How can we efficiently improve financial transparency and accountability?

**YOUR GOAL: Enhance transparency and improve accountability to citizens**

The government is under more pressure than ever to become more transparent, collaborative and participatory – all traits seen as best practices for sound government finances, good governance and overall fiscal integrity. The public is also calling for increased visibility into government decision making, particularly regarding where and how taxpayer dollars are spent – and with what results. In response, government agencies have published more financial reports that give raw facts on nearly every expenditure. Many agencies are even using audits as a way to prove their responsible use of public funds, with much-publicized private sector audit failures fueling laws that tighten financial controls.

However, audited financial statements offer little value to government decision makers or the public. They don’t link financial information with performance measures – because they can’t. Existing information systems aren’t equipped to track funds down to the program and local levels as required by new and evolving legislation, such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. In this new age of transparency and accountability, old ways of making government decisions aren’t sufficient. New analytical capabilities will prove useful for government agencies seeking to improve program performance and fiscal responsibility, but first they must understand exactly what data is needed and then be able to access relevant data that is timely, accurate and reliable.

**OUR APPROACH**

While agencies are beginning to recognize the crucial role that data plays in their success, discovering the value hidden in data continues to be a struggle. Without a clear view of data and its significance, agencies are finding it difficult to boost organizational financial performance and comply with strict regulations. SAS approaches the problem by delivering software and services to help you:

- **Create a single version of the truth** by consolidating data from all relevant sources, cleansing the data and transforming it so that it’s ready for analysis.
- **Gain deeper insight into the long-term economic impact of expenditures and make better, more reliable decisions** with advanced analytic capabilities, including large-scale forecasting and optimization.
- **Clearly communicate the value and results of programs** by developing a performance management system that has meaningful, targeted outcome measures.
- **Provide valuable insights and essential decision-support information to stakeholders and policy makers** by delivering accurate and timely reports on spending and program effectiveness.

In addition, SAS delivers a platform that is engineered to seamlessly deliver data management, reporting and analytics through a single framework that can flexibly grow within and across government organizations.
THE SAS® DIFFERENCE: Greater transparency, accountability and effectiveness

Data analysis with SAS leads to better gauging of program effectiveness as well as increased transparency and accountability. With SAS, you get:

- **Data management.** SAS lets you access, integrate and cleanse both structured and unstructured data from disparate systems, regardless of format or location.
- **Advanced, predictive analytics.** In addition to standard and ad hoc reporting, query drilldown and alerts to help you understand what has happened, SAS delivers predictive modeling to help you create detailed forecasts to address what will happen next if trends continue.
- **Reporting.** SAS provides an accurate, unified view of program performance and project status at all levels of government, giving users the ability to draw conclusions, format presentation-quality results and easily share findings via a single, Web-based reporting interface.
- **Strategy management.** SAS lets you align program performance with goals and track outcomes against spending, as well as manage projects through time lines and alarms, create program and budget forecasts, and engage in scenario planning.

Only SAS gives users access to the right data, the tools to analyze and transform data into meaningful information and the ability to report on that information. The end result is greater transparency, better accountability and increased effectiveness.

**CASE STUDY: A US Federal Agency**

**Situation**

A federal agency responsible for managing the US government’s finances and financial systems must ensure that trillions of dollars in federal money is accounted for by providing balanced budgets to the US Congress and president. The agency needed to consolidate reports from various federal bureaus into a single financial statement to enable quick, easy access to information, painless reporting and greater fiscal accountability.

**Solution**

SAS delivered a financial intelligence solution that provided:

- OLAP functionality paired with a sophisticated warehousing strategy and leading-edge analytical and statistical tools for more advanced analysis.
- Analytical technology for financial forecasting and statistical analysis.
- Web-enabled capabilities to produce reports.

**Results**

- Reports that once took days to produce now take hours.
- The agency can collect, process and report on data in a financial statement that increases accountability and meets the demands of the OMB.
- First clean audit opinion on departmentwide financial statements.

**What if you could ...**

**Establish a single source of updated, auditable data**

What if you could automatically extract, cleanse and transform data from any location and consolidate it into a single version of the truth, complete with audit trails to trace data back to the source?

**Ensure financial transparency and accountability**

What if you could extend control of information horizontally across the agency and vertically between transaction-oriented systems and your higher-level financial management system?

**Improve visibility into program performance**

What if you could cascade information about the performance of current programs and overall strategy easily throughout your organization?

**Streamline consolidation and reporting processes**

What if you could consolidate multidimensional information on demand while performing all financial calculations relevant to the reporting and planning process?

**You can. SAS gives you THE POWER TO KNOW®.**

**SAS FACTS**

- SAS has been in business since 1976 and today has customers at more than 45,000 sites worldwide.
- All 15 major US federal departments rely on the power of SAS software.
- Approximately 85 percent of independent US government agencies and commissions use SAS.

Learn more about SAS software and services for government at: www.sas.com/govedu