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**News  
Release**

for immediate release

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**IOWA AWARDED  
SPECIAL HONORS  
IN  
FTA MANAGEMENT CONTEST**

(Washington , D. C., March 24, 2010) The Federation of Tax Administrators announced today that the Iowa Department of Revenue received special honors in the judging of the 2010 Award for Outstanding Management and Organizational Initiative for its website and research library modernization project.

Presentation of the award will take place during the FTA Annual Meeting, June 7 in Atlanta. The Department of Revenue also been invited to make a presentation on the program during the annual meeting.

Judges commended the management of the redesign for its results, for its commitment to good voluntary compliance and for its intuitive “easy to understand” approach. They especially noted the agency’s focus on a good needs assessment, identifying the specific problems that needed to be addressed. One explained, “they’re focusing on a service channel that is important. We look to the Internet for cheap service. They are doing things that the IRS has on its plate but hasn’t accomplished yet – giving taxpayers access to their own accounts – which is not an insignificant feature.”

The agency sought to make “ changes that could be made within the limits of its budgets that would provide improved services to the most people and at the same time provide benefits to the Department in addressing its responsibilities as a tax agency.” It realized that its website had more than 1,500 web pages not even counting forms and statistical publications. The website was last redesigned in 2003, and since then not only had hundreds of pages of publications and historical data been added, but 10 online services were created. Similarly, the Iowa Tax Research Library, located on the website, had grown antiquated.

Management began by identifying where the public’s needs were not being met. Pages were redesigned, search features were added and tested, documents were reviewed and steps were taken to protect confidential taxpayer information. The agency then launched a marketing program to generate awareness of the information available, in particular hoping to help taxpayers better find answers to their questions. The number of new library users immediately tripled, and the average number of page views more than doubled.

But the cost to the state was minimal – the website upgrade was accomplished through an existing contract with Iowa Interactive and development of the Tax Research Library was accomplished for \$55,000.

The web address is [www.iowa.gov/tax/](http://www.iowa.gov/tax/) and the library was given its own URL, <http://itrl.idr.iowa.gov>.

The entries were judged by an independent panel consisting of Janet Gregor of Gregor and Associates, John Caggiano of the IRS Executive Development Program and Chuck Lacijan, staff director of the IRS Oversight Committee.

The Federation of Tax Administrators is a nonprofit organization composed of taxation and revenue departments of the fifty states, District of Columbia and New York City. Its mission is to improve the standards and methods of tax administration.

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