Transitioning to Open Government Data: What Are the Trade-Offs?
a federal spending data case study

Becky Sweger

Director of Data and Technology

National Priorities Project

Federal Spending Data: Make Way for the New

Consolidated Federal Funds Report

Select a year (1993 & onward):

2009 (latest data) ▼ Go

Contact us for data before 1993

Related Sites

- Federal Assistance Award Data System
- Federal Aid to States Report [PDF, 916.85KB]

Contact Us
Email us!
Call us: (301) 763-1565

Consolidated Federal Funds Report

— **Latest Consolidated Federal Funds Report 2009** ———

Search national, state and county level data by object area, agency and program code.

- On–Line Query System

- **Viewable Data** – CFFR Publication [PDF, 1.25MB]
- **Downloadable Data** –

  - U.S. and Individual States Combined [ZIP, 4.94MB] – Single file containing dat
  - Individual State Files [ZIP, 5.04MB] – 50 States, territories and D.C. as indivic
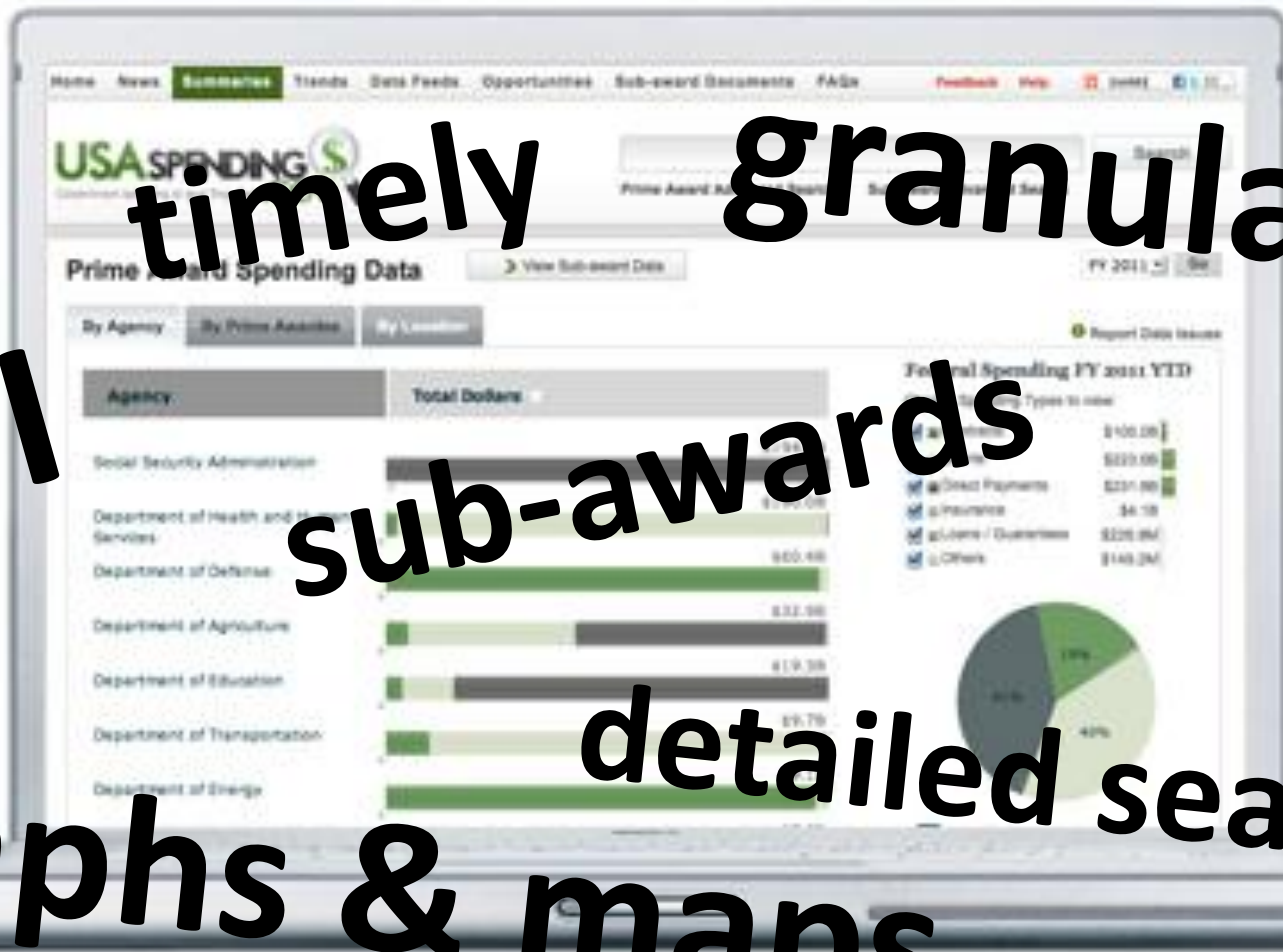
    Select a State ▼ Go

- **Reference Information** –

  - Revisions to Previous Publications [PDF, 390KB]
  - Technical Documentation [PDF, 811KB] – Contains definitions and explanatio
  - Program Identification File [TXT, 246KB] – Contains program identification cod
  - Agency File [TXT, 65KB] – Contains Federal agency identification codes and r

USASpending.gov (FFATA)

USASpending.gov: Shiny

Responsibility Shifts to Consumer

"change in emphasis from providing government information to information consumers to providing information to mediators...While information consumers typically require some analysis and simplification, information mediators can achieve more innovative solutions with the most raw form of government data."

2nd Principle of Open Government Data from *Open Government Data* by Josh Tauberer

Unavoidable Trade-Offs

Unavoidable Trade-Offs

Improvement	Trade-Off
Timeliness	Accuracy
More Data Fields	Simplicity & Usability
Granularity	Single Format
Granularity	Convenient Aggregates

Unfortunate Losses

Unfortunate Losses: Data Sources

CFFR had:

- Federal disability and retirement benefits
- Aggregated salaries
- Earned Income Tax Credit (refundable portion)

Unfortunate Losses: Continuity

Unfortunate Losses: Data Scrubbing

Unfortunate Losses: Support

- USASpending support = no phone number

- CFFR: phone number published on front page

Can We Mitigate Trade-Offs & Losses?

- How can we support data consumers without tech resources?

- What's a good model for promoting dataset literacy and community?

- Can open gov types contribute by filling in some of the gaps?