

United States Department of Commerce Open Government Plan



The Commerce Department's mission is to help make American businesses more innovative at home and more competitive abroad.



September
2015
Version 3.5



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Financial Officer and
Assistant Secretary for Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

FOREWORD

September 2015

The Department of Commerce (the Department) is committed to the principles of Open Government, and we are pleased to present this mid-cycle release of the 2015 Department of Commerce Open Government Plan, version 3.5 (the Plan). The Plan is updated annually to ensure the most current status of existing initiatives along with discussion of new initiatives are made available to the public. This release represents its sixth publication and builds on the Department's long history of information dissemination and the adoption of new tools and technology to enable transparency. This plan features an exciting and new flagship initiative called the "Commerce Data Advisory Council" (CDAC). Its addition, along with key progress updates on Open Government initiatives from our bureaus and operating units (BOU), make this an exciting edition of the Plan. A summary of what is new in this version can be found in the "What's New" section after the Introduction. You will see that the Department continues to encourage and strive for increased participation and collaboration among its employees, other government agencies, and the American people to build upon our strategic goal of Operational Excellence.

The Department invites the American public to join in as it moves toward becoming a more open and effective provider of government services and information. Please feel free to provide feedback by submitting comments to open@doc.gov.

Sincerely,
Dr. Catrina D. Purvis
Chief Privacy Officer, and
Director, Office of Privacy
and Open Government

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Introduction

The Department’s mission is to help make American businesses more innovative at home and more competitive abroad. Comprised of twelve (12) different agencies responsible for everything from weather forecasts to patent protection, the Department touches lives of Americans every day and fosters economic growth and opportunity to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and stewardship. For over 100 years, it has partnered with the U.S. business community to maintain a prosperous, productive America committed to trade, competitiveness, and environmental stewardship. The concept of Open Government is integral to the Department’s mission and is one of the innovator leaders in the Open Government Initiative.

The Department provides annual updates of its Plan which are posted at www.Commerce.gov/open, and this version 3.5 represents its sixth publication. It provides an overview of the Department’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, status of programs and an assessment of functional areas which are critical to Open Government, features three “flagship” Open Government initiatives, and highlights Open Government accomplishments of ongoing initiatives across the Department’s Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU). To learn more about the Department, and the Secretary on social media, take a look at the below links:

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Commercegov>),
- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/CommerceNews>),
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/CommerceGov>), and
- Flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/commercegov/>).

What’s New

This mid-cycle version of the Department’s Open Government plan includes some very exciting initiatives. One of the key efforts during this period is the Department’s creation of a [Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#), led by Chief Data Officer (CDO), which includes 19 of the distinguished private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the United States (U.S.). The [CDAC](#) will help guide DOC’s data revolution to foster innovation, assist in the creation of jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society. There are also many other new initiatives across multiple BOUs.

- The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) enhanced its Information Asset Inventory (IAI) by creating an enterprise-wide inventory of non-public datasets and increasing BEA application program interface (API) capabilities to add industry and international datasets.

- The Census Bureau (Census) API flagship initiative has been enhanced with over 60 API endpoints across 17 different datasets. There are also now more than 7,600 key requests, and more than 614 million accesses. In addition Census has added nine new initiatives that increase the quantity and improve the quality of information assets (IA) made publicly available.
- The International Trade Administration (ITA) increased the amount of trade-related data directly accessible to the public, via the ITA Trade Developer Portal (TDP). The ITA also established a new Digital Communications Office and Advisory Council to develop and implement new strategies to engage users and share information effectively through digital channels and means.
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) initiatives included: improving access to publications by NIST authors; improving NIST’s data management infrastructure; engaging citizens to develop a disaster resilience framework; establishing new centers of excellence; and the Head Health Challenge III – Advanced Materials for Impact Mitigation. The NIST is also continuing to improve its proactive disclosure efforts through public collaboration and meetings to determine the most sought IA within the NIST IAI.
- The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) initiatives included: implementing of the Big Data Partnership; Digital Object Identifiers; Redesigning of NOAA.gov; and the consolidating of corporate websites; wireless emergency alerts and common alerting protocol.
- The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) developed initiatives to enhance open data; improve Big Data access and consumption; and increased participation by utilizing several major public-private partnerships with representatives of the Additive Manufacturing, Bio-Chem-Pharma, Cybersecurity, and Software industries.

Additional information and updates on the above initiatives are available in the “Ongoing Initiatives at the Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU) (Sub Agencies)” section of this plan.

Background

*O*n January 21, 2009, President Obama issued the first executive memorandum of his Administration, entitled “Transparency and Open Government” (http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20090121/2009_transparency_memo.pdf). In his memorandum, the President established three guiding principles for the conduct of government activities: Government should be transparent, participatory, and collaborative. On December 8, 2009, the

“President Obama took office with a call for unprecedented openness in government, and we are heeding that call.”

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued the Memorandum M-10-06 “Open Government Directive” at the following link (http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-06.pdf) to facilitate guidance on specific actions federal agencies must take to increase transparency, participation, and collaboration in government, and established a requirement for agency publication of an Open Government Plan.

Program Oversight and the Open Government Senior Leaders Group

The Department carries out its programmatic responsibilities through its 12 BOUs identified below in “Figure 1.”

Figure 1 - Commerce Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU)



Each of these BOUs, through their distinct missions, contributes to the Department’s overall objective of promoting economic growth for the nation and providing opportunities for all Americans. These organizations are driving Open Government through initiatives that range from improving patent processing to developing sustainable and resilient fisheries, from transforming service delivery to businesses, to expanding international markets for U.S. firms, and from creating scientific and technological innovation to advancing measurement science.

Departmental employees are called upon by the Secretary to seek opportunities for greater collaboration, among the BOUs, other federal agencies, and the public. The entire workforce is challenged to bring together ongoing initiatives across the Department to form a unified strategic approach to pursue opportunities to collaborate, increase performance, and enhance



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customer service. Employees are asked to think creatively about how to work together to harness the diverse talents.

To further strengthen institutionalization of Open Government transparency, participation, and collaboration principals and initiatives, the Department created an interdisciplinary Department-wide leadership, planning, and execution team to guide and implement the Open Government program called the Open Government Senior Leaders (OGSL). The original membership of this OGSL group included the Department's Chief Information Officer (CIO), General Counsel (GC), Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA), as well as representatives from the Office of Public Affairs (OPA), the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning (OPSP), the Department's BOUs, and subject matter experts from key mission areas. The OGSL group provided extensive support to early Data.gov efforts which, as the central site for US Government data, is essential to the Administration's overall Open Government program. Today, the OGSL group, through its designated points of contact (POC) is responsible for ensuring that the Open Government efforts are integrated into the functional processes of each BOU's program and business lines.

In addition, the Department's Chief Privacy Officer (CPO) leads the Office of Privacy and Open Government (OPOG) and is charged with ensuring that the Department is appropriately addressing all matters of Privacy, Open Government, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Federal Advisory Committees Act (FACA), and Directives Management across all Departmental initiatives.

Each Departmental Secretary has called upon employees to engage proactively to continually build new and improve existing best practices for Open Government, emphasizing the importance of increasing avenues of outreach and communications. The CommerceConnect Initiative represents a success, which streamlined how businesses access government services and solutions across the entire Department. Building upon the synergy from CommerceConnect and its ability to reach across and connect businesses with multiple programs and agencies, the government used CommerceConnect as a model for BusinessUSA.gov. The BusinessUSA program is an intergovernmental effort focused on the provision of outstanding customer service to America's small businesses and exporters in order to make it easier for them to grow and hire. This inter-agency program is led by an executive committee which is made up of the Federal CIO, Federal Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Department's CFO/ASA, and the Small Business Administration.

The Department is continuing to develop its Open Government efforts through interagency initiatives, in-person and online public engagements, and internal programs that include training, collaboration, and modification of existing internal processes. Commerce has embraced the President's command to ensure a transparent and open government in spirit and in practice.

Building for Tomorrow - An Overview of the 2014-2018

Strategic Plan

America is Open for Business. The vision laid out in the Department’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan will ensure that this message continues to resonate across the country and throughout the world. It provides a broad foundation for economic growth and opportunity by focusing on five key priorities:



SUMMARY OF FY 2014 – 2018 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	
<p>1 TRADE AND INVESTMENT Expand the U.S. economy through increased exports and attract foreign investment that lead to more and better American jobs</p> <p>1.1 Increase opportunities for U.S. companies by opening markets globally (ITA, NOAA, NTIA, USPTO)</p> <p>1.2 Increase U.S. exports by broadening and deepening the U.S. exporter base (ESA, ISA, SSA, ITA, MESA, OS)</p> <p>1.3 Increase high-impact inward foreign direct investment into the United States (EDA, ESA, ITA)</p> <p>1.4 Strengthen fair competition in international trade for U.S. firms and workers by addressing and resolving foreign unfair trade practices and enforcing international trade agreements (ITA)</p>	<p>2 INNOVATION Foster a more innovative U.S. economy—one that is better at inventing, improving, and commercializing products and technologies that lead to higher productivity and competitiveness</p> <p>2.1 Grow a more productive, agile, and high-value manufacturing sector through partnerships and collaboration that accelerate technology development and commercialization (NIST)</p> <p>2.2 Increase the capacity of U.S. regional economies to accelerate the production of value-added goods and services by providing services to and investments in business and communities (ESA, ISA, MESA, NIST, USPTO)</p> <p>2.3 Strengthen the Nation’s digital economy by championing policies that will maximize the potential of the Internet, expanding broadband capacity, and enhancing cybersecurity (NIST, NTIA, USPTO)</p> <p>2.4 Accelerate the development of industry-led skills strategies that result in a productive workforce for employers and high-quality jobs for workers (EDA, ISA, NIST)</p> <p>2.5 Accelerate growth of innovation-intensive economic sectors by building public and private capacity to invent, improve, and commercialize new products and services (EDA, NIST, USPTO)</p>
<p>3 ENVIRONMENT Ensure communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment</p> <p>3.1 Advance the understanding and prediction of changes in the environment through world class science and observations (NIST, NOAA)</p> <p>3.2 Improve preparedness, resilience, and recovery from weather and water events by building a Weather Ready Nation (ESA, NOAA)</p> <p>3.3 Strengthen the resiliency of communities and regions by delivering targeted services to build capacity (EDA, ESA, NIST, NOAA)</p> <p>3.4 Foster healthy and sustainable marine resources, habitats, and ecosystems through improved management and governance (NOAA)</p> <p>3.5 Enable U.S. businesses to adapt and prosper by developing environmental and climate-informed solutions (ESA, ITA, NIST, NOAA)</p>	<p>4 DATA Improve government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy</p> <p>4.1 Transform the Department’s data capacity to enhance the value, accessibility and usability of Commerce data for government, business and the public (ISA, NIST, NOAA, NTIS)</p> <p>4.2 Improve data-based services, decision-making, and data sharing within the Department and with other parts of the federal government (ESA, ISA, ITA)</p> <p>4.3 Collaborate with the business community to provide more timely, accurate, and relevant data products and services for customers (ESA, NOAA)</p>
<p>5 OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE Deliver better services, solutions, and outcomes that benefit the American people</p> <p>5.1 Strengthen organizational capabilities to drive customer-focused, outcomes-driven mission performance (CS, AI, BWA)</p>	

Note: EDA includes the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and the Census Bureau.
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- **Trade and Investment:** Expanding the U.S. economy through increased exports and foreign direct investment that leads to more and better American jobs.
- **Innovation:** Fostering a more innovative U.S. economy—one that is better at inventing, improving, and commercializing products and technologies that lead to higher productivity and competitiveness.
- **Environment:** Ensuring communities and businesses have the necessary information, products, and services to prepare for and prosper in a changing environment.
- **Data:** Improving government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy.
- **Operational Excellence:** Delivering better services, solutions, and outcomes that benefit the American people.

The Department and its BOUs will work together to drive progress in the five goals and priorities, identified above. Open Government is tightly woven into each. The Strategic plan emphasizes that the foundation to all of the Department’s goal areas is data. Data which is also key to Open Government is recognized in the Strategic plan as the fuel that powers the 21st Century’s economy. Whether it is ITA determining which foreign markets to target, EDA understanding a regional economy, NOAA’s terabytes of weather and climate data helping predict severe events and enabling weather forecasts, or NIST data and models catalyzing advanced manufacturing, the Department’s data enables the setting of conditions which enable economic growth. It touches every American and informs daily business decisions. The

Department's data enable start-ups, moves markets, protects life and property, and powers both small and multi-billion dollar companies. The BEA produces estimates of gross domestic product (GDP), a key indicator of the health of the economy. The Census carries out the constitutionally mandated decennial census, which determines the allocation of billions of federal dollars for states and the drawing of Congressional districts. Data is not only a means of advancing the trade, innovation, and environment goals, it is also a national asset with untapped potential. The ESA will work with the private sector to harness Big Data and accelerate a data-enabled economy.

The Department's Strategic Plan incorporates the Open Government charge for a more transparent, participatory, and collaborative government supported by the production and publication of high value information in data formats, which are consumable by the American public. The Strategic Plan is available at [Commerce Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018](#).

Program and Functional Area Updates

Open Data

OMB Memorandum M-13-13 ([M-13-13, Open Data Policy – Managing Information as an Asset](#)), requires agencies to manage information they produce from data as an asset throughout its life cycle and to create an IAI of all agency assets. The IAI is to include public, non-public and restricted assets. Agencies must evaluate all assets not made publicly available to determine the reasonableness of potential future release. M-13-13 also requires agencies to collect or create information in manner that supports downstream information processing and dissemination. This includes using machine-readable and open formats, data standards, and common core and extensible metadata for all new information creation and collection efforts. Agencies must ensure information stewardship through the use of open licenses and review of information for privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions prior to release. M-13-13 applies to all new information collection, creation, and system development efforts as well as major modernization projects that update or re-design existing information systems.

The Department's Chief Data Officer (CDO) in partnership with each of the BOUs have created a path to maximize the use of IA, foster IA-driven policymaking, and increase citizen awareness on the value and consumability of the IAs.

This is occurring through:

- Expanding IA user engagement and creating a user engagement strategy;
- Creating developer relations teams;
- Launching cross-bureau IA initiatives;
- Undertaking demand-driven IA dissemination to unlock high-value IA;

- Increasing Commerce IA “Brand Recognition.”

Expanding Data User Engagement and Creating a User Engagement Strategy

In order to promote and expand best practices in user engagement, the Department is pushing significantly to expand the user base with a “user first” approach. This approach will expose valuable data assets to a massive and untapped community of innovators, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and the general public.

This expanded data engagement will be accomplished by:

- Creating a user engagement strategy:
 - Building on existing and creating new Cross-BOU teams to identify best practices in user engagement;
 - Creating a user engagement playbook all BOUs can use to improve/create user engagement strategies.
- Creating BOU developer relations teams to work with the CDO on expanding outreach and engagement with large community of innovative developers.

Launching Cross-BOU IA Initiatives

During this reporting period, the CDO brought together multiple BOUs who’s IAs are typically related in order to improve the consumability of the Department’s IAs. Bringing the IAs together improved the delivery and made information more intuitive, user-friendly, and helped to maximize use and surface relevant IAs.

- *Trade IA initiative:* Led by ESA and ITA, and building on the launch of the ITA TDP, this initiative will identify and prioritize key data on exports and trade to make available via high quality APIs.
- *Place-based initiatives:* Led by Census and building from the Open City Data Challenge, this initiative will work to bring the Department IAs together with local IAs to create more focused, scalable tools for policy makers to tackle common challenges.
- *Mapping:* Led by NOAA and building from their ongoing work in Geospatial mapping efforts, this cross bureau project will explore the creation of a common, open source map as an IA visualization tool.
- *Workforce and skills IA initiative:* Led by Office of the Secretary (OS), Office of Policy and Strategic Planning (OPSP) and CDO, this initiative will leverage private sector partners and identify opportunities to share IA on jobs and more effectively disseminate labor market information.

Undertaking Demand-driven IA Dissemination to Unlock High-value IA

Using a combination of user feedback and website analytics, the CDO, CIO and BOUs have identified the most in-demand IAs and prioritized their release, in the most useful formats along with supporting documentation. This is being accomplished by:

- *Creation of the Department IAI:*
 - CDO and CIO convened a cross-BOU group to define the necessary elements for an IAI and catalogue.
 - CDO and CIO are working with each BOU to create a plan to inventory and catalogue all IAs.
- *Demand based prioritization of IA releases:*
 - CDO and BOUs are utilizing web analytics and demand-metrics to prioritize and unlock our most high value, in demand IAs.
 - CDO and BOUs are working with user communities to create IA feedback loops that improve quality of the Department IA products.
- *API and Metadata Strategy:*
 - CDO and BOUs are working to create an API strategy and metadata standardization plan.
 - BOUs are creating a “product” lead for each IA release or new IA product to ensure that the IA products released are responsive to user needs, include feedback loops to iterate on products, and create aggressive, but workable timelines.

Increasing Commerce IA “Brand Recognition:”

A challenge faced by several BOUs is the lack of public recognition for the IA they produce and release. Starting in early February, 2015, the CDO has started a process to develop strategies to increase public awareness of the IA Commerce produces. This strategy includes:

- Creating a media and promotion strategy;
- Leveraging Commerce Principals;
- Identifying Branding opportunities.

Moving Forward with Open Data the Department’s CDO and CIO will continue working with the Data.gov POCs within the BOUs to improve the baseline IAI. The CDO and CIO are responsible for developing guidelines and implementing procedures to build the complete IAI. The CDO and BOU CIO will work with their business/program offices and data stewards to develop procedures to identify IAs and determine if the IAs are public, non-public, or restricted. As IAs are identified, any flagged as non-public or restricted, will be confirmed as such by the BOU CIO to ensure appropriateness of the determination as consistent with M13-13 guidance. The ultimate goal is to make the IA available to the public, wherever possible.

Each BOU and its program offices have been directed to catalogue, document, and assess whether each identified IA can be made available for public consumption. Each BOU CIO is responsible for constructing a system to best distribute the IA. To assist in this effort the Department provides a page for program developers at the [Department of Commerce Developer](#) web page, which can be used to enhance the public’s ability to utilize the information published.

Once data is available to consumers, each BOU will solicit feedback on the information they publish. The [U.S. Census Bureau's developer hub](#) is identified as a best practice for efforts in obtaining feedback from customers. There are other examples such as, the industry-led consultation groups run by the [International Trade Administration](#) National Export Initiative (NEI) NEXT program ([NEI NEXT](#)) that provide venues for constructive conversations about data and improving consumability across multiple environments.

Detailed information on what each BOU is doing to improve information dissemination is provided in the “Ongoing Initiatives at the BOUs” section of this plan.

For more information visit: [Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#) or [Commerce on Data.gov](#) or

Privacy

The Department assigns high priority to privacy considerations in all systems and programs. It recognizes that individual trust in the privacy and security of personally identifiable information (PII) and Business Identifiable Information (BII) is the foundation of trust in the government and the Department in the 21st Century. As an employer, a collector of data on millions of individuals and companies, the developer of information-management standards, and a federal advisor on information management policy, the Department strives to be a leader in best privacy practices and privacy policy.

OMB Memorandum M–13–13 requires departments and agencies to review IA’s for privacy, confidentiality, security, or other restrictions on information released. The Department has a robust Privacy Program charged to assist the Department and BOU CIOs with meeting this requirement. The necessary balance between the “presumption in favor of openness” and the duty to protect and safeguard PII and BII is well understood. The Department’s OPOG works with the GC, CIO and across BOUs to ensure that information is appropriately secured to prevent information loss or erroneous release.

Authorities and requirements for the Department’s Privacy program include:

- The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a
<http://www.opm.gov/investigations/requesting-investigation-copies/freedom-of-information-and-privacy-act/> provides privacy protections for records containing information about individuals (i.e., citizen and legal permanent resident) that are collected and maintained by the federal government and are retrieved by a personal identifier. The Act requires agencies to safeguard information contained in a system of records;
- The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. § 3541,

<http://csrc.nist.gov/drivers/documents/FISMA-final.pdf> requires agencies to develop, document, and implement an agency-wide program to provide information security for the information and information systems that support the operations and assets of an agency;

- OMB Memorandum M-03-22, Guidance for Implementing the Privacy Provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002 (September 26, 2003),
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda_m03-22 requires agencies to conduct reviews of how information about individuals is handled when information technology (IT) is used to collect new information, or when agencies develop or buy new IT systems to handle collections of personally identifiable information, and to describe how the agency handles information that individuals provide electronically;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-15, Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (May 22, 2006),
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m-06-15.pdf> reiterates and emphasizes agency responsibilities under law and policy to appropriately safeguard sensitive PII and train employees regarding their responsibilities for protecting privacy;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-16, “Protection of Sensitive Agency Information” (June 23, 2006),
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m06-16.pdf> requires agencies to implement encryption protections for PII being transported and/or stored offsite;
- OMB Memorandum M-06-19, “Reporting Incidents Involving Personally Identifiable Information and Incorporating the Cost for Security in Agency Information Technology Investments” (July 12, 2006),
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m06-19.pdf> requires agencies to report all incidents involving PII to US-CERT within one hour of discovery of the incident;
- OMB’s Memorandum entitled “Recommendations for Identity Theft Related Data Breach Notification” (September 20, 2006)
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2006/task_force_theft_memo.pdf outlines recommendations to agencies from the President's Identity Theft Task Force for developing agency planning and response procedures for addressing PII incidents that could result in identify theft;
- OMB Memorandum M-07-16, “Safeguarding Against and Responding to the Breach of Personally Identifiable Information” (May 22, 2007),

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/fy2007/m07-16.pdf>

identifies existing procedures and establishes several new actions agencies should take to safeguard PII and to respond to Privacy Incidents;

- OMB Memorandum M-11-02, “Sharing Data While Protecting Privacy” (November 3, 2010),

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2011/m11-02.pdf>

requires agencies to develop and implement solutions that allow data sharing to move forward in a manner that complies with applicable privacy laws, regulations, and policies;

The Department’s PII incident reports are submitted to the U.S. - Computer Emergency Readiness Team (CERT) within one hour of discovery/detection, in addition to the Department's CPO and the Department's Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT). The Department produces and submits Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) reports in accordance with OMB guidance.

For more information visit: [Commerce Privacy Program](#)

Whistleblower Protection

The Department recognizes that the effectiveness of its Whistleblower Protection Program is critical to ensuring transparency in government operations. The Department does not tolerate retaliation against whistleblowers. It is prohibited to take or fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action against an employee or applicant because of disclosure of information that an individual reasonably believes to evidence violation of law, rule or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, unless disclosure of such information is specifically prohibited by law or specifically required by Executive Order (EO) to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs.

The provisions of the Department's nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements are consistent with, and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or EO relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling EO and statutory provisions are incorporated into the Department's agreements and are controlling. See:

- Executive Order No. 13526;

- Section 721 1 of Title 5, United States Code (governing disclosures to Congress);
- Section 1034 of Title 10, United States Code, as amended by the Military Whistleblower Protection Act (governing disclosure to Congress by members of the military);
- Section 2302(b)(8) of Title 5, United States Code, as amended by the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (governing disclosures of illegality, waste, fraud, abuse or public health or safety threats);
- Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982 (50 U.S.C. 421 et seq.) (governing disclosures that could expose confidential Government agents);
- the statutes which protect against disclosure that may compromise the national security, including sections 641, 793, 794, 798, and 952 of title 18, United States Code; and
- Section 4(b) of the Subversive Activities Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 783(b)).

For more information visit:

<http://www.commerce.gov/Whistleblower%20Protection%20Enhancement%20Act>

Websites

The Department leverages its websites for Open Government. A Departmental [Web Advisory Council](#) (WAC) ensures policies are in place for consistency and ease of use of all Departmental websites. The WAC website is provided to web managers and developers to ensure awareness of all mandatory policies and recommended best practices. The website also provides links to resources and guidance on how to comply with the [Department's Policies and Best Practices](#). All Departmental websites must comply with the policies listed on this site. Each BOU CIO is required to certify annually that all websites comply with the policies published on this site.

The Department is using the guidance provided in the Digital Strategy to redesign its web presence. This guidance, along with input gathered from public and internal consultations, was provided to a website redesign team. The team, using qualitative and quantitative analytics, updated the design focusing on consumer requirements of topic-based navigation and user friendly presentation. This ensured usability across multiple screens including mobile devices.

In February 2015, the Department launched the new Commerce website (<http://www.commerce.gov/>). The site included a component to capture comments received from the individual users who visited the beta site through a prominent new feature “provide feedback” button..

Several BOU websites have also been redesigned along the principles of customer-first, and mobile-friendly. It is now the Department’s standard practice to utilize built-in feedback

mechanisms to help improve the website. These feedback links are designed to ensure anyone can submit comments.

For more information visit: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/webresources/> or <http://www.commerce.gov/digitalstrategy>

Transparency

The Department improves transparency by proactively participating in and posting its information publicly at [Data.gov](#), [eRulemaking](#), [IT Dashboard](#), [Recovery.gov](#), and [USAspending.gov](#) initiatives. It participates in the eRulemaking initiative [Regulations.gov](#) for all Departmental generated regulations to ensure full public disclosure and collection of comments are addressed appropriately. The latest information on the Department's Information Technology (IT) investments can be found by clicking this link [Commerce IT Dashboard submission](#). The Department also participates in utilizing the [FOIAonline](#), a government partnership that provides shared services for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) processing along with providing public access to many requested and released documents.

Public Notice

The Department has an extensive outreach program to ensure the public is informed and up-to-date on agency actions and business. The outreach programs include: public meetings, stakeholder meetings, online press conferences, and numerous technology-enabled public engagement forums which promote transparency, participation and collaboration. The Office of Digital Engagement, within the Department's OPA, specifically focuses on outreach efforts, ensuring effective two-way communications with the public about the Department's services. In addition, the Department is working through the BOUs to enable outreach to the appropriate communities of practice and interest (COPs/COIs) within the various business lines. You can read more about the Office of Digital Engagement in the OS Initiatives section of this document.

Below are BOU public outreach links:

Bureau of the Census (Census)

[Census Advisory Committees \(CAC\)](#)

[Foreign Trade Outreach and Education](#)

Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)

[Commerce Data Advisory Council \(CDAC\)](#)

International Trade Administration (ITA)

[AES Meetings and Presentations AES Town Hall Meetings](#)

Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

[National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprise](#)

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

[NIST Events](#)

[Energy Sector Identity and Access Management Use Case](#)

[National Conference on Weights & Measures \(NCWM\) Related Reports & Meeting Agendas](#)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

[Florida Keys - Sanctuary Advisory Council Meetings, Announcements and Actions](#)

[National Weather Service - Climate protection Center Meetings](#)

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

[FirstNet Meetings Documents](#)

[Internet Policy Task Force's](#)

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

[Public Advisor Committees](#)

Records Management

The Department implements the largest portion of the records management program through the BOUs. This allows those who are closest to the mission and understand the mission's unique needs to determine the appropriate record schedules. Each BOU Records Officer is responsible for reporting directly to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and is responsible for the implementation of OMB Memorandum M-12-18 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/memoranda/2012/m-12-18.pdf>) for their BOU. At an enterprise level, the Department is in the early stages of building a supporting program for the BOUs to leverage.

The Department's Records Officers promote collaboration, the sharing of tools and templates, and provide in-person and virtual collaboration space for issue resolution. The Department teamed with the Department of Transportation to establish and serve on the Core Team for the Federal Records Officer Network (FRON). The Department uses the FRON to meet M-12-18 by leveraging best practices, tools, and templates across the federal agencies, as well as a forum to address M-12-18 issues.

