



Taking the Indiana Transparency Portal to the Next Level

Empowering government transparency through data – Phase 1

Category: Data Management, Analytics & Visualization

State: Indiana

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Project Initiation & End Dates: 2017 to June 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2018, the Indiana Auditor of State's Office (AOS) debuted the upgraded Indiana Transparency Portal (ITP), which was in need of a revamp after first launching in 2010. AOS partnered with the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH) to utilize cutting edge data analytics processes and tools to ensure that the upgraded portal brings better visibility, openness and accountability to Indiana State Government.

MPH, in partnership with AOS and the Indiana Office of Technology, is able to complete all three phases of the ITP upgrade for \$600,000 plus a \$23,000 annual maintenance cost. Vendor costs for a similar project for a nearby state is \$1.35 million for implementation plus \$500,000 annually in maintenance costs. In addition, the ITP is customized for the State of Indiana's needs and takes feedback from multiple focus groups into the design consideration. Needed adjustments are accomplished more quickly and with the state's needs in mind instead of adjusting expectations to an out-of-the-box solution. Implementation was streamlined thanks to MPH's legal and technical framework that allows for data's value to be realized and utilized quickly and accurately.

The screenshot displays the Indiana Transparency Portal homepage. At the top left is the logo for the Indiana Transparency Portal, which consists of three vertical bars of increasing height. To the right of the logo, the text reads: "INDIANA TRANSPARENCY PORTAL" and "ITP is an online solution designed to bring better visibility, openness and accountability to Indiana State Government. The ITP contains information ranging from agency budgets to state contracts and agency performance measures. We strive to utilize your tax dollars as efficiently and effectively as possible and we look forward to sharing this information with you."

Below the header is a row of six dark green cards, each representing a different category of information:

- ASSETS**: Learn more about real properties, computers, vehicles, and other assets owned by the State of Indiana. [Learn More](#)
- CONTRACTS**: Find contracts entered into by state agencies and offices. [Learn More](#)
- EMPLOYEES**: Find information about state employment and state employee salaries. [Learn More](#)
- FINANCES**: Learn about expenditures, State Reserves, and liabilities. [Learn More](#)
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT**: Find financial information about local units of government and school corporations. [Learn More](#)
- VENDORS**: Find information on companies and individuals who do business with the State of Indiana. [Learn More](#)

At the bottom of the page are three dark green sections:

- FAQS AND AGENCY CONTACTS**: Find definitions and information about the ITP and agency contacts. [Learn more about ITP](#)
- VISIT THE INDIANA DATA HUB**: Browse and download the State of Indiana's publicly-available datasets to gain insight into current data trends around the state. [Visit the Indiana Data Hub](#)
- OTHER RESOURCES**: Find a listing of agencies that provide information for the Indiana Transparency Portal. [Learn More](#)

NARRATIVE

In June 2018, after months of planning and development, the new Indiana Transparency Portal (ITP) debuted, providing improved access and a user-friendly interface for visitors to easily find information about the state's finances. The ITP is an online solution designed to bring better visibility, openness and accountability to Indiana State Government.

Originally developed in 2010, planning for ITP upgrades began in late 2017 with key stakeholder focus groups to determine user needs and preferences. Multiple agencies have contributed to the success of the transformation.

"I know how frustrating it can be when you can't find the information you are looking for," said State Auditor Tera Klutz. "We have created a site that is interactive and offers more detailed information at a glance about our state finances without having to sort through thousands of lines of data on a spreadsheet. If you still can't find what you are looking for, I have a designated team who can help you find it."

The previous site offered static graphics and searchable fields, but it was left to the user to aggregate the information and manually combine spreadsheets to compare certain data. Enhancements to the site are designed to assist the user by offering summaries of information in Tableau-powered dashboards that give agency snapshots of vendor payments, funding sources, travel and purchase card transactions and many other categories. MPH played a key role in harnessing data from multiple repositories and identifying and implementing the latest in data analysis technology to transform the ITP.

