

SOCIOMETRICS PROJECT No. 43

SOCIONET: ON-LINE ACCESS TO EXEMPLARY SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA PHASE I

Social science data sets had grown exponentially both in size and number over the ten years prior to the project. However, easy access to these data sets by social scientists had lagged considerably. The objective of this Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I research was to use burgeoning Internet technology to empower social scientists with the ability to search a wide universe of archived social science data sets, select data appropriate to their research objectives, and acquire files and documentation as soon as they were selected. The data sets to be made available on-line were those comprising the public data archives at Sociometrics Corporation: the Data Archive on Adolescent Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention, the American Family Data Archive, the AIDS/STD Data Archive, the Maternal Drug Abuse Data Archive, the Data Archive of Social Research on Aging, and the Disability Data Archive. Over 200 premier data sets—processed and documented in standard fashion—were available from these archives during the Phase I project. Two access modes were investigated: (1) SOCIONET-DIRECT—direct access to data, documentation, and software contained on a set of CD-ROMs housed at the user's site, either on a single microcomputer or on a LAN (Local Area Network); and (2) SOCIONET-REMOTE—on-line, remote access to the SOCIONET data, documentation, and software housed at Sociometrics Corporation. SOCIONET would be accompanied by innovative search and retrieval software that allowed users to browse through the contents of the various data archives at both the study and variable levels. Phase I produced designs and prototype systems that demonstrated the feasibility of establishing and operating SOCIONET.

Phase II funding was subsequently awarded (See Project No. 52).

Sponsor: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch
Center for Population Research
6100 Executive Blvd., Room 8B-13
Bethesda, MD 20892
(301) 496-1174

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Staff: J.J. Card, E.L. Lang, D. Kim