



Architecting for unpredictability: Interactive Data

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Interactive data (often referred to as “Open Data”) simply means making data available in a standard, consumable way for others to use. Interactive data enables transparency by making data that can be shared, often free of charge, and has few restrictions on its use.

Federal, state and local governments spend a lot of time and money integrating financial and performance systems to help make decisions and improve accountability. However, data today is largely in incompatible formats, in various applications and databases not standard or easily consumed. Governments need steps like data feeds, spreadsheets, dual-entry, manual analysis and paper report assembly to make use of the data.

One key to unlocking data is to give it structure, which simply means that it has a high degree of organization such that it can be readily and easily searched and consumed across a broad range of systems. It is a consumer driven rather than system driven way to manage and use data. This increases the breadth, depth and timeliness of information available for government managers, and does so in a cost effective manner.

Better Government Through Interactive Data

What is Interactive Data?

Interactive data is data that has been digitally 'tagged', giving it a structure and context, much like a bar code defines the attributes of a specific product. Digital 'tags' enable data to be shared without the need for integrated systems. It doesn't change the data; it simply adds structure, so a variety of users can use it to meet their own information needs. Interactive data makes it easier and cheaper to use data for whatever the need.

Architecting for Unpredictability

	Current Data	Interactive Data
Focus	Producer	User
Medium	Paper	Internet
Format	Proprietary/Custom	Standardized
Frequency	Periodic	Real-time
Indicators	Statements	Various Metrics
Data Emphasis	Historical	Forward Looking
Validation	Audit Accounts	Assure Processes
Environment	Static	Agile

PSP-041-PS Data Transparency_001a

Characteristics of Interactive Data

- Enter data once, use many times
- Enabled by common data definitions (called taxonomies)
- System agnostic – empowers users regardless of source systems
- Retains source context as it is processed across different systems

How Can Interactive Data Work in Federal Financial Management?

Interactive Data can improve the efficiency of financial management and reporting:

- *Account Reconciliations* – Users can link data from various sources to reconcile in real time rather than data pushed to them to be reconciled.
- *Data Validation* – Interactive Data enables validation of the data at the source rather than by the user. Data isn't pushing back and forth. It allows users to spend more timely performing analytics with 'structured' data.
- *Straight Through Reporting* – Interactive data minimizes conversion and manipulation of the data through the reporting process, reducing the time and effort currently needed to compile reports and financial statements.
- *Reduce Cost* – Manual work-arounds and manipulation of the data is no longer needed; less time and resource intensive for basic accounting needs.
- *Analytics* – Create an open, scalable financial management analytical platform that could be accessed and consumed by any user.

How PwC Can Help

Our clients look to PwC as a leader in providing advisory services. PwC delivers advisory services that support the government's move toward a more citizen-centric, performance-based delivery model. As the federal government strives to meet the demands of the nation's citizens, changes are required in developing and supporting department-wide strategies, managing risk and compliance, and harnessing business intelligence and analytical capabilities. Our advisory professionals bring direct hands-on knowledge of federal standards for systems, internal controls and financial reporting. PwC assists clients through:

- Creating Interactive Data at your agency
- Creating agile reporting framework using Interactive Data to meet known and future information needs
- Identifying and implementing improvements to data/information supply chain to enable more agile/flexible processing environment
- Helping to socialize Interactive Data and make the change "stick"

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