



Groups Launch Project in Search of the Government's Most Wanted Documents

Washington, D.C. -- The Center for Democracy & Technology and OpenTheGovernment.org today announced the launch of Show Us The Data: The Most Wanted Government Documents, a project aimed at identifying vital government information and encouraging the federal government to put it within easy reach of the public. This project will lead to a report, recommending documents and data that the federal government should make easier to find and use. The project's launch follows up on a directive from President Obama to federal agencies to proactively make information available to the public. The goal is to identify the documents and databases the public most wants to be made publicly available in usable formats. The items can be information known or thought to be in the federal government's possession, or information that the federal government should be collecting or generating.

"In light of the recent public dialog about the importance of transparency, we think this year's Most Wanted Project a great opportunity for identifying specific areas where action meets theory," said Ari Schwartz, vice president of the Center for Democracy & Technology.

In a world of mash-ups and third party websites creating innovative products drawn from open and accessible information, the federal government must add data that is open and interoperable to that diverse pool of information. With the direct support of the White House, now is the time to figure out what information citizens want to find, access, and use from federal government sources that cannot get to right now.

"We think this survey gives the public a chance to talk directly to the new Administration and Congress and tell them, specifically, what types of information they want access to, how they want it and when," said Patrice McDermott, director of OpenTheGovernment.org.

Citizens and the public access community are asked to help identify:

- information created and/or collected by the federal government that should be accessible to the public at no fee, but currently is not;
- information created and/or collected by the federal government that is accessible to the public but is not available in a no-fee electronic form that is easy to find, search, or use;
- useful public information that is not collected and/or created by the government, but that should be and disseminated in a no-fee electronic form that is easy to find, search, or use.
- information and unclassified documents or data that are produced using taxpayer funds, but are not available to the public

This work will update and expand previous reports published by OMB Watch, the Center for Democracy & Technology, and OpenTheGovernment.org:

- 10 Most Wanted Government Documents
<http://www.cdt.org/righttoknow/10mostwanted/>
- 10 Most Wanted Documents for 2004
http://openthegovernment.org/otg/ten_most_wanted.pdf
- Hiding in Plain Sight: Why Important Government Information Cannot Be Found Through Commercial Search Engines
<http://cdt.org/righttoknow/search/>

Please visit www.showusthedata.org for more information and to cast a vote.

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