



RBFF Online Fishing License Assessment: 2012

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Prepared by
Southwick Associates



Executive Summary

Offering the opportunity to purchase a fishing license online can simplify and add convenience to the purchasing process for many customers. In an effort to better understand the online purchase experience, the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) implemented an online fishing license assessment to map a customer's online license purchase experience. Through this assessment, RBFF found that the current online purchase process allows for many examples of superior customer service as well as opportunities to become more customer-centric. RBFF recognizes that the review of online systems and practices can be challenging because the structure and content of these systems are constantly evolving and specific examples cited in this report may already have changed. The important goals of this report, however, are to examine the online processes, highlight sharable best practices, and identify potential areas for improvement across states. This and ongoing future research will inform collaborative discussions about managing and improving the experience from a customer's perspective in an effort to provide better service to the nation's anglers.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	i
Introduction	1
Process	1
Assessment Criteria	2
Online Fishing License Purchase Experience	4
Pre-Purchase Phase.....	4
Accessing the online purchase site	4
Purchase process explained	4
In-language website content.....	6
Mobile optimized sites	7
Pre-Purchase Phase Case Study: Maine	7
Purchase Phase	7
Demographic information	7
Personal information retention.....	12
License types and choices	13
Additional convenience fee.....	15
Purchase options	16
Cross-sell opportunities.....	16
Length of purchase process.....	17
Purchase Phase Case Study: Utah	17
Post-Purchase Phase	18
Purchase closing messages.....	18
Purchased license format	20
Agency communication following purchase	21
Post-Purchase Phase Case Study: Maryland	22
Convenience of Customer Support	22
Customer support tools.....	22
Electronic subscription availability	25
Customer Support Case Study: West Virginia	26
Scoring the Online Purchase Process Experience	27
Overall Online License Experience Case Study: Kentucky.....	30
Overall Online License Experience Case Study: Massachusetts.....	30
Conclusion.....	32
Appendix	34

List of Tables

Pre-Purchase Phase

Table 1. Number of clicks from state agency site.....	4
Table 2. Explanation of purchase process on opening page	4
Table 3. Multiple language option availability.....	6
Table 4. Mobile friendly option availability	7

Purchase Phase

Table 5. Demographic information required to purchase a fishing license	8
Table 6. Retention of customer information provided during purchase process	12
Table 7. License type information (descriptions) offered at time of purchase	13
Table 8. Number of licenses available to nonresident anglers.....	14
Table 9. Types of fishing licenses available to nonresident anglers	14
Table 10. States including an additional cost above the license fee	15
Table 11. Value of additional cost for online customers	16
Table 12. Shopping cart capability and payment method options offered.....	16
Table 13. License types (hunting/fishing) offered at time of purchase.....	16
Table 14. Number of pages/screens to complete purchase process	17

Post-Purchase Phase

Table 15. License confirmation page relays a message of thanks or congratulations (iFrame)	18
Table 16. Methods provided for receiving the license	20
Table 17. Authorization or signature requirement.....	20
Table 18. Information included on or with license	21
Table 19. Immediate confirmation email or agency follow-up email	21

Convenience of Customer Support

Table 20. Customer support tools availability	22
Table 21. Electronic subscription opportunities	25

Scoring the Online Purchase Process

Table 22. Criteria employed to score the online license purchase experience.....	28
Table 23. Average online license purchase experience score	28

Appendix

Table A1. Pre-purchase phase criteria	35
Table A2. Purchase phase criteria.....	35
Table A3. Post-purchase phase criteria	36
Table A4. Customer support availability criteria	36
Table A5. Online License Purchase Experience Summary Table	37

List of Figures

Pre-Purchase Phase

- Figure 1. Maryland Department of Natural Resources opening license purchase page..... 5
- Figure 2. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife opening license purchase page..... 5
- Figure 3. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission opening license purchase page..... 6

Purchase Phase

- Figure 4. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection explanation of social security number requirement 9
- Figure 5. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency explanation of social security number requirement 10
- Figure 6. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries demographic information requirements 11
- Figure 7. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife demographic information requirements 11
- Figure 8. Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife demographic information requirements... 12
- Figure 9. Iowa Department of Natural Resources example of basic license narrative 13
- Figure 10. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks example of basic license narrative..... 14
- Figure 11. Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources purchase process page 18

Post-Purchase Phase

- Figure 12. Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license purchase confirmation page..... 19
- Figure 13. Maryland Department of Natural Resources example of customer purchase history retention 22

Convenience of Customer Support

- Figure 14. Alaska Department of Fish and Game example of customer support during license purchase process 23
- Figure 15. Utah Department of Natural Resources example of customer support during license purchase process 24
- Figure 16. Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources example of customer support during license purchase process 24
- Figure 17. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation example of electronic communication recruitment..... 25
- Figure 18. Texas Parks and Wildlife example of electronic communication recruitment..... 26
- Figure 19. West Virginia Department of Natural Resources customer support tool availability 27

Scoring the Online Purchase Experience

Figure 20. Distribution of online purchase experience scores 29
Figure 21. Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources opening purchase page.... 30
Figure 22. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife license purchase page 31

Primary Report Contributors:

This report was developed by Southwick Associates with guidance from Rachel Piacenza (State Program Manager, RBF), and research conducted by Otso Valta (Master’s candidate in Corporate Environmental Management at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland).

Introduction

All state natural resource agencies offer the opportunity to purchase a fishing license online, simplifying and adding convenience to the purchasing process for customers. To better understand the online purchase process experience, the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) implemented an assessment mapping the customer's online experience. In an effort to evaluate the process, highlight sharable best practices, and identify potential areas for improvement, the purchase experience was assessed through the lens of customer relationship management.¹ While RBFF understands the license purchase process and experience differ for each angler – based upon their residency or purchase history, for example – the best practices/recommendations identified herein are constructed such that they can be directly applied to all purchase experiences.

This report reflects the findings from the assessment. Both quantitative and qualitative criteria, centered on the customer experience, were measured during the online purchase process for all 50 U.S. states. These criteria were developed across three key phases of the purchase experience: pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. Definitions for each phase are described in the Assessment Criteria section. In addition to the pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase phase experiences, additional criteria were developed to evaluate the accessibility of customer support tools present during the entire purchase process (from start to finish).

Through this assessment, RBFF found that the current online purchase process identified many examples of superior customer service as well as opportunities to make it more customer-centric. Within this report, those examples of superior customer service as well as opportunities for improvement are highlighted. RBFF recognizes that the review of online systems and practices can be challenging because the structure and content of these systems are constantly evolving. Nevertheless, this study provides numerous “best practice” examples across states that can be adopted appropriately to improve the process for all online customers. The intention of this report and its findings is to inform future discussions about managing and improving the experience from a customer's perspective in an effort to provide better service to the nation's anglers.

Process

During the month of August 2012, RBFF purchased a nonresident, short-term fishing license from each state via the Internet. RBFF includes direct links to state agency fishing license pages via each state's page on TakeMeFishing.org. For this journey, however, the path began at the state agency's home page.

¹ Customer relationship management can be formally defined as “A management philosophy according to which a company's goals can be best achieved through identification and satisfaction of the customers' stated and unstated needs and wants.” BusinessDictionary.com. Available: www.businessdictionary.com/definition/customer-relationship-management-CRM.html. Accessed: 11/07/12.

The entire purchase experience was broken down into three distinct phases: pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase, as well as the accessibility of customer support tools throughout the process. Targeted assessment criteria were developed for each of these specific phases in order to evaluate any one particular experience as well as to compare and contrast experiences across states. All of the criteria and findings are broadly discussed in the following section. Please refer to the Appendix for definitions of each criterion and information recorded.

The information gathered through the purchase experience was also used to develop a purchase experience scoring system. The goal was to provide a means of evaluating the purchase experiences relative to one another. These scores are not intended to be used as a means of determining a “good” versus a “bad” experience. Rather they are intended to provide a means of identifying areas of improvement and tracking these improvements over time.

Within this report, each phase, as well as the scoring system, is explored in-depth within its own section. Findings for each assessment criteria are reviewed and visual images captured during the process are shared. Also included within each section are state-level case studies. It is important to mention that the selection of each case study is a blend of quantitative and qualitative criteria, including the experience score. In other words, much of the selection is based upon the overall score within a particular phase or collectively across all phases. Given that many states earn the same score within any one phase, qualitative measures also influenced the selection of those case studies presented.

Assessment Criteria

More than 20 assessment criteria were developed to evaluate each of the three purchase phases and the level of customer support available during the purchase. Each criterion targets an important aspect of the customer’s purchase process.

The **pre-purchase** phase is often very brief, yet it can set the tone for the whole online purchase process. The focuses of the criteria for this phase is on:

- How well the process invites the customer in,
- What the customer should expect throughout the process, and
- What the agency offers the customer to clarify information.

Once the customer absorbs the information necessary to make an informed purchase decision, most customers are likely to transition quickly to the purchase phase. However, some customers may not leave the pre-purchase phase as rapidly. They may linger in the pre-purchase phase while they gather additional information or explore other avenues that pique their interest. And, some consumers may never continue on to the purchase phase based upon their experience.

The main focus of the **purchase** phase is information collection from the customer. As a result, the criteria evaluate the:

- Type and amount of customer information collected,
- Simplicity and clarity of the license selection process,
- Availability of convenience options to the customer, and
- Additional expense to the online customer.

Once the purchase phase is complete, the customer enters the **post-purchase** phase, which closes out the process and leaves a lasting impression of the overall experience. Post-purchase criteria focus on the items that the customer receives after their purchase, such as:

- Ability to quickly print or access an electronic copy of license,
- Type of information conveyed on the license, and
- Purchase process closure details.

Additionally, a few key tools that support the purchase activity can be present during all phases of the process. These tools include:

- Access to customer service/contact information,
- Answers to frequently asked questions, and
- Links to fishing regulations or other pertinent details related to fishing information.

Tables in the Appendix outline each criterion across each phase in the customer's experience, including the customer support phase. These tables include a detailed description of the criteria as well as the information recorded. Also included in the Appendix are summary tables reflecting the data collected from each state.

Online Fishing License Purchase Experience

Pre-Purchase Phase

Accessing the online purchase site

The online fishing license purchase process was initiated through the state agency's home page. Total number of clicks required to proceed from the state agency's home page to the license purchase page was recorded. Ideally, only one or two clicks should be necessary to launch the purchase process.

