

IdeaFactory: Using Social Media to Engage Employees at TSA



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Contents

- What is IdeaFactory?
- How IdeaFactory Works
- Success: IdeaFactory is “valuable” and “innovative”
- Getting Started: 5 Tips to Establish a Crowdsourcing Initiative
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- Want to Learn More?



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What is IdeaFactory?



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What is IdeaFactory?

- IdeaFactory is a Web-based tool that empowers all TSA employees to:
 - submit ideas,
 - provide comments on how to improve new concepts, and
 - rate ideas that should be recommended for implementation
- It uses social media concepts to harness the “wisdom of the crowds” and expand upon the traditional suggestion box

IdeaFactory Vision Statement:

Support TSA's mission by fostering a community that engages employees and encourages collaboration to initiate innovative change.



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Factory™**
Innovate. Collaborate. Succeed.
<http://IdeaFactory.dhs.gov>



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IdeaFactory Uses Familiar Social Media Concepts to Engage Users

The IdeaFactory's success relies on a community of users collaborating to improve ideas, share information with each other and make personal connections between airports

Users provide information about themselves to the full community, and personalize their posts with a signature.

facebook

LinkedIn

Users comment – and sub-comment – on ideas they are interested in and can provide further insight into. Also, user ratings used to identify popular ideas.

Blogger

digg



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How IdeaFactory Works



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IdeaFactory “Landing Page” Provides News and Requires Users to Agree to Terms of Use

IdeaFactory on WhiteHouse.gov!
v. 3.0
We're recognized as an example of collaboration in government. The IdeaFactory is featured in the Innovations Gallery as an example of how the Department of Homeland Security is encouraging participation at TSA to support the agency's mission.

IdeaFactory Agreement
The IdeaFactory is subject to our Terms of Use. Before you may access the IdeaFactory you must agree to abide by the Terms of Use. Each network session requires that you agree to the Terms of Use. By placing a checkmark in the box below and clicking the "I Agree" button, you agree to the Terms of Use.
 I agree to the Terms of Use for the IdeaFactory
 Before you are redirected, agree to the Terms of Use

IdeaFactory: Latest News
BDO Program: The Behavior Detection Officer program has gotten a lot of space on the IdeaFactory, with both TSOs and BDOs. Recently, Acting Administrator Gale Rosside and Acting General Manager for the SPOT program Dan Burch joined the conversation. "You have to remember that you - they - WE - work for TSA. Each of you is critical to our security regime," Administrator Rosside said. To see both responses, check out "TSOs Should Maintain Certification" or "BDO Needs to Change."
VF Solutions - Shoes: There has been a lot of discussion recently about the availability of shoes for TSOs. We are happy to announce that shoes are once again available on the VF Solutions website. They are the same shoes as previously offered at the same price (\$35.55). Please keep in mind that inventory will be ordered from the shoe vendor as orders are placed. Delivery time will vary from 1-20 weeks depending on the vendor, size, and availability at the time of order placement.

We Ask You!
This week: Our idea is to develop a campaign and possibly use your feedback in future training. From your observations at work, who would you consider a good leader, and why? Click here to post your comments.
Keep posting your unusual item stories here.



Users Build Solutions to Problems



Build New Idea
In posting your idea, please consider and answer the following if possible.

- What problem are you trying to solve?
- Who does this problem affect?
- What is your proposed solution or remedy?
- What steps could be taken to implement this solution?
- How difficult would it be? How much would it cost?
- What are the benefits?

Idea Title: _____

My Idea is...

Idea Categories (Select up to 3 categories)

<input type="checkbox"/> TSNM Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Baggage/Checkpoint Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Uniforms	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Evolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Efficiency
<input type="checkbox"/> PASS	<input type="checkbox"/> Baggage Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Intelligence Operations	<input type="checkbox"/> At the Airport
<input type="checkbox"/> At the Checkpoint	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life/Workplace



The User Community Rates and Collaborates on the Ideas to Make Them Better

- Users rate ideas on a scale of 1-5 light bulbs
- Toolbox functionality allows users to collaborate with peers and track ideas

The TSA IdeaFactory has built: 9,497 ideas > rated 264,747 times > 77,948 comments

Current TSA Activity

REWARD EMPLOYEES

Other
Submitted By **Suzanne.Morby** on 2/12/2009 12:35:00 PM

My idea is... In other government agencies, there is a program "Benjie Sug" (Benefit suggestions) that encourages employees to give suggestions that would save that agency money. If the idea/suggestion is implemented, the employee who intiated the idea/suggestion receives a monetary reward. I think this is a great idea for TSA to do. I believe this would be a good for IAC to consider. There are so many benefits to implement this with TSA, number one, saving the government money in the long run.

