

IDAHO

COMMERCE & LABOR

DIRK KEMPTHORNE, GOVERNOR
ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR

October 24, 2006

Richard Trigg
Region VI - Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
P.O. Box 193767 71 Stevenson St., Suite 830
San Francisco, CA 94119-3767

Dear Mr. Trigg,

Enclosed is Idaho's Workforce Information Progress Report for program year 2005 pursuant to Training and Guidance Letter No. 33-04 ~ *Planning Guidance and Application Instructions for Program Year (PY) 2005 Workforce Information Core Products and Services: Workforce Information Formula Allocations to States.*

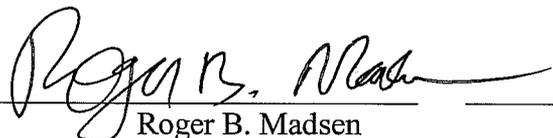
Idaho's PY2005 Progress Report elaborates on the critical LMI products produced by Idaho Commerce and Labor along with any significant changes experienced in PY2005.

Questions concerning this agreement should be addressed to Bob Uhlenkott, 208.332.3570 ext. 3217.

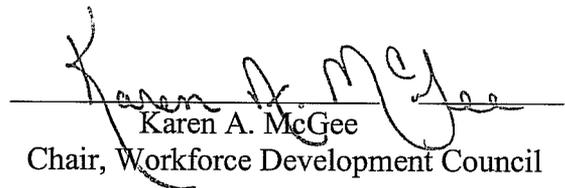
Sincerely,



Roger B. Madsen



Roger B. Madsen
Director, Idaho Commerce and Labor



Karen A. McGee
Chair, Workforce Development Council

Idaho Workforce Information

Annual Progress Report

Reference Period ~ July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006

Idaho's PY2005 Workforce Information Plan produced all deliverables as stated. Slight adjustments were made to some to fulfill inquiries from and needs of customers or to make Idaho's work force information system more sustainable in coming years. For a comprehensive review of all deliverables in the form they were planned is in Idaho's PY2005 Workforce Information Plan¹.

There are areas of the PY2005 plan where slight adjustments in scope, dissemination and content were made due to budget constraints, customer feedback or to enhance Idaho's work force information. There can also be modifications that will make subsequent *Training and Guidance Letters* more responsive to customer needs.

To meet customer needs, Idaho Commerce & Labor and the expanded Workforce Development Council are fully engaged in planning and implementing the Workforce Information Plan. Commerce & Labor works regularly with the council to identify the labor market information needs of communities and regions throughout the state. Local and regional leaders are surveyed annually as detailed in the customer satisfaction component of Idaho's PY2005 Workforce Information Plan¹. The department also presents current research at each council meeting and gains feedback on changes to the current plan that can be made to better serve customers and stakeholders.

Idaho's regional economists regularly meet with various associations, colleagues, economic developers and other business customers to maintain a full understanding of the needs and demands for LMI within all pertinent industries, occupations and business sectors. Their requests are immediately answered when possible or forwarded to central office staff for further research or consideration as future LMI research projects under the auspices of the Workforce Information Plan or other leveraged LMI funding.

The partnership and collaboration with local officials is integral to the effectiveness of planning, developing and implementing work force information research that meets the LMI needs and demands of state and local work force investment system.

The Workforce Development Council, its staff and Commerce & Labor's regional economists regularly evaluate the plan to ensure it fulfills the work force information needs of Idaho's dynamic economy. Idaho's out-stationed regional economists are the primary messengers of local LMI and the major conduit to local political, civic, academic business and labor leaders. They monitor the needs and requests of all local stakeholders, either acting immediately on questions, concerns and feedback or relaying them to those

who can respond. The more detailed requests are designated as full ad hoc projects. Both immediate and ad hoc requests are culled monthly and documented by planning and evaluation staff to be potentially included as an annual deliverable in the abstract submitted for the current year's Workforce Information Plan.