USPTO is developing a series of virtual training courses for All-Hands. The courses will provide lessons and materials to target improvement in records management from the user and

trainee point of view. In addition, the Department has identified 39 areas of practical application to be developed into a future online resource that dovetails with the virtual training. These resources are being written so that they can be leveraged by any BOU. The Department is integrating in the recommendations from the FRON during this development period.

Each BOU expects to initiate email management by 2016 and electronic records management by 2019. The Department is pursuing policy and other actions to support the BOU efforts.

The Department has utilized a series of meetings to bridge the BOUs and the Federal Records Centers (FRCs) to identify records ready for disposition, removal of freezes (when appropriate), and ensure schedules are established for unscheduled records.

The Department has been active in providing guidance and feedback on the development of the professional Records Management job series via the Federal Records Council (FRC), OPM, and the FRON.

As changes are made to the Department's records management process and procedures, updates will be provided in the Open Government Plan. One of the first changes is to rebuild the public facing records management website to create a 21st Century interface following the guidance set forth within the strategic plan.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests



Within the last year, the Department has improved the efficiency of its FOIA program by moving from a paper based records system to an electronic system. The FOIA business processes is continually reviewed to determine the need for updates to ensure the program runs efficiently and effectively. To measure the program's success the Department-wide backlog reduction goals is measured through

Balanced Score Card reporting.

The Department utilizes a multi-track processing system. The three tracks are simple, complex, and expedited. Requesters can track the status of their FOIA request to the USPTO using the following link: <https://foia.uspto.gov/palMain.aspx> and click on the "Check FOIA Request Status" and for all other Commerce BOUs, requesters can track the status of their FOIA request by going to <https://foia.uspto.gov/palMain.aspx>. The USPTO system allows requesters to determine what stage the request is in (*Received; Assigned for Processing; On Hold-Need Info/Clarification; In Process; Cost Estimate Sent; Completed; or Closed*). They will also see a key to explain what each of these statuses means.

For requests submitted through [FOIAonline](#), requesters will know where in the course of processing a particular request stands through notifications. Each requesters is notified when a

request is submitted, when it is evaluated (scope, fee waiver, expedited processing issues), assigned, processed, and closed.

Information on the Department's FOIA program can be found at [Commerce FOIA webpage](#) and/or [Electronic Library \(Formerly e-Reading Room\)](#).

Proactive Disclosures

All FOIA Officers routinely review FOIA requests to identify types of frequently requested records and other records of interest for proactive posting. Additionally, the Department is proactively posting documents responsive to FOIA requests in electronic format through [FOIAonline](#), an automated online tracking and records management system. Released documents are uploaded to [FOIAonline](#), where they are available at no cost, to the general public at <https://FOIAonline.regulations.gov>. Additionally, all FOIA professionals provide guidance and training to encourage proactive disclosures whenever possible. All component subject matter experts (SME) in various business units routinely identify records to be made publicly available. Once identified, these records are uploaded to websites.

Congressional Requests

The Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA) supports the Department's Secretary on matters pertaining to legislative issues, congressional relations, and on the Department's relationship with state, county, municipal and tribal governments and their associations. OLIA is the focal point within the Department for coordinating all activities involving legislative and congressional relations and activities. The Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental affairs is delegated authority to provide policy guidance and oversight of Department legislative and congressional relations and activities. The OLIA Assistant Secretary also develops an integrated Department plan to collect, coordinate and distribute timely and accurate information relating to those relations and activities to the Secretary and the Department. OLIA accomplishes these goals with the support of the legislative affairs offices in the Department's BOUs.

OLIA's authorities rest with a Department Organizational Order (DOO) 10-12 "Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs," which prescribes the top level organization, authority, functions and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs and, therefore, OLIA. The DOO can be accessed at the following website: http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/doos/doo10_12.html.

In addition to the DOO, other OLIA responsibilities and procedures are laid out in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 218-2 “Congressional and Legislative Affairs,” which details policies and procedures for responding to Congressional and Intergovernmental inquiries and outlines other procedures for OLIA. All of the DAOs can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/daos.html>.

Several other DAOs have portions that reference or relate to processes or duties to which OLIA is a party, including:

- DAO 202-334 “Details”: This DAO has a section on the Department’s details to Congressional Committees. Office purview: Assistant Secretary for Administration;
- DAO 203-1 “Appropriation Requests and Related Budget Matters.” Office purview: Assistant Secretary for Administration. It details how Office of Budget (OB) interacts with Congress on issues related to appropriations. In practice, OLIA supports OB in their efforts;
- DAO 218-3 “Reports to Congress Required by Law.” Office purview: the Office of the General Counsel. It prescribes the procedures and responsibilities for sending Departmental reports to Congress. In addition, it details clearance and signature authorities. The Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs is one of the Secretarial Officers responsible for clearing Congressional reports; and
- DAO 218-1 “Legislative Activities.” Office purview: the Office of the General Counsel, however, it details the duties and policies of the Department with respect to legislative activities.

Declassification

*T*he Department’s and BOU, specifically those with Original Classification Authority (OCA) can declassify documents. The Director of the Office of Security (OSY) is one of the three OCAs within the DOC and will give final approval for document declassification, after the document has been reviewed by the subject matter experts. When the declassification has been determined and the document(s) have historical permanent value they are transferred to NARA via their web link at <http://www.archives.gov/declassification/ndc/releases.html>.

The OSY collaborates with NARA to develop schedules for the declassification of records in the National Archives of the U.S. and the presidential libraries to ensure declassification is accomplished in a timely manner. NARA provides information about the records proposed for automatic declassification. BOUs consult with the Department’s Records Management Officer before reviewing records in their holdings. This ensures that appropriate procedures are established for maintaining the integrity of the records and provides NARA accurate information about BOU declassification actions when records are transferred to NARA. NARA provides guidance to the Department’s Records Management Officer concerning the

requirements for notification of declassification actions on transferred records, box labeling, and identifying exempt information in the records.

The OSY is required to submit an Agency Security Classification Management Program Data (SF 311), which is used to collect data from executive branch agencies that create and/or handle classified national security information. The report includes: the number of original classification authorities; number of original and derivatively classified decisions; number of mandatory declassification review requests and appeals; number of pages declassified; number of inspections conducted; and number of classification guides. The information is submitted to the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), and is compiled, analyzed, reported, and published in ISOO's annual report to the President. The reports are available in printed format upon request or can be downloaded from the ISOO website at

<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/reports/>.

Most documents are declassified in accordance to their declassification date, or subject to Part 3 declassification, of EO 13526. All classified records that (1) are more than 25 years old and, (2) have been determined to have permanent historical value under Title 44 of the U.S. Code shall be automatically declassified whether or not the records have been reviewed. To the extent practicable, operating units shall adopt a system of records management that will facilitate the public release of documents at the time such documents are declassified based on the automatic declassification provisions of Executive Order (E.O.) 13526.

The DOC is a Non-Title 50 agency and has no public links or webpages where the public can learn about the agency's declassification program, and or access declassified material. Declassified documents are only accessible via NARA at

<http://www.archives.gov/declassification/ndc/releases.html> or ISOO

<http://www.archives.gov/isoo/>.

Participation

Participation is critical for the Department to achieve its strategic goals. The BOUs are actively using meetings, conferences, and extensive outreach programs to ensure the public, private, and government participation is fulfilling the Department's mission. This includes issuing requests for information (RFIs) for input to building the requirements, outcomes and way ahead for programs. One such example is the [BusinessUSA](#) initiative which reaches out to public, Federal, state, local, and tribal partners to ensure that they are providing the best products in the most efficient manner.

The Department has implemented a digital strategy of shared services to gain economies of scale, while providing state of the art tools for analytics and collaboration to effectively communicate with our partners. This enables full participation without traveling. The

Department's CIO is working to improve these shared services capabilities while reducing the cost.

All Departmental BOUs have similar outreach programs. Many of which are linked in the Public Notice section of this document.

Collaboration

The Department is continually working across the public/private sector, federal, state, local, tribal, and international government levels to build partnerships to develop and share best practices to initiate an environment for economic growth and opportunity. To achieve this goal, the use of collaboration tools, public meetings, and feedback efforts, such as website comments and social media are used to identify innovative ways to effectively collaborate.

The Department is continuing to accomplish these objectives by:

- Including processes and best practices that improve and allow effective communication between the Department and the public sector, ensuring openness and transparency is part of all new programs and initiatives, as well as, any updates initiated to existing programs and initiatives;
- Maintaining a leadership role in the Open Government initiatives, by building into the information lifecycle best practices that increase the value of information and tools made available to the American public;
- Continuing to build and improve existing partnerships with the public and private sectors, which includes businesses, academia nonprofit organizations, inter-governmental at federal, state, and local, to broaden input obtained for consideration during the regulatory process;
- Improving the creation of new online tools and expanding existing tools and processes to enhance public and private sector access to the Department's information, services, and increase the understanding of funding opportunities; and
- Improving and increasing the use of social media and other collaboration tools to encourage the public to participate in idea-generation and use feedback on the Department's initiatives to establish two-way conversations.

The [Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship](#) is representative of a successful initiative in this area. It is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between eleven (11) of America's most inspiring and prominent entrepreneurs, the White House, the Department and the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development partners. Another

significant collaboration effort of the Department is the [NEI NEXT](#) initiative. [NEI NEXT](#) is collaboration with industry groups and the public around aimed at streamlining the export process and reducing wait times for American goods and services at ports.

Flagship Initiatives

The Department now has three (3) Flagship Open Government Initiatives: Creation of the [CDAC](#), [BusinessUSA](#), and the [FOIAonline](#) Request Management and Reporting Initiative. The CDAC advances Open Government and serves as the frontline for engagement between private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S allowing the Department to build its IA strategy. [BusinessUSA](#) and [FOIAonline](#) were selected as key to the Presidential Management Agenda (PMA) and the Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan (NAP) 2.0. [BusinessUSA](#) supports the PMA by increasing America’s ability to create jobs with a “No Wrong Door Approach” in “Making It Easier for America’s Small Businesses and America’s Exporters to Access Government Service to Help Them Grow and Hire.” The [FOIAonline](#) system supports the OGP NAP 2.0 and 3.0 by streamlining FOIA request processing from request submission to document publication, while allowing full document management for the departments and agencies using the system.

Creation of the Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)



The new [CDAC](#), includes 19 of the preeminent and brightest private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S. The [CDAC](#) will help guide the Department’s data revolution to foster innovation, assist in the creation of jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society.

As “America’s Data Agency,” working to unleash more data to strengthen our nation’s economic growth, the [CDAC](#) represent a diverse range of sectors from across the U. S. The [CDAC](#) will help make the Department’s data easier to access and use, and maximize the return of data investments for entrepreneurs, government, businesses, communities, and taxpayers.

[Click here for the list of CDAC members.](#)

The Department’s data inform decisions that help make government smarter, keep businesses more competitive and better inform citizens about their own communities – with the potential to guide up to \$3.3 trillion in investments in the U.S. each year. The 19 members of the [CDAC](#) will provide the Department with guidance on areas, such as, data management practices; common, open data standards; policy issues related to privacy, latency, and consistency; effective models

for public-private partnership; external uses of the Department data; and, methods to build new feedback loops between the Department and data users.

[CDAC](#) members were chosen to ensure representation from the entire spectrum of the Department’s data including demographic, economic, scientific, environmental, patent, and geospatial data. The leaders come from the information technology, Non-Government Organizations (NGO), non-profit, and academic communities, and local governments – individuals who appreciate the range of data that the Department distributes and the full lifecycle of data collection, compilation, analysis, and dissemination. They offer a balanced perspective and varied expertise to ensure meaningful dialogue and guidance on how the Department can realize its vision as America’s Data Agency.

The [CDAC](#) will be housed in the Department’s Economics and Statistics Administration, and members will serve two-year terms. To learn more about CDAC, visit:

<http://www.esa.doc.gov/content/commerce-data-advisory-council-cdac>.

BusinessUSA

Over the last several years, the government has spoken with thousands of business owners to hear what works and what doesn’t when dealing with the federal government. Entrepreneurs, especially small business owners have indicated that navigating the complex maze of government agencies was reducing production and resources and requested a one stop shop solution to obtain the assistance needed throughout every stage of business development.

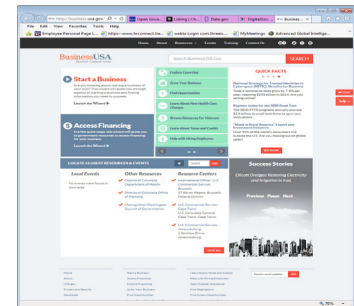


Figure 2 – BusinessUSA Services

On October 28, 2011, the President issued a Memorandum entitled, *“Making It Easier for America’s Small Businesses and America’s Exporters to Access Government Service to Help Them Grow and Hire.”* In response, BusinessUSA was initiated as an interagency effort, focused on improving the way business interacts with the federal government as a means to support growth and job creation.

The Department along with the U.S. Small Business Administration was named as Co-Chairs to serve as the Executive Committee to coordinate the strategy, design, development, launch, and operation of BusinessUSA. The interagency team is supported by a group of federal agency partners including: Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), General Services Administration (GSA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Department of State, Export/Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Treasury

(DOTreas), Department of Justice (DOJ), National Science Foundation (NSF), U.S. Trade Development Agency (USTDA), Department of Education, Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Interior (DOI), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA). To date, there have been over 200 federal representatives that contributed to achieving the goals of the Presidential Memorandum.

[BusinessUSA](#) streamlined the process for businesses and exporters to obtain information on the available federal programs through easy to access points via the [BusinessUSA.gov](#) website and contact center via 1-800-FED-INFO. These central points of access provides a full range of government programs and services including: development and training options; financing choices; federal contracting; procurement opportunities; international trade; exporting guidance; business patent and trade assistance; disaster relief assistance; services for veterans, women-owned, and minority businesses; events; workshops; services available through state, regional and local organizations; and more.

[BusinessUSA's](#) approach is to provide great customer service and provide the American citizens the government that initiates a “No Wrong Door” approach for businesses and exporters. It creates a common platform to match businesses with the services relevant, regardless of where the information is located, or which agency’s website, call center, or office, contacted for assistance. BusinessUSA’s easy to find access points enable customers to get the information needed 24 hours a day/seven days a week through one central website and contact center. Customers are afforded the opportunity to utilize BusinessUSA’s online tool to request appointments with knowledgeable business development staff and via BusinessUSA’s social media Twitter and Linked-In.

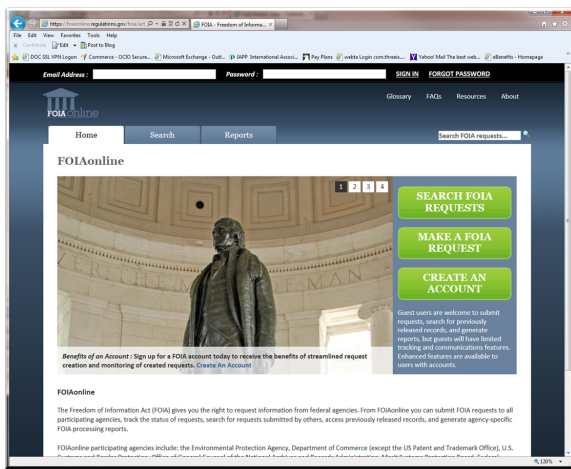
[BusinessUSA](#) publishes its quarterly performance information through Performance.gov and discloses its investment development plans through the OMB Exhibit 300 reporting process. This initiative uses existing technology and augments which leverages shared resources as a form of cost sharing, savings and/or avoidance. It has primarily leveraged web hosting, development, security, operations and contact center services from GSA. It also leverages cloud-based solutions to improve operational effectiveness. It uses APIs to capture content electronically and represent Agency-originated information. It embraces the federal digital strategy and integrates Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) and Technology-as-a-Service (TaaS) into its enterprise architecture. This approach minimizes the need to purchase costly hardware and expensive technology operational solutions. The technology used to identify existing programming codes can be adapted (at little to no charge) to meet product development needs. To date, BusinessUSA has recycled and reused over 80% of programming code. It practices an “Agile” approach to the development of technology, which has contributed to clearer objectives, shorter development times, frequent release schedules, better tools and a responsive website design (for mobile and desk top device usage).

Additionally, BusinessUSA was recognized for its outstanding leadership and innovation because of its ability to use recycled code in the development of its online products and tools. The American Council for Technology – Industry Advisory Council (ACT – IAC), a public-private partnership in government presented BusinessUSA with the *Igniting Innovation – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle 2014 Award*. BusinessUSA was selected from a pool of more than 80 candidates representing various governmental agencies and private industries.

Since the release of the BusinessUSA.gov website, they have greatly expanded the number of business-facing resources (programs, services, tools and data) in one central location from 297 at launch to nearly 5,700 federal, state and local resources today. In addition, it has promoted nearly 200 success stories and 27K local business-related events.

BusinessUSA is expanding its social media campaign to appeal to entrepreneurs and small businesses. Through these efforts, it anticipates continued growth in the number of social media followers, customer contacts and customer referrals to federal partner agencies. BusinessUSA is transforming businesses into globally competitive enterprises by providing an efficient ‘one-stop-shop’ experience for America’s business entrepreneurs.

FOIAonline Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Management and Reporting



The National Action Plan (NAP) version 2 has a primary objective to “Modernize the Freedom of Information Act” to improve internal Agency FOIA processes. NAP version 3.0 is being developed to build upon the requirement of NAP 2.0. FOIAonline provides a single interface through which the public can submit requests to any participating agency, eliminating the need to find the contact information for multiple agencies. The systems automatically assign tracking

numbers to requests, which the requester can use to automatically view the status of the request, eliminating the need to wait for manual replies from agencies. Agencies are also able to generate e-mails to requesters through the system to seek clarifying information or send invoices for fees, reducing mail delays and postage costs.

The Department’s FOIA request capabilities took a major leap forward within the Department when the FOIAonline system was deployed in October 2012. The Department partnered with the EPA and the NARA to develop and deploy the FOIAonline system. The system offers substantial cost savings and enhanced capabilities over existing government FOIA systems.

When an agency identifies records responsive to a request, it has the ability to add them to the system. Consultations and referrals to other agencies will occur within the system for participating agencies, reducing the need to send documents through another means such as government mail or email. This improves the consultation and referral process for agencies that are using [FOIAonline](#). The consultation and referral process is a frequent source of delays for FOIA requests; improvements in timeliness here have been very welcomed by users. Released documents are now uploaded to a public website, and the requester is notified of their availability. This critical feature improves transparency by making released documents available to the general public, rather than delivered only to the requester. It also stops agencies from processing multiple requests for the same materials.

[FOIAonline](#) is supplying the participating agencies with a compliant records management system that has the ability to collect metrics throughout the workflow process as defined by the agency, and expedites the production of the Annual FOIA Report required by DOJ. In the two (2) years since it has been deployed, the Department has been able to proactively release FOIA document to the public allowing the search and discovery of DOC information, which was not previously available.

The core functionality for the [FOIAonline](#) can be found in Table 1 – [FOIAonline](#) Core Functionality.

Table 1 - [FOIAonline](#) Core Functionality

<i>FOIAonline Core Functionality</i>	
<i>Accept Requests Online</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow requester to pre-populate their information • Provide status to requesters • Create communications (i.e. letters via email) between agencies and requesters
<i>Track Requests in a Case File</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process and track FOIA request • Break down requests into multiple tasks • Multi-track processing (Simple, Complex, Expedited) • Track time spent on requests (the list shifts from starting with –ing words to not... breaking down, track, assign...) • Assign case numbers • Start and stop the clock according to rules • Keep an online folder of all documents related to a request (<i>including notifications to requesters</i>)
<i>Manage Deadlines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start/Stop the clock • Generate backlog reports • Monitor workload • Notify FOIA professionals based on 10- and 20-day deadlines • Close cases when fees are not paid (<i>according to business rules</i>)

<i>FOIAonline Core Functionality</i>	
<i>Calculate Fees</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track fees and fee waiver processing • Generate invoices • Deduct what is free of charge (i.e. first 100 pages) • Manually adjust recorded time • Distinguish between search and review time
<i>Research and Upload Records</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store consultations, referrals, and letters • Send tasks to others with instructions about which records to search • Upload scanned documents
<i>Publish Electronic Records</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/sign the case file to approve redactions and fee calculations • Issue Partial/incremental releases • Send system-generated email notifications to requesters
<i>Accept Appeals Online</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track status and outcome of litigation and appeals • Issue supplemental release after appeal • Forward copies of processing to Appeals unit
<i>Prepare the Annual Report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the report in the required format with the required data structure • Use dashboards to display these metrics throughout the year, including trends
<i>Search and Retrieve</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching (including metadata and full-text)

Ongoing Initiatives at the Bureaus and Operating Units (BOU) (Sub Agencies)

*T*he Department has published high-value data as part of its scientific, technological, and economic programs. As a result, the Department has been able to establish best practices in the distribution and publication process to meets the needs of an ever-evolving public. This portion of the Open Government Plan identifies the various initiatives within the BOUs.



Office of the Secretary (OS)

OS is the general management arm of the Department and provides the principal support to the Secretary in formulating policy and in providing advice to the President. It provides program leadership for Commerce's functions and exercises general supervision over the operating units. It also directly carries out program functions as may be assigned by the Secretary, and provides, as determined to be more economic or efficient, administrative and other support services for designated operating units. OS consists of the Secretary, certain Secretarial Officers, designated staff immediately serving those officials, and a number of "Departmental offices" which have Department-wide functions or perform special program functions directly on behalf of the Secretary.

OS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **OS**.

Table 2 - OS Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
Office of the Secretary Note: * Identifies Departmental Flagship Initiative identified in Flagship section of this plan	* Creation of the Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)	Live / Operational	--
	* BusinessUSA	Live / Operational	
	* FOIAonline Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Management and Reporting	Live / Operational	--
	Office of Digital Engagement	Live / Operational	--
	Publishing Public Schedule Data for Secretary Online	Live / Operational	--

- **Project – Creation of the Commerce Data Advisory Council (CDAC)**

What's new – CDAC will help guide the Department's data revolution to foster innovation, help create jobs, and stimulate better decision-making throughout our economy and society and provide increase tool capabilities making it easier for customers to access government IA

The new CDAC includes 19 of the preeminent and brightest private and public sector thought leaders on data management and dissemination in the U.S.

For more information, this initiative is highlighted in the Departmental Flagship Initiatives section.

- **Project – BusinessUSA**

What's new – [BusinessUSA](#) increase tool capabilities making it easier for customers to access government services

BusinessUSA helps businesses and exporters of all sizes find information about available federal programs in a one-stop platform which reduces the amount of time searching various website. It streamlines and coordinates federal program assistance through easy to access points via the Business.USA.gov website and 1-800-FED-INFO contact center.

For more information, this initiative is highlighted in the Departmental Flagship Initiatives section.

- **Project – FOIAonline Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request Management and Reporting**

What's new – Improved request capabilities that include standard request input, improved tracking and reporting.

[FOIAonline](#) provides a single interface through which the public can submit requests to the Department or directly to any BOU and provides full tracking and updates with electronic document management.

For more information, this initiative is highlighted in the Departmental Flagship Initiatives section.

- **Project – Office of Digital Engagement**

What's new – Office of Digital Engagement to enhance the Departments outreach capabilities using 21st Century tools

This office is housed within the OPA - serves as the frontline for digital communication with consumers, businesses, and other key Department stakeholders. The Office of Digital Engagement is an important component of our 'Open for Business Agenda' helps the Department engage in a two-way, 21st Century dialogue with America's business community, by using the power of digital media. The Department through BOUs are working together to ensure that American businesses have access to more agency information and resources that can help them grow and hire.”

To further amplify the “Open for Business Agenda” and the priorities of the Department the Secretary uses LinkedIn, Vine, YouTube and other platforms and hosted a number of digital events including Twitter and Facebook chats that attracted interest from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including small business owners, exporters and venture capitalists. The Office of Digital Engagement launched Secretary Instagram account, the first-ever Cabinet official to have an Instagram account.

As part of the Department’s OPA, the Office of Digital Engagement is directed by Director of Digital Strategy. The team also includes members from the Office of the Secretary and a Digital Engagement Council made up of representatives from the following Departmental BOUs:

- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
 - U.S. Census Bureau (Census)
 - International Trade Administration (ITA)
 - Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)
 - Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)
 - National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
 - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
 - National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
 - U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
- ***Project – Publishing Schedule Data for Secretary Online***
What’s new – Regularly updated, searchable feed of the Secretary’s public schedule

The OPA, in conjunction with the Offices of Scheduling and Business Liaison, now releases publically via twitter at @CommerceSec (<https://twitter.com/CommerceSec>) the Department’s Secretary’s schedule daily.

Public and Agency Ideas

The Department has an extensive outreach program which includes public and stakeholder meetings, online press conferences, and numerous other tools and messaging platforms designed to engage the public. It uses the community of practice/community of interest (COP/COI) method for two-way conversations and full exchange of ideas with the public. This allows the BOUs to reach out through mission oriented COP/COIs to solicit information to improve their business lines enables the public to submit ideas and suggestions directly to the Department.



U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan



Given the large amount of data produced by the Department and the inherent value stored within it, the Department established a CDAC and designated a CDO to lead the Data efforts for improving the outreach efforts. The CDO working with the Office of Digital Engagement, the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning and BOUs, have begun to reach out to users, big and small to better share needs and best practices. Roundtables and virtual town halls key to implementing the Department’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan have been operational for 2014 – 2015 and are planned to continue into 2016.

The Department will continue efforts to improve capabilities for idea sharing and soliciting and incorporating feedback. This will ensure that the Open Government principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration are emphasized across all five of the strategic Departmental priorities: trade and investment, innovation, data, environment, and operational excellence.



Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

BEA is a component bureau of the Economics and Statistics Administration within the Department.

Primary BEA Activities

BEA is one of the world's leading economic statistics agencies, charged with the production of some of the nation's most closely watched economic indicators, influencing decisions made by government officials, businesses, and households. BEA's economic data, which provide a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the U.S. economy, are key ingredients in critical decisions affecting monetary policy, tax and budget projections, and business investment. The cornerstone of BEA's statistics is the national income and product accounts (NIPAs), which feature estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) and related measures.

Currently, BEA prepares national, regional, industry, and international accounts that present essential information on such key issues as economic growth, regional economic development, inter-industry relationships, and America's position in the world economy.

Transparency and openness have long been hallmarks of the Bureau. BEA publishes all data, research and publications on its website www.bea.gov, along with detailed methodology papers that explain exactly how BEA computes the nation's key economic indicators. The Bureau makes its subject matter experts directly available, with names, phone numbers, email addresses published online. Additionally, to ensure transparency, prior to implementing changes to the presentations or methodologies, BEA announces and conducts user conferences to explain the changes and solicit input on the impact of the changes on data users. As a 2011 New York Times story notes, "The Bureau of Economic Analysis, an arm of the Department... emphasizes transparency and is uncommonly open to public questions."

The Bureau is continuously exploring ways to further increase openness and transparency regarding its processes and products; and devotes substantial resources to educate the public about its data. Over the past two years, BEA made major improvements to its premiere data retrieval system on the BEA website, making the Bureau's vast stores of data more accessible, consumable, and shareable.

Open Data

<http://bea.gov/data.htm>

The BEA has a public listing of all datasets currently available at www.bea.gov. This listing includes datasets from all economic program areas of the Bureau, and the various formats data is available including interactive web applications and flat, downloadable files.

The BEA datasets are available for download either as static files or via various interactive web applications. In 2012, BEA implemented an award winning data retrieval system known as the Interactive Data Tables, or iTables, to make it easier to access and explore BEA data. In addition, in 2013 BEA implemented an Application Programming Interface (API), further expanding machine-readable access. The API provides direct access to nearly all BEA datasets, allowing developers to search, retrieve, analyze, and display BEA statistics.

In addition, BEA publishes a blog to further support our efforts to promote data releases, highlight new data offerings, and provide insight into our data products.

