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Data Cookbook Breaks Communication Barriers at Higher Education Institutions
IData, Inc.'s new product standardizes data and improves efficiency

Alexandria, Va. (October 7, 2009) – There are nearly 5,000 colleges and universities in the United States, each facing intense competition for students and faculty and for research dollars and resources from government and private funders. While these institutions continue to invest millions of dollars in the data systems that drive their operations, across the nation, or even within a single university, there are no consistent data definitions. That means information reported– from student and alumni demographics to academic achievement and budget data – is inconsistent and unreliable, making it difficult to accurately compare an institution's current data reports to reports from previous years, or compare reports from one university to another. This results in massive financial waste at a time when resources are scarce.

To solve this problem, IData is launching the Data Cookbook, an online tool of best practices designed to improve data reporting through better communication, collaboration, documentation, and business processes.

"Institutions are throwing money, technology, and people at the problem of reporting, and they still are not being successful," said Brian Parish, President of IData, Inc. "The real solution is developing best practices. Up until now, there has been no tool or service to facilitate these best practices. This will all change with the Data Cookbook."

Written by data reporting professionals for data reporting professionals, the Data Cookbook will save money by negating the need for institutions to replace legacy information systems while simultaneously enabling them to extract the maximum possible value from their data. By using a variety of the industry's best practices to improve workflow, facilitate collaboration, make existing reports more useful and improve future reports, the Data Cookbook serves as the first tool that will allow members of colleges and universities to shape their institution's data definitions and improve the reporting process in order to create more consistency and efficiency.

Effective institutional research relies heavily on the consistent definitions of data, according to the Association for Institutional Research (AIR). Institutional research should be about finding answers, but too often, it's about struggling with the definitions of reporting terms and a lack of understanding about how data is derived. These obstacles create the very inefficiencies and inaccuracies IData seeks to address.

On November 3, IData will launch the Data Cookbook at the 2009 Annual EDUCAUSE Conference in the presence of some of the year's most innovative and upcoming technological products and services.

About IData, Inc.
Since 2004, IData has assisted higher education institutions in becoming more successful with their administrative systems and reporting processes. Doubling in size every year in both employees and revenue, IData has a client list of 37 institutions and has successfully cultivated a unique team of industry experts, all of whom have experience working for higher education institutions or student information system vendors.

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