ALMIS Database

ALMIS database deliverable has experienced cost savings from efficiencies and long tenured personnel. However, customer feedback indicates that the ALMIS database is among their lowest priorities because Idaho provides the information in so many other forms and through other tools that exceed the ALMIS database capability in an effort to make the data as available as possible to everyone. Idaho's research and analysis and public affairs teams are small and housed in the same division, making the data more readily available to researchers, customers and stakeholders than it is in states with larger, more complex customer delivery networks.

While feedback indicates customers value local community data more than statewide, regional or national data, there are occasions when state comparisons are necessary and vital. These data need to be standardized for comparison purposes. Federal Education and Training Administration funding ensures data platforms are uniform, allowing comparability across state lines. The ALMIS database allows state-to-state comparison of data under the same contexts and platforms. As federal funding shrinks, states will follow the dollar and conduct research with more autonomy to meet the immediate needs of the local customer.

As the following report shows, Idaho was forced to fiscally subsidize several of the work force information deliverables. But in the case of ALMIS, experienced and tenured employees are responsible for populating the ALMIS database, creating savings as long as their expertise is retained.

The ALMIS database's 24/7 availability of iLMI gives customers access to information outside regular work hours and without LMI staff assistance. It is imperative that the department consolidate census, economic and labor market information databases in order to improve efficiency of data storage, data population and data dissemination. Most research and data will be pushed to its particular Web destination by both the ALMIS database and alternative existing databases that support data outside the ALMIS structure. The department is developing a Web infrastructure that will consolidate all databases into one that will push supporting data to the Web delivery system. This effort will improve speed and accuracy, enhancing distribution of LMI to those customers and stakeholders needing this valuable data.

Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections

Idaho has experienced the most significant change in deliverable content and scope in the short- and long-term projections. Employment growth in Idaho continues to lead the nation or be near the top. This has prompted numerous inquiries from customers about what the future holds for Idaho. What levels of growth will occur locally or regionally and how will that impact the need for labor, education and future curricula. Such focus on the future has compelled us to spend significantly more hours on improving local and regional models. In PY2005 Idaho developed independent models for each three-digit NAICs industry and a few selected four-digit industries for all six regions in Idaho. This ambitious effort is so far ahead of the schedule outlined in the PY2005 TEGl and plan that the work force information team has moved the deliverable dates up six to eight months. These delays have moved the dissemination of the final publication into PY2006. Having used the residual PY05 allocation, the department is subsidizing this effort with alternative funding from its budgets.

One of the most significant changes is in the delivery dates for short-term projections. Feedback from stakeholders, most notably the state Legislature, made it necessary to move short-term projections toward a December release, moving that deliverable eight months ahead of schedule. Idaho's industry and occupation long-term and short-term projections were developed in tandem using similar methodological models for the first time during PY2005.

Provide occupational and career information products for public use

Each Occupational Employment Statistics wage publication was published pursuant to the Workforce Information Plan. But publication will now occur only once a year because of Bureau of Labor Statistics budget cuts. However, OES data continues to be collected biannually. Idaho also continues to use the Estimates Delivery System to publish this updated data as quickly as possible.

The Estimates Delivery System is used to mine data needed to produce planned deliverables and respond to ad hoc information and research requests. Some of these projects will be mentioned in the following sections of this report. Idaho encourages continued funding of the system and related workgroups. These products are some of the most requested and used by customers and stakeholders.

The Idaho work force information team was successful in delivering the Fringe Benefit Survey, albeit slightly behind schedule and over budget. This effort augmented the original sample in order to gain findings by geography, business size and industry. Extra costs were subsidized by cost-savings gained in other deliverables such as the ALMIS database. Feedback from customers was positive. Customers indicate annual surveys are

not necessary and biennial surveys will meet the needs of most customers and stakeholders. Feedback indicates the fringe benefit survey would be most useful if findings were comparable across contiguous states. Therefore, it would be valuable for the partner states to collaborate in the coming years both fiscally and statistically. Idaho is currently in discussion with LMI directors in Washington and Oregon on a collaborative fringe benefit survey for the three northwestern states.

Idaho continued to produce the annual Education & Training Pay! poster, which is published on the Web site and provided by mail in hard copy upon request.