Information available on the ITP includes:

- Non-General Fund Revenue with various views including by Funding Source and by Function of Government
- Monthly General Fund Revenue, which data previously had been aggregated annually
- Trending views available across the site by year, quarter and month
- New and expanded data within Total Expenditures
- Personal services

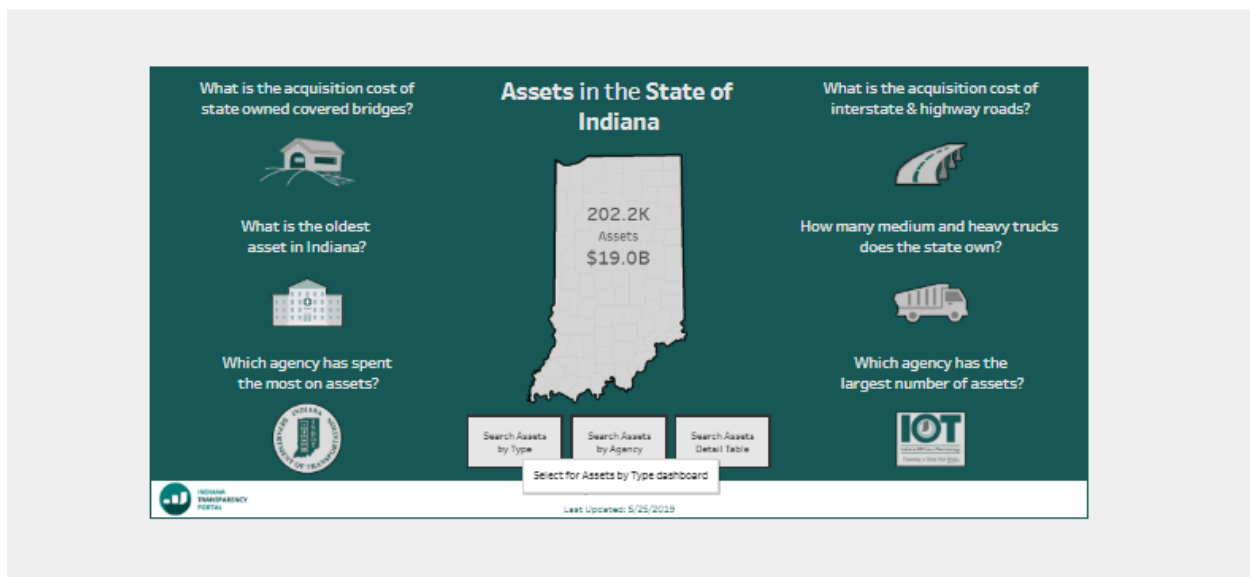
- Amount paid to vendors statewide and by agency
- Agency to agency transfers
- Purchase card and travel card expenses summarized by agency and expense category

“I can always talk about the importance of financial transparency, and I am excited to provide the data in a meaningful and relevant way,” said Klutz.

ASSETS

The Assets dashboard provides detail on state assets with an acquisition cost at or above \$500. The dashboard allows viewing by agency, asset type, cost or count.

To enhance the website experience all of the data is available for downloading through the state's Data Hub. Please go [here](#) to retrieve the full data sets of information.



By utilizing the Indiana Management Performance Hub (MPH) for expertise, development and implementation, the state is able to complete all three phases of the project for \$600,000 with \$23,000 in annual maintenance costs. A nearby state recently used vendors to complete a similar project, with the cost being \$1.35 million plus \$500,000 in annual maintenance costs.

Phase two of the project, which focuses on distributions to local government, fund balances and better defined expense categories, is underway now. Upgrades to how employee compensation, grants and contracts are displayed are the focus of phase three.

What sets MPH apart from other government initiatives - and allows it to complete large projects quickly and cost-effectively – is its laser-focus on creating a scalable, sustainable

framework that allows for data's value to be realized and utilized quickly and accurately. Legal and technical efficiencies are key to accelerating delivery of data driven insights.