Suzanne.Morby
Call I. We all just get along?

Hide Toolbox

Email Add as Favorite Subscribe For Alerts Report Abuse
Report SSI Add to My Groups

16 People Rated This Idea 3.7 Average Rating 2 Comments

This idea can no longer be rated

5	10
4	1
3	
2	
1	5

Number of people



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Users Provide Comments to Enhance Ideas and Inform Employees

Fight Germs!

Safety

Submitted By **Kimberly.Hughes** on 1/7/2010 1:03:59 PM

My idea is... to have hand sanitizer stations in all break rooms.
Kimberly.Hughes

Rate This Idea

16 People Rated This Idea

2.7 Average Rating

3 Comments

Sort Comments By: Date Submitted | User Name | Most Helpful | Most Responses

Cathy.Hanci 1/9/2010 9:30:48 AM
Report Unmarked SSI
Report Abuse
Respond
Mark As Helpful
Mark As Unhelpful
1 user(s) marked helpful
0 user(s) marked unhelpful

Cathy.Hanci We have sanitizer in our checkpoints, break room and at baggage.

Jeffrey.P.Jones 1/8/2010 10:23:50 AM
Report Unmarked SSI
Report Abuse
Respond
Mark As Helpful
Mark As Unhelpful
1 user(s) marked helpful
0 user(s) marked unhelpful

Jeffrey.P.Jones this is a local issue. At DSM we have had the sanitizer not just in the break rooms but all over every checkpoint for several years. Talk to your managers, it can come out of the regular supplies budget.



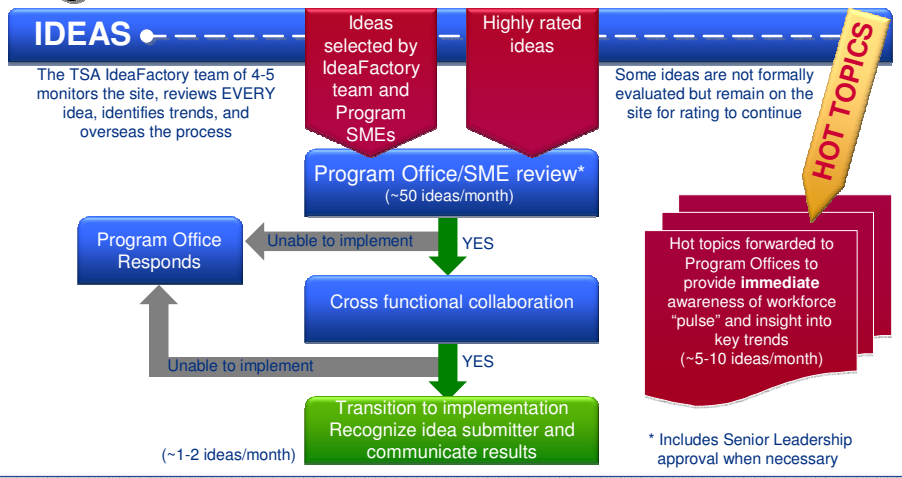
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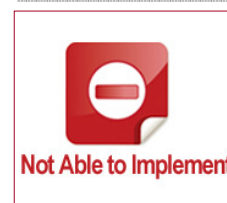


Collaboration and Evaluation Turn Ideas into Programs

The Idea Pool: Users submit ~300 ideas/month, provide comments on how to improve concepts and rate ideas on a scale of 1 to 5



Program Office Experts Respond to All Evaluated Ideas, Whether or Not They Make the Cut



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Users Determine How They Want to See Information

- Powerful Search and Filter tool allows users to conduct advanced searches based on the following:
 - Key Word
 - Idea Status
 - Ideas they have contributed towards
 - Category
- Users can use sort capability to identify most popular ideas



Profile Tab Personalizes Experience and Enhances the Community

- Allows employees to:
 - Enter information about themselves
 - View idea statistics
 - Sign up for category alerts
 - View “favorites” lists
 - Create a personal signature



“We Ask You” Engages Employees to Respond to HQ-Sponsored Ideas

“We Ask You,” accessible off the main site, is a space where program offices post a question or an idea on which they would like user feedback. That feedback is then taken into account when the office is evaluating the program in question. This offers a direct line of communication between headquarters and the field-based workforce. This feature launched in March 2009.



