WHAT IS THE LMI INFORMER CONSORTIUM?
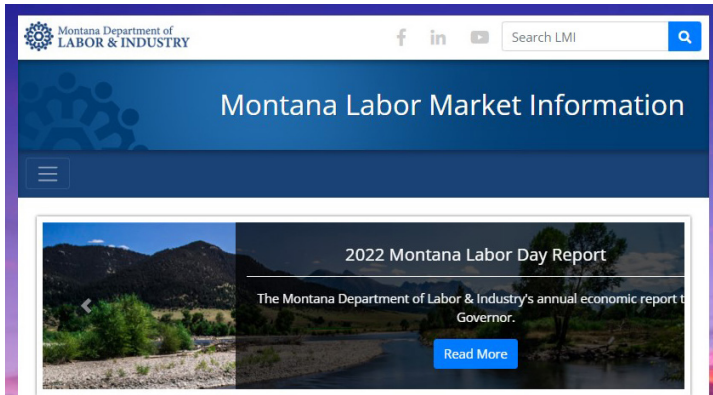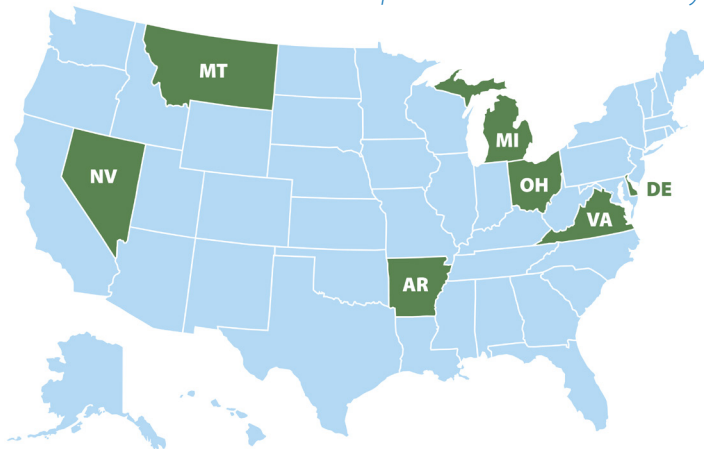
"As the Labor Market Information (LMI) needs of the customer and the states evolve, we need the flexibility to adapt to those changing needs and continue to deliver LMI effectively and efficiently."

--Mike Peery, Former LMI Director, MT Department of Labor & Industry

Four states, Montana, Michigan, Arkansas, and Nevada formed a consortium to find a different way to provide labor market information to customers. The LMI Informer consortium was formally created on February 16, 2012.

OUR MISSION

The LMI Informer Consortium's mission is to bring together state Labor Market Information offices to create and maintain an LMI delivery system that is flexible, customer-focused, customizable, affordable, and fully controlled by consortium members.

OUR HISTORY

In 2012 four states, Montana, Michigan, Arkansas, and Nevada, decided to form a consortium and find a different way to provide labor market information to their customers. The LMI Informer consortium was formally created on February 16, 2012. The consortium's LMI Informer allows member states to easily maintain their Workforce Information Databases (WID) while providing a flexible, cost effective solution to establishing and maintaining your website that makes LMI available online. Since 2012, the consortium has been joined by 3 other states, Ohio, Virginia, and Delaware.

OUR STRUCTURE

Each state signs the Memorandum of Agreement and is governed by bylaws. The Consortium is currently managed by the Montana LMI director. Each state is allowed one vote for the purposes of making decisions. The members do not pay an administration fee, or recurring membership fee to the State of Montana. States have individual contracts with the State of Montana's State Information Technology Services Division (SITSD) for hosting and maintenance, which currently is $15,600 annually. There is an initial one-time setup fee. SITSD only charges for the actual services provided.

Websites are built using the Cascade platform. The Consortium operates under the "open source" concept. This means part of the agreement by members is that any component created for their websites must be shared with all consortium members. No state is allowed to touch the core programming in order to maintain the integrity and ease of maintaining the system. However, all other aspects of a state's website can be changed to meet local needs.

The consortium uses a collaborative workspace to communicate and share information and meets quarterly to discuss consortium business. Conference calls are scheduled as needed. Training and documentation for Workforce Information Database (WID) administrators is provided by the Montana LMI DBA and posted on the collaborative workspace.

WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED

The consortium has successfully designed, built, and deployed the LMI Informer for several states, and completed necessary upgrades to maintain the most current version of the WID. The initial buy-in fees of each state allowed for the development of a customer-friendly website that provides labor market information driven by the WID, with no additional costs beyond the hosting and maintenance fees.

BENEFITS OF BEING A CONSORTIUM MEMBER

- Low ongoing costs for hosting and maintenance. Current annual cost is $15,600.

- Sharing development costs reduces overall burden on any one state.

- Members own their own code. If members leave the consortium, they can take their code with them.

- Customizable to meet local needs. No two states have to look alike.

- Free training, documentation, and support.

- Meets ETA deliverables.

- Responsive design means websites will work on any mobile device.

- Website is built using the latest version of Cascade and is WCAG compliant.

HOW TO JOIN

- New members must sign the LMI Informer Web Consortium Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and pay a one-time-only membership fee. The membership fee is held in account in Montana's LMI office for the sole purpose of paying future development costs agreed upon by the majority of consortium members. Specific details can be found in the MOA and bylaws documents.

- When a state joins and starts to work on their LMI Informer website, they work directly with the Montana SITSD to set up the contract (Intergovernmental Agreement) for hosting and maintenance.

- Once the MOA is signed and the contract with Montana SITSD is established, the state will work with SITSD to set up server's ad databases. Montana's WID DBA will work with each state to assist in standing up the new website.

- Questions on joining the consortium can be directed to Matt Betcher at mbetcher@mt.gov.

www.discover.Arkansas.gov

www.milmi.gov

www.nevadaworkforce.com

www.virginialmi.com.