

# Executing on the Future of IT

The recommendations provided below are drawn primarily from the findings surfaced during interviews with Federal agency CIOs, conversations with the Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer (OFCIO), and research conducted using government data, reports, and testimony. These findings were analyzed to develop the following overall themes, which form the basis for the subsequent recommendations.

## Themes

### Adopt a Customer-focused Approach

Rather than a top-down model of pushing out new policies to agencies, OFCIO should embrace a model that incorporates agency viewpoints and feedback throughout the entire process, including implementation and oversight. This includes the creation of feedback loops, outreach mechanisms, and prioritizing workforce development.

### Focus on Execution

Many agencies reported significant challenges in meeting the shifting priorities and proliferation of new OMB policies and initiatives. By focusing on executing a more limited number of policies and initiatives, agencies and OMB can improve outcomes. For example, the FITARA Common Baseline is the first step in a much longer process to improve the management of government IT. Moving forward, OMB should work with agencies to not just fully implement the Common Baseline, but to set evolving standards for improving agencies' IT management, budgeting, acquisition, and workforce.

### Orient Around Outcomes

Government-wide policies and initiatives often set implementation targets that do not always align with agency operations and mission. This can lead to inconsistencies in data reported on key performance indicators. An outcome-oriented focus on measuring performance would drive higher quality reporting and could provide more insight into policy areas such as open government and open data.

### Act as an Enterprise

Agencies should leverage FITARA and other authorities to drive better cooperation between bureaus and the agency CIO, as well as between all senior agency officials. Similarly, OMB should coordinate between its management and budget offices, as well as other government-wide policy stakeholders, such as OSTP, to provide clear policy guidance and lines of communication to agencies. The end goal is to have an enterprise-wide view of IT policies and investments to drive better decisions and outcomes.

# Recommendations

## Recommendation #1

### Focusing on Customer Experience: Increasing CIO Engagement with Agency Programs

The role of the CIO has evolved well beyond that of merely providing basic IT services such as desktop computing and networking. Today's CIOs need to be true business partners focused on delivering impactful results to agency programs. As such, agencies and CIOs should apply best practices from the private sector and look to overall customer experience as the primary way to measure the success of IT, as opposed to more traditional operational measures such as cost savings or data center closures. This builds on work underway within the government at groups like USDS and 18F and will require CIOs to deepen their understanding of their customers and their needs.

Going forward, CIOs at all levels of an agency should work with program leaders and other senior agency officials to establish the appropriate customer-based metrics and measurement tools. Tools like customer stakeholder surveys, web analytics, and net promoter scores, can provide continuous insight into the customer experience. This parallels innovative private-sector management practices such as "lean startup" which

emphasize continuous testing of assumptions through customer value metrics and iterative delivery rather than assuming IT providers "know what is best."

To the extent possible, OMB should incorporate this shift in thinking into its policy formulation, oversight, and governance processes. For example, the IT Dashboard could gather data and feedback from customer stakeholders in addition to the CIO evaluation. Also, OMB should continue working with agencies to establish catalogs of customer-facing services and to evaluate effectiveness of agency technology in supporting those services.

#### Findings Addressed

- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align With OMB Reporting (A5)
- Changes in Messaging and Oversight Metrics Can Discourage Agencies From Taking Action (B2)
- Agencies Struggle to Apply Government-wide Policies to Their Environments (A6)

## Recommendation #2

### Standardize Data Collection: Establish Data Analysis and Research Team at OFCIO

By creating a new team dedicated to the coordination and oversight of all data collection efforts, OFCIO can substantially reduce inefficiencies and inaccuracies in its data collection processes. This group, the Data Analysis and Research Team (DART), would manage and standardize reporting processes, provide clear and consistent guidance to ensure data quality and consistency, and set strategic direction on improving data management.

Building upon the work started in OFCIO's Integrated Data Collection (IDC), the team should:

- Standardize around a set of tools and templates for the collection of agency data;
- Establish standard rules and regular data collection cycles, as well as common tools and terminology across OFCIO;
- Review potential data collections to ensure that new data is not duplicative of current efforts;
- Periodically review all OFCIO data collection elements to determine if they are still needed;
- Recommend the removal of a data element where there is no clear need for that data (e.g., not used for metrics or public reporting); and

- Establish regular communications with agencies to get feedback on data collection efforts from the agency perspective (e.g., alignment with internal agency reporting, burden of data collection).