Privacy

The BEA views privacy and confidentiality of data as paramount, particularly given the vital trust our mission demands from businesses that provide confidential data to BEA. In addition to standard privacy and confidentiality protections in statute, BEA is also subject the requirements of the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act and the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act, both of which extend additional civil and criminal penalties for violations of confidentiality.

- [Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 \(CIPSEA\)](#)
- International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act ([Pub. L. 98-573](#))

Whistleblower Protection

On May 15, 2002, President Bush signed legislation called the No FEAR Act (Notification and Federal Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002). This act, which took effect on October 1, 2003, makes federal agencies individually accountable for violations of anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws. See the [DOC No FEAR Act Policy](#), which dictates BEA policy.

Websites

The BEA maintains one domain, www.bea.gov. Through this website, BEA provides access to its data, information about the methodology by which that data was produced, data release

calendars, a blog, as well as an open data portal. The website complies with the Department’s policies and best practices.

Transparency

The BEA participates in Data.gov and e-rulemaking initiatives, and publishes all data allowable under statute. Further, BEA publishes extensive documentation on methodology and procedures, recognizing that the highest level of transparency is necessary to fulfil our mission.

Public Notice

The BEA works with the Department’s Office of Digital Engagement on ensuring effective two-way communication with the public about the Bureau’s initiatives.

The [BEA Advisory Committee](#) advises the Director of BEA on matters related to the development and improvement of BEA’s national, regional, industry, and international economic accounts, especially in areas of new and rapidly growing economic activities arising from innovative and advancing technologies, and provides recommendations from the perspectives of the economics profession, business, and government.

Further, with respect to changes in schedules, methodologies or other pertinent information, BEA follows the requirements of OMB Statistical Directives #3 and #4, outlining public notices requirements and dissemination procedures for statistical products.

Records Management

The BEA’s Administrative Services Division includes a records management specialist who takes lead responsibility for ensuring BEA complies with all applicable record retention and archival regulations.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The FOIA provides the public a means to access Federal agency records, except those excluded or protected under the Act. All BEA FOIA requests are reviewed and responded to promptly as allowed and directed by law. Requests must be submitted electronically through the Department’s e-FOIA system, and are coordinated by the dedicated FOIA officer within the ESA. See the [ESA Freedom of Information Act Policy](#).

Proactive Disclosures

As a data producing agency, the Bureau proactively publishes or otherwise makes available all data, research, reports and publications allowable under Federal law or regulation. BEA only restricts access to company confidential, embargoed or other information protected by law.

Congressional Requests

The BEA works closely with the Department's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to collect, coordinate, and distribute timely and accurate information related to the Bureau's congressional relations and activities. Within the Bureau's Communications Division is a staff member designated as the bureau's Congressional Affairs Officer.

Declassification

The BEA does not have classification authority. BEA does impose strict embargos on public release of market sensitive information until the specified date and time of release. Authority and procedures for data embargo are provided by OMB Statistical Policy Directives #3 & #4.

Participation

The BEA actively reaches out to data users, survey respondents, and other stakeholders at meetings and conferences, both in person and through web conferences. This outreach is vital to guiding the direction of BEA's programs, including its open data initiatives.

The [BEA Advisory Committee](#) advises the Director on matters related to the development and improvement of BEA's national, regional, industry, and international economic accounts, especially in areas of new and rapidly growing economic activities arising from innovative and advancing technologies, and provides recommendations from the perspectives of the economics profession, business, and government. BEA also receives guidance and advice from the [Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee](#) and the [Interagency Council on Statistical Policy](#).

Additionally, the BEA is an active participant and a representative of the U.S. to the [United Nations Statistical Commission](#), the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#), and appropriate working groups of the [International Monetary Fund](#).

Collaboration

The BEA follows the Department's best practices for ensuring effective two-way communication with the public, ensuring openness and transparency.

BEA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *BEA*.

Table 3 - BEA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
BEA	Open Data	Ongoing / Continuous	--
	Enhancing Communications through Web and Social Media	Ongoing / Continuous	--
	New Data Products	In Progress	December 2015

- ***BEA Open Data***

The BEA has a public listing of all datasets currently available on the BEA website (www.bea.gov). This listing includes datasets from all economic program areas of the Bureau, and the various formats data is available including interactive web applications and flat, downloadable files.

BEA’s website has long made datasets available for download either as static files or via various interactive web applications. In 2012, BEA implemented an award winning data retrieval system known as the [Interactive Data Tables](#), or iTables, to make it easier to access and explore BEA data. In addition, in 2013 BEA implemented an [Application Programming Interface](#) (API), further expanding machine-readable access. The API provides direct access to nearly all BEA datasets, allowing developers to search, retrieve, analyze, and display BEA statistics.

In addition, BEA publishes a blog to further support our efforts to promote data releases, highlight new data offerings, and provide insight into our data products.

In 2015, BEA is working with third-party vendors to explore and pilot additional open data opportunities.

- ***Enhancing Communications through Web and Social Media***

BEA is enhancing its use of Web and social media tools to make its data more accessible and useful for the public. The first prong of this project involves BEA’s website, bea.gov. BEA has improved the functionality and usability of its interactive data tables. These improvements include mapping tools. In 2015, BEA has embarked upon a comprehensive reexamination of the structure, content, usability, and design of its website, bea.gov.

The second prong of this project involves using blogs, social media, and the mobile Web to make BEA data more digestible for the public. BEA has launched a blog to educate members of the public about how it might use the data to better understand the dynamics of the U.S. economy.

In 2015, BEA will focus on creating innovative video content and improving its social media presence.

- ***BEA New Data Products***

The BEA is releasing a batch of new statistics this year, part of an ongoing effort to better measure the dynamic U.S. economy and give businesses, policymakers, and households additional tools to make informed decisions. These new compilations includes:

Arts and Culture Statistics

- Release date: January 12,
- These annual statistics show the impact of arts and culture on the U.S. economy.
- Annual report covers 1998 – 2012.
- Report provides detailed information on spending on arts and culture as well as employment in those industries.

Health Care Statistics

- Release dates: January with additional statistics released in the Spring.
- BEA in the January report releases a new set of Health Care Satellite Account statistics that for the first time provides information about the changes in prices to treat different diseases – illustrating trends in prices over time. The report covers 2000-2010.
- BEA also in January releases a new set of annual statistics that track how much is spent to treat different diseases, covering 2000-2010.
- The report in the Spring provides the same information but covers 2011 and 2012.
- BEA's new health care statistics emerge from a multiyear project to improve the way health care spending is measured throughout the U.S. economy.

Quarterly Statistics on State Economic Activity

- Release dates: September 2 and December 10
- New quarterly Gross Domestic Product by State statistics provide information on state economic activity six to seven months after the end of a quarter going back to the first quarter of 2005.
- In the September 2 report, most recent period covered is the first quarter of 2015. In the December 10 report, it's the second quarter of 2015.

- Quarterly reports provide information on economic activity generated by each state as measured by gross domestic product as well as forces supporting or restraining economic activity.
- These statistics offer a more up-to-date picture of how states' economies are faring and provide a more detailed view of economic activity across the entire United States. The statistics also serve as a better barometer for potential turning points in state economies.
- BEA released a prototype version of this report last year and begins releasing quarterly statistics on a regular basis starting in September.

Consumer Spending by State

- Release date: December 1
- Annual report covers 2014 back to 1997
- The new Personal Consumption Expenditures by State statistics provide information on how much consumers are spending in each state as well as details on the goods and services they are buying.
- These statistics offer a detailed look at consumer spending behavior in each of the country's 50 states. Report provides a gauge of how consumers in different states are faring, offering a richer picture of economic activity across the entire United States.
- BEA released a prototype version of this report last year and releases the annual report for the first time on a regular basis in December.

New International Investment Statistics

- Release date: Late 2015
- New survey, launched near the end of 2014, collects information from companies in 2015. This lays the groundwork for BEA to produce new statistics about new investment made by foreign companies in the United States.
- These statistics provide information on “greenfield” investment – investment that occurs when a foreign firm establishes a new U.S. business or expands an existing one by building a new plant or facility. The statistics also cover also the acquisition of U.S. businesses by foreign companies.
- BEA previously had once collected similar information, but that survey was discontinued in 2008 due to budget constraints.



Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)

BIS mission is to advance U.S. national security, foreign policy, and economic objectives by ensuring an effective export control and treaty compliance system and by promoting continued U.S. strategic technology leadership.

Primary BIS Activities

Maintain and strengthen an adaptable and effective U.S. export control and treaty compliance system: BIS administers and enforces controls on exports of dual-use goods and technologies to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), combat terrorism, and pursue other national security and foreign policy goals.

Integrate non-U.S. actors to create a more effective global export control and treaty compliance system: The effectiveness of U.S. export controls is enhanced by strong controls in other nations that export, or transship sensitive goods and technologies. The BIS works to improve the participation and compliance of existing members of multilateral export control regimes and cooperates with other countries to help them establish effective export control programs. As part of policy formulation and implementation toward key trading partners and transshipment countries, BIS utilizes an end-use visit program.

Ensure continued U.S. technology leadership in industries that are essential to national security: BIS works to ensure that the U.S. remains competitive in industry sectors and sub-sectors critical to national security. To this end, BIS analyzes the impact of export controls and trade policies on strategic U.S. industries, administers the Federal Government's Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS), reports on the impact of defense trade offsets, and evaluates the security impact of certain proposed foreign investments in U.S. companies.

The BIS actively pursues a policy of Open Government throughout the Bureau. Ways in which this is accomplished is through our many public websites. Information is updated as it becomes available through the EFOIA website at <http://efoia.bis.doc.gov/> which also includes press releases, speeches, testimony's and an index of other documents for public release. The BIS main public website at <http://www.bis.doc.gov/> post regular updates of information for the Export Administration and Export Enforcement and other items of interest to the public dealing with BIS.

Proactive Disclosures

Whenever possible, BIS releases information to the public through FOIA with frequently asked questions being posted via the OPA. The Bureau also publishes information on Regulations, Licensing, Enforcement, Compliance & Training, Policy Guidance, and Export Control Reform on its public webpage at www.bis.doc.gov

Whistleblower Protection

The BIS has created a team to develop the Bureau's Whistleblower Protection Plan. Milestones are being created to show how the Bureau plans to inform all employees of their rights and protections under this plan. Information is being developed to publish on the Bureau's intranet for dissemination to all employees.

Ongoing Initiatives

The BIS holds regular seminars and webinars for training of individuals and companies wanting to understand the Export Administration Act. Monthly seminars are held in various locations such as Houston, Texas, San Diego, California, and Boston, Massachusetts, to assist the public to understand the regulation. Two of the Bureau's major seminars are called "Update" which is held semi-annually. One is held on the west coast and the other in Washington D.C. These semi-annual update conferences on export controls and policy gives the exporting community the opportunity to learn first-hand from senior U.S. government officials about current issues and trends in export control policies, regulations, and practices. This major outreach activity draws business and government representatives from around the world to learn and exchange ideas about export control issues. It provides the opportunity to network with colleagues in the export control industry, interact with U.S. government officials, and learn about programs and services offered by U.S. government and industry exhibitors. It is one of the Department's most notable international trade events.

Public Notice

The BIS publishes on its website all upcoming seminars being held in an effort to keep industry informed of any and all upcoming changes and answer questions concerning the export control regulations. BIS ensures compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act by posting public notices in the Federal Registry six months ahead of a renewal for required information.

Records Management

The BIS continues to move from paper to electronic use and storage of documents. This is being done by electronic use and storage of current documents and destroying paper documents through attrition. Each entity throughout the bureau coordinates with the records manager to

archive documents when necessary and destroy when the annual disposition date for these document have come.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The BIS FOIA officer uses the Department’s FOIA tracking system for tracking and release of information to the public. The Bureau also has a FOIA webpage located at <http://efoia.bis.doc.gov/> which includes EFOIA releases and how to file, and the process of filing a FOIA request. BIS has one FOIA officer and an additional FOIA officer when needed to alleviate any backlog from occurring. The FOIA officer receives requests through the Commerce FOIAonline system, through emails, faxes, or regular mail. All FOIAs are tracked in the FOIAonline system which informs the Commerce FOIA officer of the new FOIA requests and shows the tracking and progress of each request.

Declassification

The BIS declassifies information as soon as it is publically releasable. Whenever possible, the Records Manager assist the office of responsibility for the classified information in reviewing and releasing information which has reached its declassified date or is no longer required to be classified.

BIS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **BIS**.

Table 4 - BIS Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
BIS	Website transformation	Live / Operational	--
	Seminars and Webinars for training	Live / Operational	--

- ***Project – Website transformation***

In response to the feedback from our many stakeholders, the BIS website is continually being enhanced to meet Open Government requirements. The new site is operational and can be accessed with the following link: www.bis.doc.gov. By clicking either picture or icon users can explore the new site and continue to provide comments and recommendations as BIS continues to enhance our outreach efforts.

- ***Project – Seminars and Webinars for training***

The BIS holds regular seminars and webinars for training of individuals and companies wanting to understand the Export Administration Act. Monthly seminars are held in various locations such as Houston Texas, San Diego California, and Boston Massachusetts, to assist the public in understanding this regulation. Two of the Bureau’s major seminars are called “Update” which is held semi-annually. One being held on the West Coast and the other in Washington D.C. These semi-annual Update Conferences on Export Controls and Policy gives the exporting community the opportunity to learn first-hand from senior U.S. Government officials about current issues and trends in export control policies, regulations and practices. This major outreach activity draws business and government representatives from around the world to learn and exchange ideas about export control issues. It provides the opportunity to network with colleagues in the export control industry, interact with U.S. government officials, and learn about programs and services offered by U.S. Government and industry exhibitors. It is one of the Department's most notable international trade events.



Bureau of the Census (Census)

Census is the premier source of information about the American people and the economy. The information provided shapes important policy decisions, which improves the nation’s social and economic conditions.

Primary Census Activities

There are four principles, which establishes the foundation Census activities: 1) openness to user and respondent concerns; 2) independence and neutrality; strong statistical standards, and 4) confidentiality. Through these principles, Census is inherently aligned with the cornerstone principles of the Open Government Directive: Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration.

The Census is building a 21st Century digital platform to serve the American people. As the leader in providing digital products and services, Census embraces the opportunity to unlock data through digital means for the public. The open data API is an integral part of Census’s response to the comprehensive Federal Digital Strategy to enhance data and services.

Guided by customer and information-centricity, shared services, and security, and privacy, Census will execute a digital platform for projects and initiatives across the Bureau.

Open Data

The Census has an inventory of 213 public datasets in data.gov. It routinely updates and revises each dataset in the inventory.data.gov by reaching out to all the Points of Contacts(POCs) to update or revise. Out of date links, or other errors are assessed regularly. A calendar list of known updates for datasets is currently being developed.

Additionally, the Census is continually making public use datasets available through the Census Data API on a flow basis. Twenty-eight new datasets, which are retrievable via the API as needed, were added in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015.. Data can also be downloaded from the American Fact Finder (AFF), and through a tool called “DataFerrett” for any public use datasets that are accessible from that tool.

The Census frequently updates and adds information about dataset availability for the API Officer (CTO) office is working on a "CitySDK" -Software Developer Kit that is a proof-of-concept to determine how to enhance the use of the Census Data API and Geo API for

developers. As Census' Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Information (CEDSCI) evolves, it will enhance the datasets availability and access for the public.

The Data Management System (DMS) is the means by which the Census inventories internal datasets that are restricted and not available to the public and includes survey and reimbursables data, and administrative records.

Participation and Collaboration

The Census uses a number of technologies to promote opportunities for public participation in decision-making processes, and improve collaboration. For example, the Census executes its Digital Strategy through initiatives, such as digital transformation and developer engagement on Census.gov. The Census communicates those initiatives through blogs and Open Government policies. Below are some examples of public-facing communications with Census customers on digital strategy initiatives and innovations:

Blogs communicating the Census efforts to align with the Digital Government Strategy

- <http://directorsblog.blogs.census.gov/2015/01/06/improving-your-access-to-u-s-census-bureau-data-two-new-features-on-census-gov>
- <http://directorsblog.blogs.census.gov/2014/03/06/changing-the-way-we-do-business>
- <http://blogs.census.gov/2014/02/19/welcome-to-the-future-of-census-gov>

Policies

- <http://census.gov/about/policies/section207.html>

Developer engagement

- <http://www.census.gov/developers>
- <http://blogs.census.gov/category/web-transformation>

SharePoint is another tool leveraged to enhance participation and collaboration. To provide an example of how the SharePoint tool works, Census used it to streamline the Bureau's Interagency and Other Special Agreements (IOSA) process. The Administrative Records (ADREC) Branch initiated a centralized approach to managing all the Census IOSAs. This enabled the ADREC Branch became the focal point for managing, tracking, and routing IOSAs within the Census and Office of General Counsel (OGC). The ADREC Branch's restructured workflow processes and routing procedures for reimbursable, payable, joint statistical projects and no-funds exchanged IOSAs; established an IOSA management database; developed a SharePoint IOSA routing option; and enhanced channels of communications between program managers, Census Legal, OGC, Budget, and Finance Divisions with extranet capabilities.

Results of the new SharePoint process consist of reduced IOSA review times, workflow clarity, less paper routing, and transparency. A transparency example of IOSA SharePoint feature is the functionality, which allows program managers to view and track status of IOSA's in the review process at Census and OGC. In addition, the ADREC Branch's website provides IOSA

developmental tools and online advice regarding legal authorities, model agreement templates, checklists, and other helpful links for program managers.

Upcoming enhancements for this process include implementation of an IOSA/SharePoint platform, electronic signatures, and a publicly available website for current and prospective sponsors. Descriptions of and links to appropriate websites for the public's information regarding the existing collaboration efforts of your agency are identified at the following link:

<http://www.census.gov/procur/www/iosa.html>.

Future extranet capabilities plans will allow major stakeholders/agencies/customers restricted permission into our IOSA SharePoint website. This will enable faster agreement submissions and an effective streamlined IOSA community of users.

Privacy

The Census has a strong privacy compliance program, which leads and participates in a variety of privacy related trainings and workgroups to ensure the bureau's overall privacy compliance.

The Privacy Compliance Branch produces a quarterly Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) report, which is sent to the Department. The fourth quarter report contains a summary for the entire year.

Additionally, whenever there is a breach of PII, the Privacy Compliance Branch prepares a PII Breach report to the Department outlining the circumstances surrounding the incident and the steps taken to mitigate the breach. These reports are sent to the DOC as incidents occur. We do not engage in data mining and therefore are not producing data mining reports.

For more information visit: <http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/>.

Whistleblower Protection

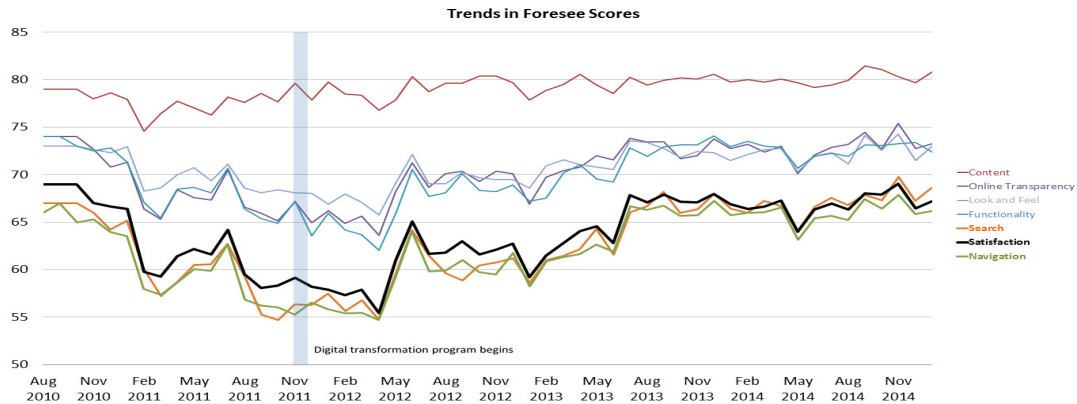
In accordance with the Department's latest Open Government Plan, the Census meets the requirements of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act. Detailed information is available at <http://www.commerce.gov/Whistleblower%20Protection%20Enhancement%20Act>.

The Census NO FEAR ACT reports are posted quarterly on <http://www.osec.doc.gov/ocr/nofear/nofear.htm>.

Additionally, the Census continuously takes steps to inform employees of rights and remedies under the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of Title 5. For example, a question is included, "I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal" on the Organizational Climate Survey (OCS) that was offered to all Census employees. Asking the question on the OCS, with its accompanying organizational granularity will allow leaders, managers, and supervisors to target "No Fear" communications more effectively.

Website

The Census’ signature website is www.census.gov. The Census conducts usability testing of our website and content through the Usability Lab. The usability/findability evaluations by web visitors have improved steadily since the digital transformation efforts began at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2012 – satisfaction scores have climbed to about 68 in January 2015 from about 57 in November 2012. The Census has found that users' ratings for search and navigation scores drive the overall satisfaction with Census.gov, despite relatively flat (high) satisfaction with our content.



Over the last three years, the Census is making Census.gov a customer-centric destination that serves as the first stop for economic, demographic, and geographic data. Census.gov is one of the largest websites in the federal government, with over 46 million annual visits and more than a million pages and assets. The site serves a wide range of users, such as general public, journalists, educators and students seeking facts, economists, academics and researchers conducting sophisticated data analysis. Through Census.gov, the Census aims to facilitate access to its statistics, increase customer satisfaction, and grow its audience.

In line with the Digital Government Strategy, the new website is just one part of our digital transformation. Together with other innovations, such as our mobile apps, the Census is using 21st Century technology to meet our mission of making the statistics that define the growing, changing nation more accessible than ever before.

The changes made to Census.gov, recognizes the importance of getting feedback from customers to improve online services to meet customer needs. The Census encourages customer feedback at cnmp.web.comments.list@census.gov and intends to construct a new Census.gov site for daily customer interest and exploration. Feedback is analyzed, prioritized and incorporated into the agile project management to enhance responses to customer needs.

The Census uses the ForeSee Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) survey – which is introduced to a sample of users who visit at least two webpages – to evaluate users' experiences with Census.gov. In addition to asking questions about aspects of their experience such as, look and feel, online transparency and navigation, the survey asks about specific content areas and data

tools, and the intention of the visit and any searches. It also makes heat maps and activity captures of surveyed users' actions on the site. This gives Census a good picture of what users are seeking and what the satisfaction rates results.

The Census also uses Adobe Analytics to measure actions taken by all users, not just the subgroup who respond to the survey, to assess search results, numbers of pages visited, most popular content, paths taken to reach the desired content, etc. The Census cross-references the results from the satisfaction survey to determine if user behaviors correspond with trends in the reported experience.

The Census implemented a Customer Experience Management Platform (CEM) which brings together key sources of customer interactions via website, social media, call centers, media outreach, stakeholder relations, etc. The information is displayed in a dashboard, which allows Census to make an informed decision to improve the customer experience.

The Customer Experience Management (CEM) platform provides shared centralized business intelligence, reporting and insight generation from a growing number of Census data sources. The initial approach was to capture and provide insight into customer interactions with Census products, tools, and services. The unique power of this system is the integration of previously stove-piped datasets by ingesting them into a centralized data warehouse and using a common coding schema. This approach enables users to reveal multiple views of the same customer segments across various customer interaction channels such as web, mobile, social, and contact center. The platform was designed and architected to enable the addition of different data sources from across the organization to deliver timely insights into consumer behavior and organizational operations.

The near real-time dashboards and visualizations provided by the CEM platform offer the Census leadership a multi-faceted view of customer needs and expectations. The visualizations encourages and enables a deeper exploration, provides leadership with real data needed to make better customer-focused decisions collaboratively, which supports the Bureau in meeting the mission objectives and creates value for the public.

Analytics have proven that the most popular content users are looking for on Census website falls into four broad categories:

- NAICS/Schedule B/trade reporting information
- Topics such as population, income, poverty, and other demographic data
- Geography-based demographic and economic data (i.e., data specific to a city, county, state or other place)
- Data tools such as the Population Clock and QuickFacts are hugely popular among one-time visitors to the site who seek fast answers.

The Census used direct result of customer feedback to recently updated two key tools on Census.gov (Search and QuickFacts) with new features to make accessing statistics user friendly.

With an improved search feature generating better results on Census.gov, users can discover a wealth of information and visualizations just by typing key words, such as “median income,” “population” or a particular NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) code. For example, a search of “California population” will display the latest population statistics along with other popular statistics for California. Users are also able to filter their search by other content types, such as image and videos.

The Census also recently updated the beta version for one of its most popular web tools, QuickFacts. The tool provides multiple data views, including viewing charts, maps and statistics for up to six geographies at once, and the ability to share on social media, embed and download content. Statistics are also now available for Puerto Rico and townships. During the QuickFacts beta period, users can submit feedback through the “Tell Us What You Think” link that is available on the application. These updated tools follow recent innovations, such as the development of the Open API and three mobile apps. These improvements are aimed at making the Census’s statistics on the growing and changing nation more accessible to the public.

The Census has taken significant steps towards making the information more accessible to the public.

The digital transformation program focuses on customer-centricity, shared platforms and innovative technologies and solutions to build a 21st Century platform to better serve the American people. Each initiative in the digital transformation program was selected for its alignment with the three digital transformation goals and their affiliated objectives. These initiatives are a critical part of the Census’s Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Mission Excellence:

Objective 1.1: Collect, process, and release high-quality statistical benchmarks to meet constitutional and legislative mandates.

Goal 2: Customer Service Excellence:

Objective 2.1: Increased effectiveness of stakeholder engagement.

Objective 2.2: Increased visibility and utility of Census products.

The goals of the digital transformation program are:

- Increase awareness and access to Census statistics
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Expand our audience

The Census digital transformation strategy addresses the agency’s digital presence – including user experience, search, mobile access, social media, analytics and content management. The strategy envisions digital content that is conceived, developed and delivered to create a positive, customer-centric experience. The key components of the strategy are:

- Redesigned Census.gov: The Census used user research and validation to create an engaging experience online. This encourages exploration of web content and makes the site easier to navigate.
- Content management system (CMS): A next-generation digital platform was introduced to present content in a consistent, user-friendly way. It also reduces the burden on internal content contributors.
- Smart search: With new integrated search capabilities pulling information from the Census API, users can get answers and visualizations to the most popular queries on Census.gov directly on the search page.
- Mobile and embeddable web applications: Interactive data tools, mobile and embeddable web applications now bring Census content to a wider audience beyond Census.gov.
- Customer experience management: By consolidating data across all of the agency's digital platforms enabled the creation of a single view of each customer's behavior. This enables leadership to understand customer behavior and trends and aids in decision making.

Here are some results of our digital transformation:

- Overall Customer Satisfaction has risen 11 points, from 58 at the start of the program to 69 currently.
- Satisfaction with Search has improved by 12 points, going from 55 in September 2011 to 68 in January 2015.
- Satisfaction with Navigation has improved 10 points, from 56 to 66.
- Engagement with Census Content has increased by 118%, as measured by year-over-year download rates of PDF documents.
- More than 1.1 million pages viewed within our web applications embedded on other websites.
- More than 180,000 download of mobile apps.
- The Census frequently released updates and upgrades of the most popular data tools. In the past few years, and it has substantially improved and simplified access to data in the Population Clock, QuickFacts, and American FactFinder, three of our most popular tools. Introduced new web tools to help the public find and understand our data, including My Congressional District and a consolidated glossary of census and survey terms. Developed embeddable widget versions of many of these tools so that users can add them

to their own websites and released a "smart search" capability, unique among federal agency websites, that provides Google-style overviews and mini-reports in addition to keyword-driven search results.

