



Data Analytics for Government Oversight

Midwestern Intergovernmental Audit Forum
September 12, 2013



Overview

- Importance of data analytics in government oversight
 - Overview of the Joint Forum on Data Analytics
 - Challenges and opportunities in using data analytics
 - Government Data Sharing Community of Practice
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Importance of data analytics in government oversight

Data analytics involve a variety of techniques to analyze and interpret data and can help identify and reduce fraud, waste, and abuse.

- Predictive analytic technologies can identify fraud and errors before payments are made.
- Data mining and data-matching techniques can identify fraud or improper payments that have already been awarded, thus assisting agencies in recovering these dollars.



Importance of data analytics in government oversight, continued

Data analytics can be used to address:

- Stewardship of government resources such as improper payments
- Outcomes of government programs and program performance
- Manage the challenges facing government, including leveraging collections of data to identify and eliminate system abuses

The accountability community is essential to addressing these issues and to providing fact-based information to decision makers.



Joint Forum on Data Analytics

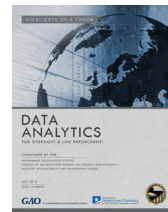
- Convened in January 2013 by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE), and the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board.
- Explored ways in which oversight and law enforcement agencies use data analytics and share information to assist in the detection and prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse.



Challenges and opportunities in using data analytics

Accessing and using data

- Lack of awareness of data sources that may be able to assist agencies in their missions
- Program offices lack incentives to design systems useful for oversight because of differences in missions
- Measuring results and prioritizing resources is difficult





Challenges and opportunities in using data analytics , continued

Sharing data

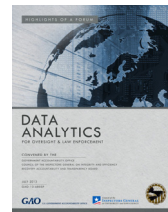
- Legal constraints and balancing data transparency with privacy
- Technological challenges such as varying standards make interpreting and using others' data difficult
- Intergovernmental challenges, such as costly access of certain federal data and perceptions that sharing is a “one-way street”



Challenges and opportunities in using data analytics , continued

Opportunities identified at the forum to enhance analytics efforts:

- Attracting and retaining knowledgeable and skilled staff
- Garnering organizational support by demonstrating value and building credibility





Government Data Sharing Community of Practice

Forum co-hosts agreed to implement several next steps identified by participants to further address analytics challenges

- GAO will develop an ongoing community of practice focused on data-sharing challenges
- To join the Community of Practice and receive information about upcoming events:
 - GovernmentDataShare@gao.gov



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GAO on the Web

Web site: <http://www.gao.gov/>

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