The Education & Training Pay! poster continues to be one of the most appreciated publications the work force information team produces. Idaho is considering changing the publication dates due to changes in the BLS OES cooperative agreements. As previously mentioned, BLS will no longer be providing states with November estimates. Therefore, publication will move to spring following the new BLS release protocol.

Idaho continues to provide two employer databases to customers – maintaining and expanding Idaho’s Business Directory as well as InfoUSA, which includes over 73,000 Idaho businesses. Via the iLMI Internet portal and the Career Information System interface, the employer databases are more widely available. They are also integrated into ancillary systems that complement LMI and CIS. The department produces a directory file to fit their Internet platform needs.

Idaho is strongly considering discontinuing efforts to survey employers not already in Idaho’s own employer database. The department would maintain the database and add employers via the Idaho Business Registration system. However, annual refile efforts continue to degrade. The returns are not sufficient to warrant the cost of adding past employers who fail to sign the releases. In PY2006, continuing to maintain the state directory will be evaluated against relying solely on InfoUSA.

Ensure that work force information and support required by the state Workforce Development Council are provided

The Communications and Research Division will continue to expand use of the **Local Employment Dynamics** program in responding to the need for labor, economic and demographic data at the community level. Idaho Commerce & Labor was a pilot state for the LED mapping application tool. Organizationally, Idaho offers an integrated structure among local economic development, labor market information, census and other data users. The mapping application provides a new planning and analytical tool, which with others helps a variety of entities facing the challenge of improving the economic viability of their communities. The comprehensive socio-economic and geographic database that will be enhanced by Geographic Information Systems and LED mapping applications is an enormous tool to assist local economic development officials. Efforts to market this tool are being upgraded in the coming year as priorities are shifted to meet customer demand.

The LED component provides an excellent tool to respond to the needs of the state board and local regions. The Communications and Research Division will use the LED program to respond to the need for labor, economic and demographic data at the community level. This program provides the tools necessary to measure, correlate and analyze these related data sets.

Federal budget cuts have delayed Idaho's effort to use the new Skills Based Employment Projections system along with a new economic forecasting tool to support local leaders and stakeholders with critical labor market information. The Education and Training Administration has cut funding to the Project Managing Partnership efforts to populate Idaho skills data into the Skills Based Employment Projections system. This tool is in great demand, and Idaho is optimistic it will eventually be funded. Without it, the process is labor intensive. Idaho's Workforce Development Council values this information as a top priority in its effort to measure skills gaps within the labor force.

The department continues to contract for the Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI) economic impact tool to assess a variety of projects for planners, economic developers and policy makers. This tool has allowed the work force information team to be more efficient in allocating its resources. In the past, the team has used a variety of other tools to develop economic multipliers and economic impacts. But they have been laborious, and alternative regional multipliers are very expensive, time consuming and difficult to apply to the local and community levels. This tool has been used for a variety of ad hoc projects that will be listed in the following sections. Idaho is now in the first year of a negotiated three-year contract for two licenses.

Idaho has also spent significant time and money evaluating a variety of cluster analyses, both by industry and occupation. The department forged an agreement with economists at the city of Boise to partner in a comprehensive industry cluster analysis for Idaho and its communities. The Division of Economic Development is also a partner in this effort.

As previously mentioned, customer evaluation supports pursuit of data and research that measure the work force and economy at the most granular levels – county, city and in some cases the census block level. Getting down to these more granular levels is significantly more expensive than the federal funding the department currently receives.

Technology, innovation and hardworking, intelligent employees have enabled the department to provide more local information in the face of today's fiscal challenges. Below is a sample of ad hoc research, informational and data contributions to various research efforts, funded at least in part by the PY2005 work force information grant:

- Conducted a study for the College of Southern Idaho occupation needs for topographical surveying.
- Assisted the College of Southern Idaho in data gathering for a \$2.9 million medical grant that was awarded.