Table 1. Number of clicks from state agency home page

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Number of clicks/steps from state agency homepage	2 clicks	1 click	5 clicks

The number of clicks ranges between one and five. On average, the number of clicks required was two. Thirty-five percent of states scored below the national average and 20% scored above the national average.

An agency's home page serves as an information portal for many types of users. Because of this, each piece of information or link on the home page competes to capture the visual attention of the user. From the perspective of the potential customer, the link that initiates the license purchase process needs to be easily identified. Because customers may attempt to locate the link through a web-based Internet search, it is beneficial to provide the same link on each agency's fishing-related landing pages as well as the agency's home page.

Purchase process explained

The opening license purchase page builds a roadmap for the customer by explaining the process ahead. The explanation should include the type of information required from the customer and payment methods available, for example.

Table 2. Explanation of purchase process on opening page

	Yes	No
States explaining process	39 (78%)	11 (22%)

The majority of states (78%) provide information related to the process ahead, such as information required and credit cards accepted on their opening license purchase page.

Maryland, Maine and Nebraska provide good examples of opening license pages. All succeeded in achieving a balance between informing the customer while maintaining the visual integrity of the page.

Figure 1. Maryland Department of Natural Resources opening license purchase page

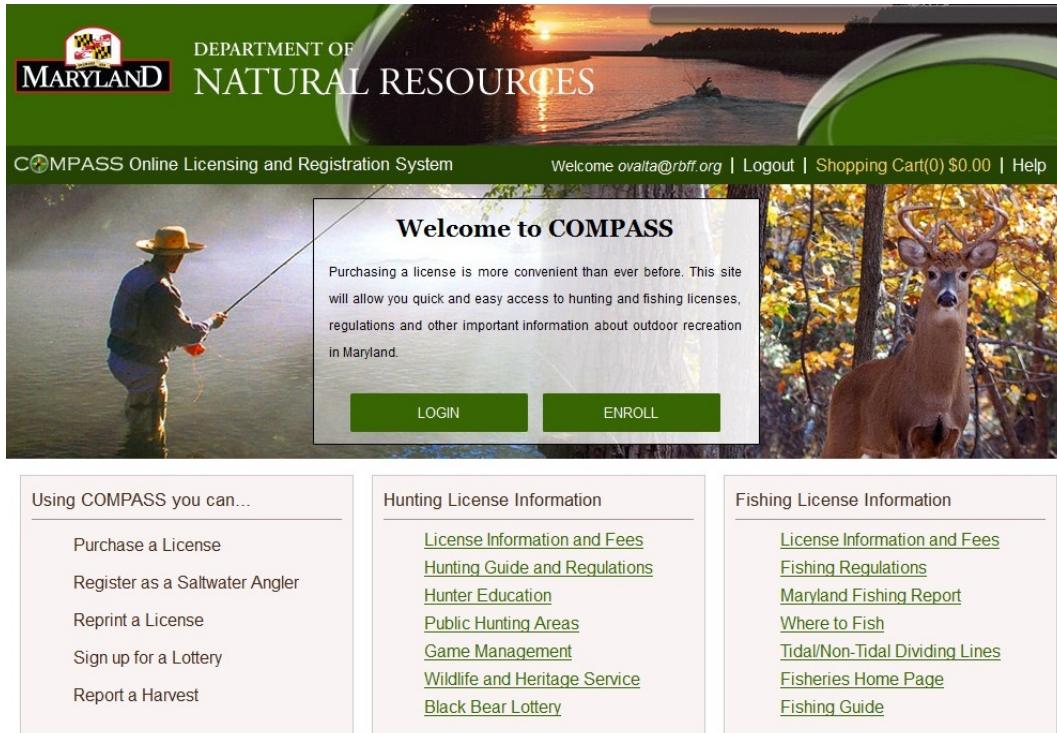


Figure 2. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife opening license purchase page

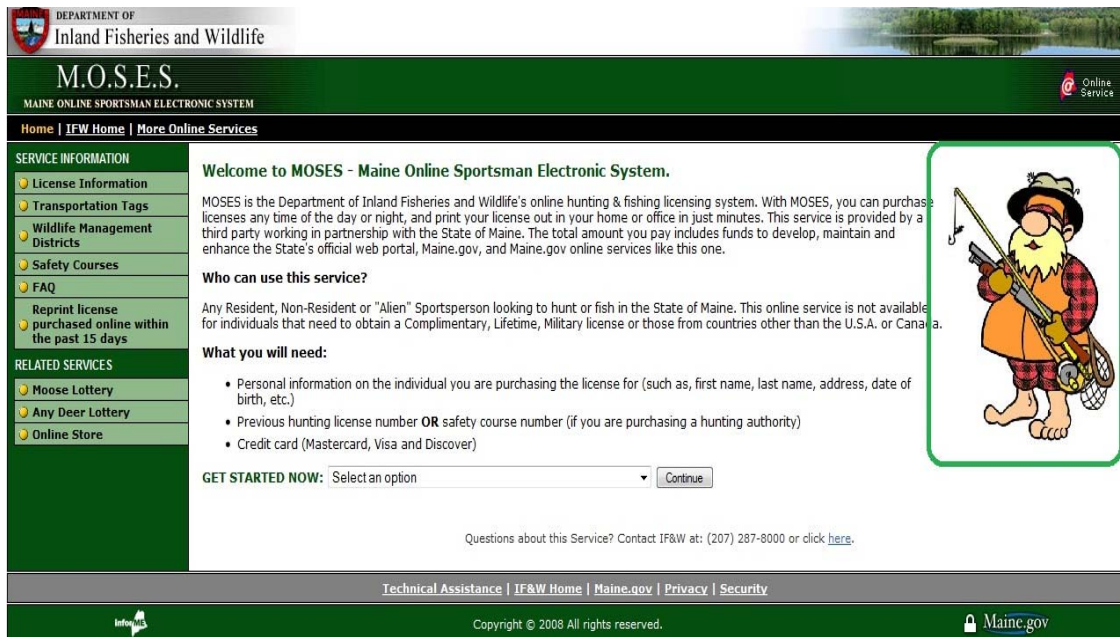
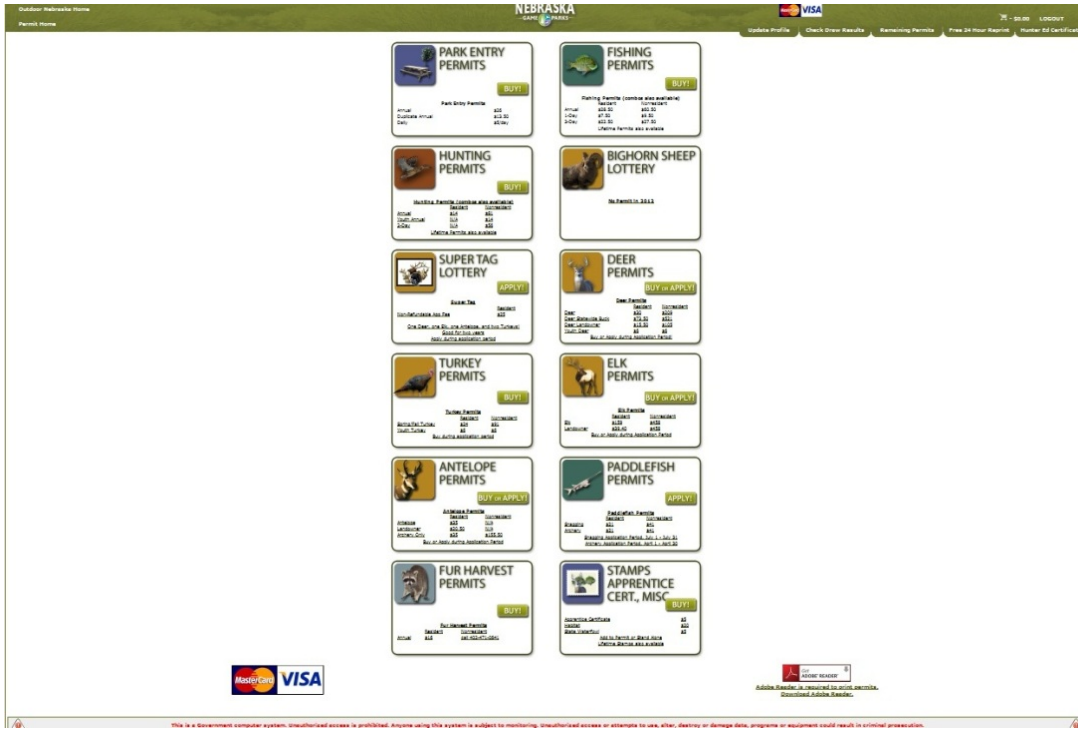


Figure 3. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission opening license purchase page



The opening page also provides an opportunity to allow the customer to search out additional information specific to their needs. Conveniently placed links to customer service contact mechanisms, frequently asked questions, and regulations all facilitate the customer search. RBFF recognizes that license purchase systems are often developed and operated by contractors. Yet, in cases where customization is permitted, these links should be incorporated in a call-out box that is easily located and constant throughout the entire purchase process. More will be discussed about the availability of customer support tools in a later section.

In-language website content

Table 3. Multiple language option availability

	Yes	No
States offering multiple language options	1 (2%)	49 (98%)

All but one state did not offer language translation capabilities at the time of the assessment. At this time, **Virginia** is the only state offering multiple language translations of the purchase process.

Mobile optimized sites

Table 4. Mobile-friendly option availability

	Yes	No
States offering mobile-friendly webpage	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

The majority of states did not offer a mobile-friendly web page at the time of the assessment. Five states have a mobile-friendly site in place; however, not all offer the platform for license purchasing. At this time, only **Michigan** and **Rhode Island** offer mobile-friendly pages for the license purchase process. **Michigan** goes one step further and offers a mobile license option eliminating the need for a paper-based license altogether.

Pre-Purchase Phase Case Study: Maine

Ideally, the first page that initiates the actual license purchase process should be welcoming to the customer and explain the key components about the license process ahead — most importantly the types of information the customer will need to complete the purchase process. **Maine's** Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife webpage that initiates the Maine Online Sportsman Electronic System (M.O.S.E.S.) is identified as a case study for this phase. The page is visually inviting but simple. The narrative is very concise and the customer is provided links to additional license information and frequently asked questions (Figure 2 above).