Though DART, as proposed here, is focused solely on collection of IT-related data, their role could evolve to encompass data governance for other OMB Management Offices (e.g., OFPP, OFFM). The team could also coordinate efforts closely with OMB's Budget Review Division, leveraging both its analytical capabilities as well as its established information collection processes such as Budget Data Requests.

#### Findings Addressed

- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align With OMB Reporting (A5)
- Changes in Messaging and Oversight Metrics Can Discourage Agencies From Taking Action (B2)

## Recommendation #3

### Continue Shift Towards Agency (Customer) Driven Policy Development and Implementation

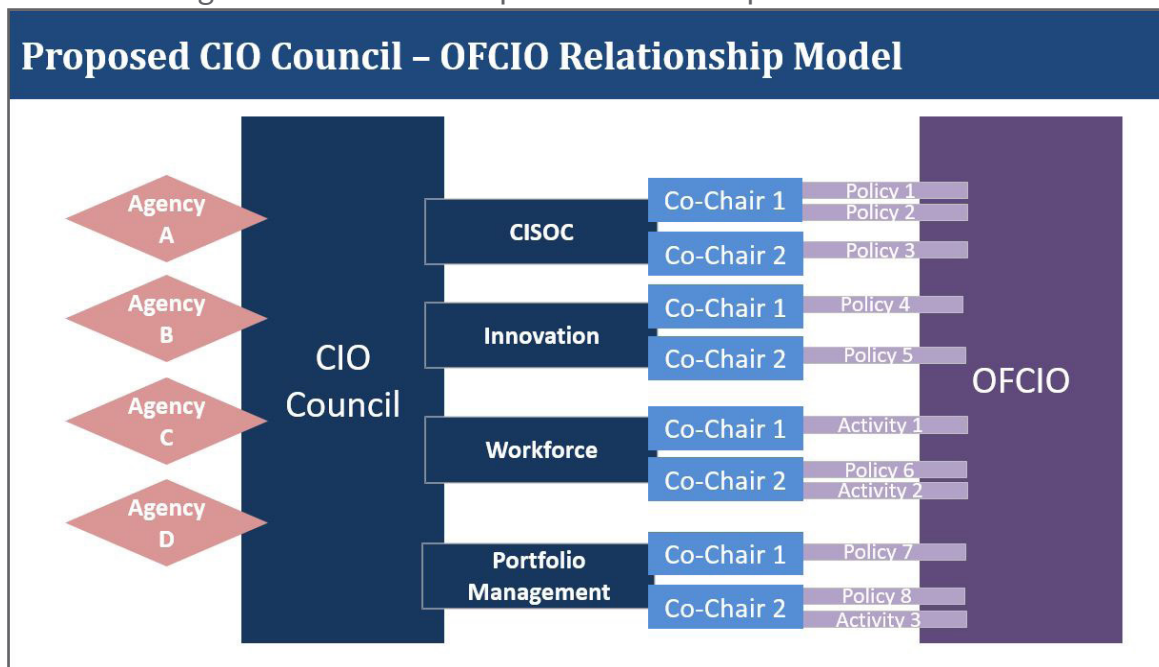
Numerous CIOs reported that many government-wide policy initiatives and reporting requirements did not always align with the mission objectives or business processes in each agency. Furthermore, the lack of a consistent approach to performance management coupled with the sheer number of policies taxes agency ability to keep pace and effectively meet OMB's objectives.