- In addition to web access, the Census offers economic and demographic data through mobile apps America's Economy, dwellr and Census PoP Quiz.

As the Census looks ahead, the focus remains the same: providing digital content which improves customer access to statistics, enables informed decision making, and continues to transform the Census into a true digital services organization. Upcoming efforts in this area will include:

- Developing a five-year digital roadmap to prioritize efforts that form the foundation of digital communications and data dissemination.
- Implementing responsive design on Census.gov to optimize the user experience, regardless of device, and provide a truly seamless digital experience.
- Expanding the Customer Engagement Management business intelligence platform to create performance management and operational insight capabilities. This system will first be used to measure the performance of the 2015 Census Test, and then evolve to integrate critical business operations from every Census directorate.
- Continuing to enhance Census.gov and smart search to align with agency-wide dissemination initiatives, as well as adding personalization features to appeal to the diverse set of the Census stakeholders.

The Census constantly gathers user feedback and leverages the CEM platform to guide future digital innovations. The result of the digital transformation strategy will be the Census that is digitally led, with an eye on delivering content to its customers and the American public.

For more information, visit <http://www.census.gov/data/developers/about.html>.

Public Notice

The Census uses www.census.gov as a platform for sharing information and providing opportunities for participation and collaboration with the public. Internally, the Intranet is used as a platform to keep employees informed and engaged in Open Government ideas and initiatives. Here are some of tools currently in use:

Externally:

- Crowd-sourcing and idea-generating tools;
- Federal Register Notices;
- Social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs etc.);

- Electronic newsletters;
- Webinars/webcasts;
- Video and slide presentations;
- National conferences and other speaking engagements;
- Census Advisory Committees <http://www.census.gov/cac/> ;
- Trade Outreach Branch meetings <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/outreach/>;
- stakeholder meetings;
- Focus groups;
- Surveys; and
- Mobile applications.

Internally:

- Electronic technology repository for collaboration;
- Director's and Deputy Director's messages (email, video, audio);
- Broadcast messages;
- Conference phone calls and video teleconferences;
- Training;
- Presentations and workshops for upper management;
- Presentations for the regional offices;
- Town hall meetings with employees;
- Employee newsletter;
- Focus groups; and
- Surveys.

Records Management

The Records Management Office (RMO) conducted benchmarks, attended brainstorming meetings to draft an email records management requirements document for internal review/comments. The RMO met with staff from the Department of Interior to inquire and seek guidance on their email records management system to identify a plausible platform. The RMO has reviewed the Capstone approach from NARA, and has also participated in an email records management DEMO presented by SMARSH, "one archiving platform for all your communications". RMO is reviewing other government agencies to determine which email record management systems processes will be similar to services for the Census. RMO is paying close attention to the risk and additional implementation requirements to ensure accuracy in email records management for the Census Bureau.

The RMO has met with the Census division's record custodians to review/update and create new record schedules for all the Census records. The goal is to update all the record schedules or create new ones by the end of this Fiscal Year. The RMO is striving to meet the Presidential Memorandum requirements to implement an email records management system here at the Census by the end of December 2016.

The RMO is currently meeting with all the Census division's record custodians to review/update and create new record schedules for all the Census records. The Census' goal is to have all the record schedules updated (or create new record schedules) by the end of this fiscal year. The RMO is striving to meet the Presidential Memorandum requirements to implement an email records management system here at the Census by the end of December 2016.

Freedom of Information Act Requests

The Census will continue to leverage technology to enhance customer service, and further integrate a “presumption of openness,” with regard to its FOIA program. For example, information about FOIA requests submitted to and fulfilled by the Census FOIA staff are available to everyone with access to the Internet, through an electronic tracking and processing tool, FOIAonline. FOIAonline can be accessed through the following link: <https://foiaonline.regulations.gov/foia/action/public/home>. Other information related to filing a FOIA request can be found at:

http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia-requests/how_to_file_a_foia_request.html. The Census has discovered a web-based application that enables to individuals to search and/or view other FOIA request and is considering posting quarterly FOIA reports satisfied to the FOIAonline system. This will enable user to see the types of request resolved and/or closed to assist them in creating a request. Information available to people for requests in the FOIAonline system includes a FOIA tracking number, the requester's name, and a request's submission date and description. Although FOIA logs available are on the FOIAonline system, FOIA logs prior to FY 2014 are accessible on

http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/foia_logs.html.

The Census ensures the customers have the ability to obtain the help or service needed on the public web site at <http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/contact.html>. Included on this page are the names and contact information for the Chief FOIA Officer and the FOIA Public Liaison. Also available, is a Resources page where customers can find a listing of FOIA laws, regulations, and policies, along with links to those documents:

<http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/resources.html>.

Additionally, on the same Resources page, named the *United States Census Bureau Freedom of Information Reference Guide* provides more detailed information about the FOIA and how the Census FOIA staff processes requests.

A plan to reduce a pending FOIA backlog was not required for the Census. The Census reported in the 2014 Annual FOIA Report a backlog of two requests, which were closed within the first quarter of FY 2015. Similarly, in the 2013 FOIA Annual Report there was a backlog of three requests, which were closed within the first quarter FY 2014.

While Census' FOIA Plan does not need to focus on backlog reduction, it still incorporates steps to ensure the FOIA program operates efficiently and effectively. This enhances the service provided to our customers. FOIA's business processes are continually reviewed to initiate

changes to increase proficiency in the FOIA program. Additionally, the Census' conducts FOIA case audits on all completed cases to ensure FOIA professionals are following the established laws, regulations, policies, guidance, and procedures. This tool is also used to establish staff training needs.

Proactive Disclosures

In order to support the Open Government Directive the Census has a distinct system and process in place to identify records for proactive disclosure. The FOIA and Open Government Office at the Census Bureau uses FOIAonline to both identify and make available records for proactive disclosure. The Census FOIA professionals use the system to assist them in reviewing responses to requests to determine if material disclosed may be of use to other requesters and discussing how to make responsive records available through the FOIAonline system, which is available to the public. Through the FOIAonline system, individuals can access posted FOIA requests and agency responses to those requests. Those responses include disclosed responsive records.

Additionally, the FOIAonline system allows the Census to collaborate with agency staff outside of the FOIA office by allowing:

- Department DOC FOIA staff to review Census FOIA cases, as well as task or assign cases;
- Staff to refer “misdirected” FOIA cases to other Departmental BOUs; and
- Staff to send consultation requests to other agencies that use FOIAonline.

The Census FOIA staff regularly reviews FOIAonline to ascertain if records were requested in the past. If the records were previously requested, the “Frequently Requested” field in FOIAonline is marked as “Yes.” Those records are made available to the public through FOIAonline by setting the proper system “flag.”

The following are links to posted material:

<http://www.census.gov/topics.html>,

http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/congressional_correspondence_logs.html

http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/policies.html

http://www.census.gov/about/policies/foia/foia_library/custom_tabulations.html

Congressional Requests

The Census receives congressional inquiries by phone, letter, fax, and email.

Congressional correspondence for the Census is handled through the Office of Congressional and Intergovernment Affairs (OCIA). All incoming congressional correspondence is date stamped and managed by the Correspondence Quality Assurance Staff (CQAS) who identifies the appropriate Action Office (OA) to prepare a draft response. The CQAS is also responsible for tracking the correspondence in the tracking system database.

The FOIA requests related to the Census congressional correspondence logs and records are handled through the Policy Coordination Office’s FOIA and the Open Government Office. The FOIA staff is responsible for reviewing, coordinating, and responding to incoming requests received. On a quarterly basis, the FOIA Office will furnish a report to the public listing congressional correspondence received by the Census. This includes the correspondence control number, member of congress, and the subject and the incoming date of the correspondence.

Census Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *Census*.

Table 5 - Census Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
Census	Improving Operational Efficiency	Live / Operational	--
	Improving the Census History Website	Live / Operational	--
	Add High Value Datasets to Data.go to v	Live / Operational	--
	Improving LED Data Visualization	Ongoing / Continuous	--
	Re-engineering State and Local Governments Statistical Programs and Improving Data Presentations	Live / Operational	--
	Adding Web-based Learning Tools to Improve Access to Economic Programs	Completed (October 2013)	--
	Using Mobile Technology to Improve Data Dissemination, Data Collection, and Employee Productivity	Live / Operational	--
	Application Programming Interface	Live / Operational	--
	Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy	Live / Operational	--
	Establishing the 2012 Account Manager Program	Completed (September 2013)	--
	Improving the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)	Completed (June 2013)	--
	Seasonal Adjustment of International Trade Statistics by Geography	Completed (March 2014)	--

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
	Indicator Release Improvement Project (IRIP)	In Progress	July 2015
	Economic Indicators Made Available through Census API	Completed (February 2014)	--
	Census – Opening for Business: Entrepreneur Edition Tool	In Progress	September 2015
	Census Open for Business: Chamber of Commerce Edition Tool	In Progress	August 2015
	Administering a Reimbursable Customer Survey	Completed (June 2015)	--
	Implementing the First Inaugural American Community Survey Data User Group Conference	Ongoing / Continuous	--
	Release of New American Community Survey 3-Year Comparison Profile	Ongoing / Continuous	--
	Census Flows Mapper	Live / Operational	--
	TIGERWeb	Live / Operational	--
	Live Webcasting	Live/Operational	--
	Enhanced Smart Search	Live/Operational	December 2015
	Quickfacts Beta	Live/Operational	December 2015

- ***Project - Improving Operational Efficiency***

The Census Improving Operational Efficiency (IOE) is in the fourth year, the IOE program created the Census Solution Box (CSB) in SharePoint 2010 to collect and route ideas year round to supplement the formal IOE call every January. The CSB ensures the capture of, and feedback on, every employee idea submitted.

These efforts have achieved a more unified approach to innovation investment and looks to more closely match innovation efforts to our challenges. To date the IOE program has achieved over 40 million dollars in savings and cost avoidance to for the Census Bureau.

In 2014, the IOE initiated an annual data call for ideas, which takes place every January-February. The data call information received allows Census' employees to develop a routine for submitting challenge-focused ideas. Three challenges were received from the 2014 IOE data call. Ideas were collected using IdeaScale. Twelve ideas were selected to become projects, of which three began funded implementation after a business case was created, and seven proceeded immediately toward implementation.

Throughout the project lifecycle, the IOE program monitors evaluated the health of each ongoing project and integrated performance measures and metrics.

A new integrated online ideation platform was created in SharePoint Online for the collection of ideas in the formal IOE data call for 2015, commenced in January. Ideas were submitted and voted on by all Census employees in an open crowdsourcing format during a six-week period. A Department -wide Ideation group to share best practices and assisted with the Department's formation of the Ideas Tool platform. Census has also engaged Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Patent and Trade Office, and (USPTO), GSA and other agencies in sharing best practices in Ideation. In 2015, 150 ideas were received from headquarters and 580 from the field, which included the National Processing Center and the Regional Offices

- ***Project – Improving the Census History website***

What's new – Promoting the History website and Improving Functionality for Mobile Devices

The Census history website <http://www.census.gov/history/> works with the Census's Public Information Office (PIO) and Center for New Media and Promotions (CNMP) to promote the history website and study enhancements that incorporate mobile device technology into the data user experience. The website highlights important anniversaries, events, and newsworthy information through the Census's Facebook, Twitter, and blog pages. Visitors to the agency's social media pages will be encouraged to learn more by following links to relevant history website pages. Examples include "This day in Census history" entries highlighting the anniversary of 1790's "Census Day" to interesting facts related to the Civil War, Women's History, or important census legislation.

The website continues to be enhanced to improve the mobile data users' experience. Enhancements include: 1) the use of Quick Response (QR) codes on posters, promotional materials, and webpages; 2) the development of mobile device "apps" that encourage visitation to the history website; and 3) introduction of audio and video on select webpages to enhance text and imagery.

- ***Project -- Add High Value Datasets to [Data.gov](http://data.gov)***

What's New – Providing important data series through Data.gov using the ODP New IAI

The Census is publishing current datasets to Data.gov as identified on a flow basis. Previously published records for Census products are reviewed regularly for date of last update and link validation.

- ***Project – Improving LED Data Visualization***

What's New – Presentation tools improve understanding and use of Census data

In June 2014, the Census released version 4 of OnTheMap for Emergency Management. First introduced in 2010, it is a public data tool that provides unique, real-time information on the workforce for U.S. areas affected by hurricanes, floods, wildfires, FEMA Disaster Declaration Areas, and other emergency events. OnTheMap for Emergency Management now includes selected characteristics from the American Community Survey (ACS) dataset.

Data visualization tools provided a platform for statistical information to be user friendly to data users. Census's LED partnership (or LEHD program) has pioneered this effort with its public OnTheMap web application, which allows graphical analysis of the relationship between residence and workplace locations on user-defined maps. The latest version will include additional data and functionality and included a querying employment trends by firm age and firm size, as well as improved visuals within the available exports.

LEHD has successfully completed two pilot data visualization projects for displaying the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) data. In 2013, the LED Extraction Tool was released to enable access to all 32 indicators of the QWI. This was followed in 2014 by the release of QWI Explorer, an analysis tool that visualizes the QWI through dynamic line/bar charts and tables. More information can be found at <http://lehd.ces.census.gov>.

- ***Project – Re-engineering State and Local Governments Statistical Programs and Improving Data Presentations***

What's New – Improved integration of census and current governments programs, and improved data products

Based on extensive consultation with public and private sector data users in a series of workshops, the Census is re-engineering the government statistics programs. The effect will be better integration of Census of Governments with associated annual and quarterly tax, finance, pensions, and employment surveys. In addition, tabulations will be improved to better address data user needs. Several improvements already have been introduced, including:

- summary briefs, issued quarterly, covering government taxes and pensions;
- annual reports accompany the release of data products, covering government finance, taxes, pensions, and employment;

- data visualizations accompanied blog posts published about data releases including the 2009 Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances in October 2011, the 2010 Annual Survey of School System Finances in June 2012, the 2011 Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll in August 2012, the 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of State Government Tax Collections in April 2013, and the 2011 Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances in July 2013, and the 2012 Census of Governments: Finance – Survey of School System Finances in May 2014;
- public webinars hosted jointly with the Association of Public Data Users to discuss various data products including data about taxes, public pension systems, and special districts.

Additionally, Commerce plans to continue making improvements to these programs, including:

- increasing the number of data visualizations included in publications; and,
 - increasing the number of new products including informational flyers and slider rulers.
- ***Project – Adding Web-based Learning Tools to Improve Access to Economic Programs***
The Census’s Economic Programs incorporate vast, complex topics and employ dissemination and collection tools that require some sophistication on the parts of the data user and respondent. New web-based tools make it easier to understand and use the data and comply with regulations.
 - Videos – web-based videos explain tools and regulations. The Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) video shows respondents how to select a sample of shipment records for reporting on the survey “<http://bhs.econ.census.gov/bhs/cfs/surveytools.html>.” Foreign trade videos show how to find and use trade data, submit accurate reports, and comply with trade regulations “<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes/exporttraining/videos/>.” The Secure Messaging Center (SMC) video shows how to register and communicate on the SMC “<http://bhs.econ.census.gov/ec12/pages/videos.html>.” We plan to offer additional videos.
 - Export Compliance and Automated Exports System (AES) Webinars – The Foreign Trade Division conducts a series of online conferences to help exporters comply with mandatory filing requirements
<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aes/meetingsandpresentations/index.html>.
 - Social Media – The Foreign Trade Division has introduced a blog to show how to find and use trade data, submit accurate reports, and comply with trade regulations. The blog is updated three times a week and has over 17,000 users
<http://blogs.census.gov/globalreach>.

- ***Project – Using mobile technology to improve data dissemination, data collection and employee productivity***

What's new – The Census has released its three mobile applications - America's Economy, "dwellr" and Pop Quiz app. These are available on the iOS and Android platforms.

The Census, in collaboration with BLS and BEA released its first mobile app called America's Economy in August 2012. The app added three new indicators in July 2013 and another in November 2013 and now makes 20 leading economic indicators available to the public via mobile devices. The app provides easy access to the indicator data, trend information, up to 24 months of historical data (where available), and a regional breakdown (where available). The app has had approximately 130,000 downloads since its release. In December 2012, the Census was an honorable mention recipient of the Walter Gellhorn Innovation Award for the agency's development of the "America's Economy" mobile app. In January 2014, the app was named a finalist for the ACT-IAC Excellence.gov award in the category of 'Enhancing the Customer Experience'.

The Census's OnTheMap application, which provides access to data that shows where workers are employed and where they live, was enhanced to allow easy access from mobile devices. The application (OnTheMap Mobile) can be accessed by Android and iOS devices at <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/m/>.

The Census is currently in the process of enhancing its home page <http://www.census.gov> to make it more mobile friendly. The enhanced version of the home page will detect where the request is coming from (what type of device) and respond with an appropriately formatted page.

The Census is engaged in building several prototypes to determine ways of using mobile devices to improve field data collection activities, as well as to increase employee productivity. The Census is also in the process of formulating a mobile computing strategy that will guide all future efforts related to mobile technology within the Bureau.

- ***Project – Application Programming Interface (API)***

The [Application Programming Interface](#) (API) makes key demographic, socioeconomic, and housing statistics more accessible than ever before. The API lets developers customize the Census statistics into web or mobile apps that provides users quick and easy access from more than sixty popular sets of statistics including:

- The 1990, 2000, and 2010 Decennial Census, which include detailed statistics on population age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, household relationship and owner/renter status, for a variety of geographic areas down to the level of census tracts and blocks.
- American Community Survey (ACS): Several vintages (currently spanning from 2010 – 2013) of the ACS (one, three, and five year estimates), which include detailed statistics

on a rich assortment of topics (education, income, employment, commuting, occupation, housing characteristics, and more) down to the level of census tracts and block groups.

- Economy-wide Keyed Statistics from Economic Census, which includes statistics on establishments, employees, receipts, and payroll for all industries. The API also includes data on an annual basis from County Business Patterns and Non-employer Statistics.
- Population estimates, which includes statistics that are the timeliest measure of current population available.
- Economic Indicators Time Series – which provide monthly and quarterly data that offer comprehensive measures of the U.S. economy.
- New Geographical APIs
- [And many more...](#)

The API aligns with the federal digital strategy and supports the goals of Open Government by making Census data available in an information-centric and machine-readable format.

- ***Project – Implementing the Federal Digital Strategy***

What's New – Census is embracing the business intent of the Federal Digital Strategy for open data, a cost effective mobile strategy, and improving the enterprise architecture and infrastructure to manage the complete data lifecycle.

The Digital Government Strategy, released in May 2012, presented a 12-month roadmap for agencies to follow to release better digital services to the American people.

The Digital Strategy is a critical part of the Open Government initiative, leveraging technology to unlock data and promote transparency with the American public. As a government leader in providing digital products and services, Census embraces this opportunity and has been working diligently towards a new 21st century digital ecosystem. In the last year, Census has made great strides in delivering on the Digital Government Strategy. Census is making their data available via API and has been doing so since before the DGS came out. However, we are ramping up our efforts to show our support for the DGS, not only through our API, but also in our migration to an "information-centric" content management system (CMS) and improving search and navigation, for its almost 50 million yearly website visitors. Efforts also include increased engagement with our customer through a broad variety of channels (both online and offline) in line with the "customer-centric" tenets of the DGS.

As of October 2012, Census identified the Census Summary File 1 and American Community Survey datasets as first-move candidates to make compliant with new open data, content, and web API policy. This data was made available to the public via a standard web

API in July 2012. In December, The API was named a Computerworld Honors Laureate in April 2013.

While Census remains a government leader in digital products and services, leadership at the bureau realizes there is even greater potential in connecting existing initiatives and further expanding how citizens access information about our people, economy, and the nation. In late November 2012, Census leadership agreed that the Digital Government Strategy should serve as a vehicle for digital transformation at Census – a charge that challenges Census to envision a future Census digital ecosystem and a path to achieving it. Census implementation of the Digital Strategy is based on the fundamental tenet that information is a strategic public asset that must be managed through the complete lifecycle from data collection through data dissemination. Census will continue to evolve the Bureau's Digital Strategy to ensure openness and application interoperability through shared services and to address heightened awareness of the challenge of maintaining security standards and infrastructure for the growing variety of digital efforts being planned.

There are three foundational elements critical to the success of a future Digital Strategy at Census.

- Interoperable systems - Improving how our systems exchange data with one another
 - Mobile Flexibility - Strengthening IT infrastructure through modern, scalable tools and software
 - API by Default Policy (CIO) - Publishing consistent standards to enable reuse and savings
- ***Project – Establishing the 2012 Account Manager Program***
The 2012 Account Manager Program is designed to support Economic Programs Directorate Strategic Plan Goal 4: "Limit Respondent Burden." The program looks at large companies across the directorate programs and finds ways to reduce total burden for data providers and to provide expert resources to assist data providers in completing questionnaires. The 2012 program will advance these goals and improve quality and timing of the Economic Census response by providing improved information and individual assistance to a selected group of the largest companies.
 - ***Project – Improving the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)***
What's New- The Census is amending its FTR to reflect new export reporting requirements.

The Census is responsible for collecting, compiling, and publishing U.S. International trade in goods. The Census amended the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR) to reflect new export reporting requirements. The FTR contain the definitions and requirements for reporting export information in the Automated Export System (AES). Specifically, the Census requires mandatory filing of export information through the Automated Export System (AES) or through *AESDirect* for all shipments of used self-propelled vehicles and temporary

exports. In addition, the Census modified the required reporting timeframe within the post departure filing program, adding additional security requirements, and making changes to improve clarity.

More information can be found at:

http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/regulations/npr_ftr_rewrite.pdf

- ***Project – Seasonal Adjustment of International Trade Statistics by Geography***

The Census currently adjusts monthly international merchandise trade statistics for seasonality by summarized commodity groupings. Working together with our partners at the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Census will also begin publishing seasonally adjusted trade value (goods only) by selected countries and geographic areas effective with the *FT-900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services* press release for January 2014 statistics. The Census currently publishes tables in the FT-900 that include trade value by country, but none are adjusted for seasonality. In addition, the Bureau of Economic Analysis plans to publish seasonally adjusted trade in goods and services on a balance of payments basis by selected countries and geographic areas in June 2014. The implementation of geographic seasonal adjustments will improve the relevance and usefulness of published trade statistics by providing data users with an ability to assess underlying patterns in time series value data for select countries and world areas.

- ***Project – Indicator Release Improvement Project (IRIP)***

The Census currently produces 13 principal economic indicators that provide relevant, timely, and high quality information to a wide variety of public and private sector data users. These monthly and quarterly reports are among the most closely watched statistics published by the Census. At an economic indicator release time, the process of transferring secure information from an internal server to a public web server can take up to 45 seconds for standard exhibits to become available for data users. In addition, the latency of the Census's economic indicator release in comparison to the Department lockup release poses a problem regarding equal access to the economic indicator data. IRIP entails a three-phase approach that will increase efficiency in releasing economic indicator data by minimizing, if not eliminating, the manual steps and reducing the time it takes to post economic indicator data to the public website to within five seconds, but as close as possible to one second, after the official release time. Upon the completion of this project the benefits will include: 1) the elimination of entering and storing similar data in different areas; 2) a complete redesign of the Briefing Room to match the Economic Indicator Dashboard and America's Economy mobile application; 3) the facilitation of quicker and equal access to indicator data after the official release time; 4) the ability to update all data driven applications simultaneously; and 5) an additional layer of security.

- ***Project – Economic Indicators Made Available through Census API***

What's New – The Economic Indicator Time Series Database is now available via the Census API and includes statistics primarily at the national level for measuring key sectors of the U.S. economy.

The Census's economic indicators provide monthly and quarterly data that are timely, reliable, and offer comprehensive measures of the U.S. economy. These critical data cover a wide variety of key economic sectors including construction, housing, international trade, retail trade, wholesale trade, services and manufacturing. The goal of this endeavor is to make vital economic data available through the Census API and assist data users and developers by providing access to analyze economic performance and help make informed business investment and policy decisions. Other data included, which are not considered principal economic indicators, are the Quarterly Summary of State & Local Taxes, Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions, and the Manufactured Homes Survey.

More information can be found at <http://www.census.gov/developers/>

- ***Project – Implementing the First Inaugural American Community Survey Data User Group Conference***

The Census saw a need to improve understanding of the value and utility of ACS data and to promote information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications. To help accomplish this, the Census contracted with Sabre Systems (who partnered with Population Reference Bureau) to organize an ACS Data User Group. The group is led by a Steering Committee comprised of selected external stakeholders representing a broad spectrum of data users with different interests.

To facilitate communication among ACS data users, an online community forum was developed; and webinars and special sessions on ACS data are organized at professional meetings and workshops around the country. Currently, there are over 850 on-line ACS data users.

In addition to these activities, the most impressive is the planning and implementation of the inaugural ACS Data Users Conference, held May 29-30, 2014, at the Holiday Inn Capitol in Washington, D.C. Nearly 300 ACS data users attended the conference.

The program included 43 contributed presentations by ACS data users, an invited plenary session by Census executives, and keynote addresses by Dr. Mark Doms, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Department of Commerce; and John H. Thompson, Director of the U.S. Census. The purpose of the conference was to facilitate information sharing among data users about key ACS data issues and applications and to promote networking.

- ***Project – Release of New American Community Survey 3-Year Comparison Profile***

The American Community Survey (ACS) provides reliable statistics that are indispensable to anyone who has to make informed decisions. The ACS is used by federal, tribal, state, and local agencies to ensure over \$400 billion are used to help communities across the nation each year. The ACS is invaluable in helping businesses determine where to make investments, ensuring job growth, and that the right products and services are provided at the local level.

In November 2013, the Census added the new American Community Survey three-year Social, Economic, and Housing Comparison Profiles to its data product line. The comparison profiles also contain the statistical significance column that indicates if the estimates are statistically different (at the 90% confidence level).

You can access three year Comparison Profiles on American FactFinder at <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>

For information on ACS and other ACS data products releases, please visit: <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

- ***Project – TIGERWeb***

TIGERWeb has made it easier and more efficient for users to access and view the full range of census geographic areas and features contained within the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) database—the Census geographic database. Previously, TIGER data were available only as downloadable files for use in a Geographic Information System (GIS). Customers who lacked access to a GIS could only view census geographic area information on reference maps produced to support specific statistical data releases. To view boundaries and other information for the full range of geographic areas for which the Census tabulates data, a data user would have to access multiple reference map types and series. TIGERWeb's on-line map viewer utilizes standard functionality to provide easy and open access to all census geographic areas, boundaries, relationships, and attributes. TIGERWeb Web Mapping Service (WMS) and Representational State Transfer (REST) services have made it more efficient for developers to access and consume spatial data for use in their own GIS and for use in applications. For more information on TIGERWeb, please visit:

http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerwebmain/TIGERweb_main.html

- ***Project – Census Flows Mapper***

The Census Flows Mapper is an interactive on-line mapping and data dissemination tool that provides access to county-to-county migration data from the American Community Survey. The tool substantially expands access to, and understanding of, the number and characteristics of county-to-county migrants. Prior to development of the Census Flows Mapper, the complex county-to-county migration datasets generally were accessible only to expert data users and migration analysts. Census Flows Mapper provides novice users with the ability to access and utilize complex county-to-county migration data that previously

were beyond reach; experienced migration analysts can use the tool for exploratory analysis before delving deeper into the dataset.

