



**Nomination Form**  
**Web Content Managers Best Practice Awards (2005)**

Email Forms by August 8, 2005 to: [webcontenttoolkit@gsa.gov](mailto:webcontenttoolkit@gsa.gov)

1. Nominator

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2. Best Practice Being Nominated:

Website URL: <http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/news.html>

Newsroom Team:

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Agency: US Census Bureau

3. Best Practice Category (You can nominate the same website or agency in more than one category). Read [descriptions of each category](#)

- Website Design **X**
- Website Content
- Citizen-Focused Online Services
- Services for Defined Audiences **X**
- Governance and Web Management

4. *Describe the Best Practice: Please be specific about what it is, why it's a best practice, evidence that's it's been successful, and how it could be replicated at other agencies. (Limit one page)*

The Census Bureau had a need to better organize and manage news releases. The press release site had been coded manually and releases were not available by date, only by subject. We wanted to allow users to search for releases by topic or by date, and we wanted to automatically display the most current releases on the site's main page, all in addition to reducing the burden to maintain the site manually. In essence, we wanted a news release blog. Any content organized by date and/or topic is well suited for a blog. The Census Bureau redesigned first our News Releases, then our entire Newsroom site using blogging software.

The Newsroom site consists of several components; most notable are the Releases and the Broadcast & Photo Services. On the Releases site, news releases going back to January of 2000 are organized by date and topic. Users can browse the site or subscribe to RSS feeds available for the latest releases in general and for each news topic. For example, a reporter covering issues on health care could subscribe to the news feed for health care and insurance releases. Several agencies have recognized the benefit of RSS feeds as a communications channel.

The Broadcast & Photo Services section includes videos, stock photography, audio files suitable for radio, and other multimedia. These assets are provided as a service to the media and other public users. Two audio collections, Profile America and Al Dia, are available as podcasts, as well, that are automatically updated daily.

With our current Newsroom architecture, the Census Bureau saves staff time, automatically organizes content, and provides content through a number of dissemination formats giving users the choice of how they access the information. The Public Information Office easily maintains the site. A news release used to take 45 minutes to publish and now takes just 10.

Other agencies could easily replicate the Newsroom site dissemination process, and could benefit from the Census Bureau's experience in having already met some challenges of using blogging software to organize and publish media information, as well as RSS news feeds. Some of these challenges have included how to automate the dissemination of embargoed data, training staff in new software and processes, and designing templates to meet multiple purposes.

The Newsroom site is extremely popular with media and public users. The site has been noted in articles discussing how governments are using RSS feeds (Public CIO Magazine, Government Computer News). The site is a best practice in using blogs to deliver content in through a number of channels to meet the needs of the users. The site provides multiple means of browsing the content, as well as targeted news feeds that users with specific interests can quickly read as they are updated.