



FORUM

Economic  
Development  
in an e-Commerce  
World

DECEMBER 11, 2000  
RICHMOND



SEMINAR

Measuring  
Government  
Performance

JANUARY 18, 2001  
RICHMOND



VIRGINIA  
INSTITUTE OF  
GOVERNMENT

*The hope is that through VLGWA, all local governments — those with highly advanced IT systems and those with nascent technological capabilities — will collaborate and learn from one another.*

e-Communications

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zation was formed in the fall of 1999 that will serve as a vehicle for the Institute's new course in e-communication assistance. The VLGWA — Virginia Local Government Web Alliance — was created by VML and VACo to provide networking and education opportunities for local government IT staff.

In addition to hosting the new organization's bi-monthly meetings, the Institute has adopted an advocacy role in trying to expand VLGWA's reach to all Virginia localities. The hope is that through VLGWA, all local governments — those with highly advanced IT systems and those with nascent technological capabilities — will collaborate and learn from one another.



For more information on Institute technology services and the VLGWA, contact Mary Beth Hewa at [meb4q@virginia.edu](mailto:meb4q@virginia.edu) or 804/982-5707. ▼

Lynchburg Study

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and parking tickets). Hence, reentry into the workplace is impeded.

The majority of those interviewed report welfare to be stigmatizing and are anxious to become self-sufficient.

Phase I of the study covered the period from 1993-1998. Phase II will follow the same population through 1999 and 2000. (Federal Welfare Reform occurred in 1996). In addition, the study is mapping community social assets in order to develop new approaches for meeting the documented needs of TANF families. Reorganization of services and service delivery within the city will continue.



For more information, visit the Institute's Web site at [www.institute.virginia.edu](http://www.institute.virginia.edu). Click on "Services" and then on "Applied Research." ▼

Performance Measurement

*January 2001 conference to launch initiative.*

In response to increased local government interest, the Institute and Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) will hold a conference on January 18, 2001, in Richmond, to explore the concepts of performance measurement.

What is performance measurement?

It is an approach to improving the performance of government using accountability, measurement, and continuous improvement as guiding principles. "Government efforts to measure performance are not new. Governments at all levels have tried to report objectively on their performance for decades."\* Techniques tried in the 60s and 70s — planning/programming/budgeting (PPB); management by objective (MBO); and zero-based budgeting (ZBB) — did not meet expectations and didn't last beyond the presidential administrations that proposed them.

Two more recent reforms that have had staying power in the public sector are total quality management (TQM) and reinventing government. In his article, Theurer asserts, "...performance measurement is not going away..." and although particular programs may fail, "...initiatives to measure performance continue to be examined because they make so much sense."

The Virginia effort will occur in five phases:

1. Introduction — the January 18th conference will feature the latest concepts, strategies, and results in performance measurement systems, presented by experts in the field;

2. Training — selected employees from the demonstration localities will receive extensive training in results-oriented measurement techniques. These trainees are then expected to train others in their home jurisdictions;

3. Consultation — once the initial training is completed, implementation will begin in the demonstration localities. The Institute will provide expert consultants upon request; no locality will be left on its own to implement the procedures;

4. Evaluation and Documentation of Results; and

5. Expansion — test localities will share their results, with help from the Institute

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Economic Development in an e-Commerce World

*Next seminar set for December 11.*

Today's changing technologies raise a crucial question for local governments — How can they deal with the complexities of providing high speed data transmission and communications systems to "new economy" companies?

There is little doubt that employers throughout the Commonwealth will become increasingly dependent upon high tech systems for both business-to-business transactions and basic customer service. In addition to their usual infrastructure needs, companies considering relocation or expansion to a new locale need assurance of state-of-the-art communications services. When prospective businesses ask about availability and capacity, local government



"HOT TOPIC" SEMINARS

\* Theurer, Jim. "Seven Pitfalls to Avoid When Establishing Performance Measures." *Public Management*, July 1998. 21-24.