Recently, OMB has undertaken efforts to provide greater structure to how it formulates policies and initiatives, but the opportunity exists to expand upon this work in both implementation and oversight. Ultimately, the goal is to develop a customer-oriented approach that meets both agencies' needs and the priorities of the Administration. Potential activities include:

- ***Rationalization of Current Policies.*** Continue current review efforts of existing IT policies to reduce overlap and redundancy, retire outdated policies, and improve alignment with Administration priorities. Additionally, work should continue to establish a comprehensive policy library and to map policies to overarching Administration IT objectives.
- ***Development of Customer-Driven Process for Policy Formulation and Implementation.*** Policy objectives are often best achieved when there is buy-in from all stakeholders involved. OMB should work with agencies, industry, and Congress to surface new opportunities to address pressing needs across the broader IT community. Any new policies or initiatives should be rigorously reviewed to prevent conflicts and
- duplication with existing policies, regulations, and laws. Additionally, OMB should expand upon its current efforts to solicit public comments and agency feedback on its draft policies.
- OFCIO can also build upon the reorientation of the CIO Council's committee structure, which is designed to better align agency CIOs and the Council's committees to OFCIO policy development process, to facilitate this change (see Figure). Using the CIO Council in such a manner can reduce confusion and increase impact and successful implementation of policies across the government. OFCIO should engage early and often with the CIO Council, leveraging their ability to solicit opinions from across the IT community to better inform actions.
- ***Establishment of Common Structure for Policies.*** The development (and usage) of a standard template can ensure policies always include common elements such as intended purpose, oversight mechanisms, linkages to existing policies, and reporting requirements. This can serve to help agencies reduce confusion and improve their ability to execute. Furthermore, both draft and finalized policies can be published in a structured format using a standard schema and open formats (e.g., JSON, XML) in addition to traditional PDF formats. This can improve the ability of agencies and oversight groups to monitor policy progress through web tools, data analytics, and other performance management tools.

**Recommendation #3****Continue Shift Towards Agency Driven Policy Development and Implementation (continued)**

Figure Rec-1: CIOC Proposed Relationship Model with OFCIO



This organizational chart provided by the Federal CIO Council (CIOC) represents the reorientation of the CIOC to better facilitate agency participation in the policymaking process.

- Linking management and budget decisions.** OMB's internal management and budget functions should increase collaboration in the area of policy development and implementation. This increased collaboration could allow OMB to consider agency-specific budget concerns during policy development. In addition, OMB could consult with agencies directly. Drafting policies that address these concerns should drive better outcomes and result in fewer budget conflicts once the policies are implemented. Additionally, agency leadership will be able to make more effective business process and budget-related decisions if they have access to more information about policy discussions and implementation requirements.

**Findings Addressed**

- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align With OMB Reporting (A5)
- Agencies Struggle to Apply Government-wide Policies to Their Environments (A6)
- Current Approach to Modernizing IT Infrastructure Does not Necessarily Align with Agency Needs (B1)
- Changes in Messaging and Oversight Metrics Can Discourage Agencies from Taking Action (B2)
- Outcomes of Open Government and Open Data Efforts Can Be Hard to Gauge (C4)
- High Visibility in Cybersecurity Leads to Multiple Policy Messages, Metrics and Priorities (E4)

## Recommendation #4

### Bolster OMB's Personnel to Focus on Customer Service Model

As OMB takes a more customer-focused approach to working with agencies, it is essential to have staff (both employees and contractors) with the right blend of hands-on, agency-based and government-wide experience to support policy formulation, implementation, and oversight. This combination of experience can help facilitate better relationships between OMB and agencies while also ensuring that new policies and oversight practices are grounded in lessons learned and best practices from previous government-wide and agency efforts. OMB can increase its ability to find such staff by:

- Expanding upon current agency rotational programs (e.g., agency detailees, Presidential Innovation Fellows) to ensure the continuous exchange of talent between agencies and OMB;
- Revisiting its hiring and contractor selection processes to prioritize and more directly screen for agency experience and customer-focused mindset;
- Using the CIO Council committees as a proving ground for potential staff by offering the opportunity to work on committee policies or activities to interested government employees; and
- Recruiting and training more young policy professionals through expanding the use of the CIO Council's IT Job Shadow Days, internships, and other related efforts.

However, hiring and retaining a service-oriented workforce with the right mix of experience is only the first step. Going forward, OMB should also develop feedback loops to assess their current staff, the quality of support provided, and emerging needs. For example, agencies could be provided with regular customer satisfaction surveys to measure OFCIO desk officer performance against metrics such as timeliness of implementation support, clarity in communicating requirements, and effectiveness in working with agencies to achieve policy objectives.