The Census Flow Mapper’s functionality makes it easy to visualize patterns of migration, as well as to produce multiple maps quickly to compare migration patterns for different counties. The ability to download data for a specific county and flows of interest allows the user the benefit of data tailored to their own analytical needs. The design of the map and the data download also provides information to our users that might otherwise be lost due to disclosure avoidance methodology when providing flow information by detailed characteristics. Having access to the full list of counties involved in any flow interaction with a selected county, and the ability to see spatial proximity by characteristic, even without the details, provides a wealth of information for both the experienced and novice user. Census Flows Mapper also provides the ability to download the map display in Portable Document Format (PDF). The on-line display and PDF map adhere to standard cartographic design principles, providing the user with the ability to produce cartographically sound maps for inclusion in reports and presentations. For more information, please visit:

<http://flowsmapper.geo.census.gov/flowsmapper/flowsmapper.html>

- ***Project – Census - Open for Business: Entrepreneur Edition Tool***

The *Census - Open for Business: Entrepreneur Edition* tool, created in conjunction with Esri, fosters the private sector’s development of new data-based businesses, products, and services. The *Entrepreneur Edition* presents official Census Bureau statistics to entrepreneur’s (as well as the ability to incorporate data from other 3rd party sources) to guide their research for opening a new business. This desktop/tablet tool is aimed at first time business owners and will allow easy access to the key data they need to develop a business plan, to support a loan application, and to assist in choosing a business location. A prototype of the tool was released for user comment and feedback in September 2014, and version 1.0 of the tool is in development and is scheduled for release in April 2015.

- ***Project – Census - Open for Business: Chamber of Commerce Edition Tool***

As a result of Census attendance at the American Chamber of Commerce Executives annual conference (ACCE) in August 2014, the Census Bureau is developing a customized tool that combines economic and demographic from the Census Bureau to create profiles for Chambers of Commerce. We plan to leverage the existing Census Open for Business platform, and related technology to develop this tool. Development of a prototype (beta version) of the tool is being developed, and is scheduled for an initial debut and demonstration at the 2015 ACCE Conference.

- ***Project – Administering a Reimbursable Customer Survey***

The Economic and Demographic Directorates of the Census Bureau are administering a Reimbursable Customer Survey to obtain feedback from our reimbursable customers who contract with the Census Bureau for survey support. The Reimbursable Customer Survey

instrument is currently being tested and will mailout in late 2014. Preliminary results from the survey will be available in the spring of 2015 and will be used to make improvements in our reimbursable operations.

- ***Project – Live Webcasting Public Events***

In order to provide greater public access to information about major programs and activities at the Census Bureau, staff was directed by senior agency leadership in the summer of 2014 to provide a public Webcast capability of the 2020 Census program management review (PMR) scheduled for October 3, 2014. This was the first time this event would be streamed for viewing via the Web for outside audiences.

In addition to Webcasting the PMR, the October 6, 2014 2020 Census Operational Press Briefing and the October 9-10, 2014 National Advisory Committee meeting were webcast. All three Webcasts were very successful. They were promoted on social media, to the Census Bureau's stakeholders and on census.gov. There were 982 views of the PMR, 187 views of the Operational Press Briefing and 1,264 views of the National Advisory Committee meeting. Those viewing the Webcasts could watch the entire proceedings, including the presentations and participant/attendee interactions. The Census Bureau is planning to Webcast upcoming events in 2015.

- ***Project – Enhanced Smart Search***

The new “smart search” is powered by the Census application programming interface or API. We now provide more statistics to users directly on the search results page, along with traditional links similar to search engines. For example, if you search for “California population,” the latest population statistics along with related demographic and economic figures will appear in an information panel at the same time. With just one click, users can see a visualization or a table of California’s population at the state or county level. Users will also be able to see the results any images or videos associated with a search. You can also filter search results by content types, such as image and videos.

In addition, our smart search function includes NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes, a very popular search topic among Census Bureau customers. The business community can easily use this function plus other website resources to find information essential to start and or grow their businesses.

- ***Quickfacts Beta***

Since its launch in 2000, QuickFacts has been one of the most popular and widely used tools on census.gov. The original vision of this tool hasn’t changed – in one or two clicks, customers of all skill levels get to profiles showing data from across programs. The agency has introduced a completely re-imagined QuickFacts, which can be found in a beta version at www.census.gov/quickfacts. The interactive QuickFacts beta has a number of exciting improvements, including customized tables that let users compare statistics for up to six

locations side-by-side. Users can also view data on a map instead of a table. Additionally, in an effort to continue growing the agency’s customer base, users can also now embed QuickFacts on their websites and share it in social media. Furthermore, new data has been added. For the first time, QuickFacts now includes profiles for townships and locations in Puerto Rico.

Census Featured Initiative – Open Data API



API
Launched in July 2012, 8,100 Key requests since it was launched.
700M API accesses since it was launched.
<http://www.census.gov/developers/>

Like many federal agencies and bureaus facing continued budget reductions and limited resources, the Census is adapting its operating model to be a smarter, faster, and leaner 21st century organization. As the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy, the Census collects, analyzes, and disseminates massive amounts of information to a widely diverse audience spanning localities, companies, even countries. These large volumes of data, coupled with the rapid pace, democratization of technology presented the Census with a challenge in how it should expand access to its data while ensuring quality and security, and minimizing costs.

To address this complex challenge the Census launched the Open Data Strategy project. The project aimed to deliver an API to the public that can provide building blocks for third-party developers to design online and mobile applications using Census statistics. The API empowers developers with easy web-access to a single pipeline of data with full flexibility, and control over which data variables to request and receive, without the need to create copies or download potentially massive files, requiring additional infrastructure to store them. To achieve this, Census developed innovative approaches to harnessing data from two of the largest federal statistical datasets available for public consumption, comprising nearly 400GB of storage. A key challenge was the ability to improve performance given the API needed to handle up to a thousand concurrent users and return data requested with an acceptable response time (sub-second more than ninety-nine percent of the time).

While APIs help expand computing potential at Census, their real value comes through enabling innovation and fostering a 21st Century economic model. The Census Open Data API allows developers both inside and outside the agency to create new, and perhaps unexpected, applications based on Census statistics, thereby extending their reach.

The Census Open Data API was implemented in July 2012 with the release of the 2010 Decennial Census data and the 2006-2010 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) Summary File (SF). The API currently serves up more than sixty datasets with additional datasets being added every month. In 2015, it will be expanded to include international data, including population and trade data for more than 200 countries. Additionally, the API

serves up the Economic Indicators. These surveys produce a variety of statistics covering construction, housing, international trade, retail trade, wholesale trade, services and manufacturing. The survey data provide measures of economic activity that allow analysis of economic performance and inform business investment and policy decisions. Other data included, which are not considered principal economic indicators, are the Quarterly Summary of State and Local Taxes, Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions, and the Manufactured Homes Survey. The Census Open Data API has incorporated continuous updates and enhancements as suggested by our user community of developers. For example, a machine-readable dataset discovery service is now available in response to user need for easier search and discover of available data in the API. Content is largely based on the Open Project Data Common Core Metadata Schema, and extended to include metadata specific to Census datasets. In addition, to help exploration of the API examples provided by the discovery service, users are now allowed up to 500 queries per day without a key. There are four phases to this project including the remainder of Phase I: Incorporating additional aggregate datasets; Phase II: Normalizing time series datasets; Phase III: Normalizing public use micro data datasets; and Phase IV: Normalizing longitudinal datasets so that the complexity of their use is transparent to the developer/user community. The project is currently in maintenance of Phase I and Phase II, where additional aggregate datasets are being included, and in the design stage of Phase III.

One example of how the open data API has benefited an organization is the Sunlight Foundations' Sitegeist application, the goal of which is to show how government data can be useful to the average person. "The (sic) majority of the data used in Sitegeist comes from the U.S. Census Bureau and their wonderful API...I've never worked with the Census bulk downloads, but I hear from colleagues that it can be a daunting task. Their API makes it incredibly easy to slice and dice the numbers as needed; combining data across "tables" for any geography you are working with." Other examples include platitudes from general public developers: "Having used these APIs for a while, I find them very useful and working well. Thank you." and, "First, let me applaud the Census Bureau for doing this, it's an awesome project. I'm glad to see JSON as the response format for the API."

The Census Open Data API is considered a notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations, especially smaller federal agencies that may not have the resources or funding to establish the necessary infrastructure to support the potential users of their data. The open data API is an integral part of the Census's response to the comprehensive federal Digital Government Strategy, of providing data and services that are available "anywhere, anytime, on any device."

In addition to the ability to allow external developers to create new applications, internal developers are leveraging the same technology and analysts are using the open data API to disseminate complex information to the public in an easily digestible format through web and mobile applications and newly developed data visualizations.



Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)

ESA plays three key roles within the Department. Provides timely economic analysis, and disseminates national economic indicators. Produce in-depth reports, fact sheets, and briefings on policy issues, and current economic events. The Department and the White House policymakers rely on these tools, as do American businesses, state and local governments, and news organizations around the world.

The ESA oversees the Census and the BEA. In this role, ESA works collaboratively with BEA and the Census leadership on high priority management, budget, employment, and risk management issues, integrating the work of these agencies with the priorities and requirements of the Department and other government entities.

The ESA host the CDAC for the Department. More information on the CDAC can be found under Department Flagship initiatives.

ESA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **ESA**.

Table 6 - ESA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
ESA	Economic Indicators	Live / Operational	--
	Digital Economy and Cross-Border Trade: The Value of Digitally-Deliverable Services	Completed (January 2014)	--
	Web Based Briefs	Live / Operational	--

- ***Project – Economic Indicators***

The ESA releases 12 monthly and quarterly Principal Federal Economic Indicators collected by its constituent bureaus: the Census and BEA. Businesses rely heavily upon these indicators to make decisions every day. In their public comments, the Secretary and ESA’s Under Secretary and Chief Economist put the indicators into a national and global economic context.

- ***Project – Digital Economy and Cross-Border Trade: The Value of Digitally-Deliverable Services***

The Department has played an instrumental role in developing policies that facilitate the digital economy. The Department’s Internet Policy Task Force identifies leading public policy and operational challenges in the Internet environment. The Task Force is committed to maintaining the global free flow of information online. ESA’s *Digital Economy and Cross-Border Trade* report provides a framework for understanding the size and nature of some cross border data flows. There is a great deal of interest in understanding the economic value related to digitally-enabled data and services delivered to users at no price. An exact number of bytes associated with these data flows may not be known, but the number is large and growing.

The ESA conducted analysis using digitally-enabled services categories identified in previous research as a starting point for identifying “digitally-deliverable” services—i.e., services that may be, but are not necessarily, delivered digitally. These service categories are the ones in which digital technologies present the greatest opportunity to transform the relationship between buyer and seller from the traditional in-person delivery mode to a digital one. Digitally-deliverable services are an important contributor to U.S. trade and help to improve the overall trade balance. When these services are considered as inputs throughout the production process, their value is even more apparent. Virtually no good or service is produced in the U. S. without input from one of the digitally-deliverable services studied in the report.

The report concludes that to understand how the U.S. economy is adapting to these changes and how to properly implement policies on international trade and other economic matters, the Federal government must continue to adapt and expand its statistics to capture these changes.

- ***Project - Web Based Briefs***

The ESA produces short, understandable briefs on timely economic topics at the rate of about once a month.



International Trade Administration (ITA)

ITA's mission is to enable U.S. firms and workers to compete and win in the global marketplace. Through the use of partnerships, technology and key sector analysis, ITA provides the gold standard of service for businesses and client-focused organizations. ITA's goals are to strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promote U.S. exports and business investment in the U. S., and ensure fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of our trade laws and agreements.

Attracting more foreign investors to the U. S. and retaining investment has a positive impact on our economy and creates and supports millions of jobs. ITA's efforts to promote exports and business investment support President Obama's National Export Initiative (NEI) and our nation's sustained economic growth. ITA is laser-focused on helping more U.S. exporters reach more markets and making trade a bigger part of the DNA of our economy.

The ITA is the premier resource for American companies competing in the global marketplace. With its mission to strengthen the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promote U.S. exports and business investment in the U.S., and ensure fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of ITA's trade laws and agreements, ITA is continuously improving its outreach to stakeholders, clients, and the general public.

The ITA's efforts to promote exports and business investment support President Obama's National Export Initiative, NEI/NEXT, SelectUSA, and the nation's sustained economic growth. The President's Open Data Initiative is a critical element of ITA's efforts to help U.S. companies compete and win in global markets. Providing actionable information to U.S. companies, foreign buyers of U.S. goods and services, and foreign investors in projects that create jobs in the United States is a key strategy within the Department of Commerce's Strategic Plan.

Open Data

Systematic Inventorying of Non-Public, Restricted, and Public Data Assets

The ITA has recently begun a knowledge management initiative that involves identifying ITA's IA and developing a data services platform that will facilitate the development and delivery of ITA information products to internal users and external customers. This effort will include cataloguing ITA's data assets in terms of data sensitivity and access rules.

Making Public Assets Available

The ITA makes its data publicly available through the TDP (<http://developer.trade.gov>), a collection of Application Programming Interfaces that allow software developers to create web and mobile applications using information produced by ITA and other U.S. government trade promotion agencies. Currently, ITA has six APIs available for public use that are sourced from ITA, the Department, and other trade agency data. These provide information about trade events, market research, locations of domestic and international export assistance centers, business opportunities, and trade news and articles. Our most recent API, released in November 2014, is the Consolidated Screening List (CSL). This API consolidates nine export screening lists of the Departments of Commerce, State, and the Treasury into a single data feed as an aide to industry for electronic screening of potential parties to regulated transactions.

In the coming year, ITA will improve the usability of existing public data assets as well as expand our data offerings. We are adding a “fuzzy search” capability to the CSL (to produce better search results in response to less precise search terms), and we will be launching new tools and data offerings that will enable users to generate reports detailing the size, challenges, and opportunities of specific export market segments by product type and/or country. New APIs planned for the coming year will focus on data related to tariff information for goods and services covered under Free Trade Agreements, and frequent questions asked by exporters.

Steps to Encourage Public Use, Promote Public Knowledge, and Foster Innovation

The ITA utilizes a variety of methods to encourage public use, promote public knowledge, and foster innovation. Links to ITA’s Trade Developer Portal (TDP) can be found on a variety of websites, including: Export.gov, Trade.gov, and Commerce.gov. ITA also actively markets the TDP through outreach to ITA Strategic Partners, speaking at public forums such as the Association of Public Data Users (APDU), and providing TDP demonstrations in various government-sponsored venues (Open Data meetings, President’s Export Council, etc.).

The ITA’s outreach and promotional efforts have resulted in several partner organizations integrating data access through TDP into products and services for their customers and a partner-created mobile app that is now available in two of the major mobile app stores.

Data Asset Identification

The ITA’s TDP publishes data related to U.S. exports. Because the origins of the TDP platform lie in the Export.gov website (a Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC) product), The ITA’s TDP team first considers datasets available from TPCC agencies including ITA. If the dataset is not yet in an open and structured form, the TDP team collaborates with the data’s steward to determine the timeline for opening that dataset.

The TDP team also considers data that will bolster its own datasets. For example, ITA and several other trade-related agencies publish trade leads and trade events. The TDP reaches out to the stewards of those datasets to determine if it is available in a structured format and, if not, what the timeline is for opening it. The timeline for publishing data in open formats is dictated by several factors, including the structure, quality and reliability of the dataset.

Privacy

The ITA completes the annual FISMA report and the Federal Agency Data Mining report (Question 6.1 in the FISMA report). However, we submit those reports to the Senior Agency Official for Privacy, (i.e., Executive Council for Privacy, through the Department’s Chief Privacy Officer). For the breach PII incident reports, ITA files the initial breach incident reports with the Chief Privacy Officer and the DOC Computer Incident Response Team, which maintains a report on all PII breach incidents.

Whistleblower Protection

The ITA takes seriously its commitment to the Whistleblower Protection Act. ITA performs the following activities in support of Whistleblower Protection:

Information about Whistleblower Protection and ITA’s commitment to it are included in our periodic New Employee Briefings.

The ITA invites the Office of the Inspector General Ombudsman annually to brief our Office Directors on Whistleblower Protection and to respond to their questions.

The ITA distributes to our entire staff an annual announcement via email from the Deputy Under Secretary reasserting our commitment to Whistleblower Protection.

Once a year, ITA includes an article in the Office of the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer “News You Can Use” publication, reminding staff about Whistleblower Protection and ITA’s commitment to it.

The Office of the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer intranet site contains a section on Whistleblower Protection so that ITA employees can research the topic independently.

Websites

In 2014, ITA established a Digital Communications Office within the ITA Office of Public Affairs led by a Director of Digital Communications with the mandate to help all ITA staff around the globe better utilize digital communication tools, including web pages, social media, and open data to communicate with the general public. The Digital Communications Office will lead a customer-centric, digital communications strategy to share information, market products and services, and engage customers. The overall strategy will adapt to evolving business needs, market trends, and customer analytics to continually adjust and improve.

The The ITA has established a Digital Council comprised of representatives throughout ITA to advise and consult with the Director to create a customer-centric model for digital communications.

ITA uses several web domains (e.g., trade.gov, export.gov, businessusa.gov, selectusa.gov) to distribute content across targeted audience segments. In FY15, ITA will continue its agency-wide digital strategy, and content will be made directly available to our partners via open data tools, thus expanding ITA’s public engagement to sites that integrate content for the business and exporter communities regardless of what sites they visit.

Transparency

The ITA actively contributes to Data.gov. The agency currently has 13 datasets posted to the site. In addition, ITA business units provide online access to a variety of data, reports, resources, and other critical information that keeps the public up-to-date on the agency’s activities. Some examples of these transparency actions include:

The ITA provides access to public versions of every document submitted on the record for every ongoing trade remedy action through the [ACCESS](#) tool.

The ITA’s [Office of Advisory Committees](#) (OAC) is the primary source for outreach to the private sector on trade issues that cut across all sectors of the U.S. economy. The OAC houses the President’s Export Council, the [Industry Trade Advisory Center](#), the Manufacturing Council, and the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. OAC ensures that meeting notifications, committee recommendations, and other actions for the groups are available to the public.

The [U.S. Foreign-Trade Zones Board](#) provides updated information on all existing and potential foreign-trade zones, including announcements of open public comment periods and case status, on its website.

Public Notice

The ITA utilizes a variety of methods to keep the public aware of its initiatives, trade remedy actions, programs, resources, and events. ITA’s new Digital Communications team within ITA’s Office of Public Affairs will develop and implement new strategies to better engage users, ensuring effective two-way communications about ITA’s activities. Below are several examples of existing outreach efforts:

[SelectUSA](#) regularly distributes information about its programs, resources, and other events via blast e-mails and Twitter. SelectUSA has sent e-mails to nearly 17,000 interested parties during the planning stages for the 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit, providing Summit and foreign direct investment-related content.

The ITA’s [Trade Missions](#) team within the Industry and Analysis unit announces new trade mission opportunities through Federal Register notices, e-mails to relevant industry trade

association members, a series of public webinars, direct outreach to regional chambers of commerce, and social media platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Twitter).

The ITA promotes the resources available to U.S. companies looking to export through its network of trade promotion and policy professionals located in more than 75 countries and 100 U.S. cities through the Export.gov web portal. Information on upcoming trade shows, informative webinars, and opportunities for training are instantly available to potential clients around the globe.

Records Management

The ITA Records Management Program has embarked on the following initiatives to ensure compliance with M-12-18, Presidential Directive on Records Management and related National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) regulations:

Expanding Records Management Training with Computer-Based Training

Training is a very important component to developing and sustaining a viable records management program within any organization. Effective records management training is not only a requirement for compliance, but also reduces the risk associated with poor recordkeeping, such as unauthorized disposal, the inability to access documentation when needed, or respond to litigation or FOIA requests. The Records Management 101 on-line training is an initiative borne out of a partnership between the Federal Records Officers Network (FRON) and the NARA Records Management training program. The Records Management 101 on-line training course prepares staff with the knowledge to accomplish their records management responsibilities, as well as comply with the applicable records management statutes. To meet logistical and resource challenges, the training is scheduled to be deployed through Commerce Learning Center (CLC) computer based training network in FY 2015.

Revising the ITA Records Management Website

The ITA Records Management will revamp its webpage as a one-stop resource for information on ITA records management program activities, services, policies and procedures. In addition, by accessing the “Hot Topics” link, users will be directed to the NARA YouTube site. This site hosts a number of free on-demand training topics related to managing Federal records and accessible to all staff.

Updating the Records Control Schedule

The ITA is the process of integrating NARA’s updated General Records Schedules into its comprehensive records control manual and revising its programmatic records schedules to ensure they are maintained for the entire record life cycle, as well as support FOIA, Litigation or other investigatory purpose. NARA requires all agencies unscheduled records to be scheduled by December 2019.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The ITA has the capacity to analyze, coordinate, and respond to FOIA requests. As reported in the Fiscal Year 2014 FOIA Annual Report, the average number of days to respond to a simple FOIA request was four days. Complex requests averaged 119 days, almost 100 days longer than the statutory time period for responding.

The ITA is currently looking into solutions to conduct electronic searches on a network-wide level as an alternative of having each person who may have responsive records conduct an electronic search. In addition, we are looking at the possibility to contract out document imaging, scanning, and management to reduce time FOIA professionals spend on the administrative activities of a FOIA program.

As part of ITA's approach to assure the presumption of openness, ITA attaches the President's FOIA Memorandum and the Attorney General's FOIA Guidance as a reminder of the presumption of openness when tasking FOIA requests to subject matter experts. This topic is also reiterated during individual training sessions.

- **FOIA links:**

Description of your staffing and organizational FOIA program

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/contactfoia.htm>

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/servicecenters.htm>

- **Process for analyzing and responding to FOIA request**

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/FOIA/foiarequest.htm>

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title15/15cfr4_main_02.tpl)

[idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title15/15cfr4_main_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title15/15cfr4_main_02.tpl)

- **Links to agency FOIA reports**

<http://www.osec.doc.gov/omo/foia/ereadingroom.htm>

Proactive Disclosures

The ITA has utilized [FOIAonline](#) to process all FOIA requests since the beginning of FY2013. If a requestor submits a request other than through [FOIAonline](#), ITA uploads the request into [FOIAonline](#) to be processed. Once a request is in the system, the general public has electronic access to what is being requested, where the FOIA request is in the FOIA process, and if responsive records are located and can be released, they are publicly disclosed electronically through [FOIAonline](#).

Congressional Requests

The ITA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA) webpage (<http://trade.gov/olia/>) describes our staffing, organizational structure, and process for analyzing and responding to Congressional requests for information. Congressional staff can sign up to receive OLIA's regular updates. ITA follows the Department's guidelines related to public disclosure of Congressional requests and agency responses.

Declassification

The ITA does not have statutory or delegated authority to classify or declassify information in accordance with E.O. 13526, Classified National Security Information. This authority, referred to as Original Classification Authority (OCA) outlined in Part 1 of E.O. 13526, resides with the head of each Executive Branch agency.

The ITA supports the Department's declassification program by providing subject matter expertise when material is presented with ITA mission equities. The subject matter expert, normally the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the country/region, reviews the material and makes a recommendation to the Department for declassification. Those recommendations are approved by ITA's Deputy Under Secretary and forwarded to the Department for final determination and action.

Participation

The ITA depends on the continued participation of its public and private sector clients and stakeholders to achieve its strategic goals. ITA staff members throughout the world are committed to providing excellent customer service and these efforts require the use of a multitude of tools.

The ITA is taking advantage of new technologies and communications platforms to get its products and services into the hands of its customers. ITA's business units are also developing new approaches to meeting the needs of our stakeholders. Some prime examples include:

The ITA is sponsoring its annual Discover Global Markets (DGM) Business Forum Series in selected cities around the country. In 2015, four DGMs are scheduled that will allow attendees to tap into ITA's global expertise, and to explore opportunities in key industry sectors that offer high export potential. The Global Markets team actively recruits attendees through the Export.gov web portal, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

The ITA's [International Buyers Program](#) connects U.S. exporters to potential global customers at major industry trade shows. Every year, the IBP results in approximately \$1 billion in new businesses for U.S. companies.

The ITA actively markets the [TDP](#) through outreach to ITA Strategic Partners, speaking at public forums such as the Association of Public Data Users (APDU) and local DC API Meetups, and providing TDP demonstrations in various government-sponsored venues (Open Data meetings, President's Export Council, etc.).

Collaboration

The ITA has launched a knowledge management initiative that initially aims to provide a platform for broader internal collaboration among the Department and interagency partners related to the creation, use, and distribution of ITA information products.

The ITA houses the secretariat for the [Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee](#) (TPCC), the interagency committee that supports President Obama’s overall economic and trade agenda, including President Obama’s National Export Initiative, and its successor, NEI/NEXT. The mission of the TPCC is to foster coordination among trade agencies that will make it easier for U.S. exporters to access the information and services they need. The TPCC consists of 20 U.S. government departments and agencies, and is chaired by the Secretary of Commerce. Since Congress instituted the TPCC in the early 1990s, the interagency committee has coordinated and developed government-wide priorities for federal trade promotion efforts, including export assistance and financing programs.

In May 2014, Secretary Pritzker launched the second phase of President Obama’s National Export Initiative – [NEI/NEXT](#). Through NEI/NEXT, 20 federal agencies are advancing program and policy improvements to provide exporters more tailored assistance and information; streamline export reporting requirements; expand access to export financing; ensure market access and a level playing field; and partner at the state and local level to support export and foreign direct investment attraction strategies. These efforts will enable more U.S. businesses to capitalize on existing and potential opportunities created by free trade agreements and the U.S. trade agenda.

ITA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *ITA*.

Table 7 - ITA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
ITA	Developing a 21st Century Digital Presence to Better Serve our Customers	In Progress	FY2014 - 2015
	Raising awareness of the SelectUSA program and its available services	In Progress	FY2015 - 2016
	Providing industry-specific information on global market opportunities and challenges	In Progress	FY2015
	Educating U.S. companies on the export opportunities created by U.S. free trade agreements	In Progress	FY2014 - 2015

- ***Project – Developing a 21st Century Digital Presence to Better Serve our Customers***

What’s New – Improving communications with the public by utilizing all available online and social media platforms and channels

The ITA is continuing to make great strides toward developing a 21st Century digital presence that will better serve our customers and stakeholders. Currently, ITA’s digital communications are conducted through three primary vehicles – websites, social media/third-party services, and e-mail.

In March 2014, ITA approved the establishment of a digital communications team within the ITA Office of Public Affairs that will be led by a Director of Digital Communications. The team’s mandate will be to help all ITA staff better utilize digital communication tools, including web pages, social media, and open data to communicate with the general public. ITA has established a Digital Council comprised of representatives from each of the business units, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and public affairs to advise and consult with the Director.

Beginning in FY2015, a full team will be assembled under the Director of Digital Communications to develop and implement a digital communications strategy in support of a broader ITA communications strategy. The team will focus on three principal areas: technology, content management and outreach/promotion.

Public website channels have traditionally been split into Trade.gov and Export.gov. Trade.gov has been more trade-policy focused, and Export.gov has targeted businesses and other organizations interested in exporting. As a first step in an ITA-wide digital strategy, Export.gov will be consolidated into Trade.gov, and ITA’s content will be made directly available to our partners via Data.gov tools, thus expanding ITA’s public engagement. Reducing the number of websites ITA supports will allow us to develop a high-quality, customer-friendly website experience. The goal is to have the consolidation completed by the end of 2014.

- ***Project – Raising awareness of the SelectUSA program and its available services***

What’s New – Expanding online access to the SelectUSA program and Federal government resources to attract and retain business investment in the United States

President Obama and Secretary Pritzker have prioritized U.S. government efforts to attract and retain business investment in the U. S. through ITA’s SelectUSA program. SelectUSA is the first federal-wide effort to promote and facilitate business investment in the U. S. as an engine for job growth and economic development. SelectUSA provides information and assistance to businesses on how to take advantage of the U. S.’ business-friendly environment, ensure that a leadership role is maintained to increase a competitive environment for new investment. The initiative coordinates investment-related resources across U.S. federal agencies, and is the single point of contact at the national level to help international and domestic firms grow and invest in the U. S.

