

Three Internet Policies

Of the various internet policies that we analyzed for this project, we would like to suggest three that warrant closer examination. These include Minnesota, Ohio, and New York. These policies are not necessarily better than any of the others but do seem to take a broader perspective on the Web and are far more inclusive with regards to the range of issues that providing Web services elicits. URL's are provided below.

The Minnesota site is actually the Information Policy Office of the state and provides a wide range of policies regarding almost anything dealing with information in an electronic world. This site is particularly appealing since it covers such a broad spectrum of issues. Not only are Internet policies and start-up check-lists provided but the entire Internet site seeks to integrate information and service delivery rather than just concentrating on the do's and don'ts of Web services. The policies take the unique approach of identifying data, management standards, and people principles as all being important components in the design of information systems, especially on the Web.

The Ohio site comes through the Computer Services division. The division has established an Internet Advisory Committee. This committee along with the Office of Policy and Planning has issued 11 policies at the time of publication. These policies cover the realm of information and telecommunications services. The Ohio site gives an excellent example of the justification for the continuity of Web site design as well as policies that cover employee rights and responsibilities rather extensively. The Ohio policies represent a very well articulated and incremental approach to information policy concerns.

The New York State Internet Policy, issued in May 1996 by the Governor's Task Force on Information Resource Management, took into account some of the policies reviewed here. It takes a "guiding principles" approach which explains the value of the Internet for government purposes and outlines key statewide policy objectives. It explains why the state has adopted the Internet as a channel for communications and service delivery and outlines the responsibilities that agencies have for using it effectively. It also includes a model agency-level policy for individual departments to adapt to their particular needs. The policy noted that practical guidelines would be issued to help agencies implement these policies in their Web sites. These have now been issued as a separate document entitled ***Developing and Delivering Government Services on the World Wide Web: Recommended Practices for New York State***. The Task Force has also published several other policies regarding other information resource concerns facing New York State.