

## **The Way Forward: Re-establishing a Public Relationship**

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### ***Abstract***

The quality of Canadians' lives depend on sound, timely, cost-effective and evidence-based decisions. The growing number of data sources makes it harder to distinguish quality from non-quality statistics. Online platforms such as Facebook and Twitter make it possible for anyone to provide statistics quickly with unprecedented reach. Persistent coverage about ID theft, data breaches and cybersecurity threats have altered citizens' perceptions of what is fact and who to trust. So we believe it is our duty to help Canadians differentiate fact from myth.

Statistics Canada faces new challenges to create quality and timely statistics as traditional methods for collecting data shift. As part of our modernization, we are integrating machine learning and AI in our processes, using administrative data to replace and supplement survey taking and converting data into useful, insightful statistics that enable citizens to access and use the data according to their needs. And our audiences may not fully understand the creation of high quality statistics and the protocols to protect private information. They see us as another entity collecting personal data. Our reputation as a trusted source of high quality statistics has become crowded in a marketplace with dozens of 'fact' purveyors. These divergent influences challenge Statistics Canada to find innovation in its communications, to compete for positioning as a trusted source.

The presentation will outline the public environment which influenced our decision to "open our doors". In part, our approach aims to re-connect with citizens, to highlight the care with which their personal data is handled and protected, to make our operations and processes transparent and easier to understand, to demonstrate the tangible benefits of our data, and to humanize our agency with the faces and voices of our employees as a way of emphasizing the care and diligence with which we approach our work and our responsibilities. We will look at the various communications channels and products developed to help us achieve this new Way Forward.