

The Panelists

Debra Cohn is Deputy Attorney General for Policy for New York State. She has been a Special Counsel to the Deputy Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice, an Assistant United States Attorney for the Civil Division, and a law clerk to Justice Thurgood Marshall. The Attorney General's involvement in information policy is multifold: the office represents state agencies in litigation over information policy issues, such as the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and the Open Records Law; the Criminal Division prosecutes fraudulent activities against the state; and the Public Policy Division examines actions by companies that violate privacy policies.

Alex Roberts is Assistant Director for IT Services at the Division of Criminal Justice Services. He is responsible for systems development, integrity, and security and IT services. The Division of Criminal Justice Services manages information to enable the smooth functioning of criminal justice in New York State. The Division maintains a statewide, automated fingerprint identification system that is tightly integrated with the criminal history database. The Division also processes and coordinates a large volume of background checks on people applying for certain jobs and licenses in the state.

Julie Leeper is an Assistant Deputy Director in the New York State Office for Technology (OFT) for Strategic Policy, Acquisition, and e-Commerce. She is responsible for leading New York's "Government Without Walls" e-government/e-commerce initiative. The Office for Technology is responsible for statewide information technology issues and works with state agencies to develop information services and policies that support the effectiveness, integrity, and security of electronic services.

John Sennett is a Special Agent for the FBI in Albany and has been with the Bureau for 22 years, including assignments in counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism in Cleveland, Washington and New Haven. In addition to his work as an investigator in the field, he provides training in state and local law enforcement and emergency management organizations. One role of the FBI is to detect, deter, and disrupt terrorist elements before they can strike in the U.S. To do this effectively, the FBI must address basic information policy issues, including government data integration, personal identification and privacy.

Ari Schwartz is Associate Director of the Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT) in Washington. He is an expert on privacy and has testified before the Congress on these issues, particularly with respect to the use of the Internet by government agencies. CDT is a non-profit advocacy organization that focuses on bringing communications technology to its full democratic potential. CDT works with industry, government, and public interest groups to defend free expression and open government, and to develop effective privacy and security policies.