

ChesapeakeStat
Topline Research Report for
Task 2: Understand the Needs of
the Partnership & Stakeholders

March 11, 2014



Executive Summary



Executive Summary

The objective of Task 2 research was to assess and articulate the information needs of the site's target audiences. Specifically, the research was necessary to ensure:

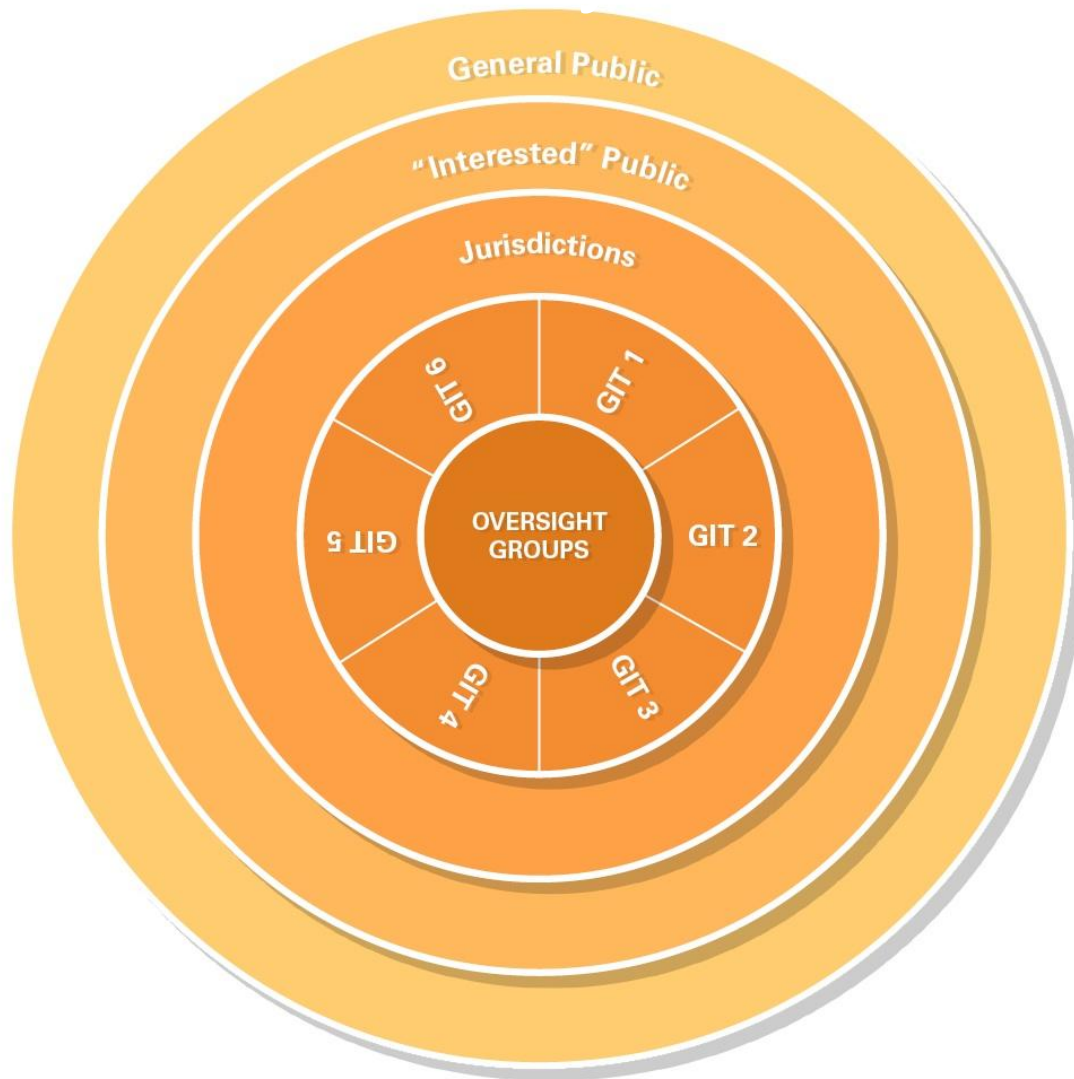
- The site's business case is valid and aligns with users' needs.
- The site targets the correct audiences.
- The audiences' information needs are addressed and met.
- The redesigned *ChesapeakeStat* site is user-driven.
- The new site can be used as a useful tool for tracking progress toward the new Bay Agreement and water quality.

Executive Summary

Task 2 included the following research tasks:

- Small group discussions (3 groups of 6-8 participants each)
- One-on-one phone interviews (25)
- Analysis
- Audience segmentation
- Audience profile development

Chesapeake*Stat* Audience Model



Executive Summary

The Big Takeaway: ChesapeakeStat will be a key asset for its target audiences if:

- They understand **who** and **what** ChesapeakeStat is for and **how** and **why** they should use it.
- The data that the site provides is the data that users actually need, and is presented in a manner that is useful and clear.
- The data on the site is accurate, consistent, timely, and reliable.
- The site is easy to use.
- They know about it.
- Some of the larger strategic considerations that emerged from the research are addressed.

