The Digital Strategy for Aotearoa — Executive summary

Vision

Aotearoa New Zealand's people, communities, economy, and environment are flourishing and prosperous in the digital era.

About the Digital Strategy for Aotearoa

The Digital Strategy for Aotearoa (the Strategy) sets a vision for Aotearoa New Zealand in the digital era, along with supporting themes, focus areas and flagship initiatives.

It also outlines key opportunities and challenges on the journey to reach the vision and details the process for implementing the Strategy in coming years.

The Strategy was developed by a cross-agency team of public servants, with input from individuals, communities, businesses, and other organisations across Aotearoa New Zealand. It is a national strategy and focuses on work led or commissioned by the Government, including work done in partnership with others.

About this document

This is an executive summary of key aspects of the Strategy to help readers understand its vision, themes, and key areas for focus.

Challenges and opportunities

The development of digital and data-driven technologies is happening at a rapid pace. The potential benefits across Aotearoa New Zealand of using and developing these technologies are huge, but realising these will require proactive, ongoing, joined up effort. In working towards the Strategy's vision, there are exciting opportunities to pursue as well as challenges to address.

Opportunities:
- cement and reflect our place in the world;
- help to grow a sustainable, resilient, high-productivity economy, and
- support better environmental outcomes and the transition to a low-emissions economy.

Challenges:
- rapid change in technologies and their applications;
- risk of amplifying societal inequalities; and
- potential for increased harms and interference in digital systems.

Three strategic themes

The Strategy is framed around three interrelated strategic themes which each have a set of supporting goals:

- Maki Tika — Trust.
- Mahi Tahi — Inclusion.
- Mahi Ake — Growth.

These three themes interact with each other, and there are overlaps and tensions in places. Skills and education, sustainability, and digital infrastructure are critical foundations that run across, and support all the themes.

Mahi Tika — Trust

Doing what's right for a world-leading digital future.

We want Aotearoa New Zealand to have world-leading trusted and trustworthy digital systems that support wellbeing and cement our place as an internationally recognised, leading digital nation.

Most people in New Zealand interact in online environments as part of their daily lives and trust is vital for a functioning digital society. For example, people going online should be able to trust they will not be subject to online bullying or harassment, and people procuring digital technology for their business should be able to trust that it will be reliable, secure, and meet their needs.

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But not everyone has the same level of trust, and building trustworthy digital systems is complex, highly skilled work.

The three goals for this theme are:

- New Zealanders feel safe and empowered in online environments;
- organisations design and use digital technologies and data in fair, culturally appropriate, trustworthy ways; and
- our digital and data infrastructures are fit-for-purpose and secure.

Three areas where work can be focused to ensure trust is built and retained are:

- getting the right guardrails in place;
- collaboratively shaping the future of digital and data-driven technologies; and
- adopting adaptive approaches to cyber security, online safety, and infrastructure resilience.

Mahi Tahi — Inclusion

Making sure everyone is empowered to equitably participate in our digital society.

The digital world is pervasive and digital inclusion has an impact on whether people can participate in all facets of daily life. It also provides new opportunities to foster learning, innovation, and creativity. Yet some estimates suggest up to one in five New Zealanders cannot or do not wish to engage online.

4.

We want an equitable, digitally inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand where everyone has the motivation, access, skills, and trust to use digital tools and technologies in ways that work for them. This includes accessible digital content and services that people can use, regardless of their background and abilities.

The two goals for this theme are:

- all New Zealanders have the tools, skills, and confidence to participate in an increasingly digital society; and
- digital infrastructure, content and services meet peoples' diverse needs.

Three areas where work can be focused to accelerate inclusion are:

- partnering with communities to address the specific barriers to digital inclusion ensuring digital content and services meet the needs of everyone, and
- better measurement of digital inclusion and improving coordination and alignment of support.

Mahi Ake — Growth

Launching New Zealand into a more prosperous digital-driven future.

We want Aotearoa New Zealand to be a place where digital innovation drives growth across all types of businesses and organisations, and where the tech sector plays a key role in enabling a more equitable, low-emissions future.

5.

Digital technologies and data are becoming a cornerstone of Aotearoa New Zealand's business environment. But access to talent remains a challenge, and many firms and organisations could benefit from increasing their digital capabilities. There is also a need to ensure there is resilient, effective connectivity infrastructure to support businesses and communities and that high value data is available, where appropriate, for people and businesses to leverage.

The two goals for this theme are:

- our businesses and organisations innovate and increase productivity using digital technologies and data; and
- we have a thriving, fast growing and inclusive tech sector.

Three areas where work can be focused to ensure inclusive, sustainable growth is happening are:

- building digital capability and a strong and diverse talent pipeline;
- supporting Māori innovation; and
- enabling data-driven innovation.

Giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The Treaty of Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi is a founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and a path to strengthening the partnership between Māori and the Crown. We must hold Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi and its principles central while working to support the three themes of this Strategy.

6.

Four core themes emerged from engaging with Māori about their aspirations for the Strategy and the Strategy reflects these themes:

- Rangatahi (young people) are the future in technology.
- Genuine collaboration on the vision and actions.
- Strengthening cultural identity and wellbeing.
- 'By Māori, for Māori' approaches drive change.

Putting the Strategy into action

Work is already underway in each of the three theme areas across the public sector and with a range of partners.

The vision and broad framework laid out in the Strategy will remain consistent over time, supported by an action plan that is refreshed every 12–18 months. Work towards the vision and goals will follow a dynamic "experience, learn, adjust" approach to ensure we stay on track in the context of rapid technological and societal change.

Measuring success

To understand how Aotearoa New Zealand is progressing towards the vision and goals of this Strategy, we need a clear picture of what success looks like and the steps towards getting there.

The Treasury's Living Standards Framework (including the supporting indicators) provides a broad, overall guide towards the vision of this Strategy.

Specific measures for the Strategy will help us understand progress towards the goals and focus areas. The success measures, as shown below, are high-level and represent our aspirations by 2032. They will need to be supported by more detailed indicators that can help inform our planning and priorities for action.

Measures of Success

- All New Zealanders feel safe and supported online.
- The economic impacts of cyber-incidents in New Zealand are lower than in comparable nations.
- High-speed internet is available to all New Zealanders.
- All New Zealanders have the tools, skills, and confidence to do all they want online.
- All New Zealanders are able to use verified digital identity should they choose to.
- All New Zealanders can afford a quality internet connection and internet enabled device.
- Digital & ICT exports are on track to becoming New Zealand's leading export earner.
- All New Zealand businesses are born digital, and supported to adopt the digital tools that work for them.
- The digital sector employs more than 10% of the New Zealand workforce in high value jobs.

Governance and oversight

The initiatives that contribute to the Strategy will be led, co-led, or funded by different government agencies across a range of portfolios, with lines of responsibility to Chief Executives and Ministers. There will be three levels of engagement and oversight to support the Strategy:

- **Ministerial:** provided by the Digital Ministers Group.
- **Departmental:** provided by a cross-agency leadership group.
- **Multi-stakeholder forum:** including Māori, community, business, civil society.

Further work is underway to develop how these three aspects will work in practice.

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