Purchase Phase

Demographic information

After the potential customer has absorbed all the information needed to make an informed decision, the purchase phase begins. At this point, most retailers and e-commerce sites begin requesting necessary or pertinent personal data to create an easy purchase experience.

There are a variety of reasons to gather demographic information during the purchase process. Some information is critical to assigning a particular license and/or privileges to a customer. The same type of information enables state agencies to link current purchase with prior purchases to learn more about their anglers, and to support agency law enforcement functions. State agencies must balance the needs of collecting information that is relevant to their requirements while balancing customers' privacy and security needs.

Table 5. Demographic information required to purchase a fishing license

Demographic information requirements	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Demographic data required to purchase license (count of mandatory pieces)	7	2	9
States requiring the following:	Mandatory	Optional	No
Name	50 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mailing Address	50 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Gender	45 (90%)	2 (4%)	3 (6%)
Social Security Number (complete or partial)	39 (78%)	1 (2%)	10 (20%)
Weight/Height	36 (72%)	4 (8%)	10 (20%)
Eye/Hair Color	34 (68%)	4 (6%)	13 (26%)
Email*	25 (50%)	22 (42%)	3 (6%)
Phone Number*	24 (48%)	19 (36%)	7 (14%)
State ID/Driver's License	21 (42%)	8 (16%)	21 (42%)
Ethnicity	5 (10%)	2 (4%)	43 (86%)

*One state provided the option for either providing an email address or phone number as contact information.

On average, states collect seven pieces of demographic information from customers. Table 5 outlines the 10 pieces of demographic information tracked and whether it is mandatory that a customer provide each piece.

- Twenty-two percent of states collect more than the average and 36% collect fewer than the average.
- Name and address are both compulsory information required by all states and the vast majority of states require a customer to indicate their gender as well.
- Only half of all states require customers to provide their phone and email address. These two pieces of information are much more likely to be optional.

Email - As the need for marketing licenses continues to grow, it can be argued that emails are becoming a necessary information piece to collect. When laws permit, states should consider requesting email addresses as a means to connect and develop a relationship with their anglers. The electronic communication format is a very efficient method to send news updates, upcoming events or other information to encourage anglers to actively participate in the sport.

Social security number - More than three-quarters of all states require a full or partial social security number, likely dictated by statute. The Social Security Administration recommends that anyone asked to disclose this information investigate why the number is collected and how it will be used. The practice of explicitly providing the reasoning behind the need at the time of purchase varies from state to state.

- **Tennessee, New Jersey** and **Kansas** were among the few states providing explicit descriptions for the need and usage of the information (Figures 4 and 5).
- **Kansas** provided very helpful PDF documents explaining the connection between license purchases and enforcement of child support laws and actions.

Figure 4. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection explanation of social security number requirement

new jersey | n | den
department of environmental protection

Division of Fish & Wildlife
On-Line License Sales and Hunter Education Registration Site

Step 1: NJ Child Support Certification Process

- You have not completed the [NJ Child Support Certification Process](#) for this calendar year. In order to obtain a New Jersey Hunting or Fishing License you must complete the [NJ Child Support Certification](#) process.

- New Jersey's Child Support Program Improvement Act is a state law that was enacted to assist in the enforcement of child support obligations and to implement the provisions of the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, known as the Welfare Reform Act. Under the state law, state agencies responsible for issuing certain licenses are required to obtain social security numbers and a certification regarding child support obligations from all applicants. Sporting and recreational licenses, which include hunting and fishing licenses, are specifically included in the Act. In order to comply with the law, you will need to complete a short certification questionnaire before your license can be issued.

Would you like to proceed with the NJ Child Support Certification process? Yes No

Yes No a) Do you currently have a child-support obligation?

Yes No b) Have you failed to provide any court-ordered health insurance coverage during the past six months?

Yes No c) Have you failed to respond to a subpoena relating to either paternity or child-support proceeding?

Yes No d) Are you the subject of a child-support related warrant?

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 2A:17-56.44d, an answer "Yes" to any question a(2) through d will result in a denial of licensure or certification. Furthermore, any false certification of the above may subject you to a penalty, including, but not limited to, immediate revocation or suspension of licensure or certification.

I have read and accept this agreement: Yes No

Submit

Cancel

!! Use of the back, forward, reload and refresh buttons is discouraged !!
!! Please use the buttons and links provided to move around this site !!

If you are experiencing difficulty using this application and need assistance, email us at AOHFNJWebmaster@activenetwork.com.

Figure 5. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency explanation of social security number requirement

TENNESSEE.GOV The Official Web Site of the State of Tennessee
 Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
 Ed Carter, Executive Director

Personal Information

Please enter your personal information so we may create a record of you or update your current record in our system. You will be able to use the same record for all purchases through the R.E.A.L. system. The TWRA number will be assigned by the system for you.

First: _____
 Middle Initial: _____
 Last: _____
 Date Of Birth: _____
 Driver's License Number: _____
 Driver's License State: MI
 Height: _____
 Weight: _____
 Eye Color: _____
 Hair Color: _____
 Social Security Number: _____

The disclosure of your social security number is required pursuant to Tennessee Public Acts of 1996, Chapter 892 and will be supplied to the Tennessee Department of Human Services to enforce orders of child support.

Address Line 1: 500 Montgomery Street, Suite 300
 City: Alexandria
 State: VIRGINIA
 Zip Code: 22314

- Not all licenses purchased require a license document to be mailed.
- Quota Hunt Applications are among the purchases that will not be mailed.
- If you purchase a hunting or fishing license which requires mailing, is the address above where you would like the license sent? Yes No

Phone Num: _____ - 5160
 (Optional) Email Add: _____

If you are experiencing difficulty using this application and need assistance, email us at AOHFTWWebmaster@activenetwork.com. If you need to purchase your license immediately please call phone sales at 1-888-814-8972.
 Note: This number is provided for the sale of licenses only, operators handling these calls cannot assist you in your internet purchase.

Roughly 70% of states also require that a customer provide physical characteristics such as hair/eye color and weight/height. In those cases where the information is compulsory, it might be frustrating for the customer and challenging to understand why a personal ID card would not be enough information.

- Five states **Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts** and **Oregon** either do not collect information related to appearance and state ID or at least leave completion of these fields optional.

All states should consider whether each of these information pieces is necessary or if substitute methods are available that ease burdens placed on customers while still fulfilling management needs. Figures 6-8 present screenshots from three different states that collect four or fewer pieces of information.

Figure 6. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries demographic information requirements

Figure 7. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife demographic information requirements

Figure 8. Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife demographic information requirements

The screenshot shows a web form with the following sections and fields:

- Name of Applicant:** First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, Suffix (Jr, II, etc.).
- Shipping Address:** Address #1 (500 Montgomery Steet Suite 300), Address #2, City (Alexandria), County, Country (USA), State (Virginia), Zip (22314). A question asks if this is also the Billing Address, with 'Yes' selected.
- Social Security Number:** SSN field containing '9717'. A red box highlights this field with a note: 'What is the idea asking SS# twice?'.
- Date of Birth:** Date field containing '1962' (mm/dd/yyyy).
- Contact Details:** Daytime Phone #, Cell Phone #, Fax #, and E-mail Address.

Personal information retention

Purchase systems that create a user account provide the ability to store information for future purchases and lessen the amount of manual data input by the customer.

Table 6. Retention of customer information provided during purchase process

	Yes	No
States with sites creating customer account	50 (100%)	0 (0%)

All 50 states create a personalized customer account, allowing for a more streamlined repeat purchase. Some states require confirmation via an email message as well as extra keywords in order to complete the creation of the customer account.

License types and choices

Following the personal information collection phase, customers transition to the license selection process.

Table 7. License type information (descriptions) offered at time of purchase

	Yes	No
States identifying basic terms of license at purchase (short general description of privilege)	26 (52%)	24 (48%)

Beyond clarifying license names, the customer experience is improved when the basic license terms are explained at the time of purchase as well. Optimally, license terms are explained on the purchase site, and more than half of the states (52%) do offer a basic license description of each license type.

- **Iowa, South Dakota** and **Virginia** offer good examples of providing basic license descriptions to customers during the purchase process to ensure that each angler selects the license that best fits their needs (Figures 9 and 10).

Figure 9. Iowa Department of Natural Resources example of basic license narrative

The screenshot shows the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) online licensing center. The page title is "Iowa's Online Licensing Center" and the user is identified as "HON CHRISTINE DOBBDAY / Purchase a License". A message states "License cross sale selection is required. Please make a selection." The page is divided into several sections:

- License Selection:** A progress indicator shows "1. License Selection" as the current step.
- License Description:** A green box highlights the following text:

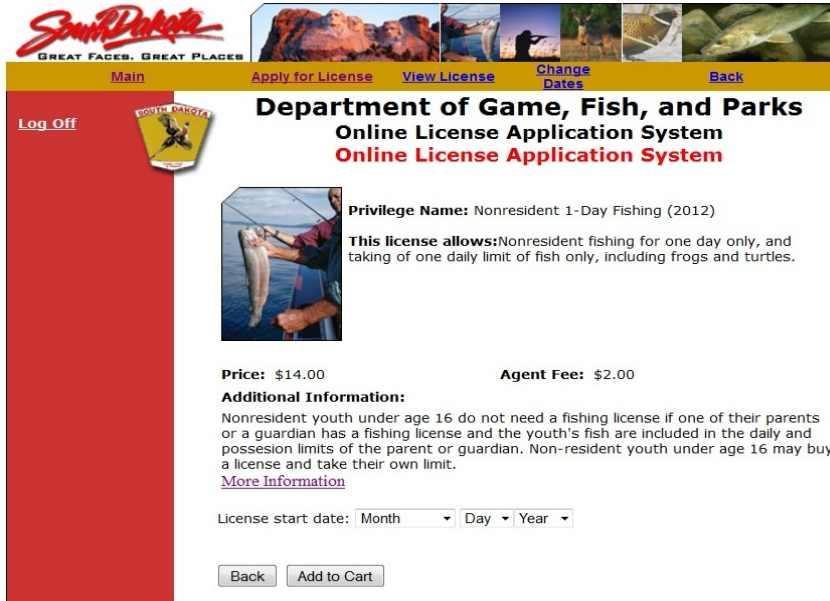
NONRESIDENT 1-DAY FISHING \$18.50 This license must be printed on your printer

License Description

#027 - NONRESIDENT 1-DAY FISHING - Nonresidents 16 years old or older are required to have a fishing license to fish or otherwise legally take, use, have possession of or transport species of fish from inland waters and boundary rivers of Iowa, as outlined by the regulations in the annual Iowa Fishing Seasons and Limits pamphlet. This license is valid for the 1 day listed on the license. Additionally, anglers must pay the Trout Fee to fish for or possess trout. Anglers 15 years old or younger may fish for or possess trout if they pay for their own Trout Fee or if they are accompanied by a licensed adult who has paid the Trout Fee and together they limit their catch to the one person daily limit of five trout.
- Enter Effective Dates:** This license is effective for 1 days. Please choose the starting date. Start Date: 08/21/2012 End Date: 08/21/2012
- License Cross Sale:** Would you like any of the following licenses as well? Select any one or multiple licenses. If you do not want any additional licenses, select "No Additional Licenses".
 - 902 TURN IN POACHERS DONATION-TP \$2.00
 - No Additional Licenses

Navigation buttons include "<< Back", "Continue >>", "Finish", and "Cancel". At the bottom, there are buttons for "Add to cart and continue Shopping", "Add to cart and begin checkout", and "Back to Licenses".

