

NTIS Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
1 November 2013  
Held at 5301 Shawnee Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22312

**1. Welcome/Opening Remarks**

Bruce Borzino, Director, NTIS and John Regazzi, Chairman, NTIS Advisory Board opened the meeting welcoming the board members and the NTIS senior staff and recorder. The primary purpose of this meeting was to discuss NTIS strategy development for Fiscal Years (FY) 2014 - 2016. The following board members were in attendance: John Regazzi and Robert Friedenber; and, via teleconference: Jose-Marie Griffiths, Judith Russell and MacKenzie Smith.

**2. NTIS Organization**

The NTIS Director started the meeting discussing the effects of the federal government shutdown from October 1 through October 16. NTIS remained open and operational during the shutdown. However, approximately 35 projects were directly affected by the shutdown. The impacts of the shutdown will not be fully known until the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, FY 2014 is completed. The NTIS organization structure remained unchanged from the prior meeting.

**3. NTIS Financial Performance**

The NTIS Chief Financial Officer (CFO) presented information on the financial performance from FY 2009 through FY 2013. Due to the federal government shutdown, the OCFO was still in the processing of finalizing FY 2013 financial results.

The Chairman stated that the NTIS annual net profit is not growing at the same rate as revenue growth. The Director explained that the change in net profit between FY 2012 and FY 2013 was in large part the result of direct investments in the CISPUB-Élan upgrade and FedRamp certification preparations. The board and staff discussed why the upgrade to Élan was necessary and how achieving the FedRamp certification would benefit NTIS lines of business. The board was satisfied when learning about the urgent need for accomplishing the Élan upgrade and FedRamp certification.

The Director also presented the first version of the NTIS Strategic Growth Roadmap FY 2012 - FY 2016 that describes the expected evolutionary changes within NTIS lines of business. The board agreed with the strategies presented in the roadmap.

**4. Accomplishments FY 2013**

In this section of the meeting, significant NTIS FY 2013 accomplishments by the Office of Federal Services (OFS), Office of Product Management and Acquisitions (OPMA), and Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) were presented to the board.

**Office of Federal Services (OFS)**

- One U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Staff Acquisition Solution.
  - Completed deployment of e-Recruit, an electronic staff acquisition recruitment application.

- Provides USDA with electronic staff recruitment and on boarding application hosted at NTIS.
- Small Business Administration (SBA) Repository Program.
  - Initiated 3-phased program to standardize and automate processes within SBA's 8A and Loan Guarantee programs.
  - Funded 2<sup>nd</sup> phase to include BPR, collaborative environment and repository hosted at NTIS.
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NextGen Collaboration
  - Created myHomeland Proof of Concept as part of DHS NextGen, a multiyear enterprise-wide initiative to modernize DHS IT infrastructure.
  - Illustrated benefits and impacts of applying available social media with secure information sharing capabilities required of Homeland Security mission space.

### **Chief Information Officer**

- IT Investment Governance Practices.
  - Established a single portfolio with three major subcomponents: Federal Services; Financial Management; and, Infrastructure.
- FedRamp Certification Program.
  - Established June 2014 as the target date for completion of NTIS FedRamp certification.
- FY 2013 Major Systems Deployments.
  - One USDA Staff Acquisition Solution.
  - National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Jive.
- NTIS Data Center Projects.
  - Enhanced NTIS technical infrastructure: virtualization, data center consolidation, system redundancy, admin support, and security.

### **Office of Product Management and Acquisitions (OPMA)**

- Operating Costs Reductions.
  - Significantly improved contribution margins and returned information products cost recovery to break even on annual adjusted net income.
- New Product Selection Criteria.
  - Established following requirements for new products: mission focused; positive contribution margin; and, electronic format.
- Open Access NTRL Project Proposal.
  - Initiated pilot program to increase NTRL traffic and public access.

## **5. Status of Board Recommendations**

This section provides status on board recommendations from prior meetings.

- How can NTIS monetize value of the technical reports (STEI) collection to cover costs if more STEI products and metadata are available for free?

Discussion: NTIS is working on the Open Access NTRL Project Proposal that will feature different levels of user access to the NTIS repository and clearinghouse. Within user access levels, each user will be registered and must have an accepted user agreement in place with password access. Subscriptions to Open Access NTRL Project Proposal will permit users greater access to NTIS bibliographic and abstract content, and to full text, electronic.

- Continue Federal Science Repository Service (FSRS) development and focus on repository and portal services.

Discussion: NTIS plans to maintain project collaboration efforts with current FSRS customers as well as coordinate and identify technology strategies, standards and open source options to ensure interoperability with Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) initiatives. NTIS will focus on growth of repository support services and plans to introduce repository starter platforms based on NTRL model for content management.

- Increase market penetration into U.S. corporate and international business segments.

Discussion: NTIS is evaluating how to increase licensing of NTRL and in establishing a new program, Electronic Databases Publishing Registry Products, to leverage private-public partnerships to establish new products and markets for highly utilized federal content.

- Outreach to STEM Council.

Discussion: OPMA has established a relationship with the STEM Education Coalition; discussed STEM outreach opportunities via American Library Association; issued a NTRL Monthly Newsletter with STEM highlights; and, conducted several STEM email campaigns.

- Review Federal Services cost estimates and pricing strategies; review Federal Services lines of business (LOB) contribution margins.

