**NNIPCamp Denver**

Session 3: Thursday 10/23/2014, 2:45pm-3:45pm

Location: Sage

Session Title: Unexpected Data Partners

Organizer: Jordan Wirfs-Brock

Primary Notetaker: Rob Pitingolo

Participants: Terpstra, Urban, Martinez, Branson [arrived late], Keithley [arrived late]

[Session begins]

Wirfs-Brock: Why is everyone here?

Terpstra: I want to get new ideas and strategies.

Pitingolo: I want to crack a tough data partner (DMV).

Wirfs-Brock: Let’s try to figure out how to move from idea to action.

Wirfs-Brock: Example- I’ve had a great experience working with libraries. There is a consortium of libraries in Colorado.

Branson: What was that data relationship?

Wirfs-Brock: It wasn’t. It was a story telling relationship.

Terpstra: I like the idea of a non-data partnership. Finding a partner to help get the word out.

Martinez: We’ve partnered with City Year. They were excited, wanted to take a data-driven approach. But it kind of fizzled.

Terpstra: We rely on person to person relationships because it’s easy. MOUs and agreements are a lot of work. It stops working once your person leaves. Can be a big setback.

Urban: We’ve wanted to build a relationship with the water department. They gave us one data dump and then nothing.

Wirfs-Brock: What did you do to show the water department it would be mutually beneficial?

Urban: They have the data, updated, just didn’t follow up.

Pitingolo: Couldn’t get DMV data because there was no resources over there.

Branson: Project based relationships tend to work. Write an MOU that’s tied to a grant and a grant deadline. Once you get the project you have a promise to get the data.

Terpstra: That’s another level that we haven’t tried but sounds promising.

Wirfs-Brock: Grants give births to partnerships and accountability.

Branson: Provides two way cover; for you and the data provider. Nobody wants to be the entity that walks away or breaches agreement. Once you’ve gotten to renew a data sharing agreement once, it’s easy to get it done again.

Wirfs-Brock: The more I think, the more important it seems like a partnership, not a ‘source’.

Branson: Some relationships have little reciprocity. DMV, corrections, workforce. There’s not much out there but it’s hard to find a two-way relationship.

Wirfs-Brock: I’d challenge to think, what could the other partner get?

Pitingolo: Some agencies seem more eager for research - health departments in particular.

Branson: What about utilities?

Urban: We have some utility data. It is de-identified and at parcel-level. Gas disconnects. Want to have thermal data to measure vacancy / squatters.

Branson: What about public housing authorities?

Martinez: We have access, individual record, but not entirely sure what they database has or can do.

Wirfs-Brock: Let’s move on to new partnership ideas.

Urban: One thing very exploratory... there’s a big push in the museum toward digitizing archives.

Wirfs-Brock: Digital communities like museums, historical societies, libraries.

Keithley: In Columbus there is a new consortium of libraries. I don’t know much about it. I think it would be cool.

Wirfs-Brock: Colorado libraries did a survey of what people use computers for. Lots for “entertainment” but in rural areas a lot of people used them for job applications and such.

Branson: There aren’t many colleges in Rhode Island. We have public school data but want private school data too.

Wirfs-Brock: Anyone partnering with researchers like academics?

Keithley: We do some work with public universities in Ohio. Sometimes you get paired with an academic who is not used to project work and can be difficult.

Branson: We have to find a PhD someplace else if we want to do peer-reviewed research.

Tempstra: I have a specific challenge: how do you find out where service agencies work if we only have an address of their main office.

Branson: You can find their 990 they should have additional locations.

Wirfs-Brock: Works sometimes. Depends on the type of service. Sometimes people travel a long distance for services.

Tempstra: It’s a solvable problem on a case by case basis. It’s hard to do in aggregate.

Wirfs-Brock: It’s a huge messy complex problem.

Keithley: There are some large non-profits that have proprietary databases that may have what you need.

Martinez: USD Mapper has some data on federal health centers.

Urban: Foundations may have some information. They want to know where their money is going.

Tempstra: Even trying to “follow the money” at my own organization was not very easy.

Wirfs-Brock: If you make traction on this problem a lot of people will be interested.

Keithley: I’ve discovered that some data is out of date. Hard to know if these organizations even still exist. Sometimes addresses are bogus (like a storage locker).

Wirfs-Brock: How is time? What do you want to do in the last 15 minutes?

Keithley: How do you deal with politics? Someone is on the board of directors of an organization we’re trying to get data from. We could go legit or just go through our board member. What should be do?

Martinez: Sometimes you have to “finesse” the connection.

Wirfs-Brock: How did you do that?

Martinez: That happened above me but it happened with time.

Keithley: Relationships always have glitches and challenges and delays.

Wirfs-Brock: Sometimes you know a relationship isn’t going to be great. How do you manage that?

Branson: We’ve raised money and bought capacity in places we couldn’t initially get in.

Wirfs-Brock: OK, any takeaways or next steps?

Tempstra: On this ‘service area’ problem at least it’s validated that it’s as difficult as I think it is. Good reminder that we’re talking about relationships and not just data sources.

Wirfs-Brock: Build in time to check in with people, not just bug them when there’s a problem.

Tempstra: Yesterday we had a conversation about how and when you get data. Kathy reflected on how NNIP can play a role in promoting best practices and ideas to help in a lot of this.

Wirfs-Brock: OK, thanks everybody.

[End of session]