

Imagining Next-Generation Statistical News Releases

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BLS Mission

- Principal US agency responsible for measuring
 - ▶ labor market activity
 - ▶ working conditions
 - ▶ price changes in the economy
- Collect, analyze, and disseminate essential economic information
- Support public and private decision making



BLS news releases

- 160 national office releases / year
- 700+ regional office / year
- Structure:
 - ▶ Identifying information
 - ▶ Text (with embedded tables and charts)
 - ▶ Technical notes
 - ▶ Detailed tables



Research in 2015-16

- News releases have changed little in 60+ years
- Stakeholder outreach to assess user needs
 - ▶ Reader survey
 - ▶ Focus groups
 - ▶ Listening sessions
- => Product needs to change

Results -> 2017 Vision

- Better serve all readers, including journalists, analysts, and the public
 - ▶ Provide more information at the time of release
 - ▶ Provide greater context to the data
 - ▶ Serve as a portal to more data
 - ▶ Make data easy to export
 - ▶ Be accessible on mobile devices
 - ▶ Rely upon automated scripts as much as possible



Mockup(s)

- <http://nextgennews.businesscatalyst.com/>



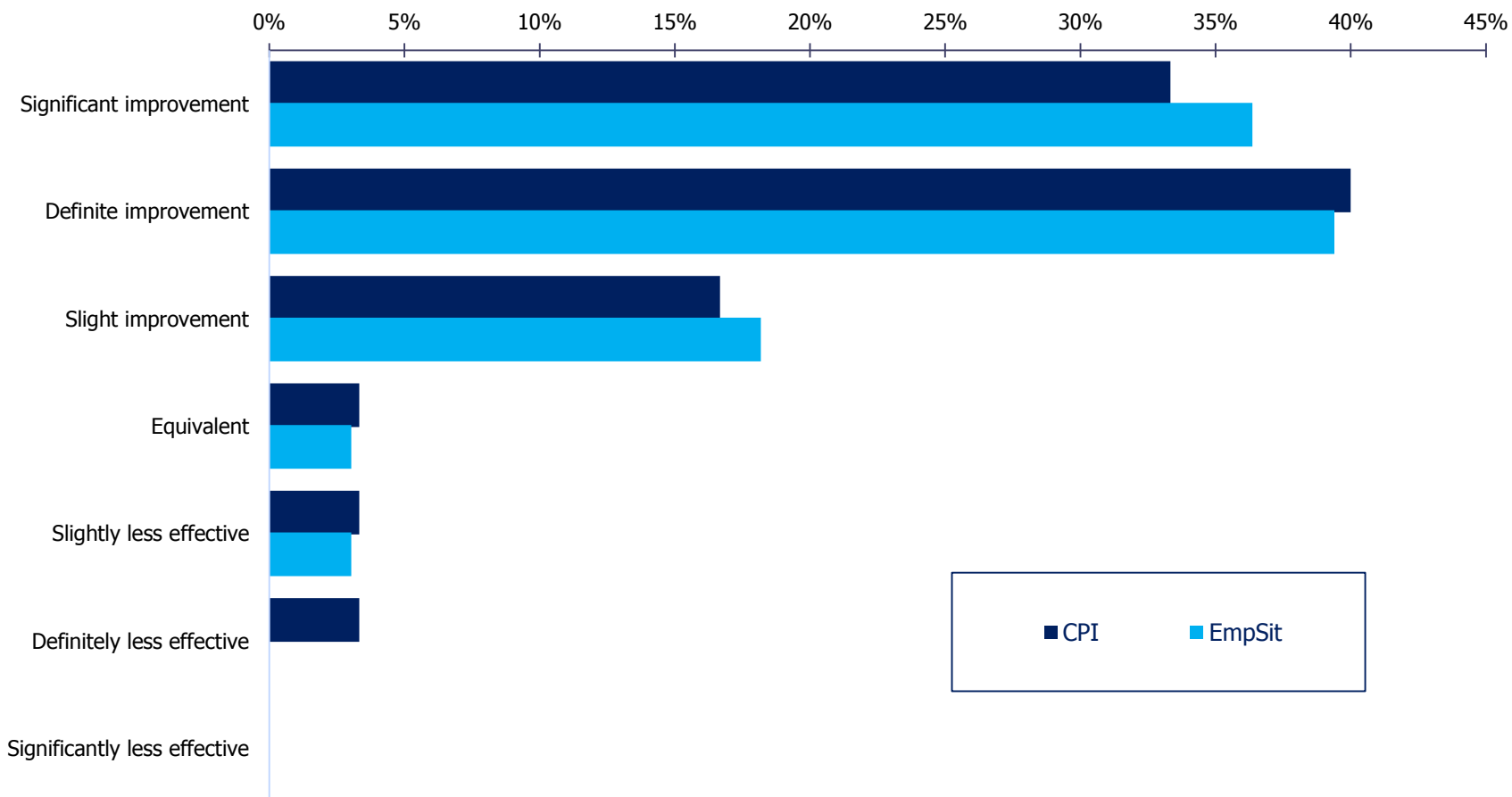
Key Design Features

- Orient around interactive charts
- Replace narrative text with bullet points
 - ▶ Automatic plus custom
- Show definitions through tool tips
- Implement interactive tables
- Meet accessibility and mobile standards
- Combine releases where possible



Early Feedback

How would you rate the mockups compared with the current news releases?



Next Steps

- Develop functional prototypes
 - ▶ End user review
 - ▶ Usability testing
- Prototype an authoring system
 - ▶ Illustrates flexibilities to BLS staff



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