Discussion: As discussed at the previous board meeting, the Federal Energy Management LOB was discontinued and the program restructured. Federal Energy Management will be incorporated in a new LOB scheduled to be launched late in FY 2014, the Information Management LOB. Further, OFS has initiated an audit review of the FY 2013 LOB's to identify actions to improve low contribution margins in selected LOB's.

- Other board recommendations were incorporated into the discussions previously listed in this section. These recommendations included: building the brand for NTIS STEI products; creating new products focused on unique aspects of the NTIS collections; and, offering subscriptions at lower prices to encourage demand.

## **6. NTIS Strategy Development**

This section focused on NTIS Strategy Development, including Market Analysis, Risk Assessment, and the FY 2014 NTIS Budget Plan.

- Market Analysis.

- Information Products. The Associate Director, OPMA, informed the board that the strategic objective to accommodate more open and improved access to federally funded science information could best be accomplished by:

- Focusing on electronic product formats and eliminating tangible product formats such as print.
- Managing information products by contribution margin within the following strategies:
  - Achieve break-even contributions margins on core information products such as STEI technical documents that are statutory required of the NTIS repository and clearinghouse mission; and,
  - Achieve defined positive contribution margins on ancillary information products that are not core to the NTIS mission such as the Death Master File; and,
  - Discontinue ancillary information products with negative contribution margins and low market penetration.
- Federal Services. The Associate Director, OFS, presented the following strategies to the board to continue the growth of NTIS federal services:
  - Market Department-level enterprise solutions capitalizing on previous NTIS program successes and existing infrastructure; and,
  - Leverage NTIS expertise and resources in digitization, product fulfillment, and distribution; and,
  - Focus on expanding current agency relationships.
- Strategic Risk Assessment and Risk Map.
  - SWOT Analysis. The Director informed the board that the senior staff conducted a thorough review of the NTIS Strategic Plan 2011 - 2016 including the SWOT Analysis, and determine that the SWOT Analysis was still current and required no major changes.
  - Risk Management Analysis. The senior staff also performed a Risk Management Analysis and revalidation of the Risk Scoring Methodology for the each Internal, External and Client Risk. The analysis resulted in the identification of one new Internal Risk and increases in the Risk Severity of two External Risks. The revised Risk Map was also presented to the board members.
  - The board was briefed on the status of the Order Processing System Elan upgrade.
- FY 2014 NTIS Budget Plan Summary was presented to the board members.

## **7. Public Comments**

There were no members of the public at this meeting.

## **8. Advisory Board Roundtable**

The roundtable is the opportunity for the Chairman and members to address specific concerns, issues and recommendations with the NTIS senior staff.

- Product Creation. The board requested information on how NTIS decides to create a product or service around its statutory missions?

Discussion: NTIS statutory work is to operate a permanent clearinghouse of scientific and technical information. The senior staff explained that lines of business and programs are normally initiated and started as the direct result of another federal agency expressing interest in receiving the product or service from NTIS. NTIS then determines that: the product or service is within its statutory authorities; NTIS has the expertise in house or a current NTIS public/private partner can provide the product or service; and, NTIS can deliver the product or service at a

reasonable cost and net profit. The final step is the approval of the proposed product or service by the Associate Directors and the Director. In other cases, NTIS has developed a product or services as a result of developing a product or service in-house to support its statutory mission. For example, the Federal Science Repository Services program was initiated after NTIS built the NTRL Release 3 on the repository model and software.

- **Best Value and Customer Service.** The board was interested in better understanding why other federal agencies come to NTIS for its products and services.

Discussion: The members were interested if other federal agencies came to NTIS because: NTIS is a federal agency; offers best value; delivers superior customer services, etc. Members of the senior staff explained that it is a combination of all the above, but it is also because NTIS enters into a joint partnership relationship with the federal agency to accomplish the work. It is not the same as contractual relationships that many agency program managers have had poor experiences and results. NTIS tailors its project plans to accomplish the specific requirements of the federal customer. Also important is that NTIS leverages its successes within the federal community. The board agreed and admonished the senior staff to continue its best value and customer service practices.

- **Open Access, Repository, Federal Science Repository Services (FSRS).**

Discussion: The board was informed that some publications in NTRL are copyright with limitations on their distribution. NTIS is continuing to develop FSRS with a focus on expanding repository and portal services. NTIS plans to focus on growth of repository support services by: increasing digitization support to science agencies; introducing repository start platforms based on NTRL model for content management and linking to trusted private-public repositories for data and publications; and, aligning with the NIST Common Access Repository Initiative.

The board recommended that NTIS proceed with the NTRL Open Access Project Pilot proposal with both Registered User and Registered Premium User tiers. The board agreed that the pilot may assist NTIS in monetizing the value of the STEI collection. The board recommended that NTIS consider the following in evaluating the pilot program: impacts; customer perceived value; cost; value creation; and, does it make sense for the NTIS mission and profitability.

NTIS plans to focus on growth of repository support services through: increasing digitization support to science agencies; introducing repository start platforms based on NTRL model for content management; linking to trusted private-public repositories for data and publications; and, aligning with NIST Common Access Repository Initiative.

The board cautioned NTIS in growing too fast and recommended that NTIS manage its growth.

## **9. Board Governance/Administration**

The next board meeting will be held at NTIS on April 25, 2014.