- Prepared a study for the College of Southern Idaho on construction occupations, which led the school to establish the residential construction technology programs with two levels of training – associate of applied science and a technical certificate.
- Conducted an occupational study for Idaho State University to help it expand educational opportunities in the area.
- Prepared a large number of economic development packages and labor market analyses for projects including those for Western Trailers in Payette, Jayco, which located in Idaho in 2005; Dutchmen, which located in Idaho in 2006, and Mulholland Positioning Systems, which has decided to locate in Idaho in 2007.
- Presented labor market information to the Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce 2005 planning session for 2005 – 2015.
- Contributed to numerous radio, television and newspaper interviews on the state and regional economies and on topics from the impact of retirement on manufacturing jobs and slow job growth to changing demographics, skills, summer jobs and plunging unemployment rates.
- Provided information to area school boards and staff for planning and budget analysis.
- Provided labor force availability for numerous economic development projects pursued Idaho Commerce & Labor and local economic development associations such as Valley Vision, Ida-Lew, Latah County Economic Development, University of Idaho, Clearwater County Incubator and the Port of Lewiston.
- Provided reports and made several presentations to the Nez Perce Tribe on economic development and the impact of building new buildings for the tribe's casino.
- Presented economic and labor market information at the statewide education conference in Lewiston.
- Provided monthly fact sheets for county commissioners, city officials and businesses in north central Idaho.
- Presented economic and labor market information at the Inland Northwest Economic Forum and the Eastern Washington Economic Symposium in Spokane.
- Provided talking points for the director for trade missions and a variety of meetings including Director's Forums, chambers of commerce, business openings and other gatherings.
- Participated in and made a presentation at the Department's E³ forums in January and August.
- Provided a variety of labor market information from short responses to special research reports to the U.S. Forest Service, University of Idaho, Lewis-Clark State College, business, media and others on a regular basis.
- Served as the chair or co-chair on several committees in the area involved looking at skill development for jobs in demand – North Idaho

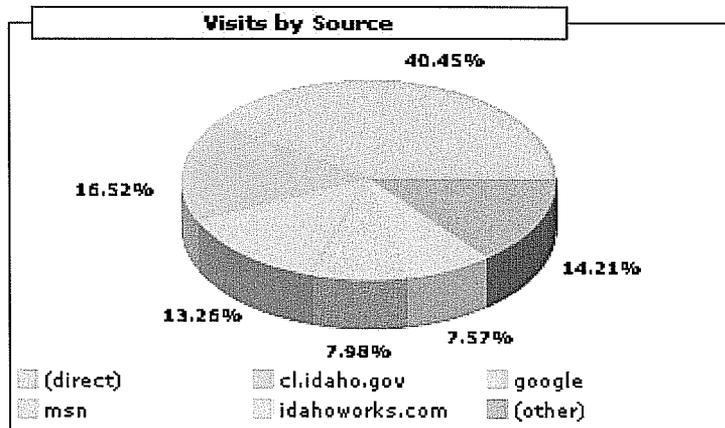
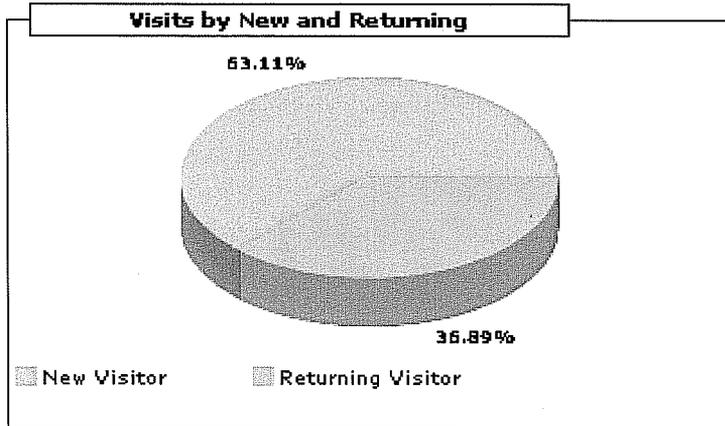
- & Eastern Washington Manufacturing Board; Inland Northwest Contractor's Board and the Lewis-Clark State College Nursing Board.
- Gathered data for Boise State University for its community college plan.
- Provided labor market analysis for Governor Kempthorne's state parks initiative.
- Made presentations to Northwest Nazarene University economic classes.
- Gathered information for several prison industry projects, including an analysis of employer willingness to hire inmates upon their release.
- Worked with state and local officials in providing labor market information and made presentations for the Marathon Cheese project in Mountain Home.
- Worked with the Boise Chamber of Commerce on labor market information for a number of potential new businesses including several call centers.
- Participated on a variety of data-hungry boards and committees including the New Business Direction Committee of the Boise Chamber of Commerce, Meridian Chamber's Economic Committee and Caldwell Chamber of Commerce Economic Committee.
- Participated in providing labor market information for southwestern Idaho for the department's economic symposium in both written and oral formats.
- Made a presentation on wages, income and unemployment to a group of 300 citizens concerned about the economically disadvantaged people in Kootenai County called "The Other Kootenai County."
- Prepared a PowerPoint presentation for the Panhandle staff of Idaho Commerce & Labor about the new U.S. occupational projections to help them better understand what occupations are likely to grow and decline.
- Met with staff from Kootenai Planning & Zoning on employment trends in Kootenai County and relative industrial growth rates of the Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls, Rathdrum, Spirit Lake-Athol and Worley areas.
- Met with Dean Haagenson, the president of Contractors Northwest and long-time leader of the contractors association in northern Idaho, about issues with regard to wages, job openings, training opportunities and possible sources of construction workers. Conducted several meetings with business owners and human resources managers.
- Developed a seven-page booklet on population, incomes and jobs in Hayden for a presentation by Jo Ann Edmiston, the Coeur d'Alene local office manager, to the Hayden Chamber of Commerce.
- Prepared population projections for Moyie Springs for an engineering firm contracting with the Panhandle Area Council.
- Put together an eight-page handout for Bridgette Bradshaw-Fleer, local manager of the Sandpoint office, for a presentation about education and Bonner County's labor force.
- Provided an estimate of the multiplier effect of the Riley Creek timber layoff in Moyie Springs to the Bonners Ferry Herald.

