

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-22-104393](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The government has faced longstanding challenges in IT management and spending transparency. In 2017, OMB announced its intention to improve insights into IT spending through government-wide adoption of the Technology Business Management Council's framework.

This framework provides a standard taxonomy that is organized into four layers (cost pools, IT towers, products and services, and business units and capabilities) intended to show an organization's total IT spending from different perspectives. These four layers are comprised of spending categories and subcategories.

GAO was asked to report on Technology Business Management implementation. GAO's objective was to identify progress OMB and GSA have made in the government-wide adoption effort. To do so, GAO analyzed and compared plans against relevant criteria, such as Technology Business Management Council guidance. It also analyzed data, as reported by agencies for fiscal years 2021 and 2022, and interviewed relevant officials.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making seven recommendations to OMB and GSA, including establishing requirements for completing the remainder of the taxonomy, assessing maturity of agencies' implementation, and addressing benchmarking use. As discussed in the report, GAO incorporated suggested OMB and GSA revisions for two of the seven recommendations; the agencies had no comments on the remaining five.

View [GAO-22-104393](#). For more information, contact Carol C. Harris at (202) 512-4456 or harriscc@gao.gov.

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TECHNOLOGY BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

OMB and GSA Need to Strengthen Efforts to Lead Federal Adoption

What GAO Found

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and General Services Administration (GSA) have taken steps to lead government-wide Technology Business Management adoption, but progress and results are limited.

- OMB's initial 2017 plans for government-wide adoption required agencies to report IT spending using categories in the first two layers. OMB continued to require reporting of these two layers in subsequent plans. However, 5 years after establishing initial plans, OMB had not expanded on requirements to include the rest of the taxonomy—the categories in layers 3 and 4, and subcategories for all layers (see figure).

Extent That the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Plans Addressed Elements of the Technology Business Management Taxonomy Version 3.0

Layer 4: Business units and capabilities	Categories and subcategories in this layer are not defined by the TBM Council because they are intended to be industry-specific and, therefore, defined by organizations to reflect their respective business units and capabilities	
Layer 3: Products and services	26 categories (e.g., finance services, manufacturing and delivery, and vendor and procurement services)	119 subcategories (e.g., application hosting, business continuity and disaster recovery, contract review, and payroll and time reporting)
Layer 2: IT towers	11 categories (e.g., application, data center, network, security and compliance, and storage)	41 subcategories (e.g., business software, client management, high performance computing, and mobile devices)
Layer 1: Cost pools	9 categories (e.g., facilities and power, hardware, internal labor, software, and telecom)	30 subcategories (e.g., cloud service providers, licensing, maintenance and support, and managed service providers)

Hashed shading represents elements that were not addressed in OMB's plans.

Source: GAO analysis of OMB guidance and *Technology Business Management Taxonomy, Version 3.0*. Copyright © 2020 Technology Business Management Council (November 2018). | [GAO-22-104393](#)

- OMB and GSA assisted agency efforts to implement the Technology Business Management framework by, for example, developing implementation guidance and a maturity model assessment tool. However, OMB and GSA have not assessed agency maturity. Further, they have not analyzed the quality of agencies' data reported in the first two layers.
- OMB and GSA released agency-reported data on the federal government's IT Dashboard (layers 1 and 2), but did not disclose that about \$31 billion in fiscal year 2021 investments were excluded. Further, they have not analyzed inconsistencies in fiscal year 2022 data, or addressed use of benchmarking that would enable spending comparisons to organizations of similar size or mission.

OMB and GSA officials maintain that Technology Business Management implementation continues to be a priority. Nevertheless, until OMB establishes documented plans and agency expectations for the remainder of the taxonomy, uncertainty will cloud agency efforts. Further, the continuing absence of OMB direction could prevent the federal government from fully achieving intended benefits such as optimizing IT spending.