Figure 10. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks example of basic license narrative



On average, states offer three license type options for nonresident anglers. Table 9 outlines the types of nonresident licenses available for online purchase.

- Thirty-two percent offer more than three license types and another 32% offer fewer than three license types.
- The most common is an annual or seasonal license.
- More than two-thirds of states also offer a short-term license lasting anywhere between one and six days.

Table 8. Number of licenses available to nonresident anglers

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Number of licenses available	3	2	6

Table 9. Types of fishing licenses available to nonresident anglers

Fishing license types	Yes	No
1-day license	32 (64%)	18 (36%)
2- to 6-day license	37 (74%)	13 (26%)
7-day license	23 (46%)	27 (54%)
8- to 30-day license	15 (30%)	35 (70%)
Annual or seasonal	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
Multiple year or lifetime	4 (8%)	46 (92%)
Family	3 (6%)	47 (94%)

Some states have found an alternative to defining the license period for the angler, which allows for free selection of the total number of desired fishing days through a drop-down list. Or as another alternative, some states offer a two-week, one-month, or a four-month/“half-season” nonresident fishing license.

- **Idaho** has a “1-15 days” drop-down list.
- **Missouri** has a “1-5 days” drop-down for short-term, nonresident licenses.
- **Arizona** offers a customer the option of purchasing 1-99 extra fishing days on any license. It is also, currently, the only state to offer a mid-length fishing license. This option allows for a great deal of flexibility on the part of nonresident anglers who can purchase a license once during the season and travel multiple times to fish without having to purchase again. Other states, however, might find that there is unmet interest among nonresident anglers for the “half-season” license.
- **Nebraska** is currently the only state offering nonresidents a lifetime fishing license option.

The least commonly offered options are multiple-year and family licenses. Offering family-based license types may foster recruitment efforts to encourage angling as a family-focused sport and is a natural extension of the recruitment efforts to encourage future generations to take up the sport. However, feedback from states selling such licenses and from customers directly may help increase understanding if such licenses have been fiscally worthwhile and effective as recruitment tools.

- **Wisconsin** offers nonresident family licenses for short term (15 days) and long term (annual).
- **Minnesota** and **South Dakota** both offer annual nonresident family licenses.
- **Minnesota’s** and **Wisconsin’s** family licenses allow spouse and children under age 16 (MN) and 16-17 years old (WI) to possess their own limit of fish.
- **South Dakota’s** license lets spouse and children participate in fishing but use only one catch limit.
- **North Dakota** and **Minnesota** also offer nonresident licenses for married couples.

Additional convenience fee

Table 10. States including an additional cost above the license fee

	Yes	No
Percentage requiring an additional cost	29 (58%)	21 (42%)

Table 11. Value of additional cost for online customers

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Cost	\$2.05	\$0.24	\$5.00

N=29

The cost of a one-day (or the shortest term possible) nonresident freshwater fishing license is, on average, \$16.25. In addition to the cost of the license, 29 (58%) states require the customer to pay an additional ‘convenience’ fee when purchasing online. These costs are defined as convenience fees, online purchase or mailing costs, and dealer or agent fees. These additional costs range between \$0.24 and \$5.00, and average \$2.05.

Purchase options

Table 12. Shopping cart capability and payment method options offered

	Yes	No
Percentage offering multiple purchase ability	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
Payment methods accepted		
MasterCard	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
VISA	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
American Express	19 (38%)	31 (62%)

For those anglers wishing to purchase more than one license/tag/stamp in one transaction, offering the shopping cart capability adds an extra level of convenience. And every state offers that capability to their nonresident anglers purchasing online.

Most common credit cards should be an accepted form of payment and the money transaction should be smooth and secure. All states accept both MasterCard and VISA as a method of payment. The majority of states do not accept the American Express credit card, which is a barrier for those people having only that card.

Cross-sell opportunities

Table 13. License types (hunting/fishing) offered at time of purchase

	Yes	No
States offering hunting and fishing license available under same listing/category on webpage	13 (26%)	37 (74%)

Despite the fact that fishing and hunting licenses are commonly sold via the same online system, fishing license options are not typically coupled with hunting license options.

During the purchase phase, states also have an opportunity to provide customers the ability to add items such as state wildlife magazines or calendars to their orders if such products are available.

- **South Carolina** offers customers a chance to purchase/subscribe to DNR Magazine, which is a good way to develop and nurture a customer relationship.

States also have an opportunity to motivate customers to donate funds toward a particular cause by providing a short description and picture about what the funds support as well as a link to more information.

- **Florida** enables customers to donate funds to support a youth program.

Length of purchase process

Table 14. Number of pages/screens to complete purchase process

	<5	5 to 8	>8
Number of pages/screens	1 (2%)	37 (74%)	12 (24%)

On average, the number of pages required to complete the online transaction is between five and eight pages. A concise and efficient purchase process should include the following pages:

- A welcome or greeting,
- Customer information collection,
- License purchase options and shopping cart,
- Payment, and
- “Thank you” and link to license.

As a general rule, the pages should flow in the above order. However, customers might find it beneficial to view the list of licenses available and their associated costs before they begin the process of entering personal information. Typically, customers want to browse before making a purchase and those who are unsure about buying are not likely to want to share personal information in advance of making that decision.

Purchase Phase Case Study: Utah

The purchase phase is the most labor-intensive part of the process for the customer. The customer needs to navigate through a number of pages, each requiring a different level of personal information. A customer-focused process works to streamline the information requests and walk the customer, with both visual and narrative cues, through each step. **Utah’s** Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources is identified as a case study for this phase. The amount of compulsory demographic information required is kept to a minimum (Figure 11). A customer account is created for the angler’s convenience

and no additional convenience fee is asked of the customer. This whole process requires roughly five pages and lasts approximately five minutes.

Figure 11. Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources purchase process page

Hunting & Fishing Licenses Online

- Welcome new customer or gift license buyer! Please complete the form below to see all the licenses you may purchase.
- If you searched for your customer profile using Customer ID, DOB, or SSN we could not locate your record. If you feel this was in error please click "search again" below to try again.
-

Fields designated with an asterisk (*) are required to purchase a hunting or fishing license in Utah or to continue with this sale.

A Customer Profile

Customer ID: *not assigned*

SSN: [] - [] - []

Resident: Resident Non-Resident
Please verify that your residency status is correct as it will determine licenses available to purchase. [Click here for more information.](#)

Date of Birth: [] / [] / []

Address: []

City: []

State: Utah

Zip code: [] - []

Country: United States

Home Phone: ([]) - [] - []

Other Phone: ([]) - [] - []

Email Address: []

Email Confirmation: []
Enter a valid email address. Your temporary license/receipt will be mailed to that address. [Click here for more information.](#)

First Name: []

Middle Initial: []

Last Name: []

Gender: Female Male

Weight (lbs): []

Height: [] ft. [] in.

Eye color: - Eye Color -

Hair color: - Hair Color -

Driver's License # []

Driver's License State - State -

Post-Purchase Phase

Purchase closing messages

Table 15. License confirmation page relays a message of thanks or congratulations (iFrame)

	Yes	No
Percentage	15 (31%)	34 (69%)

Sample size (N)=49

Ending the purchase process with a "thank you" to the customer formally closes the purchase phase and sends the message that the agency values the customer. At this phase, the state might also take the opportunity to share a couple of sentences relating to state management efforts that are supported by license funds. This information gives the customer a sense of pride and stewardship of the fisheries they utilize.

Roughly one-third (31%) of states close the process with a short "thank you" to the customer for his/her purchase. In most cases the "thank you" is for using the service rather than for purchasing the license and going fishing. And the text is not always visually prominent.

Follow-up communications from agencies after purchase of a license were tracked by RBFF over 25 weeks immediately following the purchase. Overall, RBFF found that, in addition to the 15 states that say thank you via iFrame (reflected in table), nine states say thank you via both iFrame and email, and three states say thank you via email only. In total, 18 states convey some form of thank-you message while 32 states miss the opportunity altogether.

Additionally, states use these communications to prompt customers to sign up for e-news from their agency with content such as fishing news, weekly fishing reports, hunting news, new mobile app, etc. The frequency of communications ranges from weekly messages to no contact at all. In total, five states sent customers follow-up communications in the form of a newsletter.

Closing pages provide an opportunity to elicit feedback from the customer about any phase in the process.

- **Arkansas'** closing page clearly ends the purchase process and also provides a good example of providing the customer with a feedback survey about the purchase process (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Arkansas Game and Fish Commission license purchase confirmation page

Arkansas Online License Sales

STEP 1 Customer Identification | STEP 2 License Selection | STEP 3 Payment Collection | STEP 4 Purchase Confirmation

Confirmation Number: **19324226**
NOTE: THIS PAGE IS NOT YOUR LICENSE!
Your confirmation number is valid for 14 days from date of purchase and must be in your possession when participating in the licensed activity prior to receiving your mailed documents.
This number is not valid for hunting big game (deer turkey bear & ek). You must have your license in hand from AGFC.
If you purchased a fishing or small game trip license and no other privileges that will start within 14 days no license will be mailed. You will be legal to use your confirmation number.

