American Library Association
Government Documents Round Table

Government Information Technology Committee (GITCO)

GITCO Home > Minutes of the Midwinter Meeting of GITCO, 1/14/01

Sunday, June 17, 2001, 9:30am-2:30pm.
Renissance PARC 55, Barcelona I, San Francisco, CA
Doralyn Edwards, Chair

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes

4. Reports from Task Force Representatives on matters of interest to GITCO, and other updates

a. GITCO Web Site update/GODORT Web Group Update/Eric Forte- Christof Galli of Duke is new GODORT webmaster, beginning after Annual
b. IDTF/Eric Forte- IDTF still working on survey of IGO and NGO electronic information archiving practices
c. SLDTF/Carrie Ottow- Patricia Cruise showed Counting California initiative; SLDTF planning 2002 program on innovative services for state and local information- ideas for program to Carrie.
d. Ad Hoc Committee on Digitization/Eric Forte for Luke Griffin- they will present findings and recommendations to GODORT by October. They are creating a database of govinfo digitization projects
e. TechWatch Column/Megan Dreger- ideas for future columns to Megan
f. FDTF/Aimee Quinn- FDTF interested in potential 2003 program about government documents libraries' web pages, including design and content issues. GITCO recommends any planned program be flexible enough in scope to address technology at the time of the program. GITCO will support and aid if FDTF goes ahead with program. FDTF is following up on the NCLIS report. The federal agency liason program pretty dead- will need new person to reinvigorate.
g. Web Page Template/Doralyn Edwards for Cathy Hartman- template sees consistent usage, recently about 400 hits per month. Publicity efforts continue, and the template continues to be updated as necessary. The template is being used by a SUNY-Buffalo as part of their government documents class assignment.

5. Presentation from Kenneth Nero and Pat Wood of Firstgov
In general, Firstgov went up very quickly under some pressure, but now is working on improving. Firstgov is continuing to add sites and has made significant improvements to the
search engine that have greatly improved results. They plan to begin adding state and local sites soon. Firstgov is working on a taxonomy of federal websites based on a consumer approach to government services and information. They are consulting taxonomies for various existing government information sources, as well as examples from private sector. Firstgov is seeking expert advice of govdocs librarians, especially regarding the arrangement of categories. Librarians wishing to help with taxonomy should contact John Hernandez, who will act as liason between GITCO and Firstgov.

6. Old Business

a. Firstgov/John Hernandez- John briefly reported on updates to his analysis of government search engines- Firstgov is much improved. Aimee Quinn (FDTF) and Carrie Ottow (SLDTF) will encourage members interested in working on Firstgov taxonomy to contact John.

b. NTDB issues/Carrie Ottow and Esther Crawford- Carrie and Esther have prepared a report on the differences between NTDB and STAT-USA, and- in light of NTDB discontinuation- archiving of STAT-USA. STAT-USA will not archive, not in their mission-up to agencies who produce the actual information. Aimee Quinn will take the report back to FDTF, who originally asked GITCO to look into this problem.

c. Census 2000/Grace York- some issues resolved, but many remain. Issues to address include: access to ftp for 94-171 data; access to General Demographic Profiles for place level; quick training for imminent release of STF1; web maps greatly improved, but realistically need hard copies/plotter/large printer to use; many tables long available in print do not appear to be available via Factfinder, without downloading and significant editing in spreadsheet; training for ftp and unzip needed; how to switch columns and rows in a spreadsheet; where to find geographic codes; sorting; Mac issues, especially: will Allocate work on Macs?

John Hernandez reports that Allocate will be software on DVDs. DVDs will also include ascii files untied to Allocate.

GITCO members Megan Dreger, Aimee Quinn, Wendy-Mann Elliot, and perhaps some incoming members will work with Grace on addressing these issues. Doralyn Edwards will ask GODORT Steering if anyone has suggestions for a public library person to help.

d. CD-ROM Documentation Project update/Carolyn Kohler, Anne Liebst, Beth Clausen- A TechWatch column about the project is just out. Carolyn introduced Steve Ostrem, who handles the technical issues at Iowa. Carolyn will do a program on CDROMDOC at Depository Library meeting. They are making small changes, such as deleting unnecessary fields. Steve, Beth, and Anne are working on publicity and instructions to editors. In the future, the project will retain one GITCO member who works with Carolyn and the host site, and queries the entire GITCO committee as necessary. Beth Clausen will serve in that role this year.

e. GITCO listserv- For the time being, Doralyn Edwards will continue to run the GITCO listserv as a Friend of GITCO.

7. New Business

a. GITCO Toolbox- The toolbox would organize much of GITCO's work and act as the forum
for presenting and making our work more accessible. Toolbox will be integrated into GITCO web site. Eric Forte will work up draft, and discuss design and publicity with committee via email. Toolbox elements may include:

1. CD-ROM Documentation Project
2. TechWatch- compilation of TechWatch columns, with updates to issues as necessary. Megan Dreger will lead.
4. Census 2000 issues- with results of work from group as discussed above.
5. An Agency Webwatch? - Megan Dreger and John Hernandez will work with Firstgov on some product that tracks developments at agency websites.
6. Web Template/Web Issues- this will include the Web Page Template, and also could include information for govdocs web designers. And/or it could be recommended guidelines for agency websites. It could also address any number of other issues related to migration of government publications to electronic formats, such as cost implications, preservation, etc. The committee will discuss possibilities via email. New GITCO members will hopefully be enlisted.

b. Other- Cindi Wolff reminder of Census Preconference in Atlanta- hands-on event for 40 people; Cindi suggests GITCO look into co-sponsoring 2003 program on digitization. The Committee thanked Doralyn Edwards for two years of excellent and very productive leadership.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30. Recorder: Eric Forte