

Conclusions

Even though each situation is different, based on our experience with the agencies in the Internet Services Testbed Project, we can make the following general observations:

- Developing a WWW service is a multi-year proposition. You should plan for resources to maintain and enhance the service once it is developed. Often, the ongoing investment needed to keep the Web service current is substantial.
- The human resource costs to develop and operate a typical Web site are usually significantly larger than the cost of the technical components.
- In situations where the technical infrastructure is not already present, one-time infrastructure costs may also be large.
- The addition of advanced capabilities such as access to agency databases, search engines, or flexible Web sites usually requires operating the Web site in-house, rather than outsourcing.
- The shift from outsourced to in-house hosting of the site usually means a large increase in costs, especially if technology and skilled personnel are not already available in the agency.
- While defining and estimating the cost measures is typically easier than defining and quantifying performance measures, most groups can do it.
- With some "outcome" measures (e.g. increasing tourism and business relocation), it may be difficult to sort out the effect of the Web service from other factors in the environment.

In summary, even though the World Wide Web and the Internet are relatively new technologies, developing plans to deliver a service should proceed along the same lines as any technology-based project. One method is described in *Developing & Delivering Government Services on the World Wide Web: Recommended Practices for New York State* also of interest is *Making Smart IT Choices: A Handbook*, both published by the Center for Technology in Government. Because the technology can span the whole organization, it is critical to get a development team that includes all the involved parties. Using the method described in this guide and its companion provides a useful framework for making sound investments. We wish you all the be