Print Receipt

Transaction Number: 611847502 August 13, 2012 09:26:15 AM CDT

Customer Information:

Customer ID:	067778985	Address:	500 MONTGOMERY STREET SUITE 300
Full Name:	XXXXXXXXXX	City:	
Date Of Birth:		State:	VA
Driver's License Num:	3	Zip Code:	22314
Driver's License Stat:			

Mailed Privilege

Licenses listed here will be mailed to the address provided during purchase. You should receive this license(s) within 7 to 10 business days. If you do not receive this license(s) within 10 business days contact AGFC at 1-800-364-4263 during business hours.

NT3	NON RES 3 DAY TRIP FISHING LIC	\$11.00
Effective From: 08/20/2012 08:00 to 08/23/2012 08:00		

Payment Information:

Payment Type:	Credit Card
Payment Number:	XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-1000
Payment Auth Code:	173053
Amount Charged:	\$11.00

SURVEY:
In order to provide the best customer service possible, please rate the ease of use and clarity of instructions when using this site.
 Excellent Good Average Poor
Comments:
You have 300 remaining characters.
Submit

Purchase Another License **Finish and Close**

In addition to offering thanks, the last page offers a chance to direct the customer to the state's fishing home page to read more about angling events, fishing locations and other types of services provided to recreational anglers.

Equally important, each customer should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the terms of their license and directed to download regulations for more information.

Purchased license format

Table 16. Methods provided for receiving the license

		Yes	No
States providing print method		49 (98%)	1(2%)
States providing mail option		8 (16%)	42 (84%)
	Electronic option only*	Electronic and mail option	Mail option only
All methods for obtaining license (count of states)		41 (83%)	8 (17%)

*In one case, the print license option was available; however, the interface prevented possession of a printed license. And a mail option was not available.

Most states provide a suitable print option for the customer, usually directly from the last licensing page through a link. Offering the electronic version of the license through an email or PDF format allows better layout and ease of saving the license for future printing if the original printed copy is ever lost. It also enables those customers who would prefer an entirely mobile option to access their license when needed via a device that supports email and PDF technology. However, not all states may currently offer this as a valid license option due to agency restrictions or regulations. Whatever the method, state agencies should consider providing a troubleshooting guide or link for printing or accessing their new license to ensure that all anglers are able to enjoy the full convenience of purchasing a license electronically.

- The majority of states (83%) provide customers with an electronic option only to receive a copy of their license.
- Eight states offer the option of both a print as well as a mailed copy of the license purchased. In those cases when a license was mailed, for the most part, it was done within one business day.

Especially when short-term licenses are purchased, states should consider that offering the option of a mailed license in addition to the printed version may not be necessary as the angler already has a copy of the license.

As state regulations allow, a license should efficiently display the necessary information including items such as the license name, the angler’s name and a form of authorization. To take full advantage of marketing opportunities, the license could also include the state logo at a minimum.

Table 17. Authorization or signature requirement

	Authorization number	Signature	Both
States requiring the following (count of states)	11 (22%)	36 (73%)	2 (4%)

Almost one-quarter of the states include an authorization number at the end of the purchase or on the license. The overwhelming majority requires the angler’s signature.

Table 18. Information included on or with license

	Yes	No
Hours and dates of validity	50 (100%)	0 (0%)
State and (if applicable) water type	44 (88%)	6 (12%)
Regulations sent or readily available to customer	0 (0%)	50 (100%)

All states include information related to the hours and dates of validity of the license purchased. The majority (88%) included information about the state issuing the license and the water type. It should be noted that not all states have both saltwater and freshwater.

In an effort to conserve our natural resources for generations to come, it is important that license buyers are familiar with state-specific rules and regulations as well as details on fish species. None of the states encouraged the customer to click a link to see regulations following the purchase of a license.

Agency communication following purchase

Immediately following the purchase process, there is an opportunity to send a confirmation email to provide the customer with a receipt, close out the purchase process, provide customer service contact information again, and provide a link back to the state agency webpage. A receipt signals to the customer that the purchase was successful; it can reinforce a message of thanks and partnership, both of which continue to develop the customer-agency relationship. As mentioned previously, the email address will be valuable for agency marketing and communication purposes.

Table 19. Immediate confirmation email or agency follow-up email

	Yes	No
States sending immediate communication to angler	23 (46%)	27 (54%)

Fewer than half of all states follow the practice of sending an email confirmation or agency follow-up to the customer immediately after the license purchase process.

Recall from Table 5 that:

- Twenty-five states require a customer provide an email address along with other demographic information. Of this “mandatory email” group, 15 (60%) sent a confirmation email message.
- Twenty-two states asked for a customer’s email address but did not require it. Of this “optional email” group, eight (36%) sent a confirmation email message.

Post-Purchase Phase Case Study: Maryland

Closing out the purchase process can be just as important as opening the purchase process. Offering a simple sentence, which includes a thank you or congratulatory message, provides a signal to the customer that the purchase is complete and creates a closing impression of the process. **Maryland's** Department of Natural Resources is identified as a case study for this phase. Once the purchase phase is complete, anglers print a simple license that includes a scan tag/bar code in the lower left corner. Anglers are encouraged to have this code scanned at Service Centers to streamline the process for purchasing a similar license again (Figure 13). An additional consideration, if it is possible to use scan tag readers available on mobile devices, may be to enhance the online purchase process through a mobile-friendly format that allows the angler to scan the code when they purchase a similar license type in the future.

Figure 13. Maryland Department of Natural Resources example of customer purchase history retention



Convenience of Customer Support

Customer support tools

A few key tools that support the customer's purchase activity can be present during multiple phases or all phases of the process. These support tools include:

- Offering access to customer service contact information,
- Displaying answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), and
- Linking to regulations or other pertinent details related to fishing.

Table 20. Customer support tool availability

	Yes	No
States displaying customer service contact information	38 (76%)	12 (24%)

States displaying FAQ link	21 (42%)	29 (58%)
States displaying link to regulations or other details	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

The majority of states (76%) do offer detailed easy-to-find customer service contact information.

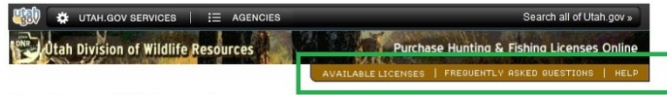
- **Alaska, Utah and Kentucky** all offer good examples of this practice (Figures 14-16).

Just under half of states offer either a list of frequently asked questions with corresponding answers or a link to access this list. However, an overwhelming majority (90%) does not display a link to fishing regulations at this point in the purchase process. To best serve all customer types, it would be ideal to have an information bar with all these key customer information areas available during the entire purchase process.

Figure 14. Alaska Department of Fish and Game example of customer support during license purchase process



Figure 15. Utah Department of Natural Resources example of customer support during license purchase process



Hunting & Fishing Licenses Online

Notice:

- **ARCHERY ELK PURCHASERS NOTICE!!!** be advised that you need a hard copy original with kill tag to hunt. This may take up to 14 days to arrive in the mail. Consider buying from a license agent if you need a permit sooner.
- **Entering "Date of Birth" only, will allow you to fill in the information required to purchase individual or gift licenses on the next screen.**

Obtaining a License:

New Customers or Gift License purchasers click here

Returning Customer

Please enter Customer ID and Date of Birth
or
Social Security Number and Date of Birth
to search for your customer profile

Customer ID:
[What's my Customer ID?](#)

Date of Birth: / /

Social Security #: - -

■ When will I receive my:

[Seasonal License?](#)

[1-day and 7-day Fishing License?](#)

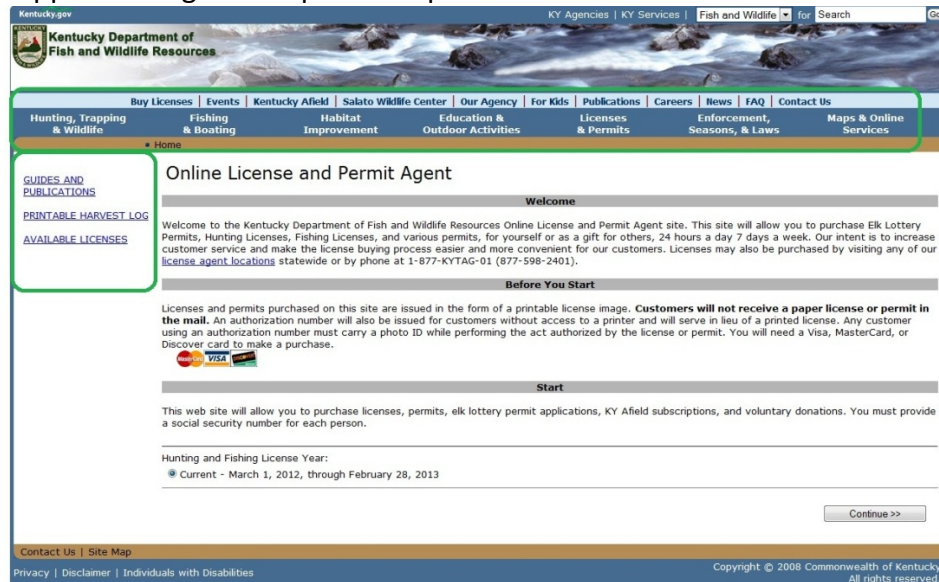
[Deer and Elk Permit?](#)

[Temporary Possession Bobcat Tags?](#)

Security:

For your protection, this application uses 128-bit security encryption.

Figure 16. Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources example of customer support during license purchase process



Electronic subscription availability

As is the case with customer support, states are able to offer the opportunity to receive e-news, messages or other communications from the agency throughout the purchase process.

Table 21. Electronic subscription opportunities

	Yes	No
States providing option to sign up for subscription or news	11 (22%)	38 (78%)

While 50 percent of states collected email address either optionally or compulsory, only 22 percent offered a sign-up for email news. It is notable that none of the states offered up social media details (i.e., asked customers to be their friend on Facebook or follower on Twitter), though many states are active in those forums. Many opportunities exist to establish customer relationships and provide up-to-date information.

- **Oklahoma** offers an example of an email newsletter (Figure 17). It allows the customer to customize newsletters to include topics of interest with nearly 10 topic categories to choose from.
- Additionally, **Texas** presents a good subscription service (Figure 18).