#### Findings Addressed

- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align With OMB Reporting (A5)
- Agencies Struggle to Apply Government-wide Policies to Their Environments (A6)
- Current Approach to Modernizing IT Infrastructure Does not Necessarily Align with Agency Needs (B1)
- High Visibility in Cybersecurity Leads to Multiple Policy Messages, Metrics and Priorities (E4)
- Despite Better Awareness, Existing Acquisition Flexibilities Are Underutilized by Agencies (F1)
- Acquisition Staff Face Challenges Evaluating Complex, Innovative Technology Without Great Technology Expertise (F3)



**Recommendation #5****FITARA 2.0: Facilitate Additional CXO Collaboration at Agencies and with OMB**

CIOs are much more effective and capable of achieving Administration priorities and agency IT goals when they are fully engaged with their peers across the CXO suite. Yet despite recent FITARA implementation efforts, IT-related decisions at many agencies are still made without significant involvement from the CIO. Accordingly, OMB should work with agency leadership to increase CIO engagement with the acquisition community, the HR community, the financial community, and the programs themselves.

OMB took an important first step by instituting the FITARA Common Baseline. However, much more remains to be done to continue improving management of agency IT systems. First, OMB needs to ensure that agencies have met the requirements of the Common Baseline. Second, OMB should consider how to evaluate whether or not these changes in management structure and operations are improving outcomes. OMB should issue a follow up memorandum focused on evaluating oversight and execution. Specific recommended actions include:

- Making regular use of the President's Management Council (composed of Deputy Secretaries) to place proper attention on high priority government-wide initiatives, especially FITARA implementation;

- Rethink how PortfolioStat supports OMB's management agenda and key IT priorities. In particular, consider incorporating FITARA and customer service efforts more directly into the agenda. Additionally, consider including Deputy Secretaries and other CXO leaders at each agency to elevate the importance of IT issues (as was the case in the initial PortfolioStat sessions in FY 2012);
- Reviewing agency FITARA implementation plans to ensure that planned agency actions are sufficient to close lingering gaps between agency performance and full implementation of the Common Baseline;
- Aligning the FITARA Common Baseline with outcome-focused measures that are easily accessible, allowing Federal stakeholders to effectively evaluate the impact of FITARA across agencies;
- Exploring advocating for appropriations directly to CIO-managed offices or programs in select agency environments;

Recommendation #5

FITARA 2.0: Facilitate Additional CXO Collaboration at Agencies and with OMB (continued)

- Increase regular coordination at the principal level and the staff level to ensure consistent prioritization (and communication) across key OMB M-Team offices (e.g. OFCIO, OFPP, OPPM, OFFM) and other key stakeholders (e.g., OIRA, OSTP, GSA/OGP); and
- Continue to integrate the thinking behind the Technology Business Management (TBM) Council's Commission on IT Cost, Opportunity, Strategy, and Transparency (IT COST) frameworks and taxonomies and other related improvements into capital planning investment control data reporting to provide CIOs improved visibility into IT costs, benefits, and business value.

Findings Addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reaction to FITARA Implementation is Mixed (A2)</li><li>• The FITARA Common Baseline is Only the First Step in a Much Longer Process (A3)</li><li>• Successfully Improving Agency IT Management Functions Requires the Participation of All Members of the Executive Suite (A4)</li><li>• Infrastructure Only Gets Leadership Attention When IT Fails (B3)</li></ul>



## Recommendation #6

### Strengthening the Partnership Between IT and Procurement Communities

Building on recent joint efforts by OFPP and OFCIO (e.g., Category Management, Mythbusting), there are a number of opportunities to foster a productive working relationship between the procurement community, CIOs, and industry. Specific recommendations include:

