

The **Insider's Guide to Using Information in Government** is the main product of three years of research by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG). This material came from our work with teams of people in government who faced and solved problems using the information government collects, creates, and maintains.

This executive briefing provides an overview of the six topics covered in the Web-based **Insider's Guide** and the case stories that illustrate them. Whether you're creating an integrated database, launching a new service project, or evaluating program performance, these six factors will impact your initiative.

**Strategy**—Understanding your program need, negotiating your environment, and evaluating existing infrastructure and culture are parts of strategy.

**Policy**—Information policies guide decisions, rest on democratic principles, and ensure the quality and availability of information.

**Data**—Quality, content, and usefulness are key factors in understanding and dealing with data issues.

**Costs**—Relationships, change, and the degree of data and task integration are often intangible, but substantial, costs to be considered.

**Skills**—Data analysis, project management, technology, and communication skills are all necessary in working with information.

**Technology**—Adopting new technology affects the business of government—from internal work processes to improving customer service.

The **Guide** presents eight real-life case stories that bridge the gap between these six topics and the actual practice of government work. They tell stories about developing new and innovative ways of putting information to use in government, including:

- developing a homeless information management system
- revitalizing a 18-year-old state-wide central accounting system
- implementing new property tax legislation
- streamlining staffing decisions in psychiatric hospitals
- transforming statistical data from print to an updated and easily accessible Web site
- improving the way a multi-billion dollar agency invests in technology
- breaking down information stovepipes with a city-wide knowledge bank
- managing the complexity of communicating with more than 3,000 local governments