Figure 17. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation example of electronic communication recruitment

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Sign Up for Electronic Newsletters" from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. The form includes a header with the department's logo and name. Below the title, it displays the email address "tmf2012@dnf.org" and a confirmation field. The form is divided into two main sections: "Select Desired Newsletters" and "Your Information".

Select Desired Newsletters: This section asks users to select areas of interest. It includes a list of newsletters with checkboxes: "Wildlife News - news stories" (checked), "Upland Update - Quail & Prairie Chicken", "Weekly Fishing Report", "Waterfowl Report - Seasonal", "WildSide E-Newsletter (monthly)", "Your Side of the Fence", "Outdoor Oklahoma Television Show" (checked), and "Misc & Vehicle Auction Notices".

Your Information: This section requires users to fill in personal details. It includes fields for "First Name", "Last Name", "Address Line 1", "City", "US State/CA Province" (a dropdown menu), "* Zip/Postal Code", "Country", "Do you hunt?", "Do you fish?", and "Outdoor Recreation (hiking, birding)".

At the bottom of the form, there is a "Preferred email format" section with radio buttons for "HTML" (selected) and "Text". The form concludes with "Join" and "Cancel" buttons.

Figure 18. Texas Parks and Wildlife example of electronic communication recruitment

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE **TEXAS LICENSE CONNECTION**

Help #_Cancel Order

Cart

Profile > Buy Licenses > Shopping Cart > Shipping > Billing > Confirm Order > Receipt

Billing Details [Change Shipping Details](#)

Total License Fee	: \$16.00
Convenience Fee	: \$5.00
Standard Delivery Fee	: \$0.00
You Credit Card will be charged for this amount	: \$21.00

Billing address is same as residence address
Billing address is same as mailing address
Other

Credit Card Details

* Name on Card
* Card Type
* Card Number
* Expiration Date

Billing Address

* Address Line 1
Street address
Address Line 2
Apt. #, Suite #, etc.
* City
* State
* ZIP Code

A transaction receipt for this order will be sent to : tml2012@rbif.org
If you would like the transaction receipt to be sent to an email address other than the one specified above, please enter it here :

Yes, I would like to hear from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
 No, please do not contact me.

[TPWD Privacy and Security Policy Statement](#)

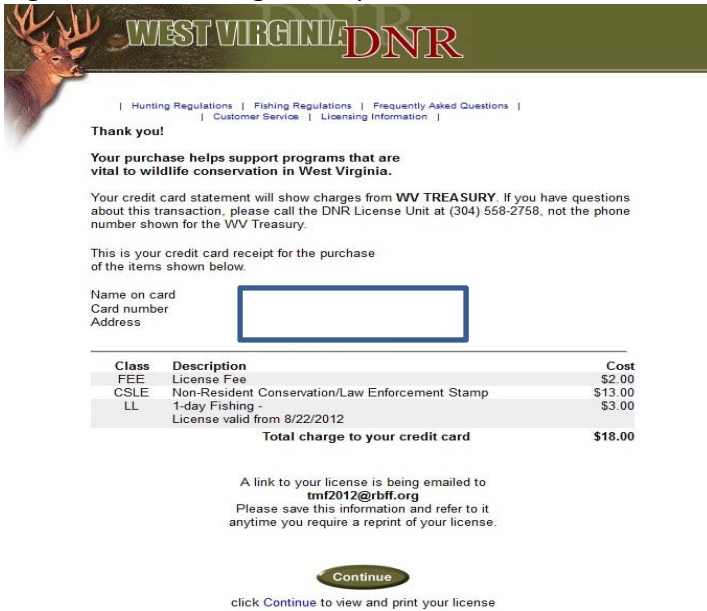
Note : Fields marked with an * are mandatory

[Cancel Order](#) [Submit](#)

Customer Support Case Study: West Virginia

A customer-centric approach places links for contact information, FAQs and regulations in a convenient and readily visible location. **West Virginia's** Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources process is identified as a case study for this phase. Customer support tools are readily available throughout the entire process. And customers are encouraged to sign up for electronic news and communications during the purchase process thereby creating the channel as well as the opportunity to initiate and nurture a relationship with anglers.

Figure 19. West Virginia Department of Natural Resources customer support tool availability



Scoring the Online Purchase Process Experience

Up to this point, the focus has been on assessing the process from a collective national perspective based upon data gathered while traveling through each phase of the purchase process. In this next section, the focus shifts toward developing a scoring system for the purchase process experience. The scores do not have finite levels determining a “good” or “bad” level, but instead are intended to give states a method to identify areas they may need to address to improve their customers’ online experience and a way to track those improvements over time.

A total of 20 specific measures across all four aspects of the purchase experience are identified as contributors to the online customer experience and make up the overall experience score. The measures and their related scores are outlined in the table below.

Table 22. Criteria employed to score the online license purchase experience

Phase	Score
Pre-purchase	
Number of clicks from agency home page	Actual click count- maximum click count recorded
First page explains process	No=0/Yes=1
Multiple language options	No=0/Yes=1
Mobile friendly	No=0/Yes=1
Purchase	
Demographic information requirements	One point for every piece of information that is optional or not required
Site remembers customer entries	No=0/Yes=1
Customer account created	No=0/Yes=1
Basic license terms identified	No=0/Yes=1
Additional cost for online customers	Additional cost=0/No additional cost=1
Payment options: MasterCard, VISA, American Express	Three cards accepted=3, two card types accepted=2, one card type accepted=1
Number of pages to complete process	Fewer than 5=3, Between 5 and 8=2, More than 8=1
Post-purchase	
License confirmation pages say thank you or congratulate customers	No=0/Yes=1
Print option	No=0/Yes=1
Mail option available	Yes=0/No=1
Email confirmation or agency email	No=0/Yes=1
Regulations sent/readily available	No=0/Yes=1
Customer support	
Contact information available	No=0/Yes=1
FAQs available	No=0/Yes=1
Links to regulations	No=0/Yes=1
Sign-up for news	No=0/Yes=1

Points can be accrued across each criterion and are awarded for practices that are customer friendly. For instance, in a case where:

- The closing license page expresses a thank-you message
- A print option is available and a mail option is not,
- An immediate confirmation email is sent, and
- Regulations are readily accessible,

this sample state would earn a total of five points for the post-purchase phase of the purchase experience. Other phases are scored in a similar fashion. The overall score is then a simple summation of each phase's score; a higher score reflects a purchase experience that is more customer-friendly. It is important to stress again that these scores are only a relative measure that aid with evaluating the customer's experience as well as identifying both instances of

success and need for improvement. Scores are included in the summary Table A5 in the Appendix.

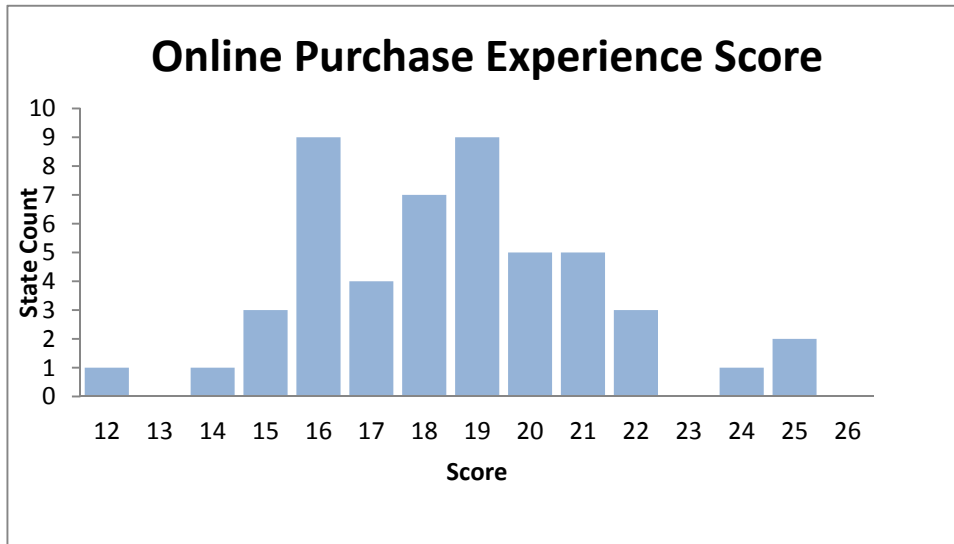
Table 23. Average online license purchase experience score

	Average score	Lowest score earned	Highest score earned	Maximum possible score*
Purchase Experience Score	19	12	25	34

* It is important to note that the maximum score is influenced by the scoring criteria for the number of pieces of demographic information that are mandatory versus optional. Assuming that two pieces of information are mandatory and the remainder are optional (based upon the current minimum collected -- see Table 5), the maximum possible score is 34. In some instances, states might be bound by legal or regulatory reasons that dictate the amount of demographic information required.

The online purchase experience scores across all states range between 12 and 25, and average 19. Figure 20 below displays the distribution of scores across all 50 states. It is clear from the distribution that the majority of states (39 states or 78%) earned a score between 16 and 21. Five states (10%) earned a score of 15 or less. Six states (12%) earned a score of 22 or greater.