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The IdeaFactory Team Promotes Every Move We Make, Which Keeps Our Process Transparent



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IdeaFactory: Tools You Can Use

- SEARCH for ideas related to your program office to see what the workforce is saying about you
- ASK for feedback on specific topics related to improve new or existing programs using We Ask You!
- CONTACT your office's IdeaFactory liaison if you find an idea that you would like to implement at TSA

Contact the IdeaFactory Team at IdeaFactory@dhs.gov for more information.



The IdeaFactory Illuminator

Vol 2, Issue No. 7 - July 2009

IdeaFactory in the News!

InformationWeek

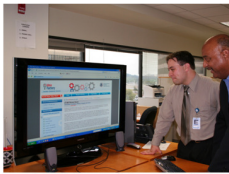
InformationWeek recently profiled how technology is being used successfully in the government in the article, [Tech Innovation USA: From Flatland Networks to Self-Scheduling Devices](#).

The IdeaFactory was one of the programs featured in the article, as an example of an in-house developed crowd-sourcing application that anyone could model.

"Any organization could put the tool to use—if they have that kind of buy-in from senior leadership," says IdeaFactory program manager Tina Canola. "It's really a tool that's more than just the ideas."

"It's about building a community and engaging and empowering the workforce, especially a distributed workforce like we have."

Other agencies featured include Defense Advanced Research



TSO Casey Flynn Visits HQ

Earlier in July, TSO Casey Flynn (above left) had an idea to reduce operational expenditures by setting current Reveals CT-80 EDS machines to idle mode when not in use. He decided to share his idea on the IdeaFactory and within two days, it caught the eye of David Holmes (above right), Assistant Administrator, Office of Inspections

Aaron Batt and the Office of Security Technology (OST) arranged for Casey to visit Transportation Security Administration Systems Integrated Facility (TSIF) at Reagan National Airport to discuss the possibility of making his idea reality. TSIF is a place where new technologies are tested and piloted before rolling out to airports nationwide.

While Casey's idea, [CT-80 Money Saver](#), has not been given the official green light, Operational Process and Technology (OPT) is in the process of evaluating the merits of his idea. If feasible, his idea could lower maintenance costs on the CT-80 machines and conserve



TSA has Four People Who Monitor the Site and Help Put Ideas Into Action

- Program Management
- Analysis, Evaluation and Process Optimization
- Site Moderation
- Communications



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Success at TSA



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IdeaFactory is Viewed as “Valuable” and “Important” by Employees



On average, **10 ideas** are submitted each day, each idea receives **8 comments** and **30 ratings**

Approximately **100 new users** visit the site each week, **5,000 users** visit the site each month, and **40 percent** of the visitors actively contribute

As of January 1, 2010, there were:

- 10,700 ideas
- 84,000 comments
- 318,000 ratings
- 28,000 users
- 50+ new programs



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Representative IdeaFactory Ideas

Idea	Benefits
Employee Recruiting and Retention	
Job Swap	Created a website that allows officers that meet certain criteria to post their interest in swapping job locations
Employee Morale	
“A Day in the Life”	Encourages senior leaders to spend a day at an airport working alongside officers, rather than a traditional meet and greet visit.
Diversity Day	Created the first annual national celebration of Diversity Day on October 29 to highlight importance and recognize workforce diversity
Mourning Bands	Allows employees to recognize employees who passed away with special markings on badge
Security	
Public Web Site Clarity	Change Web site clarification of the term “children” who are allowed to bring liquids through the checkpoint to “infant/toddler”
Training Updates	Ideas from six users were incorporated into an updated training module that teaches x-ray operators to identify threats in carry on items



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IdeaFactory is a Success at TSA

- Provides a “voice” for employees
- Employees contribute actively on relevant and important topics tied to agency priorities and initiatives
- Employees “talk”, educate and inform each other and build an online community
- HQ programs obtain valuable program feedback and interact with employees directly
- Fosters information sharing

“I feel empowered to improve my job.”

“...gives me a look at the ‘big picture’”

“It keeps employees up to date on current issue/happenings.”



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The White House Named TSA IdeaFactory a Model of Open Government



the WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE

the BRIEFING ROOM ISSUES the ADMINISTRATION ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE

OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

TRANSPARENCY • PARTICIPATION • COLLABORATION

About Open Government | Innovations Gallery | Open Government Blog

OPEN GOVERNMENT INNOVATIONS GALLERY

IdeaFactory

Department of Homeland Security

Empowers the Transportation Security Administration's large and dispersed workforce to submit and collaborate on innovative ideas to improve TSA and keep the nation's transportation systems secure.