- Prepared a report on the sources of growth and decline in Boundary County's economy from 2000 to 2005 for Bonners Ferry Herald.
- Prepared handouts on student career choices and spoke to groups at Post Falls High School, Lake City High School, St. Maries alternative school, Sandpoint alternative school, Center for New Directions and North Idaho Christian Academy.
- Wrote article for the Idaho Employment newsletter comparing occupational projections for the United States and Idaho.
- Analyzed demand for and availability of machinists for North Idaho College and the Boundary Economic Development Council.
- Gave presentation to the Idaho Commerce & Labor managers in southwestern Idaho on the economic outlook for the coming year and gave a similar presentation about Shoshone County to the Kiwanis in Kellogg.
- Collected statistics about incomes and health care benefits for Bonner County task force on health care.
- Gave a presentation to Boundary County citizens working on the economic part of county's comprehensive plan.
- Participated in three Jobs Plus site visits.
- Prepared population, employment and income estimates and projections for Coeur d'Alene Tribe's grant office.
- Made four presentations to the BYU-Idaho Communications class along with a representative from the Rexburg office. These groups total at least 100 people each time.
- Made presentations to the chambers of commerce throughout all of Idaho.
- Participated in numerous site visits and made presentations to potential large employers throughout all of Idaho.
- Represented the department in both Spanish and English at job, career and community fairs.
- Presented at the Job Options conference for Eastern Idaho Technical College and co-conducted a workshop on Internet job searches.
- Created numerous labor assessments for potential employment opportunities in the state.
- Chaired the advisory board for the Center for New Directions at Eastern Idaho Technical College.
- Assisted Eastern Idaho Technical College with mock interviews for business students.
- Conducted special research projects for the local offices.
- Made presentations at an Idaho State University class for women on the impact of the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the national, state and local economies and on women.

These are only a small sample of how work force information is disseminated and gets used by customers and stakeholders.

Maintain and enhance electronic state work force information delivery systems

Idaho's Internet Labor Market Information located at lmi.idaho.gov has celebrated its third complete year in service. It went live in February 2003 following several long and arduous years of development and preparation. It is delivering a product that meets immediate customer needs for labor market information.