Figure 20. Distribution of state online purchase experience scores



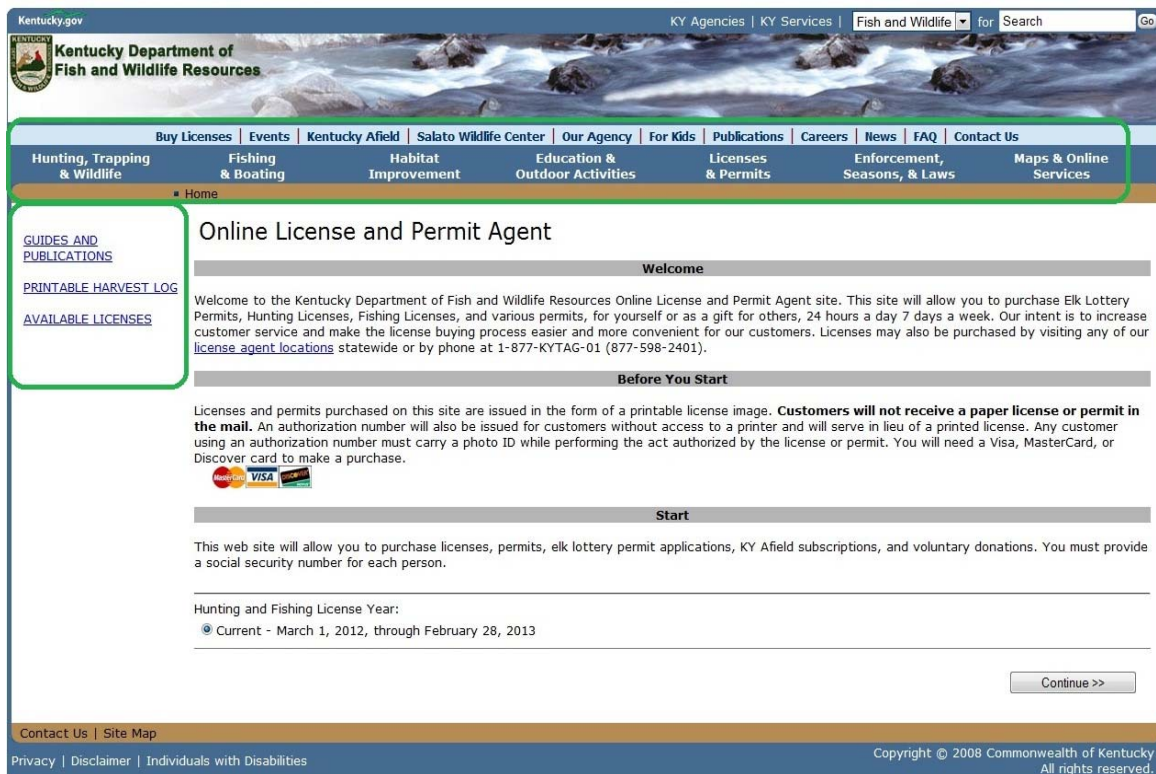
Many states excel in each of the individual phases outlined above. Few states, however, sustain a customer-centric focus throughout the whole process. Based upon the overall experience scores, two states are identified as case studies for the overall customer purchase experience.

Overall Online License Experience Case Study: Kentucky

Kentucky's Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is identified as a case study for the purchase process as a whole.

- The pre-purchase phase is streamlined, requiring only one click to initiate the purchase process.
- The amount of information required, particularly demographic, is limited to that which is necessary.
- Anglers are able to obtain their license instantaneously via a print format and are charged no additional fee for the online convenience.
- Kentucky closes the purchase process through a confirmation page and sends a confirmation email to those anglers who provide their email address.
- Throughout the process, anglers have access to customer support links.

Figure 21. Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources opening purchase page



Overall Online License Experience Case Study: Massachusetts

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife is also identified as a case study for the purchase process as a whole.

- The pre-purchase phase is also streamlined and the opening page alerts the customer to the key pieces of information needed to complete the process.
- The amount of demographic information collected is very minimal.
- The license options page is simple and categories are well organized.
- At the close of the purchase, Massachusetts offers the opportunity to review laws and regulations specific to hunting and fishing.
- Customers receive their license in PDF form allowing for printing or mobile access if necessary.

Figure 22. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife license purchase page

MassFishHunt

Customer ID: 1333887 Dobday, Christine Age: 49 Non-Resident 500 Montgomery Street Suite 300
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Item Selection - 2012 - Freshwater Fishing ?

[Check Out](#) | [Cancel](#)

Main Menu	Item Name	Add	Help	Price *
Saltwater Fishing	Freshwater Fishing	<input type="button" value="Add"/>	?	\$32.50
Recreational Lobster				
Sporting	Freshwater Fishing - 3 Day	<input type="button" value="Add"/>	?	\$18.50
Freshwater Fishing				
Hunting	Quabbin Reservoir Fishing, 1 Day	<input type="button" value="Add"/>	?	\$5.00
Trapping				
Hunting Permits and Stamps	\$10 Wildlands Fund Donation	<input type="button" value="Add"/>	?	\$9.71
Donations				
HIP Survey	\$25 Wildlands Fund Donation	<input type="button" value="Add"/>	?	\$24.27

* Additional Fees may apply.

Shopping Cart	
Freshwater Fishing - 3 Day	\$18.50
Wildlands Stamp	\$5.00
Fee Summary	
Subtotal:	\$23.50
Convenience Fee: ?	\$2.25
Total Amount Due:	\$25.75

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Conclusion

Offering the opportunity to purchase a fishing license online adds convenience to the purchase process for many customers. To better understand the online purchase process, RBFF implemented an assessment to map the customer's online license purchase experience. More specifically, a customer's experience was assessed through the lens of customer relationship management to evaluate the process, identify sharable best practices, as well as identify areas for improvement. While every purchase experience is unique, these best practices and recommendations identified herein are developed with the intention that they can be generally applied to each state's purchase process overall.

The entire purchase experience was broken down into three distinct phases: pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. The accessibility of customer support tools throughout the process was also evaluated. Targeted assessment criteria were developed for each of these specific areas, and information gathered through the purchase experience was used to develop a scoring system. The goal was to provide a means of evaluating the purchase experiences relative to one another and of tracking improvements made over time.

From a general perspective, the typical customer is able to easily identify the link or links necessary to initiate the license purchase process and is aware of the types of information that will be required to complete the process. The majority of states do not offer a mobile-friendly webpage, and as mobile technology continues to expand, states should consider exploring mobile-friendly, web-based applications.

At the beginning of the purchase phase and before the license selection process, customers are asked to provide an average of seven pieces of demographic information. Customers are then presented with multiple license options; the most common for nonresident anglers are a short-term (between one and six days) and an annual license. This assessment reveals that there are opportunities to improve license naming and descriptive narratives to ensure that the customer purchases the license that best fits their needs. Additionally as laws permit, states should consider collecting email addresses on a mandatory basis. A complete, current list of anglers' email addresses can serve as an efficient, inexpensive way to connect, communicate and nurture relationships immediately following purchase, and on a regular basis thereafter.

The focus of the post-purchase phase is on securing payment and providing the customer with access to their license. While these steps are critical, more can be done to enhance the experience and nurture the relationship with customers such as offering a thank-you message either on the closing page or in a follow-up email message. Additionally, the closing page provides the opportunity for states to elicit feedback from the customer via a feedback survey about the purchase process experience.

In general, the purchase process takes five to eight pages to complete. Each state could explore opportunities for streamlining the process by reducing the number of pages the customer must navigate in order to purchase a license. And while many states offer support tools to the

customer throughout the process, there is an opportunity to strengthen these tools, by offering things such as FAQs and customer service contact information, and placing these tools where they may be more easily accessed. Also, offering the customer the opportunity to sign up for subscriptions to preferred e-news content is a good approach in continuing ongoing engagement.

Numerous specific examples of superior customer service as well as opportunities for improvement are highlighted within this report. The intention of this report and its findings is to inform future collaborative discussions about managing and improving the experience from a customer's perspective in an effort to provide better service to the nation's anglers.

Appendix

Purchase Experience Assessment Criteria (p. 35)

Purchase Experience Data Summary (p. 37)

Table A1. Pre-purchase phase criteria

Definition of criteria	Information recorded
Number of clicks/steps from state agency home page	Number
First page explains the purchase process	Y/N
Language options	Y/N
Mobile friendly	Y/N

Table A2. Purchase phase criteria

Definition of criteria	Information recorded
Types of demographic information required	Mandatory/Optional/No
Name	Mandatory/Optional/No
Mailing address	Mandatory/Optional/No
Email	Mandatory/Optional/No
Phone number	Mandatory/Optional/No
Social security number	Mandatory/Optional/No
State ID/Driver's license	Mandatory/Optional/No
Gender	Mandatory/Optional/No
Weight/Height	Mandatory/Optional/No
Eye/Hair color	Mandatory/Optional/No
Ethnicity	Mandatory/Optional/No
Types of nonresident license options available	
NR one-day license	Y/N
NR 2-6 days	Y/N
NR one-week license (7 days)	Y/N
NR 8 - 30 days	Y/N
NR annual license or season	Y/N
NR options one-year plus	Y/N
NR family license option	Y/N
Other unique NR license options	Y/N
Basic terms of license identified at time of purchase	Y/N
Site remembers your entries	Y/N
Hunting and fishing under same listing/category on page	Y/N
Extra cost for online customers	\$
Option available to purchase more than one license/tag/stamp in one transaction (shopping cart)	Y/N
Payment options available (VISA, MasterCard, American Express)	Y/N
Length of entire purchase process	Number

Table A3. Post purchase phase criteria

Definition of criteria	Information recorded
Congratulatory confirmation page	Y/N
Authorization number or Signature	Authorization number/ Signature
Delivery methods available (print/mail)	
Print (email, PDF) option available	Y/N
Mail option available	Y/N
Email confirmation or agency email	Y/N
Information included on license (date, state, etc.)	
Indicates hours/date(s) of validity	Y/N
Indicates applicable State and if license is for fresh or saltwater or both, if applicable	Y/N
Regulations sent/readily available to customer	Y/N

Table A4. Customer support availability criteria

Definition of criteria	Information recorded
Sign-up for news	Y/N
Contact mechanism for customer service inquiries	Y/N
FAQ link at any phase during process	Y/N
Links to regulations	Y/N

