



Economic and Workforce Information Performance Report Program Year 2010

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to describe the core workforce information products and services that were provided to our customers in support of the State of Missouri's overall economic and workforce development plans in Program Year (PY) 2010.

Plan Period

July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011

Plan Narrative

- SECTION I: Performance Summary
- SECTION II: Review of Deliverables
- SECTION III: Customer Feedback

SECTION I

Performance Summary

The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) delivered a variety of targeted products and services to stakeholders in PY 2010. These outputs addressed a range of economic and workforce issues identified in the DOL-ETA Workforce Information Grant (WIG) Core Products and Services Plan. In that plan, MERIC completed 46 deliverables across 5 core product groups. Some highlights include:

E-Learning Webinars

Nine self-guided webinars walk and talk users through important labor market and workforce information. This leveraged product was field tested and improved over the year through numerous Career Center site visits. Webinars are available to the public and are incorporated into the state's workforce training system.

Business Insight Reports

Several business reports were produced to give stakeholders new insights into large cluster industries and small business needs. Cluster pattern reports included detailed employment trends and regional analysis. Small business insights highlighted entrepreneurial trends and provided resources for starting a business.

Green Industry/Jobs Products/Enhanced Career Explorer Tool

A variety of printed career products and Career Explorer enhancements were leveraged to provide valuable information about good jobs in the state. A training provider and industry survey, competency models, and regional WIA reports were also developed to inform stakeholders about the needs of this growing industry.

2011 Missouri Career Guide

A concise how-to guide to assist job seekers in selecting a rewarding career through self-assessment and knowledge of top jobs. Guide is a very popular print and web product for education providers.

Partnerships Grow

MERIC continued to support important partnerships this year with Missouri Connections, a workgroup that brings together education, economic development, and business professionals to provide career guidance to students and job seekers. In addition MERIC continued and expanded its relationship with several University of Missouri research units to develop new and improved products such as the enhanced Career Explorer, several Small Business Insights reports, and the second report on how Missouri's fastest growing businesses, dubbed "Cheetahs," weathered the recession.

MERIC also had the opportunity to lead a Workforce Intelligence workgroup of Division of Workforce Development (DWD), Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and Community College leaders to look at ways to improve the sharing and communication of critical workforce supply and demand information.

SECTION II

Review of Deliverables

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE RESEARCH CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Core Product 1 - Workforce Information Database

1.1 Description

Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database (WID) with state and local labor market and workforce data.

1.2 Principal Customers

The WID provides data to jobseekers, workforce professionals, employers, economic developers, education and training professionals, the media, and researchers.

1.3 Support of State Economic and Workforce Development Plans

The Workforce Information Database will be the main data source for populating MERIC's web services. WID improves economic and workforce information delivery by allowing access by a wide array of customers shortly after information is released. The Workforce Information Database supports a demand-driven information system by allowing customized data queries based on user needs.

1.4 Deliverables

1.4.1 Maintain and update license files.

- COMPLETED License.dbf, licauth.dbf, lichist.dbf

1.4.2 Update lookup and crosswalk tables

- COMPLETED NAICS, SOC, CIP crosswalks
- COMPLETED O*NET

1.4.3 Populate industry and occupation employment projections.

- COMPLETED 2010-2012 Short-term Projections for Statewide and Sub-state Regions
*Please note that the 2008-2018 Long-term Projections for Sub-state Regions was completed in May 2010.

1.4.4 Populate core and non-core tables

- COMPLETED Add Green Training Providers non-core table to WID
- COMPLETED As information becomes available

1.4.5 Populate Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

- COMPLETED Current Employment Statistics (CES)

- COMPLETED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)
- COMPLETED Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)
- COMPLETED Occupational Employment Statistics (OES)

1.4.6 Deliverables Support Activities

- COMPLETED Server-side database maintenance and management
- COMPLETED Recovery and Back-up maintenance
- COMPLETED Establish and manage production database

1.4.7 Provide ad hoc WID database technical and policy support to main customer groups

- COMPLETED Provide as needed

Core Product 2 - Employment Projections

2.1 Description

Produce and disseminate industry and occupation employment projections.