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VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

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WELDON COOPER CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
University of Virginia

National Issues Forums

Institute works to engage Virginia citizens in public deliberation.

by Anton (Tony) Gardner

Over the last six months, a team from the Institute has been working with the Kettering Foundation on a project aimed at increasing civic involvement in important public issues.

Kettering, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute, founded in 1927 and based in Dayton, Ohio, has developed a process — National Issues Forums (NIF) — that has been successful in fostering public deliberation at the local level.

The process begins with identifying a public issue, then creating a framework for discussion, which contains three or four perspectives, or choices, on the issue and ways it can be addressed. Recently framed issues include welfare reform, suburban sprawl, public education, health care, and violent crime.

Citizens then gather for deliberative sessions or issues forums. Using the framework created for a particular issue and with the help of trained moderators, they consider the strengths, weaknesses, and cost tradeoffs of each choice.

Toward the end of the forum, the participants determine whether they have reached common ground upon which appropriate action or policy may be developed. In many areas across the country, such forums have led to local action on national and community problems, either by inspiring individual initiative or by generating a unified message that public officials cannot ignore.

The Institute team, along with six other teams from Virginia, Florida, Illinois, and Ohio, has been working with Kettering to develop a guide that should facilitate issue framing at the local level. Each team has identified an issue crucial to its own state. The issue for the Institute is Localities — High Service Demand, Low Revenue: How to Cope? This effort will yield two key results — a booklet framing this issue for public deliberation in Virginia and an improved issue-framing guide for the Foundation.

To frame its issue, the Institute team formed an advisory group of local and state elected officials, professional managers,

academics, and representatives from business and non-profit sectors. Additionally, the City of Lynchburg organized two regional focus groups to help refine the issue. The Institute team has met several times with other state teams to share constructive feedback on its work at various stages.

The advisory group is now critiquing the draft of the framed issue. It will then be tested in an actual forum and undergo further refining before its publication as an issue book next year.

At the February 2001 meeting of the VLGMA, the team plans to introduce attendees to the NIF process using the issue book on urban sprawl. Shortly after, if there is sufficient interest, the team will hold a Public Policy Workshop to prepare participants to moderate forums and provide them with a brief introduction to the issue-framing process. Hopefully, localities will then form their own small teams, including representatives from organizations like the League of Women Voters or United Way, to conduct forums in their communities.

The Institute team plans to have its issue book available and moderators trained to conduct forums around the state early next year.

As a result of these forums, the team anticipates that participants will engage candidates on the issue of funding local government services during the important 2001 general election campaign. If this happens, then the goal will have been attained — to bring to the political center stage a crucial local government concern.



For more information on National Issues Forums, contact Tony Gardner at 804/245-9255.

Albemarle County Family Support Program

County enlists Institute to evaluate program.

In its continuing efforts to explore school/community collaboration, the Institute is assisting the Albemarle County Department of Social Services in evaluating its Family Support Program. Funded with federal monies, the program was developed to assist students with special needs by providing prevention and intervention services

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information resource. Usage rates continue to climb as local governments discover that EBIS saves valuable staff time by providing a fast, easy way to obtain information from hundreds of other local governments throughout the state.



For more information on EBIS, contact Tedd Povar at tep3e@virginia.edu or 804/371-0202.

New Direction in e-Communications Assistance

The Institute announces a change in its Internet-related services to member localities. Rather than continuing to provide hands-on Web training, the Institute will help localities find marketplace resources to meet their Web-related needs.

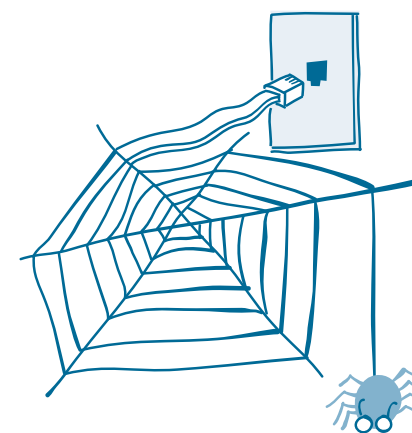
Why this change?

