

FRED's Redesign: Taking User Feedback to the Next Level

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The views expressed in this presentation are ours and not the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis or the Federal Reserve System.

Today's Topics

- A Brief History of FRED®
- Analysis Website Metrics
- Listening to FRED Users
- Increasing Utility
 - The overarching objective



FRED®—*An international leader in the provision of online economic and financial information.*

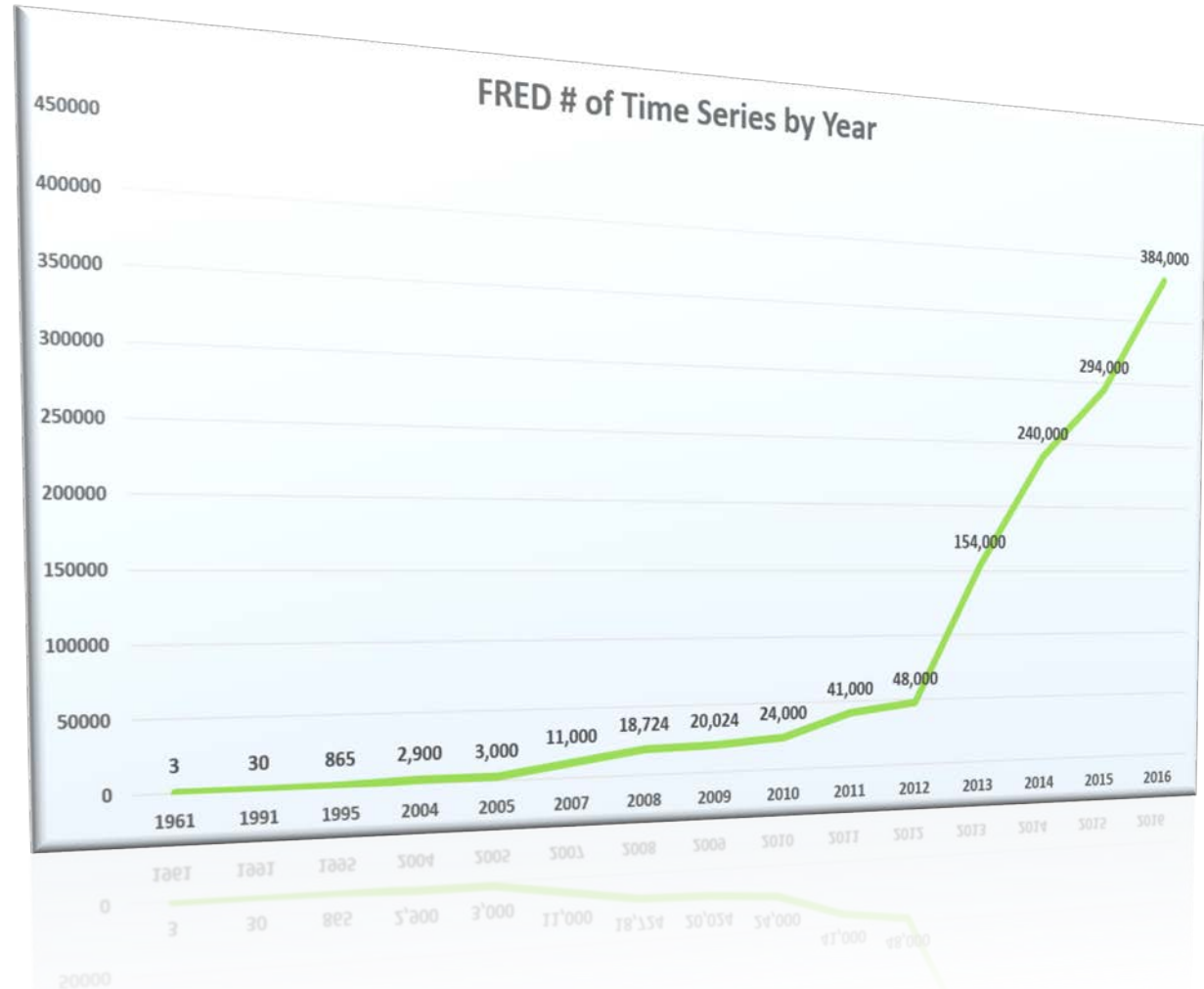
1. Primum non nocere

2. Increase retention

3. A friendlier FRED

4. Maximize existing features

FRED's commitment to improvement. . .