SelectUSA is also increasing efforts to raise awareness of best practices and opportunities for reshoring. SelectUSA offers an ombudsman service regarding federal rules and regulations for any company considering making an investment in the U. S., including U.S. companies that could re-shore. SelectUSA also offers assistance to U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs) as they seek to attract investment and promote reshoring. Commerce is hosting a SelectUSA Summer Forum with the theme “Reinvesting in America, Creating Jobs at Home,” to promote awareness of reshoring.

Throughout FY2014, SelectUSA is conducting consumer needs analysis to determine the optimal way to meet the needs of SelectUSA clients, including U.S. state and local governments and investors. This effort provides follow up activities to the inaugural SelectUSA Investment Summit, held in Washington, D.C., October 31-November 1, 2013. Approximately 1,300 business and government leaders from nearly 60 countries and economic development organizations from 48 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories met at the SelectUSA Investment Summit to learn about the advantages of doing business in the U. S. and to explore investment opportunities. Planning for the 2015 SelectUSA Investment Summit is underway.

In 2014, SelectUSA is hosting a series of Road Shows and trade show pavilions internationally to bring U.S. economic development organizations face-to-face with investors. Events are being held in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, China, Mexico, Israel, Switzerland, Austria, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Australia, New Zealand, and other locations. Events are planned into FY2015 and beyond.

SelectUSA has launched a series of webinars – some co-branded with various stakeholders and clients – that provide detailed information about SelectUSA programs and services available to retain and attract business investment. Up to 20 of these webinars are scheduled to be completed by the end of FY2014.

SelectUSA is working to update the information, tools, and resources available through the www.SelectUSA.gov website. A complete redesign of the site is underway and should be completed by mid-FY2015. The website provides industry reports and economic trends outlining the key reasons why the U. S. is the premier international investment destination, describes the Federal government resources available to businesses looking to invest, and highlights upcoming events hosted by SelectUSA and its partners to promote investment in the U. S..

A major component of the website redesign will be the launch of new data tools that will greatly expand public access to research databases and other resources. These new tools will enable potential investors, economic development organizations, and the general public to quickly identify opportunities for investment within the U. S.. In FY2014, SelectUSA is reviewing deployment of four potential data tools with the goal of these major projects coming online by the end of FY2015:

- *Nationwide Investment Incentives*: Provides companies, U.S. economic development organizations (EDOs), service providers, and policy-makers a comprehensive, comparable and up-to-date collection of federal-level and state, county, and city incentives.
- *Nationwide Investment Sites*: Allows firms to search and identify optimal sites available across the U. S. through a comprehensive, Geographic Information Systems-based depository of available greenfield, brownfield, office, warehouse, industrial, and other available commercial sites.
- *Nationwide Investment Projects*: Offers U.S. EDOs a place to post and share public tenders and other investment opportunities, and allows firms and investors to identify opportunities for expansion.
- *ServiceSolutionsUSA*: Enables investors to directly connect with U.S. companies that provide services, and offers service providers an open opportunity to reach new clients. This will facilitate investment while also increasing U.S. service exports.

The expanded access to these databases – once operational – will help fulfill Secretary Pritzker’s pledge to increase availability of Commerce data.

- ***Project – Providing industry-specific information on global market opportunities and challenges***

What’s New – Introducing industry-specific exporting opportunities to U.S. companies through sector spotlights posted to Trade.gov

ITA’s Industry and Analysis (I&A) unit focuses on helping U.S. businesses become more competitive in the global marketplace. I&A industry analysts ensure that federal government trade policy and promotion agencies have access to industry-specific information on global trends and opportunities. Many agencies provide technical assistance to U.S. companies, as well as develop and implement policies. I&A has developed specific industry sector spotlights to help U.S. government agencies focus and prioritize efforts that could significantly improve U.S. export performance.

I&A works closely with ITA’s industry advisory groups – comprised of private sector representatives – in the development of these strategies. We also prepare public versions of this information that companies can use to help guide in their strategic planning process and aid in identifying potential export opportunities.

Public spotlights are currently available for the following sectors: Aerospace; Agricultural & Food Machinery; Automotive Parts; Building Products; Chemicals; Construction Machinery; Environmental Technologies; Health Information Technology; Oil & Gas Equipment;

Processed Foods; Professional Services; Recreational Transportation; Renewable Energy; the U.S.-European Union Safe Harbor Framework (consumer data protection); and Travel & Tourism.

By the beginning of FY2015, I&A plans to make the following additional sector spotlights publicly available: Architecture, Construction, and Engineering; Civil Nuclear; Express Delivery/Distribution; Insurance; Intellectual Property protection; Semiconductors; and Smart Grid technologies.

Sector strategy reports are available at <http://trade.gov/industry/newita.asp>.

- ***Project – Educating U.S. businesses on the export opportunities created by U.S. free trade agreements***

What's New – Provide updated fact sheets that highlight the economic impact of free trade agreements on individual states and sectors

The ITA produces reports that highlight the benefits of trade agreements for the U. S. In particular, ITA prepares fact sheets that explain the benefits and opportunities from trade agreements for companies and workers in each of the 50 states. These fact sheets include a selection of state export trends, an overview of export-supported jobs, and a summary of the major commitments from a trade agreement. The fact sheets also provide details of all pending trade negotiations.

In addition, ITA prepares a series of industry-specific sector reports that outline the effects of an agreement on the market access opportunities in the partner market for each industry. The sector reports profile the current trade and tariff environment for U.S. exporters, summarize the sector-specific market access results of the agreement, assess foreign competition in the partner market, and describe non-tariff barriers addressed by the agreement that are critical for exporters in each sector. This information is critical to U.S. companies as they decide how to take advantage of these free trade agreements.

These products are available at www.trade.gov/fta. ITA will continue to update these state fact sheets as negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the Trade in Services Agreement progress.



Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

MBDA is an entrepreneurially focused organization committed to wealth creation in minority communities. MBDA was created to foster the growth and global competitiveness of U.S. businesses that are minority-owned.

The MBDA actively coordinates and leverages public and private-sector resources that facilitate strategic alliances in support of its mission. MBDA’s vision is economic prosperity for all American business enterprises.

The MBDA provides funding for a network of Minority Business Centers located throughout the Nation. The Centers provide minority entrepreneurs with one-on-one assistance in writing business plans, marketing, management and technical assistance, and financial planning to assure adequate financing for business ventures.

The Centers are staffed by business specialists who have the knowledge and practical experience needed to run successful and profitable businesses. Business referral services are provided free of charge. However, the network generally charges nominal fees for specific management and technical assistance services. The Centers are located in areas with the largest concentration of minority populations and the largest number of minority businesses. [Locate a center near you.](#)

MBDA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **MBDA**.

Table 8 - MBDA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
MBDA	Support of SelectUSA.gov Project	On-Going / Continuous	--
	Support of BusinessUSA.gov Project	On-Going / Continuous	--
	Business Development Tools Modernization Project	In Progress	August 2015

- **Project – Support of *SelectUSA.gov***

What's new –Integration of information regarding SelectUSA.gov

In a continuing effort to increase the awareness of business programs and services, MBDA promotes SelectUSA.gov initiatives on the MBDA.gov website and participates in all [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) events. MBDA promoted the 2013 [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) Summit on the MBDA.gov website and maintains a blog page that references all [SelectUSA](http://SelectUSA.gov) activities with active hyperlinks.

- **Project – Support of *BusinessUSA.gov* Project**

What's new –Integration of MBDA programs and services with BusinessUSA.gov

The MBDA is continuing its participation on the BusinessUSA.gov steering committee to provide a one stop destination of all federal programs that support small businesses. MBDA's role in this effort has been to ensure that its programs and other information specific to minority business enterprises are included in the BusinessUSA.gov portal. The first iteration of BusinessUSA.gov was released on February 17, 2012. Since its release MBDA and the [BusinessUSA](http://BusinessUSA.gov) steering committee have been working on functionality and enhancements to improve the user experience for the portal.

- **Project – *Business Development Tools Modernization* Project**

What's new – Enhancement and redesign of MBDA's business development Applications

The MBDA has identified technology that can be used to enhance or replace the suite of business development applications that reside on the MBDA portal. Historically, these tools have been used by Minority Business Enterprise's (MBE), and MBDA Business Centers to support activities associated with their business. Although visitors to MBDA's portal actively use these tools, the agency has determined that there are more modern tools that could be used to improve the effectiveness of and ensure a first class experience for visitors to the site. Newer tools will provide visitors with access to a virtual space that can be used to grow their businesses and will also allow visitors to tailor the site to their individual business needs. The ultimate vision for the initiative will be to increase MBE access to financing and procurement opportunities existing within the public and private sector. The requirements document for obtaining a contractor to host the new services is expected to be complete by mid-summer 2014.



National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

NIST founded in 1901 is a non-regulatory federal agency within the [Commerce](#). NIST's mission is to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life.

Open Data

NIST Public Access Plan

In response to the Memorandum from the Executive Office of the President for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies: Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research, dated February 22, 2013, NIST developed a NIST Public Access Plan. The plan describes NIST efforts to make freely available to the public, in publicly accessible repositories, all peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data arising from unclassified research and programs funded wholly or in part by NIST. Within the constraints of its mission and funding, NIST will also promote the deposit of scientific data arising from unclassified research and programs, funded wholly or in part by NIST, free of charge unless an exception exists, in publicly accessible databases. A NIST Public Access Policy will articulate the roles and responsibilities of NIST staff for ensuring public access.

Improved Access to Publications and Archival Materials

The NIST is partnering with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to use the existing PubMed Central (PMC) repository system to provide public access to full-text peer-reviewed scholarly publications and associated data for NIST, leveraging the well-established search, archival, and dissemination features of PMC. NIST plans to acquire a web-based manuscript submission and peer-review workflow solution that enables geographically dispersed stakeholders, including both NIST employees and non-NIST collaborators, to electronically submit, edit, and search bibliographic information and view progress-tracking information during internal review.

The NIST is also working with the Internet Archive, under an arrangement with the Library of Congress, to digitize the hundreds of technical reports it has published over more than 100 years, with the goal that the entire legacy collection of NBS/NIST technical series publications will be available to the public through the Government Printing Office's Federal

Digital System. Some of these technical publications were targeted to very specific audiences, but many are about topics of interest to a broader audience.

The NIST staff members are also enhancing the NIST Digital Archives by adding information about and images of artifacts in the NIST Museum collections and photographs portraying NBS/NIST history. NIST staff members are tracking the number of web hits on and the number of citations of those reports and papers to make a measurement-based determination of the effectiveness of this strategy to increase the impact of NIST research.

Improved Access to Data

The NIST's plan for providing public access to data consists of three components: data management plans (DMPs), an Enterprise Data Inventory (EDI), and a Common Access Platform providing a public access infrastructure. Generation of data management plans has begun, providing documentation of plans for storage, archival, and accessibility for NIST's multiple types of data. The EDI is a catalog of the datasets with a user-friendly front end to enable NIST scientists to easily enter metadata about their datasets and an export capability to facilitate feeding that metadata into data.gov. The Common Access Platform will create an infrastructure of registries to make it easier for users to find and use datasets from any source.

To enhance its ability to store, exchange, and disseminate its research data to external stakeholders and the public as well as to share it between NIST technical staff and their immediate collaborators, NIST is making foundational improvements to its data management infrastructure. There are four prongs to this initiative:

- Analyze data management practices across NIST organizational units, document procedures, and build out flexible and extensible tools to support data management plans and the Enterprise Data Inventory;
- Create a robust data management framework for data of all working levels by extending cloud-based storage and network connectivity, and deploying easy-to-use interfaces for the management of NIST data;
- Pilot development of a NIST public access data portal with improved interfaces, with particular focus on supporting Standard Reference Data;
- Accelerate the identification, assessment, authorization, and deployment process for widely used software tools that support data exchange and research collaboration.

Materials Genome Initiative

The Materials Genome Initiative (MGI) is a multi-agency initiative designed to create a new era of policy, resources, and infrastructure that support U.S. institutions in the discovery, manufacture, and deployment of advanced materials twice as fast, at a fraction of the cost.

The discovery and optimization of new materials for innovative products is a time-consuming and laborious process, and computational design of materials has begun to emerge as a powerful new tool for materials discovery and optimization. However, major efforts in both theory and experiment are needed to provide the data that underlies successful modeling. Given NIST expertise in the integration, curation, and provisioning of critically evaluated data and models, NIST has assumed a leadership role within the MGI, establishing essential data exchange protocols and the means to ensure the quality of materials data and models. These efforts will yield the new methods, metrologies, and capabilities necessary for accelerated materials development. NIST is working with stakeholders in industry, academia, and government to develop the standards, tools, and techniques enabling acquisition, representation, and discovery of materials data; interoperability of computer simulations of materials phenomena across multiple length and time scales; and the quality assessment of materials data, models, and simulations.

Privacy

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Privacy and Open Government.

Whistleblower Protection

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Inspector General.

Websites

Several years ago, as part of an effort to expand dissemination of its research results, NIST implemented a CMS, which included access to an improved database of research papers authored or co-authored by NIST researchers. Content is “tagged” by topic, enabling the public to subscribe to receive new information posted on the website on specific topics of interest such as nanotechnology or energy-related research. Currently, there are more than 110,000 subscribers who receive information on approximately 160 different topics. The NIST website also includes several blogs that allow members of the public to comment or ask questions about posted articles and the CMS includes icons to easily share content from the NIST site with social media websites (more than 3,000 “shares” in the first 4 months of FY2015).

External Website Migration

The NIST is migrating its central web pages from a proprietary CMS to Drupal, an open source CMS. The new website will allow greater flexibility in the functionality of NIST internal and external web pages. It will also be hosted in the cloud, which will improve NIST’s ability to meet current and future needs.

Social Media

The NIST has created sites on YouTube (more than 4,300 subscribers, nearly 1 million video views), Facebook (more than 20,000 “likes”), Twitter (16,000 “followers”), LinkedIn (10,000 followers) and Flickr (more than 17,000 images viewed). To ensure that as many people as possible benefit from NIST’s work, news of major research results posted on the NIST website is routinely announced through these additional social media sites.

Transparency

The NIST strives to be consistently open and transparent in its interactions with the public and news media.

The Institute implements the Department of Commerce Public Communications Policy, which includes explicit approval for research staff to talk with the news media and the public directly--without prior permission from the Public Affairs Office--about the results of their taxpayer funded research.

The NIST Public Affairs Office regularly offers communications training to its research staff, including describing this portion of the policy, to ensure that they are committed to broadly disseminating NIST results to a wide variety of audiences. Plain language training is available online and through regularly scheduled in-person courses on campus.

The Union of Concerned Scientists, a non-profit dedicated to encouraging transparency in scientific communication, surveyed the NIST technical staff and found that NIST scientists “are aware of free speech protections in the official policy and report a comparatively high degree of openness.”

The NIST provides a dedicated phone and email public inquiries referral service during all business hours to ensure that any member of the public may request assistance in locating specialized technical reports or experts or in resolving customer services concerns they may have. The Public Inquiries email is available in the footer of most NIST web pages to facilitate easy access to this service.

NIST’s [policy on scientific integrity](#) is also easily accessed on its homepage.

Public Notice

The NIST follows departmental guidance from the Office of Public Affairs.

Records Management

The NIST manages its records in accordance with NARA and Department of Commerce regulations, ensuring that records are economically and effectively created to meet business needs, kept long enough to protect rights and assure accountability, and preserved and available for future generations. NIST is updating its records management directives to be clear and concise, conveying records management requirements and responsibilities to all NIST staff.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

The NIST responds to Freedom of Information Act requests in accordance with Department of Commerce regulations and Department of Justice guidance. NIST emphasizes the importance of transparency of its operations and regularly performs discretionary releases of documents and information that could qualify for exemption from release, but for which there is no foreseeable harm. The NIST FOIA Office works collaboratively with the NIST Operating Units to obtain

information in response to requests in a timely manner and to encourage proactive disclosure of information.

Proactive Disclosure

In November 2013, NIST initiated a review of its cryptographic standards development process in response to concerns about the integrity of NIST cryptographic standards and guidelines. As a critical component of this review, the NIST Director charged the NIST Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology (VCAT) to form a Committee of Visitors (CoV) to serve as technical experts to assess NIST cryptographic standards and guidelines development process and if necessary provide findings on how it could be improved. NIST made publicly available all materials provided to the panel by posting the content on the VCAT website. NIST also held open discussions with multiple stakeholders for awareness and input.

Participation

The NIST has a rich history of participation in numerous standards development efforts, dating back to the beginning of the 20th century when the National Bureau of Standards (which became NIST in 1988) was founded. Currently, over 450 NIST staff members participate in over 120 standards development organizations on both a national and international scale.

To increase citizen involvement in the development of standards to address new technological challenges, NIST has reached out into the community to convene workshops at key locations around the country, organize diverse stakeholders, and establish consensus-developing organizations. This strategy has broadened participation and organized communities to take action in a prioritized, timely manner. It has been used successfully for developing standards frameworks for the Smart Grid sector and critical infrastructure cybersecurity. The strategy is currently being used to develop a community-centric resilience framework and to bring a uniform structure to the previously ad hoc development of forensic standards and guidelines.

Smart Grid Interoperability Panel

In 2009, the NIST initiated the Smart Grid Interoperability Panel (SGIP) as a vehicle for NIST to solicit input and cooperation from private and public sector stakeholders in developing the smart grid standards framework. With NIST encouragement, the SGIP was transitioned to a non-profit private-public partnership organization in 2013, supported by industry stakeholder funding and funding provided through a cooperative agreement with NIST. The SGIP does not develop standards directly, but rather it provides an open process for stakeholders, including NIST, to coordinate and accelerate standards development and harmonization and to advance the interoperability of smart grid devices and systems.

Green Button Initiative

The NIST provides leadership to the standards development work in the White House-inspired and industry-led Green Button Initiative, which enables consumers to download their own energy usage information from their utilities' websites in a standardized electronic

format. Working closely with the SGIP, industry and other federal agencies, NIST has led the development of the technology foundation for Green Button, including standards, testing, developer tools and technical support for implementers. Based on significant nationwide voluntary adoption by utilities, and with support by NIST, over 100 million U.S. consumers (and over 8 million Canadian consumers) now have Green Button data access to help them better understand and manage their energy usage.

Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity

Starting in 2013, the NIST has worked with stakeholders to develop a voluntary framework – based on existing standards, guidelines, and practices – for reducing cyber risks to critical infrastructure. The first version of the Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity was released on February 12, 2014. Since then, NIST has collected user feedback and experience through a Request for Information and a public workshop. NIST also facilitated working sessions on specific technical areas that will be used to enhance the Framework in the future.

National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace

In 2011, the President signed the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC). This important White House initiative aims to improve the privacy, security, and convenience of online transactions through a collaborative effort between the private sector, the public sector, advocacy groups and other non-profit organizations. The National Program Office (NPO) was established at NIST by the Secretary of Commerce to coordinate the implementation of the NSTIC. Modeled after the SGIP, NIST initiated the Identity Ecosystem Steering Group (IDESG) as a multi-stakeholder vehicle for the development of the Identity Ecosystem Framework – the policy, standards, and accreditation processes for Identity Ecosystem participants. Over the past three years, NIST has funded twelve private sector pilots through cooperative agreements to facilitate the adoption of NSTIC-aligned identity solutions.

Privacy Risk Management Framework

The NIST also has initiated development of a privacy risk management framework to support improved privacy engineering in the design of information systems. NIST is developing a NIST Interagency Report on privacy engineering objectives and a risk model. NIST held two public workshops, with attendance from industry, government and academia, in FY2014 to inform the development of this report, and presented the draft concepts through a live webcast with an interactive question and answer period. Comments received were posted publicly.

Organization for Scientific Area Committees

In 2014, the NIST collaborated with the Department of Justice and the forensic science community to create the Organization for Scientific Area Committees (OSAC), established to coordinate development of standards and guidelines for forensic science. OSAC has named

402 new members to 23 subcommittees on forensic disciplines such as firearms and toolmarks and facial identification, and is bringing a uniform structure to what was previously an ad hoc system, with the goal of improving the quality and consistency of forensic science in the United States.

Disaster Resilience Framework

The NIST is leading the development of a community-centric Disaster Resilience Framework, which will establish the overall performance goals; assess existing standards, codes, and practices; and identify gaps that must be addressed in order to bolster community resilience. In 2014 and 2015, NIST is convening a series of Disaster Resilience Workshops around the country to engage a broad network of stakeholders with multidisciplinary expertise to help develop the Disaster Resilience Framework, with a focus on the role that buildings and infrastructure lifelines play in ensuring community resilience. To date, NIST has convened 3 workshops and has another scheduled for mid-February 2015. The first version of the Disaster Resilience Framework will be released for public comment in the spring of 2015.

Big Data Public Working Group

Big Data is another important area in which NIST is leading public participation in standards development. Although there is broad agreement about the remarkable potential of "Big Data" to spark innovation, fuel commerce, and drive progress, the rate at which data volumes, speeds, and complexity are growing is outpacing scientific and technological advances in data analytics, management, transport, and more. NIST is leading the NIST Big Data Public Working Group (NBD-PWG) to develop consensus definitions, taxonomies, reference architectures, and technology roadmaps to accelerate the deployment of robust Big Data solutions. The NBD-PWG, open to the public with active membership from industry, academia, and government, has five subgroups developing a working draft of a Big Data Interoperability Framework that will be available for public comment in February 2015.

Collaboration

To help accomplish its mission, NIST seeks out high-quality partnerships, collaborations, and other interactions with U.S. companies, universities, and agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. Each year, NIST hosts about 2,700 associates and facility users who collaborate with its scientists. NIST works with over 1,300 manufacturing specialists around the country to help small and mid-size manufacturers improve and grow. NIST has several designated user facilities available for both proprietary and non-proprietary research. Access to these facilities is generally provided on a first-come, first-served cost-reimbursable basis. In addition, NIST jointly operates research organizations explicitly established to promote the kind of cross-disciplinary collaborations that accelerate research results. NIST hosts as many as 100 conferences, workshops, symposia, and other meetings annually. Most are co-sponsored with other federal agencies, academic institutions, professional societies, or industry groups.

National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

The NIST has established the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (NCCoE) to collaborate with user communities and vendors and integrators of commercially available technologies to build practical cybersecurity reference designs that can be rapidly applied to the real challenges that businesses face each day.

Centers of Excellence

The NIST is also in the process of creating Centers of Excellence to provide an interdisciplinary environment where researchers from NIST, academia, and industry will collaborate on emerging areas of basic and applied research and innovations in measurement science. The first of these centers, the Center for Hierarchical Materials Design (CHiMaD), was established in 2013 to accelerate materials discovery and development; provide opportunities to transition new breakthroughs in advanced materials to industry; convene multidisciplinary and multi-sector communities for in-depth discussions; and provide training opportunities for scientists and engineers in materials metrology.

The second, the Community Resilience Center of Excellence, was selected through a merit-based competition and announced in February 2015. The new center will collaborate with NIST to achieve its long-term goal of developing tools that individual communities can use to assess their resilience. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of alternative measures intended to improve performance and minimize post-disaster disruption and recovery time. These tools will improve decision-making so that communities can build a “business case” for the measures they take.

A third center, the competitive selection of which is to be announced in FY 2015, will support NIST's efforts to strengthen forensic science through the development and delivery of improved measurement and analysis technologies and the development of best practices and standardized methodologies to improve evidence interpretation and reporting.

Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office

The NIST provides leadership and coordination across all federal agencies with program in advanced manufacturing by leading the interagency Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office (AMNPO), hosted by NIST. In particular the AMNPO is charged with enabling industry-led, private-public partnerships focused on manufacturing innovation to enhance technology transfer in U.S. manufacturing industries. With participation from all federal agencies involved in U.S. manufacturing, the AMNPO is establishing the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI), a network of linked Institutes for manufacturing innovation with common goals but unique concentrations, which will create a manufacturing research infrastructure for U.S. industry and academia to solve industry-relevant problems, as well as provide work force training needed in manufacturing. To date, these Institutes have been stood up by the mission agencies DoE and DoD, but it is proposed that DOC, USDA and other agencies soon fund institutes. NIST is responsible for convening

all Institutes with the NNMI for sharing of best practices and providing support infrastructure. NIST also responsible for managing a competitive proposal and review process to select and fund Institutes funded by DOC that bring together industry, academia, and government partners to collaborate and co-invest in manufacturing innovation.

Technology Transfer

The NIST works to disseminate its research results as broadly as possible. In October 2014, NIST and NOAA co-sponsored a Technology and Entrepreneurship Showcase to bring together innovative technologies, licensable inventions, research and engineering facilities, small business support resources at the Federal and state levels, and sources of funding—all under one roof, and all available for networking. Excluding presenters, over 60 individuals attended. NIST plans to continue this series in 2015, working in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Virginia. NIST also plans to host two “listening sessions” in Maryland to hear from the local communities about how federal labs can contribute to economic development.

Lab to Market

The NIST plays a prominent role in fulfilling requirements of the Lab to Market Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goal, one of 15 goals established as part of the President’s Management Agenda and stemming from the Presidential Memorandum on Technology Transfer of 2011. As part of this effort, in FY2015 NIST is initiating a pilot NIST entrepreneurship program, partnering with the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) to integrate minority business development into the Lab to Market process, working with other agencies to develop policies and tools to bring investors and capital to the technology commercialization process, holding workshops with universities on extramural commercialization, and conducting economic studies to evaluate impact in identified priority areas. Also as part of the Lab to Market Team, NIST has placed all of its technology data and facility use data on data.gov in a machine readable format for other parties to use.

Challenges

Global City Teams Challenge

The NIST is partnering with other federal agencies and the private sector to sponsor a year-long [Global City Teams Challenge](#) to help communities around the world work together to address issues ranging from air quality to traffic management to emergency services coordination. NIST is inviting communities and innovators to create teams that will foster the spread of “smart cities” that take advantage of networked technologies to better manage resources and improve quality of life. Voluntary participants will work collaboratively to build, deploy and test transformative “Internet of Things”/“Cyber-Physical Systems” applications within communities across the U.S. This new challenge will leverage the success of the [SmartAmerica Challenge](#), which from December 2013 through June 2014 brought together more than 100 companies, universities and other

organizations to form teams that developed and applied networked technologies. That challenge demonstrated that these technologies have the potential to create jobs and business opportunities and provide socioeconomic benefits.

Head Health Challenge III

The NIST has joined with the NFL, GE and Under Armour to launch Head Health Challenge III, an open innovation competition to advance materials that better absorb or dissipate energy. These new materials could improve the performance of protective equipment for athletes, military personnel and those in dangerous occupations. The challenge, which will award up to \$2million for innovative materials, is part of the \$60 million Head Health Initiative, a multiyear collaboration between GE and the NFL launched in March 2013. It aims to support the discovery, design and deployment of advanced materials that can improve the protection of athletes, members of the military and others from brain injuries by better absorbing and mitigating force. Additionally, NIST will work to refine measurement approaches, convene the research and industry communities to assess the state of performance testing for impact energy absorbing/dispersing materials and identify gaps in these measurements. The ultimate goal will be to develop standard testing methods for these materials systems over the next several years.

NIST Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NIST*.