2.2 Principal Customers

Employment projections are useful to job seekers, workforce developers, workforce boards, education and training providers, and economic developers. Customers use this data to make informed career choices and to direct programs towards specific occupations and industries.

2.3 Support of State Economic and Workforce Development Plans

This product group supports improved economic and workforce information products by providing the foundation for a whole series of career and industry analyses. Projections data supports identifying targeted occupations and industries.

As the impact of the recession continues to be felt across Missouri, it became evident that timely release of sub-state long-term projections estimates would be needed to provide real-time guidance to state and local workforce development agencies for career training assistance and planning. To that end, the decision was made in Missouri to develop and release both statewide and sub-state long term projections at the same time to provide a more up-to-date outlook for growing opportunities in good paying industries.

It is the intent to continue to develop and release statewide and sub-state long term projections data together rather than release them a year apart. Missouri plans on utilizing the extra time gained from more efficiently producing the long-term projections data to spend additional staff time on the development of value-added career outlook information projects and services to local workforce staff and training providers.

2.4 Deliverables

2.4.1 Produce industry and occupation employment projections per ETA guidance.

- COMPLETED Short-term 2010-2012 Industry Projections (Statewide and 2 Sub-state Regions)
- COMPLETED Short-term 2010-2012 Occupational Projections (Statewide and 2 Sub-state Regions) *Please note that the 2008-2018 Long-term Projections for Sub-state Regions was completed in May 2010.

2.4.2 Produce Workforce Studies.

- COMPLETED Healthcare Workforce Trends Brief
- COMPLETED Agricultural Wage Survey
- COMPLETED Healthcare Cluster Report
- COMPLETED Education and Training Outlook 2010-2012
- COMPLETED Top Growing/Most Openings Career Briefs 2010-2012
- COMPLETED 2011-2012 Career Guide

2.4.3 Leveraged Product Releases

- COMPLETED Good Outlook Green Opportunities Brief - Short-term 2010-2012
- COMPLETED Top 25 Green Jobs Brief - Short-term 2010-2012

2.4.4 Provide ad hoc technical and policy support to main customer groups.

- COMPLETED Provide as needed:
 - Long-Term Projections Report by Region with target industries and National Career Readiness Certificate Ratings identified for state WIB committee
 - Middle Skills Report

Core Product 3 - Special Studies and Economic Analysis

3.1 Description

Conduct special studies and economic analyses to provide information support for state, regional, and community development initiatives and targeted industry or workforce studies. Ad hoc studies allow for flexible analytical responses to new initiatives and economic shocks such as a major layoff.

3.2 Principal Customers

Principal customers targeted for this core product group include local workforce investment boards, workforce and economic developers, regional planning organizations, current and prospective businesses, educational and training providers, and other state-level policy makers.

3.3 Support of State Economic and Workforce Development Plans

This product group supports improved economic information delivery by coupling value-added research with customer focused presentation. Usefulness and usability is optimized by consultation with the specific customer throughout planning, development, and delivery. Studies are leveraged when possible to meet the goals of various stakeholders.

3.4 Deliverable Examples Include:

3.4.1 Produce and disseminate *Economic Indicators*

- COMPLETED Release Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Economic Indicators

3.4.2 Produce Small Business Insight Reports

- COMPLETED Reports developed in partnership with MOSourceLink, a small business resource center, highlight where and in what industries entrepreneurs are interested in starting a business. Also discuss main questions and issues owners have in starting or expanding a business in Missouri.

3.4.3 Produce WIA Workforce Migration Patterns

- COMPLETED WIA regional reports show where people are migrating into and out of a particular region. Data and mapping useful for understanding labor movement trends at sub-state level.

3.4.4 Produce Pattern Industry Insight Reports

- COMPLETED Detailed analysis of large core industry clusters to include regional and surrounding state employment, export trends, and specialties/markets to better understand competitive niches for strategic planning. Industries include chemical manufacturing, transportation equipment, and machinery manufacturing.

3.4.5 Produce WIA LED Hotspots Reports

- COMPLETED Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Hotspot Reports profile the industry and workforce traits of cities that are economic engines within a WIA region.

3.4.6 Produce Metropolitan Export Briefs

- COMPLETED Updated analysis of metropolitan exports that create new income for economic regions throughout the state.