Data delivery must occur in a secure and uniform manner, but the technical details consume resources and delay the business benefits associated with an instance of sharing. To address this, MPH focuses on foundational work that allows for a consistent, efficient process to share data and glean insight in an easy-to-understand format. This is the foundation for the ITP and all other projects. Lilly Endowment, a private philanthropic foundation created by members of the Lilly family in 1937 through stock in Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals, provided a \$1.025 million grant to support and allow for higher quality and more efficient external data sharing. This work includes data re-architecture including:

Metadata: This is the data that summarizes basic information about data, making finding and working with particular instances of data easier. MPH is creating a comprehensive repository for metadata to allow for a consistent presentation of institutional memory for any data point. This maintains a clean data environment, provides contextual information and saves discovery time for data users.

Data Quality: Through profiling, validation and quality rules, MPH ensures that data issues are recognized and addressed as they arise. Profiling assesses data quality as it is ingested into the system. Validation provides a quality check after the transfer. Quality rules ensure that logical issues (duplications, missing data, etc.) are identified. By doing this, it increases the credibility and usability of datasets while providing checkpoints along the way to make sure data integrity is maintained.

Record Linkage: MPH's new record linkage tool consolidates matching in a single code base and location to link datasets across state business divisions. This provides a holistic view of an issue by aligning different fields for common entities. For example, educational information from one state agency to opioid datasets from another agency to provide social context around different challenges. In the case of ITP, many datasets were linked to provide next level insight into state financials and operations. By creating one pathway, various agencies and organizations can quickly gather on the path to see exponentially greater value from the shared data.

Anonymization: Establishing a consistent process for how data is anonymized, or eliminating paths for re-identification, allows for automation and uniformity. It also better protects the privacy of Hoosiers while still allowing subject matter experts to identify solutions through data usage.

Legal efficiencies center on standardized data sharing agreements (DSA). In the last year, MPH as standardized DSAs among state agencies and external partners to increase the ease and efficiency of collaborative data sharing efforts like the ITP. This replaces the need for negotiated agreements, which consume valuable resources and delay the business benefits of collaboration. More than 15 State of Indiana agencies and 25 external partners have entered into DSAs.

While the ITP provides comprehensive, easy-to use visualizations for financial transparency overviews, some users want to dig deeper into the data. The datasets feeding the ITP are available for download on the Indiana Data Hub (Hub). Maintained by MPH, the Hub is the home for actionable data covering a variety of subject matter areas within Indiana State Government. This data is housed securely, de-identified and published in a manner that promotes analysis, collaboration and innovation. Aside from Government Transparency, additional topics on the Hub include Healthcare, Public Safety, Education/Workforce and Demographics.

IMPACT

The impact of the updated ITP is wide-reaching. The site emphasizes the State of Indiana's focus on transparency and being accountable to tax payers. Legislators and agency personnel are frequent visitors to the site, which shows that key staff are using the information as part of their daily responsibilities. The ease of access and searchability is cutting down the need for meetings, calls and emails previously needed to obtain similar data. Media is also using this information to supplement stories about the State of Indiana. Published feedback includes:

"Its greatest strength is the window it opens to the business of Indiana government. Hoosiers benefit when state government operates in full transparency. Klutz's efforts to expand public access should be replicated across state government." — *The (Fort Wayne) Journal Gazette*

"The updated website takes data that previously was silo-ed by agency or record type and now displays it on a series of "dashboards" that allow for rapid comparisons, with the option to access more specific records." – Daniel Carden, *NWI Times*

"I believe that state agencies and legislators will probably use this data and this site more than anybody else because they're going to need it to do their job." - State Auditor Tera Klutz

While increased access to transparency and the ease of finding information are the key benefits of the ITP, one must not overlook the benefit to implementing this project in-house. Similar projects have cost states \$3.35 million over five years when considering implementation and annual maintenance costs. MPH's cost for all three phases of the ITP upgrade is less than \$700,000. This is a \$2.65 million savings to tax payers that can be used to support state operations elsewhere.