

## Open Data Market Is Growing, Study Says

Colin Wood | May 13, 2016



Open data is one of government's most acclaimed endeavors, but back in March, U.S. Open Data Director Waldo Jaquith [noted that open data might be a trend on shaky ground](#). "Fad" can be another word for "trend," after all. But [a new study](#) conducted by open data company Socrata indicates that, for the time being, investment in and support for open data remain steady.

The study's objective was to evaluate government's attitudes and plans surrounding open data, and the report indicates positive support from government, particularly at the federal level. Data was gathered via an email survey issued to 506 self-selected government workers.

"The benchmark study uncovered the power of open data in bolstering economies and creating efficiency within government," said Socrata Chief Marketing Officer Eric Eden. "Expanding commitment and investment from government entities spanning federal, state and local are very promising signs that more communities will benefit from open data in the near-term."

The federal government led the survey with 56 percent of respondents reporting that their organization's goal is to make as much of their data open as possible. About 60

percent of federal respondents also reported that their stated open data mission goes beyond basic sharing and that they are taking action on that mission. About 44 percent of federal respondents also shared that their organizations have open data investments planned for the next six months.

The trend was weaker in other levels of government, but still encouraging for open data proponents. About 18 percent of respondents from county government reported open data investment planned within the coming six months, while 25 percent of city respondents reported investment plans. Eighty-three percent of respondents overall said it is their goal to make the most important and useful data open to the public.

For company CEO and President Kevin Merritt, the study bolsters what Socrata already believed about the market.

“Obviously we’re heavily invested in the open data market, and we’re more bullish than ever,” Merritt said. “The business has been growing super fast for four or five years now and ... if anything, I would say there’s a tipping point. There is an absolute avalanche of governments now deciding that they need to be involved in this open data movement.”

That open data is a fad ready to fizzle out within a couple of years was a notion that was floating around in 2012, too, Merritt pointed out. But open data is still alive and well.

“If anything, it’s picked up momentum. It hasn’t diminished,” he said. “When I started literally picking up the phone in 2008 and 2009 and calling cities and counties and states and trying to see if they might participate in this broader movement that the federal government was doing, it was few and far between that said, ‘Yeah, this is something I would want to do.’ And now it is so mainstream, I’m even surprised by how low it goes in the market in terms of how small these municipalities are that are embracing this idea.”

In March, Gartner released [a report](#) outlining the market’s technology priorities and topping the list for both government and the private sector were business intelligence and analytics applications, a function that without data, could not exist.

<http://www.govtech.com/data/Open-Data-Market-is-Growing-Study-Says.html>