The Challenge
IdeaFactory addresses three main challenges at TSA:

- How TSA can engage employees and ensure that every member of its large (50,000+) workforce at more than 450 airports and other locations has a voice in the way the agency and its operations evolve;
- How TSA can collect constant, fresh input and perspectives on improvements to keep the agency flexible and effectively mitigate security threats; and
- How TSA can disseminate information about new and existing programs, initiatives, and policies to

Getting Started: 5 Tips for Establishing a Crowdsourcing Initiative



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Tip #1: Identify the Business Need

IdeaFactory was launched in April 2007 to address three key business needs at TSA:

- How TSA could **engage geographically dispersed employees** and ensure **they have a voice** in the way the agency evolves;
- How TSA could collect **fresh input and perspectives** on improvements to keep the agency flexible and effectively **mitigate security threats**;
and
- How TSA could promote its **core value of innovation**.



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Tip #2: Ensure Senior Leadership Champions Effort and Provides Support

- Support comes from highest levels at TSA
- Active participation from senior leaders is key
- Regular dashboards and updates keep site content fresh in leaders' minds
- Leaders post specific challenges or questions tied to ongoing priorities and initiatives
- It's important to engage not just senior leaders - mid-level managers are critical to promoting usage to front-line employees



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Tip #3: Understand Your Users



 **The IdeaFactory Illuminator**

September 2008 Vol. 2, No. 9

IdeaFactory Expands DHS-Wide

We are proud to announce that the IdeaFactory is expanding to all DHS agencies in the coming months. Hopefully you have seen Acting Administrator Gale Riordan's recent message, "Who Would've Thought It?", explaining the expansion efforts currently underway. The IdeaFactory team thanks all of our users for helping us achieve this high praise and recognition. We could not have done it without you!

Cost Savings Challenge Finalists Announced

We are excited to announce that 11 ideas have been selected as finalists from April's Cost Savings Challenge. We received over 600 responses with ideas on how to save TSA money. About 140 met the criteria for the challenge and were forwarded to the appropriate program offices for further evaluations. This week, the 11 ideas were announced that made it through the second pilot or proof of concept stage for final eval.

The full list of the finalists is available [here](#).

- ~95% of TSA's employees are not in front of a computer and have limited time to access the site
- We designed site features with user characteristics in mind
- We also design communications (newsletters, emails, etc.) around user needs and use existing networks to push out messages

- ✉ Email
- ♥ Add as Favorite
- 📧 Subscribe For Alerts
- ⚠ Report Abuse
- ⚠ Report SSI
- ➕ Add to My Groups
- 📊 Show Stats And History
- ➔ Add To Export Cart



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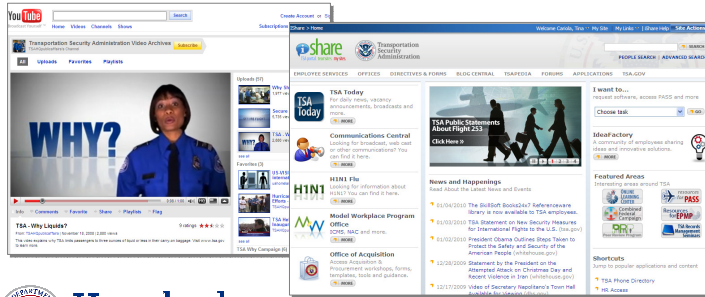
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Tip #4: Focus Your Social Media Mission



- Be sure to coordinate with entire agency's social media strategy
- Don't try to be all things to your users
- IdeaFactory only allows ideas to make TSA a better place to work – no questions, rants, etc.

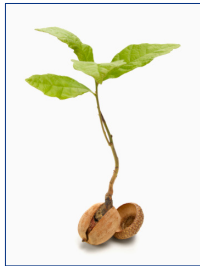


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Tip #5: It's OK to Start Small and Grow



TSA:

- Went from concept to launch in 6 weeks
- Used an Integrated Project Team with representatives from legal, communications, IT, and program offices to push concept forward
- Built a basic site with in-house resources
- Held teaser campaign and live webcast for launch to promote the site
- Implemented ideas as quickly as possible to show employees we were serious
- Listened to the users to help build the community



