

Integrated Information Solutions at the Census Bureau

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We are well into the information age. The Internet has changed everything. There is no question that Government agencies should no longer provide just raw data, they should provide value-added information. Secretary Daley has testified before the House Committee on Commerce about his commitment to make the Commerce Department a model of electronic commerce, the E-Commerce Department of the 21st Century. In the words of Secretary Daley, "I believe as the representative of business, we should do as business does. That means aggressively using the Internet, making Commerce a friendlier Department to Americans."

Technology and user expectations have rapidly advanced to the point where Government dissemination can and must provide answers to user questions -- not just provide statistics. The provision of these answers will be accomplished by successfully integrating data files from many sources to provide information solutions for data users. Achieving an important part of the E-Commerce or "Digital Department" Initiative, namely increasing the public availability of Commerce information and increasing service to the citizen and Commerce's public value, will be accomplished via the Integrated Information Solutions (IIS) initiative. The Census Bureau, with its massive stores of data, technology, and user service expertise, is in a most advantageous position to meet the American public's emerging information needs -- to move beyond mere data dissemination to knowledge dissemination.

The Census Bureau instituted the IIS process to define the details of how we should proceed from the Data Access and Dissemination System (DADS) project to the full vision of an integrated information access and dissemination system. The process also is establishing links with other major initiatives related to information dissemination, including, at the Census Bureau: the Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER) system modernization, the Federal Electronic Research and Review Extraction Tool (FERRET), the E-Commerce system, the corporate metadata repository, and Information Technology improvements; and, outside the Census Bureau: the Department of Commerce "Digital Department" Initiative, FedStats, and the Federal Geographic Data Committee-coordinated National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI), among others.

This demonstration presents a concept to promote understanding of benefits users will realize by having the capability to dynamically integrate multiple data sets from many sources.