Summary of Top 5 Themes & Recommendations from Task 2 Research Efforts



Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



1. Clarify the benefit and value of using the site, and who should use it.

“There’s a lot of potential for ChesapeakeStat, but it’s floundering on what its real niche should be. It doesn’t need to and shouldn’t be everything for all. Focus on just two or three audiences it should address and the things it should enable those audiences to accomplish.”

Recommendations:

- Define the site’s audiences and address them directly.
- Limit the target audiences and tailor content to their needs.
- Clearly state the purpose and benefits of using the site.
- Explain how to use the site to achieve goals.
- Differentiate the site from other information resources.
- Explain who governs the site and how.
- Explain how the site facilitates adaptive management.

Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



2. Provide scalable data that addresses users' information needs.

“There are 21 commitments within the Agreement, but there are so many more indicators of progress toward our success and whether we are making a difference that ChesapeakeStat could report on.”

Recommendations:

- Make the data as detailed and on as fine a scale as possible.
- Provide high-level syntheses of the data that show big-picture trends, with ability to get the details if needed or desired.
- Obtain and incorporate data that is not on the site now.
- Provide context around the data.

Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



3. Show the plans, progress, performance, and payoff.

Users want to know:

- The goals, strategies, decision points, links between the data points, and level of certainty that the goal will be reached and when.
- If management strategies and goal implementation plans yield results.
- Trends in progress, changes over time, and geographically where progress is being made.
- A clear definition of adaptive management as a strategic approach.
- How to interpret the data contextually.

Recommendations:

- Provide a clear illustration of the goals and strategies.
- Map, show, and describe the trends in progress.
- Explain adaptive management in easy-to-understand terms.
- Put the data in context.

Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



4. Ensure the transparency, accuracy, simplicity, consistency, and currency of the data. Specifically:

- Funding data.

“Want to see how funding has been allocated and appropriated, and how it’s been broken down. How are various amounts being used and to what end? Was it used for overhead or truly utilized toward end goals? People want to see value for the dollar, that something is really happening as a result of the investment.”

- The data that is and is not on ChesapeakeStat.

“If information is not available, the site needs to acknowledge that caveat, or state that all assumptions are correct and the missing data has no significant impact on goal progress.”

- Ease of use and accessibility of the data.

“Transparency is perceived by the user, depending on how user-friendly navigating the site is. If it’s inherently convoluted and information is hidden behind a bunch of steps to get to it, it won’t be transparent.”

Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



Recommendations:

- Provide detailed funding data to the extent that it's available.
- Be transparent about any missing data.
- Make the site easy to use by streamlining and simplifying the amount and presentation of the data and the site's functionality.
- Explore the possibility of standardizing data reporting.
- Explore making the site interoperable with other sites.
- Add missing data, and/or acknowledge that data is missing.
- Maintain the site and notify users when the site has been updated.

Top 5 Themes & Recommendations



5. Increase *ChesapeakeStat*'s visibility and use through branding and marketing.

- Websites are not “build it and they will come.”
- Audiences won't use it if they don't know about it.
- Define *ChesapeakeStat*'s unique selling proposition
 - “What's in it for me?”
 - “Why should I use *ChesapeakeStat* instead of what I'm currently using?”

Recommendations:

- Develop brand concepts and attributes for *ChesapeakeStat* that drive the site's look, feel, tone, and content.
- Articulate what *ChesapeakeStat*'s brand stands for.
- Develop and execute an outreach plan for the launch and ongoing marketing of the site.

Considerations Moving Forward



Considerations Moving Forward

- Positioning and leveraging the site's TMDL information.
- Ongoing site maintenance, management, and marketing.
- Incenting and motivating target audiences to use the site.
- Aligning Chesapeake*Stat*'s data with data available on other sites—e.g., through linking and/or interoperability.
- Enhancing existing data and obtaining new data.
- Clearly defining how Chesapeake*Stat* interrelates with other Program web products.
- Explaining the use of “stat-ing” as an effective method for tracking Bay health progress.
- Determining involvement and roles of key stakeholder groups.

Next Steps



Next Steps



- **Finishing Task 2**
 - Continued conversation about and resolution of considerations
- **Starting Task 3: *Strategy Development***
 - Affinity diagramming and development of site architecture
 - Content strategy
 - Creative brief
- **Looking ahead to Task 4: *Design & Implementation***
 - Primary and secondary page designs
 - HTML templates
 - Working with development contractor to implement designs