

NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE FY 2021 ANNUAL FEDERAL ADVISORY BOARD REPORT

INTRODUCTION:

National Technical Information Service Advisory Board (NTIS Advisory Board or Board) is a statutory Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Board. The Secretary of Commerce, pursuant to Section 212(c) of the National Technical Information Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 3704b(c)), established the NTIS Advisory Board, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. The NTIS Advisory Board shall review and make recommendations to improve NTIS programs, operations, and general policies in support of NTIS's mission to advance Federal data priorities, promote economic growth, and enable operational excellence by providing innovative data services to Federal agencies through joint venture partnerships with the private sector.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP:

- Dr. Ajit Gaddam, Advisory Board Chair
- Mr. Aaron D. Burciaga
- Ms. Claire L. Walsh
- Ms. Diana M. Zavala

BOARD ACTIVITIES:

- Public Meeting: November 12, 2020, hosted virtually
- Public Meeting: May 24, 2021, hosted virtually

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:

November 12, 2020 Recommendations:

1. Ms. Zavala proposed meeting with to discuss approaching the CDO Council and another meeting with USDA CDO Ted Kaouk. Meeting will be scheduled with updates provided at the next FACA meeting
2. Mr. Burciaga offered to assist with the review collateral materials. Current materials will be provided to the Board.
3. Mr. Burciaga asked if NTRL has a future road map for the evolution over the next 3-5 years. Mr. Strickland will share with the Board the 3-year plan once completed.
4. Mr. Burciaga recognized the efforts of the data science team sharing the difference between the June report and the end of year, noting the growth was approximately 500 percent. The data subscription services showed a sharp decline, and he was interested in the background. Ms. Patterson shared that this is in part due the allocation methodology and will research further. Updates will be provided to the Board.
5. Mr. Burciaga asked if there was any thinking toward an NTIS hack-a-thon. He felt that the large trove of data available coupled with the JVP could be the basis for the quarterly or semi-annual hack-a-thon. This may be excellent incubator. This recommendation could allow NTIS to sponsor the “problem du jour” at one of the agencies. NTIS will explore and provide an update at the next FACA meeting.

6. Dr. Gaddam and Mr. Burciaga shared NTIS should explore focusing on cyber specialization and cloud. Further consideration to an IT lead for a Center of Excellence (COE) on automation analytics and AI as well as cyber and cloud. He shared IT should consider having a person lead the COE and supporting the DS team. NTIS will investigate the feasibility of a lead for the COE structure.
7. Mr. Burciaga recommended focusing on awards and applying for them. Nominations could bring NTIS recognition. NTIS should investigate further and incorporate awards into their processes
8. Ms. Zavala recommended the ACT-IAC Innovation Inventory could be incorporated into the project methodology where success stories could be published increasing visibility. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.
9. Mr. Burciaga's organization focus included the impact of telework. He asked that NTIS consider how post-COVID changed how NTIS operates. He suggested NTIS looks aprovided data for platforms as a JV opportunity – Analytics as a Service; Insights as a Service and Platform as a Service. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.
10. Mr. Burciaga recommended the OPM team meet to whiteboard actions towards the direction of quantified results. He reviewed Slides 22 and 23 recommending what happened as an outcome but shared we did not quantify as “man hours”, “lives saved” or “dollar and cents.” He offered to participate. NTIS will schedule the meeting to include the Board members.
11. Mr. Burciaga recommended NTRL as a Service and NTRL as a governance service. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.
12. Dr. Gaddam focused on the post-COVID actions at NTIS. Post-COVID represents a tremendous opportunity for talent acquisition absent the geographical restrictions. He recommended seeking talent to include new college hire to augment the current staff. NTIS will investigate further and provide an update.
13. Mr. Burciaga shared the largest opportunity should be in the NTRL and data subscription comparing the opportunity to Netflix and iTunes. Mr. Burciaga offered another session to assist with this initiative. NTIS will schedule a session to investigate and explore further.

May 24, 2021 Recommendations:

1. Mr. Capella asked for assistance with getting the “marquee customer.” Dr. Gaddam shared he and the board will assist with ideas in this area.
2. Mr. Burciaga ask if moving forward we could include a column of Same Period Last Year (SPLY) in the OCFO presentation.
3. Mr. Capella offered to send all vacancy announcement on USA Jobs to the Board.
4. Mr. Burciaga suggested we investigate further Platform as a Service or “insights as a service.”
5. Mr. Burciaga suggested we investigate finding ways to monetize the NTRL using scraping of reports as a value-add naming it as “Information/ Insights as a Service” as an offering.
6. Mr. Burciaga suggested exploring the role of the JVP with the NTRL.
7. Mr. Burciaga suggested leveraging Production Other Transaction Authority (OTA) as an opportunity.
8. Ms. Zavala suggested NTIS explore offerings of AI trust assessment capability and ML operations insight.
9. Ms. Zavala suggested developing an award SOP.
10. Ms. Walsh asked that NTIS anticipate future demand on AI regulations or a future EOs. She emphasized how NTIS could support agencies with transparent and ethical

AI frameworks.

11. Mr. Burciaga asked if NTRL has a future road map for the evolution over the next 3-5 years.
12. Mr. Burciaga asked if there was any thinking toward an NTIS hack-a-thon. He felt that the large trove of data available coupled with the JVP could be the basis for the quarterly or semi-annual hack-a-thon. This may be excellent incubator. This recommendation could allow NTIS to sponsor the “problem du jour” at one of the agencies.
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Minutes:

- See link (November 12, 2020 Public Meeting)
https://www.ntis.gov/assets/pdf/Minutes_Nov_12_2020.pdf
- See link (May 24, 2021 Public Meeting)
https://www.ntis.gov/assets/pdf/FACA_NTIS_Advisory_Board_Minutes_May_24_2021_Final_signed.pdf

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