



THE BEA ITABLES AND NEW MEDIA

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Comments / Suggestions

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What is BEA's role in the statistical system

- BEA is an agency of the Department of Commerce.
 - BEA is part of the Department's Economics and Statistics Administration.
- What we do:
 - Produce economic accounts statistics that enable government and business decision-makers, researchers, and the American public to understand the Nation's economy.
 - Collect source data, conduct research and analysis, develop and implement estimation methodologies, and disseminate statistics to the public.
 - Produce the national income and product accounts (NIPAs), which feature the estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) and related measures.
 - The GDP was recognized by the Department of Commerce as its greatest achievement of the 20th century and has been ranked as one of the three most influential measures that affect U.S. financial markets. Since the NIPAs were first developed in the aftermath of the Great Depression, BEA has developed and extended its estimates to cover a wide range of economic activities.
- Today, BEA prepares national, regional, industry, and international accounts that present essential information on such key issues as economic growth, regional economic development, inter-industry relationships, and the Nation's position in the world economy.

iTables background

- 4 disparate databases and front ends.
- Multiple technologies used to display data.
- Charts, graphs and exports were not consistent in look and feel.
- Few collaboration tools.
- No interactivity.
- Usability study provided insight on changes needed for BEA's interactive data tables.
(2009)

First steps

- BEA created a graphic and charting committee
- Decided the best practices for displaying data
- Developed requirements for IT group to use when designing new system

Expanding the functionality

- IT department developed a master database that translated all requirements into a front end design interface
- All charts and graphs used the same design front end but pulled from individual program area databases
- User accounts were allowed to be created
- Mapping came at a later date and was also consistent across the application

Unique features

- Sign up or creating an account
 - Not required to use iTables
 - Allows for queries to be saved for later access
 - Provides access to social media platforms for additional sharing
- API exposing NIPA and Regional datasets
 - Free access for developers
 - Additional datasets forthcoming
 - Will be used to display multiple datasets for the SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS redesign exclusively online

Marketing of the iTables

- iTables was first introduced to the Washington Campus group seminars for students and educators.
- iTables was also shown to key users such as Haver Analytics in New York shortly after launch.
- BEA created several online videos on how to use iTable to find regional data
- The API was used during the National Day of Civic Hacking event in June 2013