

The Program Office has performance data at their fingertips...

“[The electronic data collection system] is going to simplify things immensely.”

OCS Program Specialist

The online forms standardize responses and streamline data entry for grantees...

“This will make filling out the Performance Progress Report much easier.”

Comment from an end user

Enhancing Performance Management

Electronic Data Collection

Since 2002, the Office of Community Services (OCS) has funded capacity building programs that provide training, technical assistance, and financial assistance to faith-based and community organizations. These organizations report a wide range of data to OCS, making it a challenge to assess performance in a uniform way. The program needed a solution that would increase access to information and increase speed in collecting data and reporting outcomes to Congress.

In response to this need, Dare Mighty Things designed and implemented a custom electronic data collection system that gathers information on each organization's activities, outputs, and outcomes. The information is stored in a database where the program staff can access it anytime to monitor and analyze results for individual organizations or across the entire program.

Key Issues

- Grantees report a wide range of data, making it a challenge to aggregate information across grantees and create uniform methods for assessing performance.
- The program experiences significant lag time of up to a year between completion of activities and realization of outcomes and when the data is available to analyze and report to Congress.

The Solution

- Grantees provide data on activities, outputs, and outcomes in a web-based reporting system.
- Program office staff, in consultation with Dare Mighty Things, review individual reports for accuracy and completeness, and then, using an automated tool, import the information into a database.
- As successive reports are submitted, relevant data from previous reports is automatically pre-populated in the web-based reporting system.

Innovations

Consolidating data entry tasks reduce a six to nine month process to weeks, or even days, making data available for analysis in less time.

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Data entry efficiencies, such as automatic report population, reduce errors and improve accuracy.

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Web-based reporting and automated data importing result in more timely analysis and performance assessment.

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Changes in reported activities, outputs, and outcomes are automatically highlighted, providing greater transparency on progress toward targets and goals.
