

# Obama's CIO: Gov't data can drive innovation

March 12 2009, By DONNA BORAK , AP Business Writer

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(AP) -- The White House's first chief information officer, Vivek Kundra, wants Americans to have access to more government data to drive innovation and help stimulate the economy.

When the [government](#) puts rich information into the [public domain](#) it can help create new markets, Kundra said Thursday at FOSE, an annual government [technology](#) expo. For instance, he said, the global-positioning satellite system spurred everyday technology used to get directions or locate restaurants. But he didn't suggest any other data sources that might be unleashed.

President [Barack Obama](#) named Kundra this month to oversee government technology, a newly created role. That includes making sure disparate computer systems speak to each other and watching the security for vast information databanks.

Previously Kundra had been [chief technology officer](#) for the District of Columbia, responsible for operations at 86 agencies.

Part of Kundra's focus now is to change the way the government buys technologies from its vendors. He wants to find ways for the government to leverage technologies already used by consumers.

"What makes the government so special that it can't embrace some of these consumer technologies?" Kundra said. "What makes the government process so different that there is no way the government

can't take advantage of the Darwinian pressure in the consumer space to fundamentally innovate?"

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Citation: Obama's CIO: Gov't data can drive innovation (2009, March 12) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-03-obama-cio-govt.html>

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