**7/19/2016**

**Open Data**:

* The White House pushed out guidance from the Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy to expand open-data initiatives, [reports FCW](https://fcw.com/articles/2016/07/15/open-data-guidance.aspx). The guidance pushes best practices, as well as making 2016 the “most expansive” when it comes to open government.
* The National Institutes of Health hopes to use open data to help determine where food-borne epidemics begin, [reports Federal News Radio](http://federalnewsradio.com/ask-the-cio/2016/07/cloud-services-help-nih-bureau-solve-food-borne-mysteries/).
* A blogger digging through New York City’s Open Data Portal figured out City Hall had made an $800 million typo, [reports Patch.com](http://patch.com/new-york/new-york-city/blogger-identifies-800-million-typo-citys-budget).
* “Open-source kindness” means using data to help people in altruistic ways, such as helping the homeless find shelter, matching low-income people with mental-health resources or enabling parents to find free child-care programs, [reports GovEx](http://govex.jhu.edu/data-points-podcast-episode-9-open-source-kindness/).
* The governor of Alaska hopes to use risk-assessment data analytics to determine whom should be released from prison, [reports StateScoop](http://statescoop.com/alaska-gov-signs-bill-to-cut-down-on-incarceration-using-data-analytics).

**Open Government**:

* Cloud-data company Socrata is shifting from working with all governments to just large governments to try to make itself profitable, and laid off 19 people in the process, [reports GeekWire](http://www.geekwire.com/2016/socrata-layoffs/).
* A court ruled the federal government could withhold mugshot from the media in three states, [reports The Associated Press](http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/court-feds-mug-shots-criminal-defendants-40583474).
* San Diego has unveiled a new website filled with government data—and it’s coherent: They included how long it takes the fire department to respond, how many hours city libraries are open, and how many gallons of water are used each day, [reports KPBS](http://www.kpbs.org/news/2016/jul/13/san-diego-unveils-website-on-city-performance/).

**Plain Language**:

* Texas hospitals have determined “armed intruder on the fifth floor” may be more helpful than “code blue,” and are replacing alerts with plain-language messages, [reports The Dallas Morning News](http://www.dallasnews.com/news/crime/headlines/20160714-texas-hospitals-work-to-reduce-security-code-confusion.ece). In a recent incident, a nurse yelled, “Code yellow!” after a father fainted while watching his child being born. The bomb squad soon arrived to address the situation.
* iT1 Source is the primary provider of plain-language software for the government, [according to a press release](http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/it1-source-becomes-principal-distributor-of-acrolinx-plain-language-software-to-the-federal-government-300298299.html). “The Acrolinx software analyzes and scores content, guides writers to follow Plain Writing Guidelines, and helps them maintain one clear, consistent voice. It also offers robust analytics to provide managers with the critical metrics they need to ensure conformance with the Plain Writing Act and Guidelines.”

**Tech Politics**:

* Several tech gurus, including the co-founder of Slack, chair of Expedia and co-founder of Facebook, have [written an open letter](https://shift.newco.co/an-open-letter-from-technology-sector-leaders-on-donald-trumps-candidacy-for-president-5bf734c159e4#.755w6escn) to presidential candidate Donald Trump saying, “Trump would be a disaster for innovation.” They argue that diversity is strength, and that open ideas create innovation.

**Tech Contracts**:

* 18F’s ability to hire tech companies quickly through a blanket purchasing agreement has other companies complaining of a lack of transparency, outreach and fairness in contracting gigs, [reports Government Technology](http://www.govtech.com/civic/IT-Showdown-Tech-Giants-Face-Off-Against-18F.html).
* And government insiders complain 18F’s contracting processes disrupt traditional procedures, [reports Government Technology](http://www.govtech.com/data/Former-GSA-Head-Internal-Procurement-Groups-Were-Against-18F-from-the-Start.html).

**Geek Love**:

* An artist is using data to tell stories in unusual ways, [reports KCET](https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/refik-anadol-media-architecture-artist-disney-concert-hall-current-la).
* Scientists are using “animal selfies” (they’re better at it than humans are) to determine the biodiversity of ecosystems, [reports PLOS](http://blogs.plos.org/scicomm/2016/07/13/plos-science-wednesday-ama-recap-how-open-data-helps-conservation-efforts/). Open data then allows researchers to determine how best to protect those environments.
* George Orwell believed plain language—and also language that is not “ugly”--could also help politics, and he offered tips on how to avoid tired metaphors, verbal false limbs and pretentious diction. Also, he hated “utilize.”

**Vet Love**:

* Vets are protesting “Orange is the New Black” after the show depicted recently returned combat Vets as inhumane guards in the series, [reports The Christian Science Monitor](http://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/TV/2016/0717/Veterans-protest-alleged-stereotypes-in-Orange-is-the-New-Black).