Back in 1995, when the Institute designed its technology-development services package for member localities, the World Wide Web was in its infancy. Local government and citizen expectations were limited to creating and maintaining a simple Web site of one or two pages; the Institute's service package was designed to meet these early needs.

The Internet has taken us a long way in five years. Today's elaborate Web sites require extensive development and maintenance — services now readily available in a competitive marketplace. As a result, the Institute has chosen to refocus its Web-development services on helping members find the resources to achieve their objectives.

In a related development, a new organi-

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Lynchburg Welfare Reform Study

Phase I completed. Results to guide phase II.

Research began in 1998\* after the City of Lynchburg was selected as a test locality for welfare reform. The purposes of the study were to 1) test assumptions regarding the use of community resources and services by Lynchburg's welfare recipients, 2) determine if services to this population could be improved, and 3) effect implementation of new service-delivery procedures and organizational structures within the city. The study was designed to involve the heads of all public- and private-sector agencies that work regularly with these families. This approach has already produced modified administrative and service responsibilities among these agencies.

Key insights from phase I, which will guide phase II, are:

- The fundamental revelation was that widely-held assumptions were wrong. In Lynchburg, TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) families are not primary users of services available to the poor.
Most TANF families are not major users of other community services.
Health and housing head the list of services used most often by TANF families, but fewer than fifty percent live in public housing.
Seventy-five percent of TANF children show no variation from the total population in school success.
Only five percent of TANF families have children in foster care. (These children do comprise half of the total foster care population.)
An overwhelming percentage of TANF families are not consistent users of services over a five-year period. (They are in and out of the system depending upon erratic financial conditions.) This finding negates the public perception of multi-generation welfare families.
Half of the TANF adults have never had a driver's license. Fifty percent of those who have licenses are holding invalid licenses (due primarily to unpaid traffic violations

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\*See the spring 2000 issue of THE COLUMN for background on the study.

*"It is clear that performance measurement is not going away...but management initiatives to measure performance continue to be examined because they make so much sense."*

JIM THEURER  
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT,  
JULY 1998

### Performance Measurement

*continued from page 1*

and VLGMA, with other localities. Then, a second round of training and implementation will begin in other localities interested in pursuing performance measurement systems.

The Virginia undertaking will also include the participation of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and Innovations Group.

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*The writer is director of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and the Virginia Institute of Government. For more information on this project, contact John Thomas at jpt6n@virginia.edu or 804/982-5545. ▼*

### Economic Development

*continued from page 1*

representatives are having a difficult time providing timely, complete responses.

The Institute, in partnership with Virginia Tech, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and the telecommunications community, has begun a series of daylong seminars to help localities find some answers.

The next seminar, scheduled for December 11 at Richmond's Omni Hotel, will provide information on:

- how to deal with the telecommunications companies that already have a presence in the community,
- how to determine a company's actual capacity to deliver specific levels of service, and
- what a locality must do to stay competitive with other communities in the state.

In addition, a panel of community and e-business representatives will provide case studies illustrating what it takes to attract and serve e-commerce companies.

The series is open-ended and will continue as long as key questions remain for local governments on this complex and rapidly changing subject.

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*For more information on the forum series, contact Tedd Povar at tep3e@virginia.edu or 804/371-0202. ▼*

### UVA Center for Survey Research Joins Cooper Center

This summer, the Center for Survey Research (CSR), which had been a free-standing unit of the Department of Arts and Sciences, became a division of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, the University's primary link to state and local government in Virginia.

CSR, created in 1987, conducts surveys and provides data analysis for local governments, state agencies, professional associations, and other organizations throughout the Commonwealth.

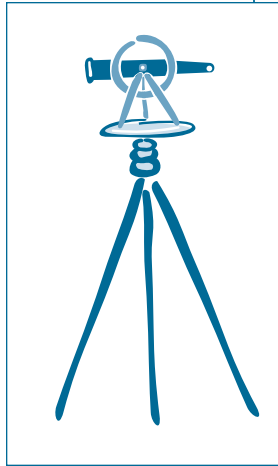
Over the past decade, CSR has increased its services to local governments and state agencies in Virginia. Recent local clients include Prince William County (measuring citizen satisfaction with services); City of Charlottesville (assessing planning needs); and Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (conducting a transportation study).

