	100	58.75	45	52	10%	73	11%	10	10.24	100	30019
65	National Bank	http://www.nbc.ca	101	59.25	47	45	9%	63	17%	34	4.54	95	46564
66	Enbridge	http://www.enbridge.com/about-us	101	60	39	78	7%	50	21%	68	2.03	44	47053
66	Hydro One	http://www.hydroone.com	101	60	50	29	12%	90	22%	75	2.04	46	53802
68	City of Oakville	http://www.oakville.ca	102	60.5	46	48	10%	75	17%	41	3.07	78	41168
68	Hydro Ottawa	http://www.hydroottawa.com	100	60.5	42	70	10%	70	22%	74	1.70	28	32840
70	Nova Scotia Power	http://www.nspower.ca	101	61	50	29	10%	76	18%	48	3.63	91	27134
71	Encana	http://www.encana.com	101	61.25	36	83	6%	31	20%	63	2.58	68	33421
72	Nunavut Govt	http://gov.nu.ca	100	62.25	34	87	7%	43	17%	40	3.09	79	24777
73	Newfoundland Labrador Govt	http://gov.nl.ca	100	62.5	44	58	11%	83	20%	62	2.07	47	23744
73	Manitoba Hydro	http://www.hydro.mb.ca	100	62.5	42	70	10%	72	16%	28	3.10	80	37279
75	Great West Life	http://www.greatwestlife.com	100	62.75	50	29	12%	88	17%	41	3.83	93	35407
75	City of Winnipeg	http://winnipeg.ca	100	62.75	44	58	11%	86	17%	36	2.69	71	28668
75	City of Victoria	http://www.victoria.ca	100	62.75	49	34	11%	84	20%	58	2.83	75	25292
78	Imperial Oil	http://www.imperialoil.ca	100	63.5	32	92	7%	37	29%	95	1.75	30	33626
78	BC Ferries	http://www.bcferries.com	100	63.5	49	34	10%	71	20%	55	4.02	94	22557
80	New Brunswick Government	http://www2.gnb.ca/	100	64.25	45	52	10%	77	17%	38	3.54	90	20970
81	City of Oakville	http://www.oakville.ca	101	65.25	46	48	10%	78	18%	50	3.17	85	39361
82	Windsor Family Credit Union	http://www.wfcu.ca	100	65.75	50	29	13%	92	21%	69	2.75	73	23507
83	BC Govt	http://gov.bc.ca	100	66.25	40	75	8%	52	19%	51	3.29	87	26670
84	Pengrowth	http://www.pengrowth.com	100	66.5	36	83	7%	42	18%	49	3.69	92	15410
85	Capital Power Corporation	http://www.capitalpower.com	100	67.5	10	99	8%	55	21%	66	2.20	50	37652
86	City of Kitchener	http://kitchener.ca	100	67.75	45	52	13%	93	23%	81	2.03	45	32826
87	Nexen	http://www.nexencnoocltd.com	100	68	34	87	11%	82	24%	86	1.46	17	38205
88	City of Alberta	http://www.alberta.ca	100	71.5	34	87	9%	69	24%	87	2.01	43	30695
89	Saskatchewan Govt	http://saskatchewan.ca	100	72	44	58	14%	97	21%	70	2.56	63	51582
90	Canaccord	http://www.canaccordgenuity.com	101	72.25	29	95	7%	49	23%	84	2.63	61	27346
91	Bruce Power	http://www.brucepower.com	100	72.5	39	78	9%	67	26%	92	2.29	53	42560
92	Newfoundland and Labrador	http://www.nlhydro.com	100	73.5	40	75	15%	99	23%	79	2.00	41	22744
93	City of Port Coquitlam	http://www.portcoquitlam.ca	100	75	43	65	14%	96	17%	43	4.88	96	49590
93	Cenovus	http://www.cenovus.com	100	75	37	82	9%	62	30%	96	2.51	60	52232
95	Assiniboine Credit Union	http://www.assiniboine.mb.ca	101	78	40	75	10%	79	28%	94	2.57	64	37604
96	Pacific International	http://www.pifinancialcorp.com/	100	79.25	34	87	13%	94	31%	98	1.93	38	27304
97	City of Toronto	http://toronto.ca	44	79.75	38	81	12%	91	20%	64	3.15	83	41171
98	ATCO	http://www.atco.com	100	84.25	18	98	11%	87	27%	93	2.47	59	46590
99	Economical Mutual	http://www.economical.com	100	84.5	28	96	11%	80	30%	97	2.57	65	74509
100	Husky Energy	http://www.huskyenergy.com	102	88.5	32	92	14%	95	23%	81	3.26	86	37653

Methodology – what are the metrics?

- We analyzed the sites in March, 2017

- We scanned up to 100 pages of content using automated crawling techniques. In some cases, we found less than 100 pages, so we included the page count and word count for each entity.

- We crawled starting from the publicly available URL.

- Certain pages within the sample of 100 contain non-textual content (e.g.: videos). We omitted these pages from our scan.

We calculated the index based on 4 metrics. Each metric contributes equally to the final score. The metrics are:

Metric	Formula

1. Readability

Readability ranges from 1 to 100. 100 is the top mark. If communicating with Canadian citizens, aim for at least 55.

This is based on the Flesch Reading Ease index.

(206.835 – (1.015 x Average Sentence Length) – (84.6 x Average Syllables per Word))

2. Passive Language

The % rating is the proportion of sentences with a passive construction. Passive language is where the subject acted upon appears before the verb. For example:

"Quality is monitored" vs. "We monitor quality"

If you use active voice, you will increase clarity & strength. You will also flush out the 'actor', i.e. who did the action?

(Passive Sentences / Total Sentences * 100)

3. Long Sentences

The % rating is the proportion of sentences that are longer than 25 words. Long sentences mask multiple concepts. Splitting up these sentences will result in a clearer message.

(Long Sentences / Total Sentences * 100)

4. Complex Word Density

The density rating is the proportion of complex words relative to the total word count. This scan looks for complex words/phrases based on Federal Guidelines. See http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/wordsuggestions/simplewords.cfm for the list scanned. Replacing complex words with simpler words helps your readers concentrate on your content.

(Complex Words/Total Words * 100)

About VisibleThread

VisibleThread helps executives in large organizations govern content quality with less cost and risk. Sales and marketing teams in diverse industries use our technology to improve many functions, including proposal development, contract review and brand audits. Our software finds brand compliance, poor readability and other issues in websites and documents. Unlike consumer-grade analysis tools, VisibleThread processes hundreds of documents and web pages in minutes. Fuelled with greater organizational intelligence, customers drive efficiency and reduce cost across their organizations. For more information, visit www.visiblethread.com

For questions or if you want a specific sector index:

- For a specific agency or bureau index, email: sales@visiblethread.com

- For questions on the metrics or methodology, email: support@visiblethread.com

- For inquiries from members of the press or media, email: charles.farrell@visiblethread.com

----

(1) http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm
(2) https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/government-communications/canada-content-style-guide.html