Table 9 - NIST Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
NIST	Improving Dissemination of Basic Research Results via the NIST and other websites	Live / Operational	--
	Improving access to NIST research results through social media including Wikipedia, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter	Live / Operational	--
	Improving Access to the Digital Data Repository of NIST Collections, including Publications, Artifacts, and Photographs Relating to Measurement Science	Live / Operational	--
	Making Photos and Videos from the 9/11 Investigation available to the public	Completed (August 2011)	--

- ***Project – Improving Dissemination of Basic Research Results via the NIST and other websites***

Several years ago, as part of an effort to broadly disseminate its research results, NIST implemented a CMS, which included access to an improved database of research papers authored or co-authored by NIST researchers. Content is “tagged” by topic, enabling the public to subscribe to receive new information posted on the website on specific topics of

interest such as nanotechnology or energy-related research. Currently, there are more than 60,000 subscribers who receive information on approximately 160 different topics. The website also allows members of the public to comment or ask questions about posted research articles and to easily share content from the NIST site with their own websites (more than 3,000 “shares” in just 4 months of this fiscal year).

In the last 110 years, NIST published hundreds of technical reports such as NIST Interagency or Internal Reports (NISTIRs) and Technical Notes – which were targeted to very specific audiences. Some of these topics are of interest to a broader audience, so NIST is republishing them electronically as papers in the Journal of Research of NIST. Because the Journal of Research is indexed in major scientific/technical databases, these republished reports will reach a broader audience and are more likely to be used and cited, increasing the impact of NIST research. NIST staff members are tracking the number of web hits on and the number of citations of those papers to make a measurement-based determination of the effectiveness of this strategy.

- ***Project – Improving Dissemination and Access to Basic Research Results via Social Media***
The NIST has created sites on YouTube (more than 2,000 subscribers), Facebook (more than 4,500 “likes”), Twitter (4,800 “followers”), and Flickr (more than 17,000 images viewed). To ensure that as many people as possible benefit from NIST’s work, news of major research results posted on the new NIST website is routinely announced through these additional social media sites.

The NIST continues to use Wikipedia to improve dissemination of its research results to the public. For selected topics NIST staff members continue to add links to NIST technical reports or papers in the Journal of Research of NIST, to make NIST research information more readily available in a highly used web resource. NIST staff members are adding links to images and descriptions of scientific instruments in the NIST Digital Archives. NIST staff members are tracking the number of web hits on and the number of citations of those reports and papers to make a measurement-based determination of the effectiveness of this strategy to increase the impact of NIST research.

- ***Project – Improving Access to the Digital Data Repository of NIST Collections, including Publications, Artifacts, and Photographs Relating to Measurement Science***
Currently, information regarding NIST publications is electronically available through its Research Library’s online catalog, which includes links to the full text of many publications. Information about some of the objects in NIST’s museum is also available through the NIST Virtual Museum. The online catalog and the NIST Virtual Museum are available to the public.

In fiscal year 2011, NIST implemented the NIST Digital Archives, a digital library repository. The Digital Archives conforms to the latest library and publishing metadata

standards to enhance the ability of other scholarly and research repositories to discover and harvest information. It contains the full text of NIST’s technical publications, including the Journal of Research, as well as images of and information about NIST historical scientific objects. The metadata conforms to the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting, which is the accepted standard within scholarly and scientific communities for making the contents of information collections available to researchers. File formats adhere to Government Printing Office, Library of Congress, and NARA preservation requirements. NIST is collaborating with the Library of Congress and the Internet Archive to digitize NIST’s legacy publications through the Open Content Alliance FedScan initiative.

The NIST Digital Archives permits the digital forms of NIST’s technical publications and other content to be easily searchable by the public through major Internet search engines, such as Google, Google Books, Google Scholar, WorldCat, and Yahoo. Through the FedScan initiative NIST’s legacy publications are scanned, processed through a rigorous quality assurance protocol, and made available to the public in a variety of file formats (e.g., Daisy, EPub, Kindle) through the Internet Archive website. All file formats are also provided back to NIST. These multiple efforts and searchable access points significantly enhance dissemination and use of NIST’s research results.

- ***Project – Making Photos and Videos from the 9/11 Investigation available to the public***
The NIST acquired a large amount of visual material as part of its World Trade Center Investigation. A subset of this material, including photographs and video clips, was organized into a searchable database in which each image and video clip was characterized by a set of attributes including: source/owner, time of shot/video, content (including building, face(s), key events such as plane strike, fireballs, collapse), and other details. These materials can be obtained by visiting <http://wtcdata.nist.gov/index2.htm>.



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA is an agency that enriches life through science. NOAA’s reach goes from the surface of the sun to the depths of the ocean floor working to keep citizens informed of the changing environment around them.

The range from daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration and supporting marine commerce, NOAA’s products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America’s gross domestic product. NOAA’s dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information they need when they need it.

The NOAA roots date back to 1807, when the Nation’s first scientific agency, the Survey of the Coast, was established. Since then, NOAA has evolved to meet the needs of a changing country. NOAA maintains a presence in every state and has emerged as an international leader on scientific and environmental matters. It’s mission touches the lives of every American and has a role in protecting life and property and conserving and protecting natural resources.

Background: NOAA surveyed the 13 Open Government functional areas to identify significant accomplishments, plans or innovative approaches that we have in place for each. This survey resulted in comments for four of the functional areas, as follows:

Open Data

- The NOAA has a long-standing and formal policy (which pre-dates OMB M-13-13) requiring NOAA’s environmental data to be managed based upon an end-to-end data lifecycle, and to be “visible, accessible and independently understandable to users ...”. In support of this policy, NOAA has an active Environmental Data Management Committee, which comprising members from all Line Offices to facilitate and guide the myriad NOAA data producers and data stewards toward effective implementation of the policy. In turn, this effort significantly advances and enables the Open Data agenda for NOAA’s environmental information. In early 2015, the EDMC released a revised Data Management Planning directive, and will shortly issue a new Data Access directive.

- On an annual basis, the NOAA hosts an Environmental Data Management Workshop to promote awareness, discussion, and problem-solving of NOAA data management activities including data discovery, access services, metadata, usage, citation, "big data" issues, and other topics of relevance. Typically attended by some 150 data managers and stewards across NOAA, the workshop provides a valuable collaborative forum that directly advances the open data agenda.
- The NOAA is a principal member Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC), and an active participant in OGC's consensus based process to develop publicly available interface standards for interoperable solutions that "geo-enable" the Web, focusing especially on ensuring OGC standards support time-dependent and multi-dimensional environmental observations and numerical model outputs.
- In November 2013, the NOAA implemented an environmental data catalog at <http://data.noaa.gov/> to satisfy the public data inventory requirement of OMB M-13-13. This catalog, which like data.gov uses the open-source CKAN software, automatically harvests standardized metadata records from NOAA's archival data centers and other programs on a regular basis in order to remain up to date.

Privacy

- The Department's Chief Privacy Officer has issued new Templates for Privacy Threshold Analyses (PTAs) and PIAs. All new and renewed NOAA PTAs and PIAs are in the new formats.
- NOAA is beginning to implement the NIST Special Publications 800-53 Revision 4 Appendix J Privacy Controls.

Records Management

- The NOAA Records Management Office has a number of proactive initiatives to promote effective records management across the agency, including:
 - Implementation of a Records Management 101 online training course in 2015 (via Commerce Learning Center) to prepare staff with the knowledge to accomplish their records management responsibilities and comply with applicable records management statutes.
 - Establishing a records management helpdesk mailbox as a resource for NOAA staff to ask for records management assistance or guidance pertaining to records issues within their office
 - Revamping of the NOAA Records Management webpage as a one-stop resource for information on NOAA records management program activities, services, policies and procedures.
 - Integrating NARA's updated GRS records schedules into NOAA's comprehensive records control manual and revising NOAA's programmatic records schedules to ensure they are maintained for the entire record life cycle, as well as support FOIA, Litigation or other investigatory purposes.

FOIA

- The NOAA FOIA program is aggressively working off its backlog of FOIA requests and plans to have the backlog reduced by 50% by mid-2015.
- The NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has recently hired and trained additional staff to manage its large volume of FOIAs.

NOAA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NOAA*.

Table 10 - NOAA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
NOAA	Modernizing the NOAA Climate Database	Shutdown Closeout	March 2013
	NOAA Big Data Partnership	Live / Operational	
	Digital Object Identifiers	Live / Operational	
	Expanding Citizen Science Community of Practice and Inventory	Live / Operational	
	NOAA Climate.gov Portal	Live / Operational	
	Integrated Severe Weather Data via GIS Map Interface	On-Going / Continuous	
	New Data Visualization Capabilities for Global Summary Data	On-Going / Continuous	
	New Local Climatological Product for US and Global Locations	On-Going / Continuous	
	Redesign of NOAA.gov and Consolidation of NOAA Corporate Websites	Live / Operational	
	NOAA Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)	Live / Operational	

- **Project – NOAA Big Data Partnership**
 The NOAA Big Data Partnership (BDP) program engages with industry partners to address challenges in providing public access to NOAA’s data at no net cost to the government. The program targets NOAA data holdings that have either been hitherto unavailable to the public, or have been prohibitively difficult for outside parties to access at scale. The program hopes to achieve greater public access to NOAA data by working

with industry to intelligently position the data near computing, analytic, and other value-added services.

The NOAA believes that engaging with business through the BDP has high potential to deliver partnerships and infrastructure that will create a new market space for economic growth and job creation and allow the private sector to exploit the value of these data. Furthermore, by reducing or possibly removing altogether the need for Federal funding to develop IT infrastructure and distribution channels, this approach speeds the way to these potential outcomes.

The entire BDP program is governed by the program’s statement of objectives, which was issued in October 2014. The projects core tenets include that (a) no provider will be granted exclusive access to NOAA data, and (b) public end-users will be granted equal access to the data on equal terms with no privileged private access. These principles exist to support both the general public’s interest in basic access to government data, as well as industry’s need for high performance and reliable access for business needs.

The NOAA will establish public-private partnerships (“data alliances”) with up to six different anchor institutions. Interested smaller companies with demonstrated capabilities will be able to join one or many of these data alliances. The main goals of these alliances are to foster:

- Private sector assessment of the potential value of government data,
- The development of innovative technical approaches to cataloguing, aggregating and disseminating data, and
- Greater commercial and public use of and value returned from the data.

If successful, the alliances could evolve into a larger scale public-private partnership that would move the bulk of NOAA’s environmental data onto the cloud, where the data can be accessed by public at large through a single interface or through a coherent and limited set of interfaces.

Within six months after formation of the first Data Alliance and agreement with Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) providers, NOAA hopes to have developed a pilot or proof of concept delivery mechanism for getting data to the cloud. It also hopes that the groundwork for a business model will be in place around the IaaS providers, in order to demonstrate the sustainable nature of this approach.

- ***Project – Digital Object Identifiers***

NOAA observations and forecasts are critical to the nation's commerce, decision-making, and research. When data are utilized for such purposes, it is important to be able clearly

cite the data used, much as the author of an article or a book can cite sources. A key element of such citations is a unique identifier. A book can be referenced by its International Standard Book Number (ISBN), whereas an article or data can be referenced by a Digital Object Identifier or DOI for short. DOIs have long been used in the publishing industry, and are increasingly being assigned to datasets. Once a DOI has been assigned, it is possible to use that identifier to navigate directly to an informational web page that describes the data and includes links to obtain the data and detailed documentation. The DOI remains the same even if the data are moved to another web site or organization, so this provides a permanent ID.

As part of its Open Government activities, NOAA will continue for the foreseeable future an initiative to assign DOIs to datasets archived in its National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI). The NOAA Central Library is also issuing DOIs for technical reports archived there. The NOAA Environmental Data Management Committee (EDMC) has also issued a *Data Citation Procedural Directive* with guidelines for obtaining and citing DOIs.

The DOI initiative has several benefits:

- It allows users to cite data unambiguously
- It enables NOAA to track such citations in the literature
- It encourages submission of data to the archives
- It supports the linkage of publications and data called for in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) memorandum [Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research](#), and
- It enables data producers to get credit for data they have properly documented and managed for long-term preservation

The NOAA will report at least quarterly the number of new DOIs assigned (204 as of Jan 21, 2015) and any future metrics or milestones in this initiative.

- ***Project – Expanding Citizen Science Community of Practice and Inventory***

The field of citizen science is experiencing rapid growth empowered by emerging technology. NOAA has a rich tradition of supporting citizen science. Today that tradition is being carried on through a portfolio of projects and a diversity of efforts fostered and supported across the Agency.

NOAA Community of Practice

A [NOAA Citizen Science Community of Practice](#) was launched in November of 2013 to foster communication and collaboration among the Agency’s citizen science

efforts. The Community of Practice is facilitated by NOAA's Office of Education and relies on grassroots participation from community members throughout the Agency. Since its formation, this NOAA community has grown steadily with over 145 members currently engaged representing 67 projects. It is estimated that these projects result in more than half a million volunteer hours per year (equal to more than 239 person-years of effort). A volunteer Steering Committee, made up of members from across NOAA, provides guidance on how the Community of Practice can best be supported as it continues to grow and evolve. Webinars for the Community of Practice have focused on topics such as integration of mobile devices and project evaluation.

Complimentary Efforts

The NOAA is an active participant in the [Federal Community of Practice on Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science](#) (FCPCCS). Working with the FCPCCS, NOAA is in the process of getting its projects entered into an inventory of federal citizen science and crowdsourcing hosted by the Commons Lab at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. In November of 2014, NOAA's Chief Scientist, Dr. Richard Spinrad, presented a [keynote talk](#) at the *Tracking a Changing Climate* Forum focused on how citizen scientists contribute to climate research and hosted by the U.S. Global Climate Change Research Program, the Wilson Center Commons Lab, and the FCPCCS. Additionally, NOAA is actively supporting the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in the creation of a Federal Citizen Science and Crowdsourcing Toolkit.

- **Project – NOAA Climate.gov Portal**

What's New – Won two Webby Awards and one People's Voice Award; completed our second 'Quality of Relationship' site-wide evaluation; developed & published the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, v1.0; and saw huge growth (72%) in user visit rates compared to last year.

The NOAA Climate.gov (www.climate.gov) provides easy online access to authoritative science, data, and information for a climate-smart nation. The site offers four audience-focused sections:

- News & Features — a popular-style online magazine for the climate-interested public, covering topics in climate science, adaptation, and mitigation
- Maps & Data — a gateway for scientists and specialists to find and use climate maps and data for research and analysis
- Teaching Climate — a compendium of learning activities and curriculum materials, multi-media resources, and professional development opportunities for formal and informal educators who want to incorporate climate science into their work, and

- Supporting Decisions — a clearinghouse of reports, resources, and decision-support tools for planners and policy leaders who want authoritative climate science information

In 2014, Climate.gov was awarded two Webby Awards — the web’s highest honor — by the International Academy of the Digital Arts and Sciences, in their “Government” and “Green” categories. The site also garnered one People’s Voice Award, which is determined by popular public vote.

In FY2014, NOAA Climate.gov experienced 72% growth in our rate of visits compared to FY13 (target was 10%). We also completed our second ‘Quality of Relationship’ evaluation in 2014, scoring 75.2 (target was 75; baseline score was 72.6).

In 2014, in response to the President’s Climate Action Plan and Executive Order to help the nation prepare for climate-related changes and impacts, the Climate.gov team led a partnership of federal agencies in developing the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (toolkit.climate.gov). The Toolkit provides scientific tools, information, and expertise to help people manage their climate-related risks and improve their resilience to extreme events. The Toolkit offers:

- A 5-step resilience-building process
 - A library of real-world case studies showing people taking adaptation actions
 - A compendium of decision-support tools
 - A geobrowser (Climate Explorer) offering maps of climate stressors as well as people and assets impacted
 - Topic narratives (based on the 3rd National Climate Assessment)
 - A catalog of training courses
 - Maps highlighting regional and local climate science and service center; and
 - A semantic search tool allowing users to search the entire federal government’s climate science domain and filter results according to facets of interest
- ***Project – Integrated Severe Weather Data via GIS Map Interface***

This initiative provides an integrated map interface for the US, state and county-level storm damage information, lightning strike data, NEXRAD products (such as hail signature) along with other available severe weather data from NOAA's National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI). A user of the interface may, for example, select a date (a very recent date or for a major historical event) and view the data through one interface.

Dataset Used: Next Generation Radar – or NEXRAD – Level-III point features describing general storm structure, hail, mesocyclone and tornado signatures, NWS local storm reports collected from storm spotters (storm events database), summarized lightning strikes from Vaisala’s National Lightning Detection Network.

Future enhancement plans include integrating this interface with the Storm Events Database, thus expanding the sources of data available through the interface.

- ***Project – New Data Visualization Capabilities for Global Summary Data***

A dynamic mapping application for Global Summary Data from NOAA's National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) displays colorized maps for temperature, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth for all global locations, for any point in time. This application provides new capabilities via online services, to include implementation of the following example use cases:

- An agricultural company can view information regarding a recent heavy rainfall event to assist in determining the area's most susceptible to nitrogen-leaching and would require supplemental fertilization for crops.
- The USDA can view temperature data from a recent heat wave to determine regions which are likely to suffer from lower crop yields due to high temperatures.
- In post-storm event analysis (such as a major hurricane), the data can be quickly viewed to correlate damage reports with climatological data.

Parameters such as temperature, precipitation, and snow depth have visualization capabilities via colorized maps, for all global locations, for any point in time. This includes over 30,000 currently active stations. For example, users are able to select a date (very recent date or for a major historical event) and view a color-plot of the data, such as minimum temperature. Additional station locations are being added to this dataset, to provide better spatial coverage.

Dataset Used: Global Historical Climate Network (GHCN)-Daily, comprising daily summary data (e.g., maximum/minimum temperature, precipitation, snowfall) for global locations.

- ***Project – New Local Climatological Product for US and Global Locations***

NOAA's National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) Local Climatological Data

(LCD) product provides a very easy-to-read summary of hourly and daily summary data for each location, to include parameters such as:

- Hourly temperature
- Dew point
- Cloud cover
- Precipitation
- Wind speed

- And many others

This data is available for any point in time for US and many global stations. The LCD product was released in “beta” in Q2 FY-15, with product review and finalization scheduled for Q3 FY-15.

Dataset Used: Integrated Surface Dataset (ISD), comprising hourly data (e.g., temperature, cloud cover, humidity, visibility, etc.) along with selected daily and monthly summary parameters for global locations.

- ***Project – Redesign of NOAA.gov and Consolidation of NOAA Corporate Websites***

The NOAA.gov website serves as the primary public face of NOAA. The site logs nearly 100 million visits annually and is consistently one of the top accessed Federal Websites. In 2015, NOAA will redesign the NOAA.gov main site while consolidating and integrating NOAA corporate information and resources into the new site organization and presentation. Through this effort, NOAA will improve the overall user experience for the general public and key audiences by improving the appeal, user friendliness, navigation, information accessibility, search capabilities and usability of the sites.

The redesigned NOAA.gov website will leverage a common content management methodology, and deploy an improved information architecture and design to aggregate content and links to key NOAA mission areas. Integration of NOAA’s corporate office information and resources will enhance findability and transparency of administrative and operational information to key audiences. Ultimately, this redesign of NOAA.gov and corporate NOAA sites will introduce of new story-based, interactive content and information architecture to promote the understanding and use of NOAA products and services, while guiding visitors to the data and information they seek - where and when they need it most.

- ***Project – NOAA Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)***

What’s New – WEA Improvement Recommendations being reviewed by FCC

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) are 90-character emergency messages sent by alerting authorities through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) to cell phones via commercial wireless carriers. WEA is an opt-out service and there is no charge to consumers. NWS began participating in WEA in late June 2012. NWS activates WEA for Tsunami, Tornado, Flash Flood, Hurricane/Typhoon, Dust Storm, and Extreme Wind Warnings. NWS activation of WEA has been credited with saving hundreds of lives, particularly during tornadoes.

WEA is a partnership between public safety officials, FEMA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS). Each WEA message is geographically targeted to cell phones using cell broadcast technology. Cell broadcast uses radio technology to deliver the alert to cell phones via cell towers which are inside and/or adjacent to the threat area as defined by the alerting authority. The use of radio broadcast technology means WEA is not subject to network congestion as with traditional point to point SMS text messaging.

In 2014, the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council (CSRIC) developed recommendations on WEA testing as well as improvements to WEA regarding message length, content, and geo-targeting. The FCC is now reviewing those recommendations. NOAA/NWS played a highly proactive role in the two CSRIC working groups which developed the recommendations. Each working group was comprised of members from industry, government, and academia.

The system which enables NWS activation of WEA is HazCollect Extended. HazCollect Extended ingests NWS' traditional teletype style alerts, parses them into their most atomic parts, reproduces each alert in Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) format, and transmits each CAP message to FEMA IPAWS. NWS CAP messages which warrant WEA activation are specially marked so that IPAWS only passes those alerts to commercial wireless carriers. See <http://weather.gov/wirelessalerts> for more information about NWS activation of WEA.

CAP is based on Extensible Markup Language (XML) and is an industry standard for the exchange of emergency alert information. FEMA officially adopted CAP for IPAWS in 2010. NWS CAP messages are publicly available over a variety of NWS dissemination channels as well as FEMA IPAWS. See <http://alerts.weather.gov> for more information about NWS produced CAP.

FEMA IPAWS is this nation's all-hazard alert aggregator and serves as a gateway to wireless carriers for WEA as well as broadcasters for the Emergency Alert System (EAS), and a variety of other dissemination channels.

See <https://www.fema.gov/integrated-public-alert-warning-system> for more information.



National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

NTIA is the Executive Branch agency that is principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues. NTIA’s programs and policymaking focus largely on expanding broadband Internet access and adoption in America, expanding the use of spectrum by all users, and ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for continued innovation and economic growth.

The NTIA is embarking on a series of data collection and dissemination initiatives to provide a more detailed, quantitative understanding of broadband Internet access and use in the U.S.. This information will inform efforts to increase broadband access and adoption, thereby supporting economic growth. Initiatives will include data collected through NTIA’s broadband mapping program and a new broadband-related survey.

NTIA Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NTIA*.

Table 11 - NTIA Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
NTIA	Creating a National Broadband Map	Live / Operational	FY 2015
	Establishing Online Access to Results of Broadband Survey	Live / Operational	--
	Publishing Federal Spectrum Transition Plans	Live / Operational	--
	Creating a Federal Spectrum Compendium	Ongoing	--
	Multistakeholder Privacy Policy Process	Ongoing	--

- ***Project – Creating a National Broadband Map***

Through its State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program, which is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, NTIA has awarded financial assistance grants for broadband data collection and planning. Data is displayed in NTIA’s National Broadband Map, which was made publicly available in March 2011. The map displays the geographic areas where broadband service is available and its speed, as well as the technology by which it is provided, and its availability at public schools, libraries, hospitals, colleges, universities, and public buildings. The National Broadband Map is interactive and searchable by address, and identifies broadband service providers by census block or street segment. Data collection began in 2009 and will conclude in 2015 when the Federal Communications Commission will use its data to maintain the Map. Datasets are presented in a clear, accessible, and open format to the public, government, and research community. This initiative provides broadband information at an unprecedented level of comprehensiveness and granularity.

- ***Project – Establishing Online Access to Results of Broadband Survey***

Working with the Census, NTIA has undertaken a series of 54,000-household Internet-use supplements to the basic Current Population Survey, most recently in October 2009, October 2010, July 2011 and October 2012. Through this effort, NTIA is examining why people do not use high-speed Internet service and is exploring differences in Internet adoption and usage patterns around the country and across socio-economic groups. NTIA and the Census Bureau release these data in open, Web-based formats, making the survey instruments and associated reports as widely available as possible.

- ***Project – Publishing Federal Spectrum Transition Plans***

In March 2014, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules governing use of spectrum in the 1695-1710 MHz, 1755-1780 MHz, and 2155-2180 MHz bands for Advanced Wireless Services (AWS-3). The FCC, in collaboration with NTIA and the federal agencies, reallocated from federal use to non-federal use the 1695-1710 MHz and 1755-1780 MHz bands. Most of the incumbent federal systems currently using the 1755-1780 MHz band will relocate out of the band, but the FCC’s rules also provide for indefinite sharing with a limited number of federal systems. Federal entities have submitted transition plans to NTIA, and NTIA has compiled and consolidated the estimated costs and timelines contained in the agency transition plans. In September 2014, NTIA published on its website the individual agency transition plans, and all plan data spreadsheets in machine readable format. Updated plan data as well as aggregated Frequency/ Location/ Timeline data and aggregated Costs and Timeline data in XML and JSON formats will be published in FY 2015.

- ***Project – Creating a Federal Spectrum Compendium***

In April 2014, NTIA published a compendium of federal spectrum use in the 225 megahertz through 5 gigahertz bands—prime real estate that has prompted the most interest from both federal and commercial users. The compendium contains information for each frequency

band in which the federal government has significant operations on an exclusive or shared basis. NTIA's compendium shows agencies need spectrum for crucial tasks ranging from military flight testing to air traffic control to weather forecasting. This newly published data provides a band-by-band description of how spectrum is used by federal agencies, the number and type of frequency assignments NTIA has authorized, and the percentage of frequency assignments by category. In addition, the data also features contour maps showing where federal systems that utilize spectrum are located across the country. The compendium is available initially in pdf format. NTIA will make the compendium available in machine readable formats in FY 2015 and NTIA will update the information regularly.

- ***Project – Multi-stakeholder Privacy Policy Process***

In July 2012, NTIA established its domestic multi-stakeholder privacy policy process, bringing together representatives from technology companies, trade groups, consumer groups, academic institutions and other organizations. This effort supports the White House's *Consumer Data Privacy in a Networked World: A Framework for Protecting Privacy and Promoting Innovation in the Global Digital Economy*, and showcases the viability of multi-stakeholder processes for Internet policymaking. The first multi-stakeholder process focused on mobile application (“mobile app”) transparency. Companies have adopted or are beginning to implement the code of conduct for mobile app transparency, which has increased confidence in the multi-stakeholder approach and reinforced the Department's commitment to consumer privacy. A second multi-stakeholder process, begun in February 2014, is focused on crafting privacy safeguards for the commercial use of facial recognition technology.



National Technical Information Service (NTIS)

NTIS seeks to promote American innovation and economic growth by collecting and disseminating scientific, technical and engineering information (STEI) to the public and industry, by providing information management solutions to other Federal agencies, and by doing all without appropriated funding. NTIS outreach to the public and industry is for the purpose of promoting scientific research and technology transfer to enhance economic growth.

NTIS Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *NTIS*.

Table 12 - NTIS Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
NTIS	Making Five Years of Bibliographic Data Searchable (Data.gov)	Live / Operational	--
	National Technical Reports Library (NTRL)	Live / Operational	--
	Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)	Live / Operational	--

- Project – Making Five Years of Bibliographic Data Searchable***

The NTIS is making the latest five years of the NTIS Bibliographic File searchable via Data.gov. The file contains over 180,000 bibliographic records that link to a Web-store of federally funded technical reports from a broad spectrum of federal agencies. This bibliographic file is being made available through Data.gov in a compiled XML format, which will – for the first time –open access to NTIS’ technical reports collection to Web exposure and extraction. Titles within the NTIS Collection represent billions of dollars in research. Metadata content corresponds to research reports, computer products, software, video cassettes, audio cassettes and more. Data includes such fields as Title, Author, Source Agency, Document Type, Page Count, Category Code, as well as a link to NTIS’ online ordering system for those who wish to purchase the title directly from NTIS. Users can also access the NTIS website at www.ntis.gov to search, identify and purchase items within the NTIS Collection of more than 3,000,000 products.

- ***National Technical Reports Library (NTRL)***

The National Technical Reports Library (NTRL) provides access to the largest collection of U.S. Government-sponsored technical reports. There is metadata for more than 2 million records with links to approximately 700,000 digitized full-text reports. Primarily, the NTRL provides an open environment online subscription access to the results of U.S. Government-sponsored basic and applied research.

The development of the NTRL is rooted within NTIS' basic authority to operate a permanent clearinghouse of scientific and technical information as codified in chapter 23 of Title 15 of the United States Code (15 U.S.C. 1151-1157). This chapter also established NTIS' authority to provide products and services in a cost sustainable manner. Federal Agencies are required to provide their research results to NTIS per the American Technology Preeminence Act (ATPA), and the results are available to the public in perpetuity.