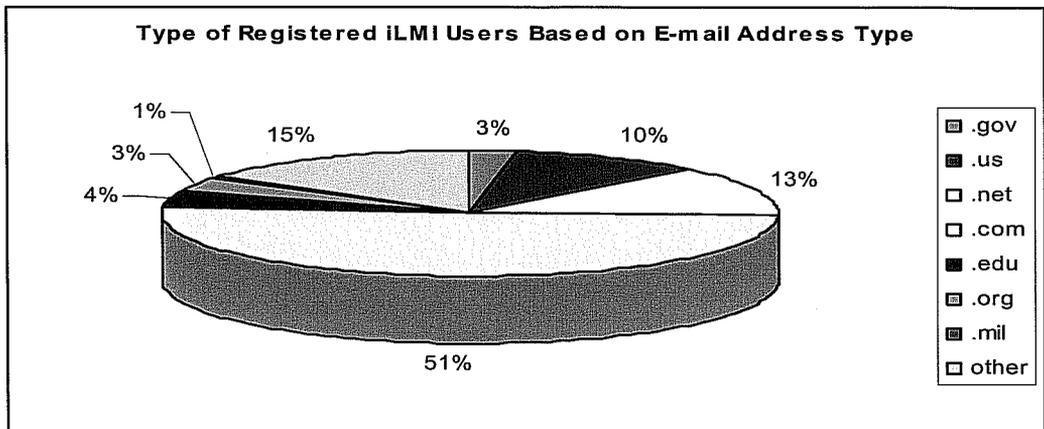


The Idaho Labor Market Information Web site is the main source of data and content delivered to Idaho customers. Over the analysis period of July 2005 through June 2006, iLMI averaged nearly 10,000 visits per month. Sixty-three percent were new visitor, and 37 percent were returning visitors. Nearly 41 percent of visitors accessed the site directly by its URL, lmi.idaho.gov, meaning customers either have iLMI bookmarked or are physically typing in the address. About 17 percent of visitors access the site through the Idaho Commerce & Labor main Web site, cl.idaho.gov.

Idaho currently is running version 3.0 of Wi and will be upgrading to version 3.1 in

near future. Idaho has a maintenance agreement for 3.0 and will likely procure another year with CIBER in December 2006.

The "my site" portal has a total of 961 registered users. External users account for 87 percent of those registered. My site allows the user to save articles, publications and data for easy retrieval. The chart below breaks down user types.

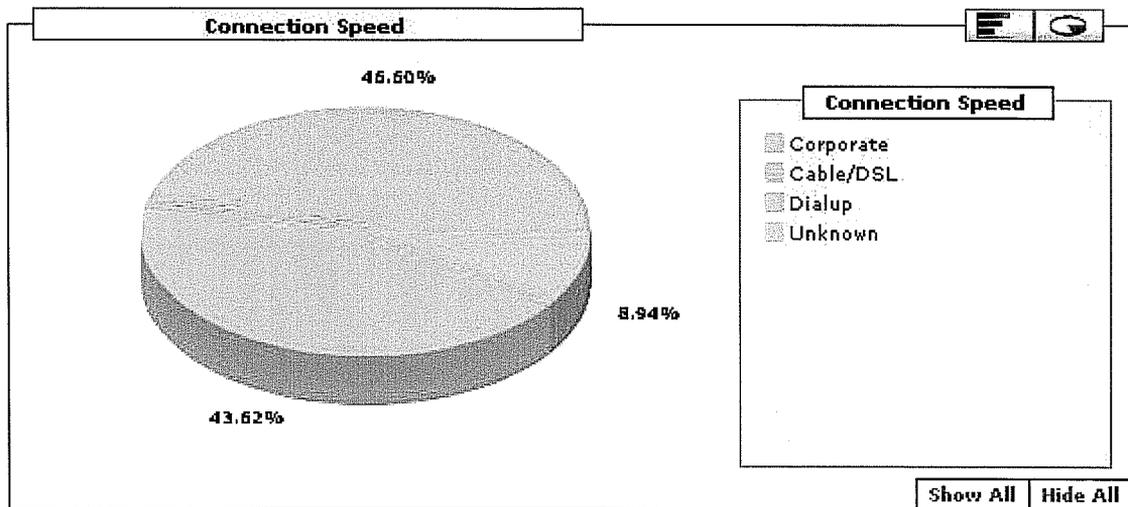


Keywords to finding iLMI through external search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN are consistent across those search engines. “Idaho,” “County,” “Wages” and “Prevailing” remain the most used keywords in successfully connecting to iLMI.

