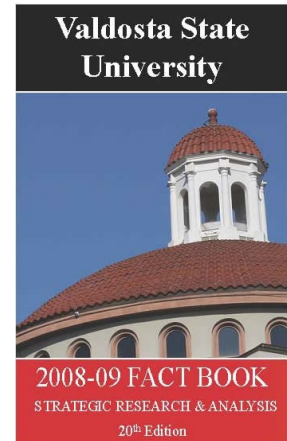# Table Topic: The Future of the Fact Book

Fact Book: a reference guide which contains charts and tables of institutional information on a variety of topics, generally including detailed data on students, faculty, staff, courses, financials, and more.

Questions to Guide Today's Discussion:

- Are you producing a Fact Book at your institution?
- If so, what format are you using and why?
- How often do you produce a Fact Book?
- What is the average time investment to do so?
- What limitations have you experienced?
- Are information needs on your campus changing?
- What type of feedback do you receive? (comments, web counter usage)
- What is the purpose of the Fact Book for current audiences? Is it still the main source of data on your campus? Is it a marketing tool?
- Will the Fact Book as we know it become unnecessary or obsolete?

Types of Fact Books:

Print   **Online - pdf**   **Online - html**   **Online - interactive**

Moderated by:
Angela Elder Henderson ⬥ Senior Research Analyst ⬥ Strategic Research & Analysis
Valdosta State University ⬥ Valdosta, GA ⬥ (229)333-7836 ⬥ aselder@valdosta.edu
AIR Annual Forum ⬥ Atlanta, GA ⬥ June 2, 2009

Table Topic: The Future of the Fact Book

Fact Book Formats of Select Peer Institutions:

Select Peer Institutions

- Arizona State Univ.: Online - pdf
- Bridgewater State College: Online - pdf
- Fitchburg State College: Online - PowerPoint
- Indiana Univ. South Bend: Online - pdf
- Salem State College: Online - pdf
- Univ. of Central Oklahoma: Online - pdf
- Univ. of Northern Alabama: Online - pdf

Select Aspirational Peer Institutions

- McNeese State Univ.: Online - pdf
- Southeastern Louisiana Univ.: Online - html
- Jacksonville State Univ.: Online - pdf
- Stephen F. Austin State Univ.: Online - pdf
- Univ. of West Georgia: Online - pdf
- Univ. of Central Arkansas: Online - pdf
- Univ. of West Florida: Online - html

Note: institutions may also produce print documents not referenced on website

Pros and Cons - Print vs. Electronic Fact Books

Printed Fact Books

Advantages:

- Tangible historical record
- Information is portable (not tied to computer)
- Campus familiarity with print format

Disadvantages:

- Information can be outdated before it goes to print
- Distributed selectively (often only to on campus audiences)
- Waiting on information for one section can delay publication of the entire document
- Errors discovered after printing cannot be corrected
- Time required for document layout
- Cost of printing

Electronic Fact Books

Advantages:

- People expect information to be accessible online
- Information is more timely
- Information can be updated as necessary or uploaded in sections as data becomes available
- Document is available to anyone with internet access (prospective students, peers, etc.)
- Interactive - can be linked to additional data (drill down features) not available in print
- No cost for distribution/printing

Disadvantages:

- No hard copy for historical documentation
- Reconstruction for assessment purposes can be difficult (broken links, missing documents)
- Campus users may be resistant to changing formats