



THE JOURNALIST

Data Consumer

Name: Anna Butler Age: 34 Occupation: Freelance Writer Location: Denver, CO

An investigator and award winning blogger, Anna worked for 8 years at the Washington Post, but now freelances.

Anna studied at NYU and enjoys skiing, biking, and craft beers.

“ Watchdog journalism is a state of mind for the whole newspaper: Journalism that gives power to people. ”*

Goals & Tasks

- Uncovers waste, fraud, or misuse in Federal spending
- Pursues information related to recipients or Federal programs with attention to use of funding consistent with intended purpose, waste, data discrepancies, geographical distribution, etc.
- Seeks answers based on a hunch or specific question; often topical and timely.

Attitudes & Motivations

- Transparency is paramount
- Cares about serving the American public
- Skeptical: will cross-reference with other systems that also document Federal spending
- Will use other legal means to seek information (subpoenas, FOIA request, etc.)

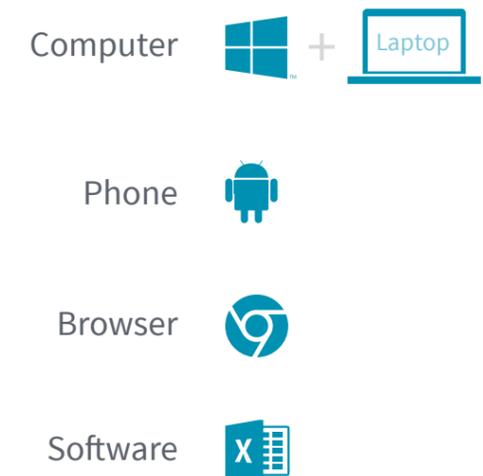
Pain Points

- Not enough detail on spending descriptions or financial recipients to conduct investigations. In some instances, data does not go back far enough to tell the whole story
- Stories are fragmented because of how child companies are split across records; difficult to get the big picture
- Lack of transparency in primary sources of data displayed on USASpending

Skills



Tools



Design Implications

- Link to primary sources or surface them easier (clear, traceable path back to data source for reconciliation)
- Provide more detailed records of spending
- Provide robust search and filter capabilities. Save searches
- Make the financial reporting systems easier to understand

* <http://www.poynter.org/2005/slapping-a-headline-on-watchdog-journalism/67427/>