ANALYZE THIS

State government runs on data but bad data is getting in the way.

What’s the Major Cause of Data Problems? In a Governing survey, state officials and managers cited technology as a big issue, but it’s hardly the only one.

Black Box Problems That Analytics Cannot Solve

| Lack of visibility of what goes in and what comes out | Data has to be undocumented changes | Proliferation of disconnected spreadsheets | Environments that experience low data quality
|
|---|---|---|---|
| 5% | 31% | 15% | 20%

Which agencies have the best data?

Agencies that require reporting to the federal government tend to have more reliable information.

- 9% said local governments or political subdivisions
- 9% said education
- 6% said occupational oversight or licensing boards
- 24% said human services or social services
- 11% said economic development
- 11% said Medicaid or health
- 6% said revenue
- 6% said labor or labor-related agencies like workforce commissions

Which agencies have the biggest problems with data?

Social services seem to present a particular challenge.

- 18% said data inaccuracy
- 12% said missing data
- 12% said incomplete or inadequate data
- 9% said accessing or finding data
- 7% said a lack of data comparability
- 6% said data that lacks integrity or is unreliable, unverifiable, or lacking in documentation
- 6% said data that is unused, unusable or lacking in purpose
- 4% said siloed data

What are the top data problems?

“Bad data” can mean a lot of different things.

- 15% said data inconsistency
- 15% said they encountered data quality issues often
- 31% said they encountered data quality issues sometimes
- 54% said they encountered data quality issues frequently
- 0% said they encountered data quality issues rarely

How bad is the bad data problem?

7 in 10 officials say bad data is an impediment to doing the public’s business.

Ways to Fix the Bad Data Problem

- 3% Putting a strategy in place to collect, manage, and use data effectively
- 3% Putting people on point for data integrity, attracting data scientists
- 3% Putting controls in place to prevent errors and loss – including training
- 3% Putting an emphasis on the “I” in IT in modernizing technology
- 3% Lack of visibility of what goes in and what comes out
- 3% Data loss due to undocumented changes
- 3% Proliferation of disconnected spreadsheets
- 3% Environments that prioritize expediency over quality

*Based on Governing’s interviews of more than 70 officials in 46 states conducted between October 2014 and March 2015.

Get the full story at governing.com/BadDataReport

© 2015 e.Republic