

US government agencies look to efficiently convert old data

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Created 16/06/2006 - 11:27pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Friday 16th of June 2006 11:27:45 PM Filed under [Misc](#) [1]

The future of U.S. government IT systems will include a big focus on converting old data into electronic form, two government IT leaders said Friday.

The U.S. government's intelligence agencies are looking heavily into technology that can quickly convert typewritten and even handwritten text into electronic data, said Greg Pepus, senior director of federal outreach at In-Q-Tel, a venture capital firm funded by U.S. agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Intelligence agents need technology that can quickly convert notes handwritten in Arabic or in symbols to electronic data that can be easily shared and put into a database, he said.

"The problem is the vast majority of data in the world isn't in databases," Pepus said during a panel discussion about the future of U.S. government IT needs at the Gartner Inc. Government Conference 2006 in Washington, D.C.

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