When Data Aren’t Open: Restricted Use Data: Trials, Tribulations, Triumphs

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The Population Research Institute

- The Population Research Institute (PRI) encourages, organizes, and supports innovative research and training in the population sciences.

The Information Core

- Access and retrieval services to assist PRI faculty, students, and staff with information and data location and retrieval.

The Data Archive

- Assist PRI researchers in identifying, accessing, and collecting demographic data for PRI faculty and students for population research.
Restricted Data Contracts

• Site/Project Contracts:
  – One contractual agreement/license with multiple users working on different research pursuits.
    • Add Health
    • National Center for Education Statistics
  – One secure computing environment for multiple agreement/license holders.
    • Survey of Early Child Care
    • National Longitudinal Study of Youth
    • Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey
    • Demographic and Health Survey
  – Restricted data for site/project contracts are normally housed on secure, stand-alone Windows servers or secure Linux server space.
Restricted Data Contracts

• Individual project contracts:
  – Data stored on stand-alone workstations in faculty offices, secure Linux space, or small Windows server.
    • The Los Angeles Family and Neighborhood Survey
    • National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being
    • National Survey of Family Growth

• 10 Unique Restricted Datasets
• 20 restricted data contracts
• 105 Researchers
Restricted Data Contract Explosion

- Not only did the number of individual contracts rise, but also the number of users on existing “site” and/or “project” agreements.
Collaboration

In order to effectively acquire, secure and manage these agreements, everyone needs to be kept in the loop.
Challenges

- Educating users
- Controlling access
- Negotiating paperwork
Successes

• Educating users
  – Infocore Blog
  – Seminars/ Workshops

• Dedicated server model = Tighter control over access

• Cutting-edge research
Strategies

- Keep everyone involved in the project in the loop.
- Have all i’s dotted and t’s crossed before submitting paperwork.
- Have more than one contact at a particular data agency.
- Keep an open dialog with the data agency.
- "It is the squeaky wheel that gets the oil"
- Ask for help from agency computing staff when developing security protocol.
- Organization is key for successful contract management.