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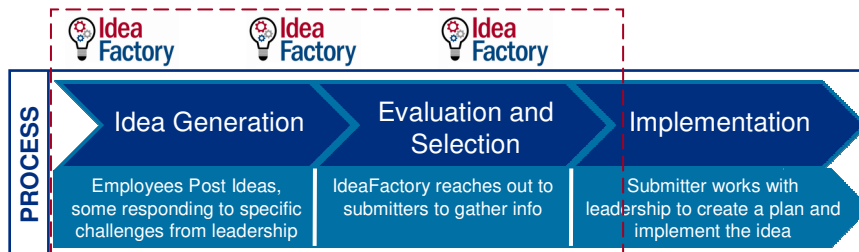
Lessons Learned



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Engage Employees Throughout the Entire Idea Lifecycle



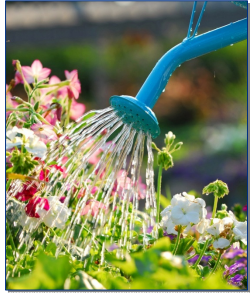
The IdeaFactory Innovation Process



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Cultivate the Community



- Keep the program fresh with new challenges, frequent communications and regular updates
- Listen to what your users want and respond
- Use effective moderation to create a collaborative atmosphere on the site
- Identify and celebrate champions and successes
- Enable employees to help other employees



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Transparency is Key



- Say “why” you can’t implement ideas
- Be flexible and open to changing your processes
- Expect negativity-you can’t make everyone like everything
- Establish thresholds and set employees’ expectations for what happens with ideas
- Give people an inside look at who and how the program is managed



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It's All About Balance



**Wisdom of
the Crowds**

+

**Subject Matter
Expertise**

= Success!



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It's a Program, Not a Web Site



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Want to Learn More?



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Get Involved

- Join the White House-sponsored Community of Practice (COP) for Idea Generation Tools (government email address required)
 - <https://max.omb.gov/community/display/Planning/Idea+Generation+Tools+Community+of+Practice>
- Attend monthly COP meetings
 - **2nd Tuesday from 3-4 PM**
- Review the **White Paper** summarizing program best practices and tools utilized in the Federal Workplace
- Check out www.apps.gov for other social media idea generation options

Welcome to the Community of Practice for Idea Generation Tools:

On January 21, 2009, in his first Executive Memorandum, the President called for bringing innovation to government by tapping the collective intelligence of the public and of government employees and called for an all-hands-on-deck approach to solving our most pressing problems.

Generating and Capturing Good Ideas from the Federal Workforce to Solve Tough Problems.

This is your online resource to connect with those who are using idea generation tools in the federal workforce. We welcome your participation, questions, and contributions. You are not alone in your efforts! **Contact us, send a question or resource to our discussion forum, join our meetings,** or just look through the documents we've collected here to help you on your idea generation project.

Vote on Ideas
Support Our Favorite Ideas

Submit an Idea
Relay an Idea to the House

Make it Happen
Take Ideas into Action

Search the Idea Generation Tools Community of Practice:

Community Resources

- **Members** (Sign up to Join the Community and Connect with others)
- **Calendar** (Find upcoming events)
- **The White Paper**
- **Meeting Materials**
- **Schedule and Structure of Meetings** (dates, presenting agencies, and discussion topics)

Getting Started

- **Introduction to Idea Generation**
- **Ready to Go? A Beginner's Checklist**
- **Success Stories**
- **Goals and Guiding Principles**

News and Announcements

Second Community of Practice Meeting

The second intergovernmental Ideation Community of Practice meeting was held Tuesday, December 8, 2009. Roughly 50 people participated in the meeting, representing nearly 30 different agencies. The weekly meeting was led by group members Karl Gudmundsson (USDA) and Floyd May (HKO). Choosing the right tool for a committee needs was the focus of this meeting. A document that contains criteria contributed from other participating agencies will be fleshed out in the next few weeks and will be the first piece of the "How to" tool kit.

[Send Meeting Materials](#)

[Get Involved](#)

Launch of New Community of Practice

This Community of Practice is intended for federal users of these platforms or those federal agencies and departments interested in developing such tools. The key issues discussed will revolve around management and implementation issues, as well as an examination of best practices. Participants are expected to come from a variety of backgrounds, such as program administrators, IT system administrators, public affairs managers, and human resource specialists, among others.

This Community of Practice will involve two components: 1) an electronic portal containing relevant resources such as tools and guides related to ideation from both the executive branch and...

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IdeaFactory Sharing Options

- DHS is exploring options to share IdeaFactory code and program management documentation
- An appropriate interagency sharing agreement must be approved by both parties prior to sharing
- Contact ideafactory.hq@dhs.gov for more information



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Extra slides/graphics