Labor Market Information program pages continue to be the most popular with customers. Download of data is available on all program pages. Rankings in the top six are Wages by Occupations, Labor Force, Labor Market Publications, Business Directory, Population and Covered Employment.

Area Labor Market Information has shown improved visits with the north central region receiving the most regional visits, the Mountain Home office getting the most local office visits and Lemhi County being the most popular of the county labor market information pages.

Nearly 47 percent of iLMI customers are entering the site from a so-called corporate connection – typically a dedicated line with a very fast speed. Cable or DSL connections, which are also relatively high speed, account for nearly 44 percent of customers. Dialup, which is the slowest of all speeds, is less than 9 percent. This information enables the department to optimize the site and content. The faster the connection speed the more content can be delivered. Most Internet users will leave a page if they have to wait longer than a few seconds for it to appear. With the predominance of higher connection speeds, graphs and charts can now be placed on the program along with download capabilities. Having graphics on the Web page instead of just a download keeps the viewer on the page longer, possibly even on the site longer. Tracking connection speeds provides a better idea of the site’s target markets.



Although all publications are available on the Labor Market Information Web site, many customers still request paper copies. Idaho delivered nearly 32,000 publications to customers over the last program year. The Idaho Employment Newsletter and County Labor Force Worksheet continue to be the most requested. Idaho Employment Newsletter subscribers were surveyed in July. The survey contained six questions concerning content, method of delivery and other labor market information tools readers might use. The main reason was to determine how many readers preferred to have the newsletter mailed. Of those receiving the publication in the mail who responded, 44 percent said they would switch to e-mail deliver while 43.5 percent said they wanted to keep getting the newsletter in the mail. Limiting the number of copies printed and mailed would save money that could be directed to future research projects.

The survey confirmed customer preference for regional data and content, which has come out in the inquiries received by telephone or during presentations. The newsletter should continue to be published monthly. Although less than 50 percent of readers of the printed version actually go to the Labor Market Information Web site, it is anticipated the shift to electronic distribution will increase use of iLMI over the next few months. Those responding to the survey expressed an interest in additional data on construction, building permits and demographics. Overall, readers are happy with the current Idaho Employment Newsletter. A complete review will be conducted by the survey team to see what improvements can be made.

The department continues to assess the feedback it gets through the online user surveys accessible on every page of the Web site. But the LMI team gains perhaps the most intelligent feedback on the Internet delivery system during hands-on training sessions. These venues provide trainers with immediate user assessments. Often improvements are made within 24 hours of these suggestions being made.

The LMI team works closely with the six regional economists stationed throughout the state. Feedback from the state council and the local groups continues to focus on the need

for dynamic electronic and analytical products. The LMI unit will continue using the Workforce Informer, or Wi, technology to meet this demand. Idaho continues to aggressively pursue the use of electronic and digital media to more efficiently and effectively publish and disseminate LMI.

The future of electronic delivery of LMI in Idaho is exciting. LMI data is accessible to anyone. iLMI has evolved over the last three years and includes both fundamental data tools for core customers and more comprehensive data tools for power users. Simple search engines and Web site links are included to facilitate rapid, user-friendly browsing of numerous LMI sources. They allow analysts to update and load information quickly, permit historic data to be retained and provide links to related topics, articles and publications. Customer feedback and demand will result in significant upgrades as seen below. Specific to iLMI technology, anticipated outcomes and future enhancements to be made in PY2006 are:

