Department of Commerce Strategic Plan 2014-2018
Summary of Section 4: DATA

Strategic Goal 4: Improve government, business, and community decisions and knowledge by transforming Department data capabilities and supporting a data-enabled economy.

> "While remaining ever vigilant to protect data confidentiality, personal privacy, and national economic security interests, the Department will unleash its potential to:
> - Maximize the value of Commerce data to governments, businesses, and communities;
> - Make data easier to find, access and use;
> - Partner with other government agencies and the private sector to improve interoperability and dissemination;
> - Collect and manage data more efficiently and less intrusively; and
> - Spark innovation and fuel entrepreneurship with open dialogue and integrated feedback."

Strategic objective 4.1:

Transform the Department's data capacity to enhance the value, accessibility and usability of Commerce data for government, business and the public.

Challenges:
- capacity to analyze and disseminate the magnitude of data is significantly constrained
- differing standards, methodologies, operations, infrastructures, websites, architecture, platforms, and formats that make it difficult to access, find, use, and combine data sets

Key Strategies:
- Increase capacity to make data accessible, discoverable and usable by public (NIST, NOAA)
- Public private partnerships towards intelligently positioning data in the cloud, to be co-located with easy affordable access to computing, storage and advanced analytical capabilities
- Drive the development of Big Data standards and measurement science (ESA, NIST)
- Drive advancements in standards by forming communities of interest from industry, academia, government, and other standards bodies, with the goal of developing consensus definitions, taxonomies, secure reference architectures, and a technology roadmap
    - Establish data interoperability across the Department and expand open data access (ESA, NIST, NTIS)
- Use a standards-based approach to develop and interoperable data infrastructure. This will be developed in a close collaboration between the public and private sectors.
- NTIS will serve both as convener and enabler and provide a shared governance framework for agencies to collaborate
- Make Commerce data easier to access, use, download and combine through a *Find It - Connect It* service (ESA, NTIS)

- The Department will format its data in a manner that can be queried from any of a number of different perspectives through the creation of a common system: Find It - Connect It. This service will guide users to interoperable data sets with built-in intelligence to achieve this
- To develop the new service, the Department will host engagement events and forums, obtaining stakeholder input on how best to structure the Find It - Connect It capability

Strategic Objective 4.2
Improve data based services, decision-making and data sharing within the Department and with other parts of the federal government

Aims:
- Re-engineer current ways of doing business and re-evaluate the utility of the data the Department collects and its use to inform decisions both within the department and in other federal agencies
- Design the 2020 Census to be as cost-efficient as possible
- make better use of existing data, by combining data from different agencies to create more useful data products, and enabling data sharing across agencies

Key Strategies:
- Improve the use of existing federal databases to help analyze business assistance and economic growth programs throughout the government (BIS, ESA, ITA, MBDA)
- Execute high profile statistical data programs (incl. 2020 Census) well (ESA)
- Increase data sharing among federal agencies and reduce the public's burden of providing information (ESA)
- Current law prohibits sharing data among the Census Bureau, BEA, and BLS. Enactment of a legislative amendment to Title 26 would allow more data sharing and reduce cost and enhance data quality without sacrificing confidentiality

Strategic Objective 4.3
Collaborate with the business community to provide more timely, accurate, and relevant data products and services for customers

"By partnering with the business community and the private sector at large, the Department will generate new data products helping to grow current businesses and catalyze the development of new businesses. Through outreach to the business community and users, the Department will measure customer demand and determine what new data products to produce.

Generating these new products will be done in one of three ways, depending on the nature of what is needed:

  (1) Using in-house, traditional means and methods to produce new data products;
  (2) Partnering with the private sector to couple its data with government data; or
  (3) Providing government data in ways that are more useful to businesses and others so they can more easily combine it with their own private data resources.

Business customers will be the first beneficiaries of this process, but the 90,000 governmental entities and nearly 320 million Americans the Department serves will also benefit from the new data products and services that are fueled by these efforts."

Key Strategies:

- Foster the growth of private sector weather, water, and climate information and service-providers (NOAA)
    - Although the federal government provides considerable environmental information services, there is demand for even more information—information parsed in ways beyond the government's current capability. A vibrant private sector industry is poised to fill this gap
    - The Department can accelerate the development of this industry by providing sustained and reliable information and expand partnerships with private sector and other enterprise partners to encourage the development and marketing of enhanced products and services
- Explore combining of federal and private-sector data- sets to strengthen decision-making (ESA)
    - The Department will explore, research and test the extent to which government and private sector data can be shared and the economic potential such sharing represents
    - Challenges: sharing practices, legal impediments, desired levels of transparency, impact of burden associated with providing the information
- Continually revisit and revise the Department's data products to meet changing needs (ESA)
    - It will continually reassess the way in which its data can add value to the public and to the economy
    - The Department will establish an interdisciplinary team, focused on evaluating whether data collection, storage, and dissemination efforts are appropriately aligned with private-sector changes. Based on customer feedback, the Department will re-evaluate its data products and develop new data products to better meet customer needs and maximize the value of the data it collects and distributes