- Online access to an electronic library of over 2 million bibliographic records (dating from 1964)
- Links to over 700,000 corresponding full-text reports
- Coverage from the late 1890's to present (most reports date from the 1970's to present.)
- Search engine capabilities
- Release 1, 2009
- Release 2, 2011
- Release 3, 2012

- ***Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS)***

The NTIS created the Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS) to transition and modernize the Federal investment in scientific research. Building on the existing Federal IA of Data.gov and Science.gov, the FSRS creates a common foundational platform to move existing science discovery to the future of e-science while embodying the principles of technology transfer--research, innovation, and economic growth. The FSRS is an information management tool that can be used effectively by Federal agencies, laboratories, and the science community. The objective for these more robust repositories for federally funded scientific content has been to highlight interagency collaboration and interoperability of various data object types joined together for ease of discovery and access. Developed with a private-public partnership, the FSRS fulfills the Federal archival mandate for opening up access to Federally-funded scientific research.

The FSRS is based on open-source approaches, is durable against technological changes, and is flexible enough to support broad and varied uses, increasing access to the Federal Government's data and information.

- Storage and preservation of diverse resources
- Ingestion of distributed content

U.S. Department of Commerce – Open Government Plan

- Access control customized to agency requirements
- A robust interface with advanced metadata and full text search, filtering, and full-text and media display
- Launched 2011



Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

Office of Inspector General's (OIG) seeks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's programs and operations. The OIG also endeavors to detect and deter waste, fraud, and abuse.

The OIG Open Government operations and plan contributes to the Departmental Open Government plan by ensuring that the principles of transparency, collaboration and participation are built into our policies and operations. In order to ensure that these principles are supported routinely throughout OIG, certain programmatic functions are dedicated with open government commitments and responsibilities. These programmatic functions include positions such as the OIG Records Officer, the OIG FOIA Officer, and positions within the OCIO.

One of the ways the OIG supports the principle of transparency, is to routinely update the Webmaster posts with cleared and finalized OIG information to the website. To ensure that the OIG operations support the principles of collaboration and participation, we periodically review our website to ensure that all reports and audits are easily accessible. In FY 2013, the OIG's Public Affairs Specialist led an effort to update the OIG's website, resulting in improved public access to agency material and general navigation of the website. Recently, we also joined other the Department's bureaus in using FOIAonline to process OIG FOIA requests. This action resulted in improved tracking of OIG requests, coordination with Departmental FOIA Officers, and information sharing with requesters.

The OIG is also supporting Open Government activities by improving the Records Management policies and processes to manage records and by reviewing OIG's records management schedules for accuracy. The OIG Records Officer conducts annual training for staff and maintains an internal website to increase awareness. This supports meeting one of the goals within M-12-18 "Managing Government Records Directive," which was to provide annual records management training to employees by December 31, 2014. Furthermore, in December 2014, OIG posted a "Request for Information" (RFI) to FedBizOpps in order to gain information on electronic records processes for email records.

The OIG plans for Open Government activities are highlighted in both the chart and the paragraphs below. To allow more insight into our other Open Government activities and plans we are providing more details in the paragraphs following the chart below.

Open Data

The OIG is complying with the Open Data Memorandum OMB M-13-13 by developing and maintaining an “enterprise data inventory” of the OIG publically available data resources. This is our flagship initiative that supports the departmental plan and Open Government objectives established by the administration. As time permits, we are also actively categorizing and inventorying our internal digital assets. The categorization of our internal digital assets includes a review of the OIG Records Retention Schedules to ensure that the information is maintained in accordance with NARA policy. In the following paragraphs are some other ways we are supporting the Departmental Open Government plan.

Privacy

The OIG, OCIO continues to prepare compliance reports such as those required under the FISMA. The OCIO actively participates in reviews of the Departmental Privacy Controls implementation approach in conjunction with the NIST. We continue to update standard operating procedures to improve the OIG network infrastructure and to meet Departmental requirements. The OIG Security Officer monitors and responds to incidents as needed. The OIG OCIO is also improving security by implementing the administration’s priority cybersecurity capabilities. These actions will assist the protection of the personal information we maintain and improve services to OIG customers, both internal and external. The Office of Administration (OA) continues to provide security training to new employees during in-processing and annual computer based training. Annually, the OIG reviews the OIG PIA to ensure compliance with departmental requirements. The PIA is also reviewed when a new information system is being designed for implementation on the network. In FY 2014, we completed an amendment to our existing SORN covering investigative records.

Whistleblower Protection

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 2302(c), OIG informs employees of their rights and remedies under the prohibited personal practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of Title 5. OIG’s website includes a separate Whistleblower Protection Program page with information and links related to the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, OIG’s Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman, filing whistleblower reprisal complaints, and whistleblower protection agency certification. The page includes the phone number and email contact information for the Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman. The Ombudsman’s role is to educate agency employees about prohibitions on retaliation for protected disclosures, and inform agency employees who have made or are contemplating making a protected disclosure about the rights and remedies against retaliation for protected disclosures. As part of the strategy to promote awareness, the Ombudsman provides brown bags, posts informational posters at agency facilities, and develops brochures for employee as part of the orientation process.

Websites

The OIG's website is accessible by a link at the bottom of the Department home page and directly at www.oig.doc.gov. The website includes a menu at the top of the page, allowing visitors to access various topics of interest. The website provides access to downloadable PDFs of public audit (investigative and other reports), audits initiated, correspondence, and Congressional testimony. Information is organized by title, date, and the Department's bureau. The website also includes a FOIA reading room, as well as information on how to make a request. The "Contact Us" page provides information for the webmaster and includes links to the FOIA Officer contact. The OIG periodically reviews the usability of its website by analyzing the results of workgroup studies and by being an active member of the Departmental Web Advisory Council.

Transparency

To ensure transparency, one of OIG's goals highlighted in the chart following the OIG Open Government Plan introduction is to publish an inventory of external data assets on Data.gov this FY. Recently, the OIG Office of Administration (OA) completed this inclusion of the OIG inventory of external data assets within Data.gov. The concept of transparency is established in OIG routine processes and policy. The OIG has a formal clearance process that ensures active endorsing the administration's Open Government objectives. OIG routinely practices proactive disclosures by including a plan to issue two public investigative reports as part of the strategic goals for FY 2015. The OIG also publishes a Semi-annual report twice yearly and the "Top Management Challenges report annually.

The OIG supports transparency by sending tweets using OIG's official Twitter account and by posting comments to its Facebook page of events concerning the office. The OIG also participates in transparency by utilizing the FOIAonline, a government partnership that provides shared services for FOIA processing. To learn how the OIG FOIA office provides public access to frequently released documents we have included a paragraph with information on our reading room in this plan.

Public Notice

As stated previously, OIG uses a Twitter account and Facebook page to publicize publications, activities, and job vacancies. Using these popular modes of communication helps support transparency, collaboration, and participation. OIG is increasing customer outreach to stakeholders, citizens, and the media as the number of followers to the posted tweets and Facebook posts expands. The OIG will continue to use these communication methods to inform the public. The OIG website at www.oig.doc.gov is also used to provide the public notice of recently released reports and audits. The "Recent Releases" section on the OIG Home page provides the public links to these reports, audits and other correspondence. Furthermore, the OA posted a request for information to FedBizOpps in December 2014 to pursue the goal of gaining information on records management of email. More details on this initiative are below in the section on Records Management.

Records Management

The second flagship initiative is to improve records management processes by revising records management policies and OIG disposition processes. As part of this initiative, OIG posted a request for information (RFI) on FedBizOpps in FY 2015 to obtain information on records management for e-mail records in the cloud. This RFI was drafted in support of the “Managing Government Records Directive” (M-12-18, jointly issued by OMB and NARA) to meet the goal of managing all e-mail records in electronic format by December 2016. By improving the management of e-mail records and by examining the records management policies will improve customer service, meet one of the goals of the Presidential Records Directive, and serve the objectives of Open Government. The OIG will be continuing to improve records management policies as mentioned in the chart earlier in this document.

The OIG Records Manager routinely participates in the FRON. This activity supports the Open Government activity of collaboration. Providing records management training to OIG employees enables OIG to meet one of the goals of M-12-18, by implementing annual records management training to all employees by December 2014. As part of this action, the OIG Records Manager coordinated with other records managers within the FRON and NARA to collaborate on an online records management course developed for Federal employees scheduled for release in the third quarter of this FY.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Within the last two years, OIG moved primarily to electronic-based systems that has greatly improved the efficiency and responsiveness of its FOIA process. All FOIA requests are tracked in the FOIAonline system. The OIG also improved its FOIA processes by developing a more robust external FOIA reading room containing frequently requested items (serving the Open Government objective of proactive disclosure) and by revising the FOIA external website to list the exemptions to the Act. In this way, OIG is communicating with the public to provide information on the FOIA program and encouraging transparency, collaboration, and participation. FOIA responses are sent by e-mail directly to requesters in order to remain proactively engaged. The OIG websites provides more information on the OIG FOIA program at <http://www.oig.doc.gov/pages/Freedom-of-Information-Act.aspx>.

Proactive Disclosures

Previously mentioned, upcoming events and activities are posted OIG’s Twitter account and Facebook page to alert customers. Posting the Tweets and the Facebook comments notifies the public of weekly activities and alerts them to job announcements within OIG. OIG also notifies the public of additions to the external website by posting notice of audits initiated and recent releases in these sections on the OIG home page. The OIG will continue to review its website to improve customer communications. The OIG FOIA Officer also routinely reviews FOIA requests to identify types of frequently requested records and other records of interest for proactive posting.

Congressional Requests

The OIG has a formal process for reviewing, releasing and responding to Congressional requests. First, employees who act for the requesting official complete a clearance form requesting Office of Counsel (OC) review. The OC assesses the suitability of public release under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 5 U.S. C. § 552 and the Privacy Act of 1974, (5 U.S.C. § 552a) and then determines whether the report is appropriate for public release (with or without redactions) or must be completely withheld from public release. Once the testimony or response to the congressional committee inquiry is finalized, it is then posted to the external OIG website at <http://www.oig.doc.gov/Pages/Testimony.aspx>. Our Public Affairs Specialist actively participates in the review process and engages in proactive disclosures by announcing upcoming public interviews.

Declassification

The OIG follows the Department’s “Manual of Security Policies and Procedures” for security of commerce information. New employees receive briefings from the OSY. However, OIG does not have the authority to classify information. Some information, such as, open or sensitive investigations and the related evidence is confidential and PII and BII are protected by FOIA exemptions.

Participation

In order to meet OIG’s strategic goal to “Develop A Robust Infrastructure To Support A High-Performing OIG” to continue the improvement of network infrastructure, OIG examined the ways to improve its services to the workforce. Some of the ways the OIG is improving its network infrastructure is to leverage technology initiatives, such as, Cloud computing and collaborating with industry on improvements in information storage and information sharing. For example, OIG is improving SharePoint services by implementing SharePoint 2013, Cloud Based Email Migration in FY 2015, and improving our bandwidth capacity. OIG collaborates with industry experts to implement best practices by attending open data meetings of the OCIO council and encouraging employees to attend networking opportunities to obtain guidance on similar issues, which other federal agencies experience.

Collaboration

The OIG will continue to utilize its Twitter account and Facebook page as a communication tool with members of the public and other stakeholders. The tweets invite input from the public and encourage the public to participate in idea-generation and to provide feedback on the Department’s initiatives, building an open two-way conversation. Using this method also encourages comments on OIG activities and inviting collaboration on OIG’s objectives to fulfill the mission of reporting fraud, waste, and abuse within government. The OIG also provides access to its hotline number on the OIG Twitter account and invites followers to sign up for Tweets of interest from the OIG Twitter account.

OIG Open Government Initiatives

The table below shows a list of initiatives for **OIG**

Table 13 - OIG Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
OIG	Publish an inventory of our publically available digital assets on inventory.data.gov	Completed (April 2015)	--
	Improve OIG Records Management Policies and Processes by revising records management processes.	Ongoing	Next Phase December 2016
	Continue to improve network infrastructure to ensure security of privacy information by analyzing and updating privacy controls	Ongoing/Continuous	Next Phase December 2016

- Publish an inventory of our publically available digital assets on inventory.data.gov*
 The OIG is complying with the Open Data Memorandum OMB M-13-13 by developing and maintaining an “enterprise data inventory” of the OIG publically available data resources. This is OIG’s flagship initiative that supports the departmental plan and Open Government objectives established by the administration. As time permits, OIG will actively categorizing and inventorying our internal digital assets.
- Improve OIG Records Management Policies and Processes by revising records management processes*
 The second flagship initiative is to improve the records management processes by revising records management policies and OIG disposition processes. As part of this initiative, OIG posted a request for information (RFI) on FedBizOpps in FY 2015 to obtain information on records management for e-mail records in the cloud. This RFI was drafted in support of the “Managing Government Records Directive” (M-12-18, jointly issued by OMB and NARA) to meet the goal of managing all e-mail records in electronic format by December 2016.
- Continue to improve network infrastructure to ensure security of privacy information by analyzing and updating privacy controls*
 The OIG’s OCIO is also improving security by implementing the administration’s priority cybersecurity capabilities. These actions will assist the protection of the personal information OIG maintains and improve services to external and internal customers.



United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is the federal agency for granting U.S. patents and registering trademarks. In doing this, the USPTO fulfills the mandate of Article I, Section 8, Clause 8, of the U.S. Constitution to "promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries." The USPTO registers trademarks based on the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (Article I, Section 8, Clause 3). Under this system of protection, American industry has flourished. New products have been invented, new uses for old ones discovered, and employment opportunities created for millions of Americans. The strength and vitality of the U.S. economy depends directly on effective mechanisms that protect new ideas and investments in innovation and creativity. The continued demand for patents and trademarks underscores the ingenuity of American inventors and entrepreneurs. The USPTO is at the cutting edge of the nation's technological progress and achievement.

The USPTO advises the President of the U.S., the Secretary of the Department's, and U.S. government agencies on intellectual property (IP) policy, protection, and enforcement; and promotes the stronger and more effective IP protection around the world. The USPTO furthers effective IP protection for U.S. innovators and entrepreneurs worldwide by working with other agencies to secure strong IP provisions in free trade and other international agreements. It also provides training, education, and capacity building programs designed to foster respect for IP and encourage the development of strong IP enforcement regimes by U.S. trading partners.

The table below shows a list of initiatives for *USPTO*.

Table 14 - USPTO Initiatives

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
USPTO	<i>Improving Transparency</i>	On Going / Continuous	--
	Roundtables on AIA Trial Proceedings	Completed (May 2014)	--

Operating Unit	Project	Status	Estimated Completion
	Roundtable on First-Inventor-to-File Anniversary	Completed (April 2014)	--
	Patent Litigation Toolkit	Completed (February 2014)	--
	Data Visualization Center	Live / Operational	--
	Trademark Educational Outreach Program	Live / Operational	--
	Customer service enhancements related to the American Invents Act	Live / Operational	--
	Improving Participation	On Going / Continuous	--
	National Trademark Expo	Completed (October 2014)	--
	Roundtables on Copyright Policy Issues	Completed (July 2014)	--
	Roundtable on Crowdsourcing Prior Art	Completed (April 2014)	--
	Expansion of Law School Clinic Certification Pilot Program	On Going / Continuous	--
	Improving the Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (MPEP) and Manual of Trademark Examining Procedures (TMEP) through an online discussion tool	Live / Operational	--
	Redesign of www.uspto.gov	Live / Operational	--
	Improving Collaboration	On Going / Continuous	--
	Roundtable to Solicit Feedback on Guidance for Determining Subject Matter Eligibility of Claims Reciting or Involving Laws of Nature, Natural Phenomena, and Natural Products	Completed (May 2014)	--
	Roundtable on Additive Manufacturing	Completed (April 2014)	--
	Multi-stakeholder Forum on Improving the Operation of the Notice and Takedown System under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act	Live / Operational	--
	Satellite offices – Dallas, Denver, Detroit , San Jose	Live / Operational	--
	Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program	Live / Operational	--
	Public Advisory Committees	Live / Operational	--

Highlights of 2014

- *Open Data* - The USPTO recently co-sponsored [an event with NYU's GovLab](#) which brought together diverse members of our user community—including industry representatives, prior art searchers, and academics—with the USPTO's data team to discuss ways the public currently utilizes datasets and how they can be improved to promote public knowledge and foster innovation. We also created an employee affinity group dedicated to the expanded use of Big Data.
- *Opening of the Denver Office* – In June 2014, the USPTO Rocky Mountain Regional Office opened in a new, permanent location in Denver's central business district. The office will help the region's entrepreneur's advance cutting-edge ideas to the marketplace, grow their businesses, and more efficiently navigate the world's strongest IP system.
- *Public Roundtables* – The USPTO held a variety of public roundtables across the country on subjects including First-Inventor-to-File, Crowdsourcing Prior Art, Additive Manufacturing, America Invents Act Trial Proceedings, and others. Of note, the USPTO and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) hosted several roundtable discussions on topics called for in the Department of Commerce Internet Policy Task Force's Green Paper on [Copyright Policy, Creativity, and Innovation in the Digital Economy](#) released in 2013. The purpose of these ongoing roundtables is to further engage members of the public on: (1) the legal framework for the creation of remixes; (2) the relevance and scope of the first sale doctrine in the digital environment; and (3) the appropriate calibration of statutory damages in the contexts of individual file sharers and of secondary liability for large-scale infringement.
- *2014 Trademark Expo* - The USPTO hosted its annual National Trademark Expo in October at the agency's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. The free, two-day event was designed to educate the public about trademarks and their importance in the global marketplace. It attracted more than 15,000 visitors of all ages. Exhibitors showcased their federally-registered trademarks through educational exhibits, including booths, themed displays, costumed characters, and inflatables. In addition, the expo featured educational seminars and children's workshops and activities.
- *Patent Litigation Toolkit* – As part of the USPTO's work in implementing President Obama's Executive Actions on patent reform, the [new online toolkit](#) was published in February 2014. It provides information that can be extremely valuable to those who are not steeped in patent law, like smaller "Main Street" retailers and consumers, helping to level the playing field against larger entities engaging in abusive patent litigation.

Status Updates on Previous Initiatives

- *Regional Offices* – In addition to opening the Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Denver in June 2014, the USPTO continued to hire for its offices there, in Dallas, and in Silicon Valley, and to conduct aggressive outreach and stakeholder engagement in all four locations, including the permanent office in Detroit. The Silicon Valley office, for example, continued to build training programs, workshops, and partnerships with local innovators and to tailor programs and events to the region’s unique industries, such as the [USPTO’s first Cybersecurity Industry Partnership](#). And in Detroit, Saturday Seminar sessions provided training to independent inventors and small businesses on the importance of IP protection. Together the four offices function as hubs of innovation and creativity, helping protect and foster American innovation in the global marketplace, enabling businesses to cut through red tape, and creating new economic opportunities in each of the local communities.
- *Website Redesign* – Using feedback gathered through its website satisfaction survey and interactive focus sessions with inventors, legal professionals, and others in the IP community, the USPTO is launching a newly redesign website at www.uspto.gov in February 2015.
- *Data Visualization Center* – The [Data Visualization Center](#) is a quick source of USPTO information regarding processing and quality measures in Patents, Trademarks, the Office of Policy and International Affairs, and the Patent and Trademark Trial and Appeal Boards. It is available on the USPTO [home page](#) in the left navigational menu, identified by a large icon. By selecting the Data Visualization Center link, users have the opportunity to see “dashboards” of specific data from each business unit, updated on a quarterly basis.
- *Improving the MPEP and TMEP* – The USPTO continues to rely on an innovative online tool that was launched in January 2011 to foster public discussion of ideas for improving the [Manual of Patent Examining Procedures](#) and [Trademark Manual of Examining Procedures](#). Collected suggestions and comments are considered during the production of subsequent editions of these important publications.
- *Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program* – In 2012 the USPTO established this new program to tap expertise of distinguished IP professionals and academics. The program enlists the services of leaders in academia and the industry who can devote up to six months of service to the agency on a full time basis. Edison Scholars continue to study ways to improve the USPTO's efficiency and performance, decrease burdens on applicants, and improve patent quality and clarity, among other topics.

Goals for 2015-16 – New and Expanded Initiatives

Open Data. The USPTO currently provides an inventory of its data assets through its [website](#) and Data.gov, and makes public datasets available through its website and bulk download through a [no-cost agreement with Reed Tech](#). The agency also provides an application programming interface access to the [Trademark Official Gazette](#) (TMOG) and the [Trademark Status and Document Retrieval](#) (TSDR) system. As part of the Agency Open Data and Mobility Roadmap, the USPTO has a number of programs underway to provide direct access to its most frequently requested data assets through application programming interfaces. The USPTO recently co-sponsored [an event with NYU's GovLab](#) that brought together diverse members of our user community, including industry representatives, prior art searchers, and academics, with USPTO's data team to discuss ways the public currently utilizes datasets and how they can be improved to promote public knowledge and foster innovation. The USPTO participates in events such as the National Day of Civic Hacking and is in the planning stages of sponsoring similar events to coincide with the release of its application programming interfaces. The USPTO has also created an employee affinity group to foster and support the developer community's use of GitHub. The Agency Open Data & Mobility Roadmap charts the USPTO's progress from where we are to where we would like to be in terms of APIs, data access, use, and quality. We identify data assets and establish timelines by working with the community through our outreach events that encourage the public to do innovative things with our data and through feedback from our data customers.

Proactive Disclosures. The agency is hard at work on efforts to proactively disclose more information to the public, including initiatives to make more datasets available, as described above, and in improving the patent and trademark databases already available through the agency's public website.

Privacy. Per existing guidance, the USPTO files reports with the Department of Commerce every time there is a PII issue.

Whistleblower Protection. The USPTO participates in OSC's Whistleblower Protection Act certification program and is currently engaged in internal discussions on how to better ensure, above and beyond No FEAR Act training, that employees are informed of their rights and remedies.

Ongoing Initiatives

Participation in Transparency Initiatives. The USPTO participates in Data.gov by attending monthly meetings sponsored by GSA and works with Commerce Department counterparts to update and maintain the USPTO inventory of its data assets in compliance with the metadata standards. The agency also provides monthly submissions to the IT Dashboard.

Public Notice. In February 2015 the USPTO will submit a Federal Register Notice unveiling the agency’s new Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative (see below), as well as its plan for an upcoming patent quality summit. This summit, very similar to the public roundtables on copyright policy, will include a number of proposals (outlined in the FRN) to improve patent quality, and will afford members of the public a chance to offer their input and discuss the proposals with USPTO officials. In addition to the FRN the event will be advertised on the [agency’s event calendar](#), on the home page carousel, and in various public remarks by the head of the agency leading up to the event. A similar series of public roundtables will be held in 2015 on the agency’s proposed IT improvements and will also be advertised through the same means.

Records Management. The USPTO has initiated an e-Records project to facilitate the development of an eRM roadmap and execution strategy to ensure compliance with Presidential Memorandum M-12-18. We are in the planning and analysis phase and have been working diligently to finalize requirements and develop an architectural solution/framework for managing email and all permanent electronic records. An integral part of our analysis is evaluating and leveraging in-house COTS and/or third-party software solutions. A pilot prototype/proof-of-concept will be developed prior to implementation of the final product. This information is available internally on the agency’s [Records Management Intranet page](#).

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests. The USPTO has an excellent capacity to respond to FOIA requests in a timely manner, with over 99% of FOIA requests processed in a timely manner in Fiscal Year 2014. As a result, the USPTO does not have a significant backlog of FOIA requests. However, the [USPTO FOIA Office](#) continues to monitor and examine the processing of FOIA requests received each year to determine how FOIA processing can be further improved. The primary plan for improving agency FOIA performance will be through additional training of USPTO FOIA personnel and records custodians.

Congressional Requests. In addition to a dedicated mailbox for constituent issues from at congressional@uspto.gov, the USPTO is currently redesigning the [Office of Governmental Affairs webpage](#) to a format that is more current and useful. OGA has nine personnel, with one person dedicated to handling Congressional requests. When a request is received, she consults Patents or Trademarks accordingly. The OGA director then reviews the answer and responds to Congress. These requests are not made public, as they often refer to specific patent applications that are privacy-protected by law for a specific period of time.

Declassification. The USPTO has no original classification authority. The only information of note, last provided to the Information Security Oversight Office on October 6, 2014, was that the USPTO made 35 *derivative* SECRET classification decisions during the reporting period, and 13 *derivative* CONFIDENTIAL classification decisions.

Websites. In February 2015, the USPTO will launch a new website with improved usability and navigation for members of the public looking to find information on agency activities and programs. In developing the new site, the agency met with hundreds of users—both frequent and new visitors to the site—to learn what information they look for and to study how they find it. The new navigation makes it easier to access services and accomplish tasks; for example, the Quick Links menu connects users to the most heavily used tools for searching, filing, paying, or checking on the status of an application. We’ve also grouped together materials for specific audiences such as inventors, patent agents, and educators. In addition, the new site is more mobile and tablet friendly than the previous version of the site. This redesign was the first phase of our work to upgrade users’ USPTO online experience. Future phases will improve our “transactional sites”—the online tools and systems where you conduct business with the USPTO, such as filing for trademark registration or paying the fees for a patent.

Participation. The USPTO has a number of mechanisms for the public to participate in the agency’s core mission. They include several major public-private partnerships with representatives of the Additive Manufacturing, Bio-Chem-Pharma, Cybersecurity, and Software industries; routine public roundtables on issues like post-grant proceedings, patent examiner guidance in light of recent Supreme Court decisions, copyright policy, and more; as well as frequent calls for public comment through Federal Register Notices.

- One such platform is [Ask Patents by Stack Exchange](#), which allows members of the public to contribute relevant prior art that patent examiners can use in making their determinations of patentability for a proposed invention.
- The USPTO is currently developing other platforms to facilitate the “crowdsourcing” of prior art, including mobile apps.
- The USPTO plans to hold a number of public meetings in 2015 and beyond, including a symposium on trade secrets (January 8), a Trademark Trial and Appeal Board Stakeholder Forum (January 29), a patent quality summit (TBD), and a series of roundtables on the agency’s many IT improvements.

Collaboration

- *MyUSPTO* – The agency is developing an optional online customer portal, which initially would serve as a source for customer contact and correspondence information, and would eventually allow customers to create a portfolio of information that can be used with a single login for other USPTO transactions, like electronic fee payments.
- More information about *MyUSPTO* can be viewed in the [Federal Register](#).

- Programs such as [Patents for Humanity](#) and the [Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Professionals Program](#)—as well as the USPTO’s partnership with Invent Now on [Collegiate Inventors Competition](#) and [Camp Invention](#)—allow the agency to obtain ideas from and increase collaboration with those in the private sector, non-profit, and academic communities.

Flagship Initiative.

- The *Enhanced Patent Quality* Initiative aims to improve agency operations through a variety of means that reflect the Open Government principles of transparency and participation.
- They include a *Patent Quality Summit* in 2015 that will allow members of the public to discuss and debate several patent quality proposals and to contribute ideas of their own.
- Several *follow-up roundtables* will enable the agency to continue gauging public interest in the initiative and to transparently discuss additional public ideas on how to improve patent quality.
- The agency will also employ a variety of *Big Data techniques to measure patent quality and to improve* every stage of the examination process, to allow for continued improvement and sustainability.

Public and Agency Ideas. The USPTO responds to public feedback on a routine basis, and public engagement will be an integral part of the USPTO’s periodic review and modification of this plan moving forward.



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- Transparency •
- Participation •
- Collaboration •

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OPEN GOVERNMENT PLAN**

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