- New Web site administrator tools. Integrated user statistics allow administrators to track the number of downloads of publications, articles and Excel files. To date, the task is cumbersome and labor intensive due to the amount of traffic generated by users. A new tracking tool is currently being development by Idaho Commerce & Labor staff. Upon completion, administrators will be able to query Web statistics and create more in-depth reports on usage, downloads, visits and keywords used.
- Further enhancements to Industry Explorer, a more user-friendly report system based on industry data. User statistics will be available to e-mail articles, publications and Excel files directly from the site.
- Article and publication rating. An online rating system will include a one-to-five point range, displaying the most popular articles and publications in real time.
- Advanced search tool. Search engine will hit on all aspects of written content based on a keyword search, author name and category.
- Database enhancements. Non-core tables such as schools, programs, completer tables and economic indicator tables such as the consumer price index will be populated.
- Graphing tools. Integrated Pop Charts dynamic graphing tool will allow for more extensive use in the ALMIS database and the entire site.

These diagnostics will be used as a baseline for future analysis. The visits should expand exponentially since the department continues to convert all of its previous Internet information into the Wi product, which already covers the majority of the department's Internet delivery.

The future of delivering work force information via the Web is both fiscally challenging but fiscally necessary, creating a technology conundrum. This is clear as consideration is being given to moving more of the department's budget from actual Wi products to tools such as Web diagnostic software to measure Web traffic and the like.

The work force information team is at a cross-road in evaluating information-delivery technology against the current federal budget allocations and state supplements. However the department understands that its best weapon to counter budget cutbacks is technology and innovation. It must maximize our return on investment as it continues to use technology and innovation to deliver world class work force information products to customers and stakeholders. Idaho Commerce & Labor strongly encourages ETA to expand funding for the maintenance and enhancement of electronic work force information delivery systems. This infrastructure is vital to delivering accurate and useful work force information to customers in an efficient and timely manner.

Support state work force information training activities

Communications and Research staff provided Labor Market Information training to a wide variety of customers at sessions held around the state. These included legislative committees, local chambers of commerce, economic development groups, job fairs, business groups, school classes and local office staff. The sessions focus on how to use LMI in making good business decisions, career choices and more effective job searches. They will also provide training on the new iLMI Web site, including the local office pages.

One example of this effort was training through the Idaho's Economic Symposium held in Boise this past year. Over 200 legislators, planners, economic developers, business and a variety of other customers and stakeholders attended. This group was expanded during regional follow-up sessions were held to provide and gather information.

The work force information team is developing a new approach to training in response to the significant cutbacks in funding and the rising need for localized accurate economic data and research. The team is now reaching out to the department's economic development team and offering training to its members and their partners. In fact, in some cases the economic development staff are providing the licenses and tools needed to gain the information that in the past the work force information team had to provide for them. Training electronically through the work force information delivery system is a major focus during shrinking budgets. Prioritizing ad hoc research requests is necessary since the department can no longer answer every inquiry. Therefore it continues to use new tools to respond or speed up response time and improve accuracy. As part of the customer satisfaction evaluation component, Idaho's top 10 requests to regional economists with the highest frequency listed first are:

- General economic conditions by geography.
- Unemployment rate, employment and labor force.

- Wages by occupation and by geography.
- Population growth by region.
- Information disaggregated by industry.
- Ranked employer size by geography.
- Demographics of population and labor force.
- Labor availability and supply.
- Declining and growing occupations, occupations hardest to fill and curriculum needs by skills and training gaps.
- Cost-of-living information relevant to Idaho geographies.

As previously mentioned, the work force information team gains perhaps the most intelligent feedback for improvements of the Internet delivery system during training sessions and other contacts. These power users understand how to leverage LMI so their feedback on iLMI is integral to efforts to cut costs while improving the product.

However, the current funding cutbacks and the rising need for local and precise research have prompted the work force information team to look for opportunities where it is able to charge for research publications. The department currently cannot keep pace with the rising demand and funding shortfalls. A cursory assessment of models for charging for products indicate may challenges. However, models to charge for research need to be evaluated in order to meet the rising demands on staff from customers and stakeholders. Customers are often charged extremely high fees when they contract with the private sector to add value to existing labor market information. State LMI shops can do this research at significantly lower cost, but funding is necessary to continue to deliver these vital LMI services.