

THE INVESTIGATION, SELECTION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
INTERACTIVE MAPPING SOLUTIONS FOR THE ILLINOIS INSTITUTE FOR
RURAL AFFAIRS.

An Abstract of

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ABSTRACT

In the summer of 1998 the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) recognized the need to improve the functionality of its web site. As a planning and development agency the IIRA wished to visually disseminate socio-economic data to end-users. Because the agency caters to rural communities whose resources are often limited, the IIRA wanted to find a cost-effective way for local governments and planners to gain access to useful information at the local level. This report examines the investigative process used to solve this problem. The problem is divided into three components: conceptual decisions, technical roadblocks, and graphical design. Potential solutions are then presented and discussed, and the report describes the final decision of those at the IIRA. The final solution to the problem is a web-based application called the Illinois InfoAtlas. The interface design and the functionality for the Illinois InfoAtlas were decided upon through a cooperative effort of IIRA leaders and the student intern (Todd Lindley), but the programming, testing, debugging, and implementation were done by the student intern (Todd Lindley) over the course of a two-year period. The website offers a wide range of data, is widely visited, and can be found at <http://www.iira.org/infoatlas/>.