A NEW STANDARD:

ACHIEVING DATA EXCELLENCE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
WHAT’S CHANGED SINCE 2002?

Big data:
- Growing number of sources
- Potential to add $5 trillion to global economy
- Includes detailed records that can be mined for trends

Open data:
- Governments opening up, and digitizing data
- “Spatialization” of data
- Improves efficiency of services, encourages better decision making

Mobile data:
- Data today are electronic
- Almost all requests for data are electronic
- Rise of apps
METHODOLOGY

EDO survey:
- 5,000 members
- Mailing list of over 25,000 non-members
  - 156 responses in two weeks

Data Consumers Survey:
- Questionnaire sent to Site Selectors Guild and Industrial Asset Management Council
  - 60 responses in two weeks

Web scan:
- 100 websites of EDOs

In-depth interviews

Big Shout-out to:
Site Selectors Guild
and
Industrial Asset Management Council!
DATA TELL THE STORY OF YOUR COMMUNITY, BUT

Data may be:
- Coarse
- Granular
- Out of date

Data may not:
- Be specific enough
- Reflect real conditions

EDOs Frustrations

In general, data are not:

- Standardized across sources
- Consistent between sources
- Scaled to match local geography
- Up-to-date
- Easy to access
- Detailed enough
- Easy to comprehend
- Comparable with other jurisdictions
- Well organized
- Attractively presented

% of economic developers agreeing

- EDOs with less data capability
- EDOs with greater data capability
PROBLEMS WITH DATA

Geographic mismatch
Data mismatch
Datedness
Lack of representation
Sampling issues
Can affect funding

“The reports that these services turn out are only as good as the data that makes them.”
- Page 2, A New Standard: Achieving Data Excellence in Economic Development
EDOS AND DATA

Data can be used to:

- Strategically plan
- Measure performance
- Market a community
- Assist in business decisions

How does your organization address data that potentially present your community in an unfavorable light?
HOW TO IMPROVE CREDIBILITY AND MARKETING

Data can be used to:

- Presenting data that is as comprehensive as possible (even where unfavorable)
- Supplementing local data with relevant comparisons/benchmarks
- Providing narrative context for data where it is difficult or unclear
- Maintaining data that is up-to-date
- Listing sources
- Highlighting use of objective third-party verification
- Explaining methodology, assumptions, and other pertinent decisions
- Supporting and adopting open data initiatives that simultaneously protect client confidentiality
WHERE EDOS ACCESS DATA

Federal Source
- Census
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Other Federal Sources

State Data Sources
Local Data Sources
Other:
- Utilities
- Colleges and Universities
- Real Estate Boards

Proprietary Private Sector Data Sources
In-House Data Collection

There seems to be less value to end users in EDOs re-packaging public data—which site selectors can find on their own-- and more in EDOs assessing their own communities for indicators and packaging it well. This both corrects and augments the story that public sources of data tell about communities.

– Julie Engel, CEO & President, Greater Yuma Economic Development
MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF DATA FOR EDOS

- Federal government
- Local government
- State government
- Paid software
- Utilities
- Higher education
- In-house collection
- Local real estate boards
- School districts
- Libraries
- International organizations

% of economic developers agreeing

- Critical
- Somewhat Important
OTHER DATA USERS

Corporate Users
- In-House Corporate Real Estate Professionals
- Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs

Other Data Users
- Governments
- Non-profits and Educational Institutions
- Workers
Most important factors in business location decisions

Available buildings and sites
Infrastructure and utilities
Workforce characteristics
Wages
Labor market
Labor regulations
Taxes and incentives
Demographics
Higher education
Quality of life

Critical data points sought from EDOs

- Labor regulation
- Employment by industry
- Taxes and incentives
- Business revenues
- Building regulation
- Employers
- Demographics
- Higher education
- Natural disasters

% of data consumers agreeing

- Usually seek from EDOs
- Critical to location decisions
“EDOs are expected to be able to work with data. EDOs who invest in their research and economic capacity can provide a much greater value-add to site selectors and business planners. For EDOs that know how to use data and communicate it, the future is a very bright place.”

-Paul Jacob, Economist and Policy Analyst, The Halifax Partnership
SPOTLIGHT ON WORKFORCE

- 65% of demand-side users report that this information is critical or very important to site location decisions.
- Only 32% of EDOs can reliably provide this information, according to data consumers.
- More than 60% of EDOs put information about educational attainment online; slightly fewer posted other workforce demographics.

Today, there is a much higher significance placed on workforce data at the sub-regional level. This can be challenging to obtain as many federal sources only report down to a metro or county level for specific occupational codes and industries.

-Local EDO, Arizona

In the future, there will be even more need for multifaceted and granular workforce data.

-Andreas Dressler, Terrain Consulting, Berlin, Germany
PRESENTING DATA TO VARIOUS AUDIENCES

Corporate Data Needs by industry
- Production industry
- Healthcare
- Finance, insurance, and real estate
- Primary resources
- Software and information technology

Corporate Needs by Function
- Management functions
- Research and development
- Warehousing, distribution, and logistics
- Data centers
MANAGING DATA

Small EDOs and Large EDOs Display Different Data

- Smaller jurisdictions are much likelier than their larger counterparts to post information on the cost of housing, workforce demographics, zoning, and utility rates online.
- Larger jurisdictions are more likely to post sector-specific (including target industry-specific) information, such as wages.
- Larger jurisdictions are also more likely to be using display software, offer downloadable reports, and other such improvements.

Most important for consumers:

- Direct correspondence
- Formal requests
PRESENTING DATA

Most important for EDOs:
- Websites
- Site visits

Highly important for consumers:
- Direct correspondence
- Formal requests

Importance of media channels

- Site visits
- Websites
- Calls and e-mails
- Requests for information
- Customized reports
- Reports
- Advertising

% of respondents ranking first, second, or third in importance

- Economic developers
- Data users
APPENDIX A

Appendix A lists 69 sources for EDOs
- 21 are federal
- 58 are private
  - Of them, 27 are IEDC members
IN CONCLUSION

How does an EDO make sure their data is up to the new standard? By constant monitoring, ongoing collection, and excellent packaging, combined with a service mentality toward end users.

- Page 45 A New Standard: Achieving Data Excellence in Economic Development
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Link to EDRP Papers

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