- **Service-Level Agreements (SLAs).** Set clear expectations regarding procurement timelines and service levels to improve trust and reliability between procurement staff and IT. These SLAs could be measured via a scorecard-like approach for easy review and monitoring.
- **Feedback Systems.** Pilot ideas to gather feedback from the government and vendor community regarding the understandability, actionability, and results of past Requests for Information (RFIs) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs), to develop best practices.
- **Acquisition Centers of Excellence (COEs).** Designate (or have agencies nominate) acquisition offices which demonstrate leading performance in particular product/service areas, extending GSA's Category Management approach to build communities of experts throughout agencies. The COEs can also promote the sharing or reuse of contracts (e.g., GWACS) and the application of procurement practices that worked well in prior acquisitions.
- **Make Greater Use of Existing Certifications and Explore New Certifications.** Continue to standardize and streamline performance of procurement programs as well as project management activities and functions through the use of certifications such as the Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM).
- **Increased Information Sharing.** Share RFI responses internally across government (as appropriate), increase visibility into the acquisition by making every RFI and RFP available (post-release) in a standardized, open format on a single website and allow all potential vendors easy access to any posted opportunity (regardless of set-aside status).

#### Findings Addressed

- Delays and Uncertainty Due to Procurement Process Length are Obstacles to Effective IT (F2)
- Restrictions to Accessing Vendors Create Unintentional Risks to Meeting IT Needs (F4)
- Government Procurement Processes Lack the Flexibility to Adapt to Evolving Cyber Threats (E1)

**Recommendation #7****Clarify the Role of the CIO: Put the “Information” Back in CIO**

The recent proliferation of IT-related “Chief” positions (e.g., Chief Digital Officers, Chief Innovation Officers, Chief Technology Officers) has made it difficult for many CIOs to understand their role and their place within the agency leadership team. Moreover, many CIOs reported spending the majority of their time focused on infrastructure management and operations rather than on mission-related efforts and the strategic use of information to drive decisions.

To address these issues, the role of the CIO and other IT-related positions should be further clarified both at the government-wide and agency levels. This can be accomplished as follows:

- Sharing best practices and proven models for OCIO organizational structures from across Federal agencies, other governments, and even the private sector. The Department of Transportation (DOT) provides one example, where the CTO works directly for the CIO with each having clearly defined roles.
- Development of a “model office” which can serve as a template for agencies to follow in structuring their own operations. The model office can lay out reporting relationships, responsibilities, and authorities of “Chief” positions involved in IT-related functions. Multiple models can be defined depending on the type of agency mission (i.e. definitions used in FedStat, such as Entitlement & Beneficiary Services or Economy & Infrastructure).

- Continuing to make greater use of commodity IT and shared services will enable CIOs to focus on more strategic, mission-oriented efforts. Ultimately this will allow CIOs to be the decision maker for the trade-offs between significant mission and operational priorities.

Finally, OMB should clearly outline the relationships between OFCIO and other IT-related offices and organizations within the Executive Office of the President and across the government (e.g., OSTP, USDS, OIRA, GSA) to provide a clear path for agencies to engage with the appropriate government-wide policy stakeholders.

**Findings Addressed**

- Authority and Role of CIOs Vary Between Agencies (A1)
- The Broad Range of Stakeholders Complicates Governance (C2)
- Agency CIOs Express Difficulty in Dedicating Resources to Open Government and Open Data Initiatives (C1)

**Recommendation #8****Establish a Standard Performance Management Framework**

The start of an Administration is an ideal time to establish an overarching strategy which identifies the key objectives and measurable goals across the government-wide management areas (e.g., human capital, financial management, procurement) that the incoming Administration would like to accomplish. As a part of a renewed President's Management Agenda, OMB should publish a multi-year vision that sets forth the strategic direction for Federal IT efforts. All new policies, performance indicators, and agency goals should then align to this broader framework. This strategy should be widely distributed across the government.

By starting with higher-level goals that remain relatively constant over time, OMB can keep agencies focused on its highest priorities even as individual actions and policy requirements may change to meet the current environment's needs. As OMB and agencies implement new policies, this performance framework can provide "line-of-sight" alignment between top objectives, lower-level goals, and the oversight or measurement process used to ensure continued progress towards those objectives. Whenever practicable, agencies should be encouraged to develop their IT business objectives around this framework.

As a part of maintaining consistent communication with agencies, OMB should maintain a list of performance gaps and measurement challenges, and plan short-term projects to address those gaps and challenges throughout the year. Finally, OMB should ensure there is an effective channel for agencies to provide feedback on their needs, policy challenges, and implementation concerns.