3.4.7 Leveraged Product Releases

- NEAR COMPLETION Cheetah Businesses Survey Report updates the original fastest-growing businesses in Missouri study from December 2008 with new survey questions and case studies to understand how these companies excelled through the recession. - FINAL REPORT IN SEPTEMBER 2011

3.4.8 Produce Rapid Response Economic Impact Briefs

- COMPLETED Provide as requested:
- Three Briefs developed

3.4.9 Provide ad hoc special studies

- COMPLETED Provide as requested:
- Defense Spending and Military Briefs

Core Product 4 - Web Accessible Information

4.1 Description

Provide workforce information deliverables on the internet and make deliverables alternatively available through other electronic media and means of distribution.

4.2 Principal Customers

Mass availability of information via the internet and targeted distribution by other electronic media formats permits accessibility to the general public which includes all of MERIC's core customer groups.

4.3 Support for State Economic and Workforce Development Plans

4.3.1 The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) operates, in cooperation with the Missouri Government's Information Technology Services Division, a website located at <http://www.missourieconomy.org>.

The MERIC website received more than 244,000 visitors this past program year and is prominently inter-linked with other related public sites.

4.3.2 MERIC actively participates in the development and distribution of *Missouri Focus* E-news, the Department of Economic Development's (DED) flagship communications piece delivered weekly to over 2,600 subscribers. MERIC contributes weekly content on economic conditions and workforce information.

4.3.3 MERIC continues to partner with the DED public relations office for distribution of economic conditions releases on a regularly scheduled basis to state media outlets.

4.3.4 MERIC partners with the Missouri Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis on various collaborative dynamic web applications and research products.

4.4 Deliverables

- MERIC will develop "e-friendly" products and assure availability on the website and through other electronic distribution channels as necessary to reach targeted customer groups and the general public.
- MERIC will develop further enhancements to the MERIC website.
- MERIC will provide and post to the web site in a .pdf version suitable for report printing routine workforce information reports especially useful to target customer groups.

4.4.1 Examples of Product Releases

- COMPLETED Two (2) Focus Economic and Workforce Newsletter Articles each week

Core Product 5 - WIB Partnership and Consultation with Key Stakeholders

5.1 Description

Partner and consult on a continuing basis with State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) in order to provide needed information support for workforce investment strategic planning, response to rapidly changing economic conditions, and state or local initiatives. Consult with other key stakeholders in workforce information such as economic development and education organizations.

5.2 Principal Customers

Workforce Investment Boards and Key Stakeholders in Workforce Information

5.3 Support of State Economic and Workforce Development Plans

“Smart” delivery of products and services will allow MERIC to assure that core products are being understood and utilized to their full potential and that specific needs of this customer group are being met with respect to their regions. MERIC will take advantage of electronic media to announce and deliver additional products to WIBs. Webinar training to enhance workforce/economic knowledge will be offered again as a cost-effective method of learning.

In addition to partnering with the workforce boards, MERIC collaborates and consults with several related organizations to leverage increased outputs:

- 5.3.1 MERIC collaborates with the Missouri P-20 Council to develop products that inform the public and educators about job training needs. The mission of the Council, led by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Department of Higher Education (DHE), and the Department of Economic Development (DED), is to align educational efforts to better prepare students for the workforce of tomorrow.
- 5.3.2 MERIC is a key partner in Missouri Connections, a workgroup providing career planning information to students and job-seekers. This public outreach project includes the DED, DESE, DHE, Missouri Center for Career Education, and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce.
- 5.3.3 MERIC also took advantage of Recovery Act opportunities to collaborate with community colleges, universities, and the Department of Natural Resources to collect and produce primary data and research on the green economy and training.
- 5.3.4 This year MERIC was also awarded a LMI/WI e-Learning Improvement Initiative Grant to evaluate and modify ETA webinar modules for front-line career center staff and workforce planners.

