

Statewide Data Coordination Initiative

The Statewide Data Coordination Initiative is a collaborative effort of state and local governments to facilitate data coordination in the state of Washington. A group of state and local stakeholders worked together between March and July 2001 to develop a strategic vision for statewide data coordination. This group also developed a short-term action plan for initial implementation of the vision over the 2001-03 biennium.

The Strategic Vision

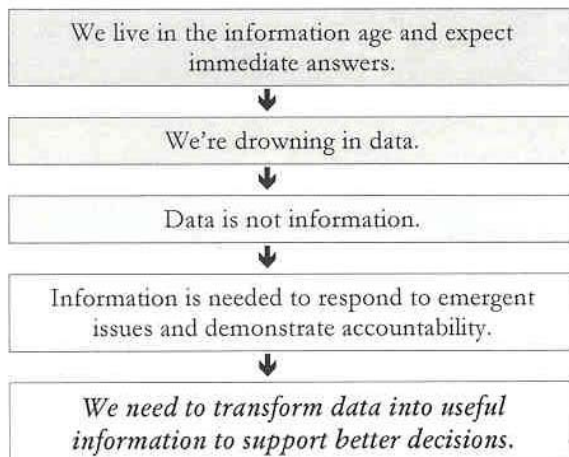
“Better Information for Better Decisions”

State and local governments bringing together information necessary to make decisions and demonstrate governmental accountability.

The Problem

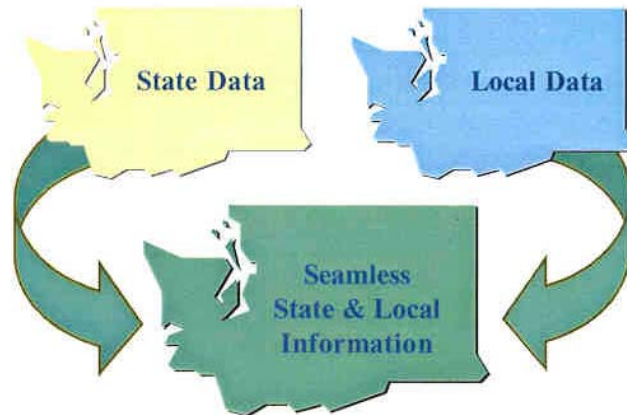
“For top management tasks, information technology so far has been a producer of data rather than a producer of information...” Peter F. Drucker, 1998.

An increasing demand exists for information that supports better decision making and demonstrates governmental accountability. 125 state agencies, 39 counties, 280 cities and towns, and thousands of special purpose districts and non-profits collect data on services provided to the citizens of Washington State. Although the data may be useful within an individual jurisdiction or agency, it is not consistent and comparable statewide. Therefore, necessary information on statewide governmental services is often difficult, if not impossible, to provide.



The Solution

Create a central resource that helps state and local governments collaboratively transform data into relevant and seamless statewide information.



“When people want to interact with government, they don't know all the different divisions, forms, and layers. They don't know that something is the responsibility of a city, county or state, [or] hybrid forms of government.”

Governor Locke,
Government Technology Magazine; July 2001

The Statewide Data Coordination Initiative proposes the development of a state and local consortium that supports and facilitates ongoing statewide data coordination by:

- Removing Barriers:** identify and resolve barriers to data coordination;
- Comparing Apples:** promote collection of comparable state and local data;
- Seamless Views:** facilitate new ways for viewing results of statewide government services;
- Promoting Accessibility:** provide easy access to information that supports analysis and decision making;
- Providing a Tool Box:** develop guidelines, tools, and a model framework that add value to data coordination efforts; and
- Building on Lessons Learned:** share best practices and leverage resources.

Key Benefits

The Statewide Data Coordination Initiative will enable state and local governments to:

- Respond to emerging information needs;
- Improve data consistency and timeliness;
- Demonstrate governmental accountability;
- Enhance citizen understanding of government spending and services; and
- Increase efficiencies by reducing duplication in data collection and reporting methods.

Critical Success Factors

Elements needed to achieve the strategic vision:

- Attract willing and voluntary participation of stakeholders
- Get “Big Time Buy-In”
- Balance benefits and burdens (e.g., cost) of data coordination
- Be flexible and responsive to data coordination opportunities
- Keep long-term vision fresh

Timing is Everything

Now is a good time to coordinate because:

Need

- Government leaders and the public are not content with fragmented information
- Emerging issues require data coordination, such as transportation and salmon restoration

Climate

- State and local governments are open to data coordination
- During a time of constrained resources, data coordination offers the potential for doing more with less

Technology

- The technology is available to support data coordination and improve accessibility to information

REALIZING THE VISION ... Setting the Stage

Short-Term Objectives

Over the next two years, the Statewide Data Coordination Initiative will set the stage for successful ongoing statewide data coordination:

- Create the Statewide Data Coordination Consortium to serve as a central resource for data coordination initiatives
- Identify short-term initiatives that need assistance with data coordination (proof of concept)
- Develop the tools needed to support the short-term initiatives

Potential Data Coordination Initiatives

Data coordination can provide information needed to answer questions of statewide significance in many subject areas, including debt reporting; law and justice; mental health; salmon recovery; transportation; and watershed projects.

The area of transportation offers a rich opportunity for data coordination. As its initial pilot, the Consortium could assist state and local transportation stakeholders.

Key Action Items

- attain buy-in from stakeholders
- sign 2001-03 Statement of Intent
- establish statement of work
- designate Consortium Coordinator
- develop model framework, guidelines, and communication mechanism to support data coordination
- prioritize and gain consensus on proposed short-term initiatives
- determine best supportive role for Consortium

Short-Term Outcomes

- *Broader Participation* More data stakeholders will be drawn to the coordination table.
- *Thirst for More* Decision-makers will see the benefits of data coordination, and will ensure resources are allocated for ongoing data coordination efforts.
- *Foundation for Success* Through lessons learned, the Consortium will develop best practices to support data coordination efforts in the future.