**Findings Addressed**

- Successfully Improving Agency IT Management Functions Requires the Participation of All Members of the Executive Suite (A4)
- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align with OMB Reporting (A5)
- Changes in Messaging and Oversight Metrics Can Discourage Agencies from Taking Action (B2)
- Infrastructure Only Gets Leadership Attention When It Fails (B3)
- Agency CIOs Expressed Difficulty in Dedicating Resources to Open Government and Open Data Initiatives (C1)
- Broad Range of Stakeholders Complicates Governance (C2)
- Cybersecurity Sprint Demonstrated a Highly-Effective Model of OMB-to-Agency Requirement Formulation and Implementation (E3)

## Recommendation #9

### Focus on Knowledge Management: Collaborate, Coordinate, and Communicate

CIOs emphasized that greater communication across the IT and management communities, including between agencies and OMB, could help spread successful solutions to common problems, lower confusion, and streamline agency oversight and policy compliance efforts. OMB should empower and designate the CIO Council as the official hub for government-wide IT knowledge management and communities of practice. These efforts could include:

- Increasing collaboration between OMB, the CIO Council, cross-agency governance organizations (e.g., USSM), other agencies, and other CXO councils to identify areas of interest for new communities of practice aligned with OMB and agency priorities. HUD's customer relationship coordinators provide a good example of how to hardwire program-and-IT collaboration at the agency level;
- Conduct "mythbusting" efforts on an ongoing basis to address misconceptions throughout IT management, particularly around hiring and acquisition flexibilities;
- Standardizing terms and definitions used in OMB reporting requirements, agency operations, and external communications to the extent practicable;

- Developing tools and processes to share best practices and lessons learned, and publicize communities of practice across IT disciplines;
- Increasing engagement with participants by using modern tools like mobile and social networking in addition to traditional listservs, web portals, and discussion forums; and
- Revamping a government-wide CIO Bootcamp effort to provide those new to IT leadership positions a common background of Federal IT management laws, regulations, policies, and practices.

#### Findings Addressed

- Existing Policies and Statutes Can Conflict with Open Data Efforts (C3)
- Despite Better Awareness, Existing Acquisition Flexibilities Are Underutilized by Agencies (F1)
- Acquisition Staff Face Challenges Evaluating Complex, Innovative Technology Without Great Technology Expertise (F3)
- New Tools Have the Potential to Accelerate Cost Savings and Infrastructure Rationalization (B5)
- The Federal IT Workforce is Not Adequately Equipped to Address Challenges in Cybersecurity (E2)

## Recommendation #10

### Establish Central Funding for Shared Services and Infrastructure Modernization

As heard throughout the interviews, requirements for upfront capital planning and investment, complex rules for transferring funding between agencies, and a lack of attention from agency leadership make it challenging for agencies to modernize IT infrastructure and move to shared services. To address these issues, OMB should continue its recent work with Congress to establish a centralized source of IT funding. This fund can:

- Provide multi-year funds, outside of traditional agency budgets, specifically prioritized for infrastructure modernization and shared services adoption;
- Establish a standard approach and sufficient authorities for transferring funds between and to agencies; and
- Provide centralized expertise and oversight for infrastructure modernization efforts to drive consistency across the government.

This fund can be centrally managed by OMB or a designated agency and should be tightly coordinated with current and emerging government-wide initiatives to modernize shared services and IT infrastructure, such as Unified Shared Services Management (USSM) and the Data Center Optimization Initiative (DCOI). A key precursor to this effort is providing an authoritative definition for the primary concepts of IT modernization and shared services. A central management office would be well-positioned to provide these definitions.

#### Findings Addressed

- Transfer of Funds Between Agencies Presents Challenges (D2)
- Agency Funding Mechanisms Negatively Impact the Ability of the Federal Government to “Buy as an Enterprise” (F5)

## Recommendation #11

### Providing Common Cybersecurity Resources for Agencies

OMB has made significant progress in addressing longstanding vulnerabilities in agency IT infrastructure to improve the government's overall cybersecurity posture. However, opportunities remain for additional improvement:

- **Awareness & Education.** Promoting cybersecurity-supportive behaviors and norms throughout the Federal workforce through increased training, awareness, education, and outreach;
- **Cybersecurity Workforce.** Experimenting with new, and scaling successful hiring and retention strategies, incentives, and process reforms for cybersecurity talent;
- **Sprint-Based Approach to Policy Implementation.** Scaling the lessons learned from the Cybersecurity Sprint and applying them to other key agency implementation gaps;
- **Centralized IT infrastructure.** Extend efforts to establish a shared government-wide, modern, secure infrastructure which all agencies can adopt. By focusing cybersecurity expertise and technology on building this shared infrastructure, OMB can allow CIOs to focus on customer and mission-focused IT activities. This approach can be of particular benefit to organizations with limited infrastructure capabilities, such as small agencies (see Recommendation #12); and

- **Publicly-Available Dashboards Illustrating Potential Areas of Improvement.** Currently, agency performance on implementing safeguards is published in the annual FISMA Report and quarterly Cybersecurity CAP Goal in PDF formats. OMB started to release Excel workbooks to supplement this reporting, but it should take the next step to strengthen oversight by making an interactive, sortable dashboard modeled on Project Open Data Dashboard to make it as easy as possible to identify each agency's key areas for improvement in a quantitative, rigorous format.

#### Findings Addressed

- The Federal IT Workforce is Not Adequately Equipped to Address Challenges in Cybersecurity (E2)
- Cybersecurity Sprint Demonstrated a Highly-Effective Model of OMB-to-Agency Requirement Formulation and Implementation (E3)



**Recommendation #12****Establish Centralized IT Capability for Small Agencies**

Significant economies of scale can be achieved through use of shared services. This is particularly true for small agencies, which have limited internal resources and often lack specialized IT skills in critical areas such as cybersecurity and digital services. By establishing a centralized IT capability for small agencies, significant cost savings can be achieved. Additionally, centralizing IT can improve the speed of delivery, reliability, and security of IT services at small agencies.

This capability could either be housed in an existing agency office with shared services management expertise (e.g., USSM), or be managed by designating one or more shared service providers as managing partners. At a minimum, the focus should be on basic IT services (e.g., network, hosting, email) but could be expanded to include more complex services such as administrative and back office functions (e.g., HR, FM). Additionally, this approach could serve as a model for larger Federal agencies, providing an opportunity to first pilot service offerings and operating models on a small-scale before introducing them government-wide.

**Findings Addressed**

- Agencies Struggle to Apply Government-wide Policies to Their Environments (A6)
- Current Approach to Modernizing IT Infrastructure Does Not Necessarily Align with Agency Needs (B1)
- Transfer of Funds Between Agencies Presents Challenges (D1)
- The Federal IT Workforce is Not Adequately Equipped to Address Challenges in Cybersecurity (E2)

**Recommendation #13****Expand Engagement With Audit and Oversight Groups to Improve Data Availability**

While OMB, GAO, and the Inspectors General (IGs) can at times appear to be working towards different objectives, ultimately they share the same goal: an efficient and effective government that delivers for its citizens. As such, OMB should look to partner, where appropriate, with these groups to both improve data quality as well as to strengthen oversight of agency IT management. GAO and IGs bring specialized audit skills, methodologies and tools. Moreover, GAO and IGs can serve to focus agency attention on specific issues, in part because their findings are published publicly and can be accompanied by press coverage and Congressional scrutiny. OMB of course will need to preserve a level of independence, but can look to partner with GAO and IGs as follows:

**Targeted Audits & Oversight Efforts.** OMB should more directly engage with GAO and the IGs around specific policies and priorities and work with them to identify and remediate potential concerns raised in audits, as appropriate. Additionally, OMB should also work with these groups to identify opportunities to increase the transparency and availability of agency data through public-facing tools like the Federal IT Dashboard.

**Measurable Goals and Policy Requirements.** OMB should take steps to make it easier for other oversight groups to engage with agencies on IT management topics. For example, OMB should also write agency reporting requirements using consistent, structured data reporting to make it easier for GAO and the agency IG community to conduct audits by comparing reported data against agency records.

**Findings Addressed**

- Agency Operations Do Not Always Align with OMB Reporting (A5)
- Infrastructure Only Gets Leadership Attention When It Fails (B3)
- Outcomes of Open Government and Open Data Efforts Can Be Hard to Gauge (C4)

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