5.4 Deliverables

5.4.1 Workforce Investment Board Liaisons

- COMPLETED Continue Point of Service (POS) support for WIBs by regional staff liaisons

5.4.2 Technical and Policy Support to SWIBs, LWIBs, Partners and Customer Interest Groups

- COMPLETED Produce economic and demographic data sets and analysis for Economic Strategic Initiative.
- COMPLETED Develop enhanced LMI/WI e-Learning webinars for local career centers and utilize WIB Liaisons to present and gather feedback.
- COMPLETED Develop enhanced LMI/WI e-Learning webinars for workforce planners and utilize WIB Liaisons to present and gather feedback.
- COMPLETED Deliver WIB support as needed through regional staff liaisons
- COMPLETED Staff toll-free helpdesk line for communicating workforce and economic information.
- COMPLETED Maintain and answer MERICData e-mail inquiries from the MERIC web site.
- COMPLETED Develop training sessions for workforce partners using webinars as requested

5.4.3 MERIC Customer Satisfaction Survey

- COMPLETED Customer e-mail survey to assess satisfaction with e-mail and phone line service
- COMPLETED Web-based survey to receive broader customer input

5.4.4 Provide ad hoc technical and policy support to main customer groups

- COMPLETED Provide as requested:
 - Facilitated Workforce Intelligence workgroup
 - Assist in Trade Act Assistance worker analysis for community college grant application

SECTION III

Customer Feedback

MERIC researchers, using a project tracking system, documented 855 Research and Information Products and 282 Customer Inquiries and Technical Assistance Outputs in PY 2010. Products were developed by incorporating customer feedback from past activities and from requests for new information.

MERIC assigns a WIA liaison to each region so that customers can quickly reach a research professional with questions and comments concerning LMI data. MERIC also has a telephone and e-mail hotline so that inquiries can be directed to subject-matter experts for a response.

In addition to the liaisons and a Workforce Research Manager who is in regular contact with Workforce Development staff, MERIC conducted additional surveys in PY2010 that provided feedback and direction for our services. A customer feedback survey, using the low-cost online web tool SurveyMonkey, asks customers general questions about service. Although small in number, 93% of respondents rated MERIC's customer service as either *Good* or *Excellent*. When asked how helpful the information was, 90% said it was *Helpful* to *Very Helpful*.

A second survey was targeted specifically at workforce planners, front-line career center staff, and community colleges. As part of a Workforce Intelligence workgroup, MERIC surveyed how these different customers used workforce information and what formats were preferred.

When asked what LMI data was used the most, workforce and community college planners indicated *Employment Projections* whereas front-line staff said *Occupational Skills and Education Needs*. When asked what the preferred format to receive LMI data was, workforce and community college planners preferred *Printable Reports with Analysis* while front-line staff overwhelmingly sought *One-Page Information Summaries*.

In conjunction with an LMI/WI e-Learning grant, surveys were used to gather feedback on the LMI training needs of front-line Career Center staff and workforce planners. The majority of respondents (55%) wanted more training on *O*Net Online* as this was heavily used by front-line staff to help build resumes, explore career options, and match job seeker skills with work orders. *LAUS* and *QCEW* training was the next priority to better understand the larger industry trends occurring in the economy.

MERIC redesigned the training lessons to shorten the courses and include a walk-through portion for hands-on use and confidence building. Most respondents (76%) thought that this was the most effective training method of showing a data tools' functionality and would increase tool usage.

Two on-going areas of interest for Missouri's workforce system are the improvement of LMI web delivery and the training of staff in LMI uses. Website improvements remain a challenge although opportunities with Stimulus funds to enhance certain tools, like the Career Explorer, were accomplished this planning year. However, MERIC recognizes the need for further improvements and will continue to work with state Information Technology staff to move toward a more robust, user-friendly web site.

The LMI/WI e-Learning grant enabled the development of customized, self-paced training modules that DWD integrated into the training system so certificates could be awarded for course completion and tracking. Module lessons were also placed on the MERIC website for general public use. MERIC will build on the success of the e-Learning grant by embedding a survey at the end of each module so that training can continue to improve with customer feedback.

In conclusion, MERIC has developed a wide range of products and services this planning year to assist in state workforce and economic development goals. The flexibility of this ETA grant to tailor products to state needs continues to be an outstanding feature of this program. MERIC looks forward to the on-going partnerships it has developed with ETA, DWD, and other stakeholders to advance the use and knowledge of labor market and workforce information to drive better decisions.

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