Table A5. Online License Purchase Experience Data Summary Table

Assessment Criteria	States																
	Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California	Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Florida	Georgia	Hawaii	Idaho	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Kansas	Kentucky
# of clicks from agency home page	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	1
First page explains process	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Multiple language options	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Mobile-friendly	N	N*	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N*	N	N	N	N
Contact information available	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
FAQs available	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y
Links to regulations	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Name	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Mailing address	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Email	M	M	O	O	O	M	O	O	M	O	N	O	M	M	O	O	Either
Phone number	O	M	O	O	M	M	O	M	M	O	N	O	M	O	M	O	Or
Social Security number	M	N	O	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	M	M	M	M
State ID/Driver's License number	M	N	N	O	N	N	M	O	O	M	N	M	M	N	N	M	N
Gender	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Weight/Height	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N
Eye/Hair Color	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	N	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N
Ethnicity	M	N	N	N	N	N	M	N	M	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Count of mandatory demographic data	9	7	5	6	7	7	8	4	8	7	5	7	9	7	7	7	4
Site remembers customer entries	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Customer account created	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hunting and fishing licenses together	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Basic license terms identified	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
Price of short-term fresh water license	\$26.72	\$20.00	\$17.25	\$11.00	\$14.30	\$9.00	\$22.00	\$13.50	\$19.73	\$22.50	\$11.00	\$16.63	\$21.51	\$9.00	\$13.33	\$6.66	\$10.00
Additional cost for online customers	\$0.52	\$0.00	\$1.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	\$1.00	\$2.73	\$2.50	\$1.00	\$3.88	\$2.01	\$0.00	\$2.83	\$1.50	\$0.00
NR one-day license	N	1-day	1-day	N	1-day	1-day	N	N	N	1-day Saltwater Shore	N		N	1-day	1-day	1-day	1-day
NR 2-6 days	N	3-days	5-days	3-days	2-days	5-days	3-days	N	3-days	3-day Fish and Hunt	N		N	N	3-days	5-days	N
NR one-week license (7 days)	1-week	one-week	Possible to buy 1-99 extra	one-week	N	N	N	1-week	1-week	N	1-week	1-15 days drop down list	N	one-week	one-week	N	one-week
NR 8 - 30 days	N	two-weeks		two-weeks	10-days	N	N	N	N	N	30-days		10-days	N	N	N	15-days
NR annual license or season	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
NR options one-year +	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Family license option	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Option to purchase more than one license	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
VISA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mastercard	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
American Express	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Number of pages to complete process	5-8	5-8	5-8	5-8	5-8	9	5-8	~10	5-8	5-8	4	5-8	5	~10	5-8	5-8	5-8
Sign up for news	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
License confirmation pages says 'thank you' or 'congratulations'	N*	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Authorization (Number=N/Signature=S/Both=B)	S	S	S	N	S	N	S	S	N	S	S	N	S	S	B	S	S
Print option (Print or PDF)	PDF	Print	Print	Print	PDF	PDF	PDF	Print	Print	PDF	Print	Print	PDF	Print	Print	Print	Print
Email confirmation or agency email sent	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
Mail option available	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Indicates hours/dates of validity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicates state and water type	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N/A	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Regulations sent/readily available	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Online Purchase Experience Score																	
Pre-Purchase Phase score	3	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	5
Purchase Phase score	8	10	12	13	11	8	9	11	10	11	13	9	9	9	10	10	13
Post-Purchase Phase score	3	3	4	1	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	2	4
Customer Support score	1	1	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	0	2	1	1	3	0	2	3
Overall Experience score	15	17	22	19	21	12	16	19	19	16	21	16	15	20	16	18	25

Note regarding mobile technology: N* indicates that state has mobile-friendly technology in place but not for license purchasing.
 Note regarding email confirmation: N indicates no immediate/short-term communications for ~2 weeks post-purchase.

Table A5. Online License Purchase Experience Data Summary Table (cont.)

Assessment Criteria	States																
	Louisiana	Maine	Maryland	Massachusetts	Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Missouri	Montana	Nebraska	Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey	New Mexico	New York	North Carolina	North Dakota
# of clicks from agency homepage	2	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	1	1
First page explains process	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N*	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N*
Multiple language options	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Mobile-friendly	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N*	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N*
Contact information available	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
FAQs available	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Links to regulations	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Name	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Mailing address	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Email	O	M	M	O	M	M	M	N	O	O	M	M	O	O	M	M	M
Phone number	M	O	M	O	O	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	O	M
Social Security number	M	N	M	N	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	M	N	M
State ID/Driver's License number	O	N	M	N	N	M	M	M	N	N	M	Y	M	N	M	M	N
Gender	N	M	M	O	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Weight/Height	N	M	O	O	M	M	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	O	N	M
Eye/Hair Color	N	M	O	O	N	M	N	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M
Ethnicity	N	N	O	N	N	N	M	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Count of mandatory demographic data	4	6	7	2	5	9	8	8	7	7	9	7	8	7	7	5	8
Site remembers customer entries	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Customer account created	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hunting and fishing licenses together	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Basic license terms identified	N*	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Price of short-term fresh water license	\$7.50	\$13.00	\$21.00	\$23.50	\$8.00	\$9.79	\$10.20	\$8.00	\$26.91	\$9.50	\$18.00	\$17.00	\$9.00	\$22.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$17.00
Additional cost for online customers	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$0.00	\$2.25	\$0.00	\$0.24	\$2.20	\$1.00	\$1.91	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.00
NR one-day license	1-day	1-day	N	N	1-day	1-day	1-day	1-5-days	N	1-day	1-10-days	1-day	N	1-day	1-day	N	N
NR 2-6 days	N	3-days	3-days	3-days	3-days	3-days	3-days	1-5-days	2-days	3-days	1-10-days	3-day	2-days	5-days	N	N	3-days
NR one-week license (7 days)	N	one-week	1-week	N	N	1-week	N	N	N	N	1-10-days	1-week	1-week	N	1-week	N	N
NR 8 - 30 days	N	15-days	N	N	N	2-weeks	N	N	N	N	1-10-days	N	N	N	N	10-days	10-days
NR annual license or season	Annual	Season	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual*	Annual	Annual	Season	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
NR options one-year +	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NR Lifetime	N	N	N	N	N	NR Lifetime Sportsman	N
Family license option	N	N	N	N	N	Family	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N (for short term)	N
Option to purchase more than one license	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
VISA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MasterCard	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
American Express	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
Number of pages to complete process	5--8	~10	11	5--8	5--8	5--8	5--8	5--8	~10	~5	5--8	5--8	5--8	5--8	5--8	5--8	~20
Sign up for news	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
License confirmation pages says 'thank you' or 'congratulations'	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Authorization (Number=N/Signature=S/Both=B)	N	S	S	S	S	N	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	N	N		S
Print option (Print or PDF)	Print	Print	PDF	PDF	Print	Print	Print	PDF	Print	Print	PDF	PDF	Print	Print	Print	Print	Print
Email confirmation or agency email	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
Mail option available	Y	N	N/A	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Indicates hours/dates of validity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indicates state and water type	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Regulations sent/readily available	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Online Purchase Experience Score																	
Pre-Purchase Phase score	4	5	3	5	5	3	5	4	4	3	3	5	4	5	3	5	4
Purchase Phase Score	13	9	11	16	13	8	10	10	9	10	9	9	11	10	12	12	8
Post-Purchase Phase score	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3
Customer Support score	0	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
Overall Experience score	19	20	19	25	21	14	18	18	17	16	16	19	18	20	19	21	16

Note regarding mobile technology: N* indicates that state has mobile-friendly technology in place but not for license purchasing.
 Note regarding email confirmation: N indicates no immediate/short-term communications for ~2 weeks post-purchase.

Table A5. Online License Purchase Experience Data Summary Table (cont.)

Assessment Criteria	States																
	Ohio	Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Carolina	South Dakota	Tennessee	Texas	Utah	Vermont	Virginia	Washington	West Virginia	Wisconsin	Wyoming	
# of clicks from agency homepage	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	5	3	1	2	
First page explains process	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	
Multiple language options	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	5	N	N	N	N	
Mobile-friendly	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N*	N	N	N	
Contact information available	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
FAQs available	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	
Links to regulations	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	
Name	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Mailing address	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Email	O	M	O	M	O	O	M	O	M	M	M	M	O	M	M	N	
Phone number	O	O	O	M	N	O	N	M	N	N	M	O	M	O	N	M	
Social Security number	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	N	M	M	M	M	M	
State ID/Driver's License number	O	O	N	M	M	M	M	M	N	N	N	M	O	M	N	N	
Gender	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N	M	M	M	M	Y	M	M	M	
Weight/Height	M	M	N	M	M	N	N	M	M	M	M	N	Y	N	M	M	
Eye/Hair Color	M	N	N	M	M	N	N	M	M	M	M	N	Y	M	M	M	
Ethnicity	N	N	N	N	N	M	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
Count of mandatory demographic data	6	6	4	9	7	6	6	7	7	6	7	5	4	7	7	7	
Site remembers customer entries	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Customer account created	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Hunting and fishing licenses together	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	
Basic license terms identified	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	
Price of short-term fresh water license	\$11.00	\$35.00	\$16.75	\$26.70	\$16.00	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$19.00	\$21.00	\$12.00	\$20.00	\$21.00	\$20.15	\$18.00	\$10.00	\$26.50	
Additional cost for online customers	\$0.00	\$3.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3.00	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	
NR one-day license	1-day	N	1-day	1-day	N	N	1-day	N	1-day	1-day	1-day	N	1-day	1-day	1-day	1-6days	
NR 2-6 days	3-days	6-days	2-days, 3-days, 4-days	3-days	3-days	N	3-days	3-days	N	N	3-day	5-days	2-days, 3-days	N	2-days Great Lakes, 4-days	1-6days	
NR one-week license (7 days)	N	N	1-week	1-week	N	one-week	N	N	N	one-week	1-week	N	N	N	N	N	
NR 8 - 30 days	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	10-days	N	N	N	N	N	N	15-days	N	
NR annual license or season	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	
NR options one-year +	N	N	N	N	N	3-years	N	N	N	N	5-years	N	N	N	N	N	
Family license option	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	15-day family & annual family	N	
Option to purchase more than one license	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
VISA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
MasterCard	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
American Express	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	
Number of pages to complete process	5-8	11	5-8	5-8	5-8	~10	5-8	5-8	>8	~5	5-8	~10	5-8	5-8	5-8	~10	
Sign up for news	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	
License confirmation pages says 'thank you' or 'congratulations'	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	
Authorization (Number=N/Signature=S/Both=B)	S	S	B	S	S	S	N	S	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Print option (Print or PDF)	Print	PDF	Print	PDF	PDF	Print	N	PDF	Print	Print	PDF	PDF	Print	Print	PDF	Print	
Email confirmation or agency email	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	
Mail option available	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	
Indicates hours/dates of validity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Indicates state and water type	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	
Regulations sent/readily available	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
Online Purchase Experience Score																	
Pre-Purchase Phase score	5	4	4	5	6	3	3	4	5	4	4	5	0	3	5	3	
Purchase Phase score	11	9	13	10	10	10	11	10	10	12	10	12	12	11	10	9	
Post-Purchase Phase score	2	3	1	2	3	3	1	2	2	4	4	4	2	4	2	2	
Customer Support score	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	3	3	4	1	1	
Overall Experience score	19	17	20	18	21	18	16	17	20	22	19	24	17	22	18	15	

Note regarding mobile technology: N* indicates that state has mobile-friendly technology in place but not for license purchasing.
 Note regarding email confirmation: N indicates no immediate/short-term communications for ~2 weeks post-purchase.