Thomas M. Guterbock, CSR director, feels that the move is a logical one. "There's a very clear synergy," he explains. "The work we do matches the Cooper Center's mission." Guterbock sees clear potential for growth in the scope of CSR's survey services, citing six specific areas:

- citizen satisfaction surveys,
- customer satisfaction surveys for particular state or local agencies,
- labor force surveys for regions seeking to promote economic development,
- membership surveys for associations,
- surveys on planning and land-use issues, and
- program evaluation surveys.

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*Visit the CSR Web site at www.virginia.edu/surveys. For more information, contact Kate Wood at surveys@virginia.edu or 804-243-5224. ▼*



*Localities should post next summer's internship openings on the Leadership 2020 Web site by January 2001, when students begin planning their summers.*

*Visit the site at www.L2020.institute.virginia.edu*

### Family Support Program

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through school/community collaboration.

The Institute has contracted with Dr. Bruce Gansneder of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia to design and conduct a multi-year program evaluation.

Work to date includes formation of a steering committee comprising representatives from the Cooper Center, Curry School, and Albemarle County; identification of program goals, activities, and desired outcomes; and a redesign of program documentation to be used by both the support workers and the evaluation team.

The evaluation will assess the program's impact on student academic behavior, family risk factors, growth and development of students and families, and home/school involvement.

Indicators of academic behavior will include grades, test scores, attendance, tardiness, citizenship, discipline referrals, and teacher assessments of student classroom behavior and progress.

These data will be used as 1) an analysis of the number, magnitude, and duration of these changes and 2) a comparative analysis of Family Support Program participants to other students.

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*For more information about this project, contact Bruce Gansneder at bg@virginia.edu or 804-924-0826. ▼*

### Leadership 2020

*Localities invited to post summer 2001 internships.*

Leadership 2020 (L2020), the Institute's internship program, placed three students in local government internships last summer.

Adam Miller, a government major at George Mason University, interned in Franklin County, working on a GIS project for the Department of Public Safety under the supervision of Claude Webster.

George Cauble, III, an economics major at the University of Virginia, completed a variety of special projects under the supervision of John Vithoulkas in Henrico County's Department of Finance.

Chad Chandler, an engineering student at the University of Virginia, worked for the City of Virginia Beach in the Department of Public Utilities, supervised by Clarence Warmstaff.

Leadership 2020 was developed by the Institute to introduce students to the challenges and opportunities of working in local government while earning a stipend and degree credit.

The Institute encourages interested localities to post next summer's openings on the L2020 Web site by January 2001, when students begin planning their summers.

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*Visit the Leadership 2020 Web site at www.L2020.institute.virginia.edu. For more information, contact Nancy Gansneder at intern-L2020@virginia.edu or 804/982-4770. ▼*

### Who Uses EBIS?

*The answer is not what you'd expect.*

Now that the Institute's e-mail based information service (EBIS)\* has three years and over 500 inquiries under its belt,

we thought it would be interesting to see which local governments are using the service, and at what levels.

One would assume that the majority of questions come from smaller jurisdictions that have less specialized staffs and, therefore, a greater need for expert assistance. Conversely, it would seem logical that the largest jurisdictions serve as information providers rather than inquirers.

However, an analysis of EBIS utilization shows a more balanced picture:

Locality Population	Percent of Inquiries
Small (up to 10,000)	28%
Medium (10,001 to 49,999)	37%
Large (50,000+)	35%

The Institute is pleased that member localities of all sizes view EBIS as a valuable

\* EBIS is the Institute's managed information system through which member local governments submit questions that are sent anonymously to over 200 local governments via email. The return responses are entered into a database and sent on to the inquirer, as well as any other jurisdictions that "piggyback" on that inquiry.