The Decision Makers—FSPR Comm.*

Amy Melser



Christian Zimmermann



George Essig



Josh Haines



Katrina Stierholz



Keith Taylor

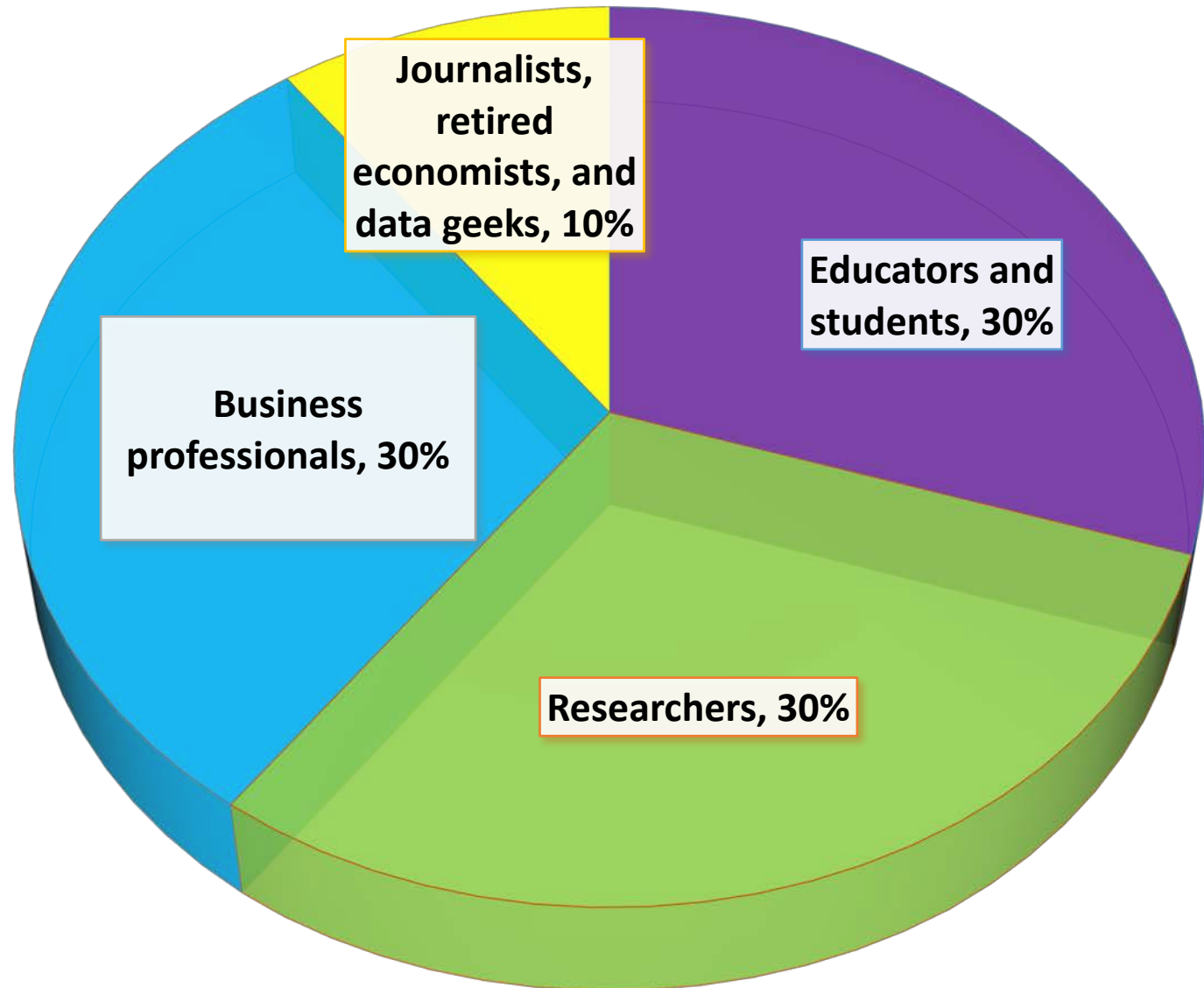


What's the big deal with FRED?

- 35% growth!
- 1/3 traffic is international
- ~ 30,000 registered accounts
- *Wall Street Journal, The Economist, NYT, WaPo*, and many others look to FRED for research and content
- Most macroeconomics textbooks



Who uses FRED?



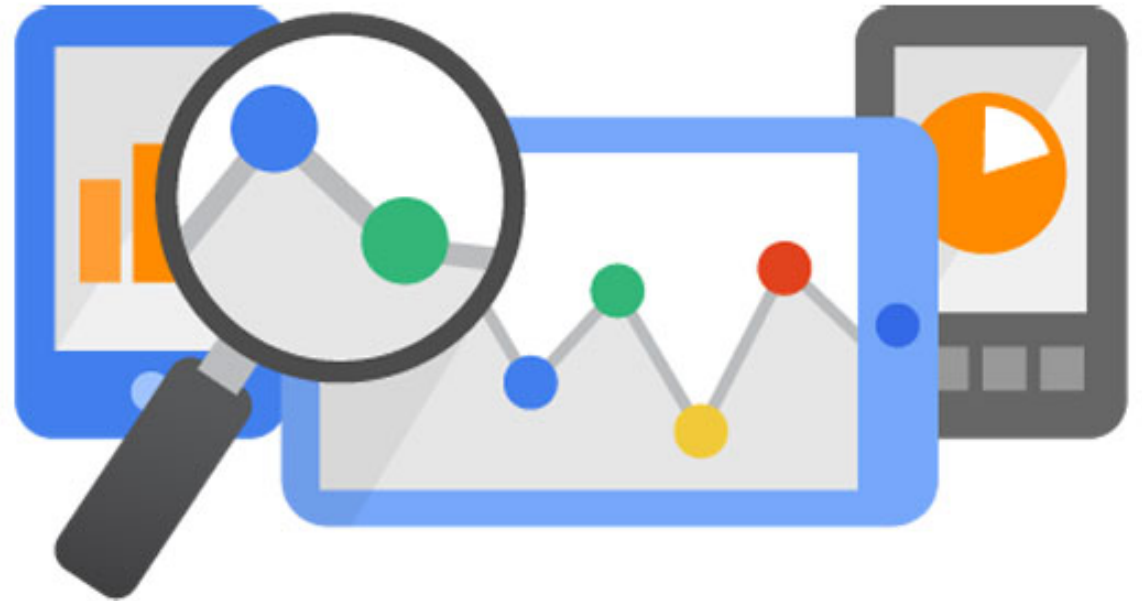
Why change FRED? Look at the Data . . .

- ~50% of visitors new to the FRED.
 - 50% visited one page and never returned.
- Plateuing Power Users.
- New users: 2/3 land on series or graph page.



Google Analytics told us . . .

- Bounces
- Seasonality
- Underused capabilities?
- Popular features
- User path analysis

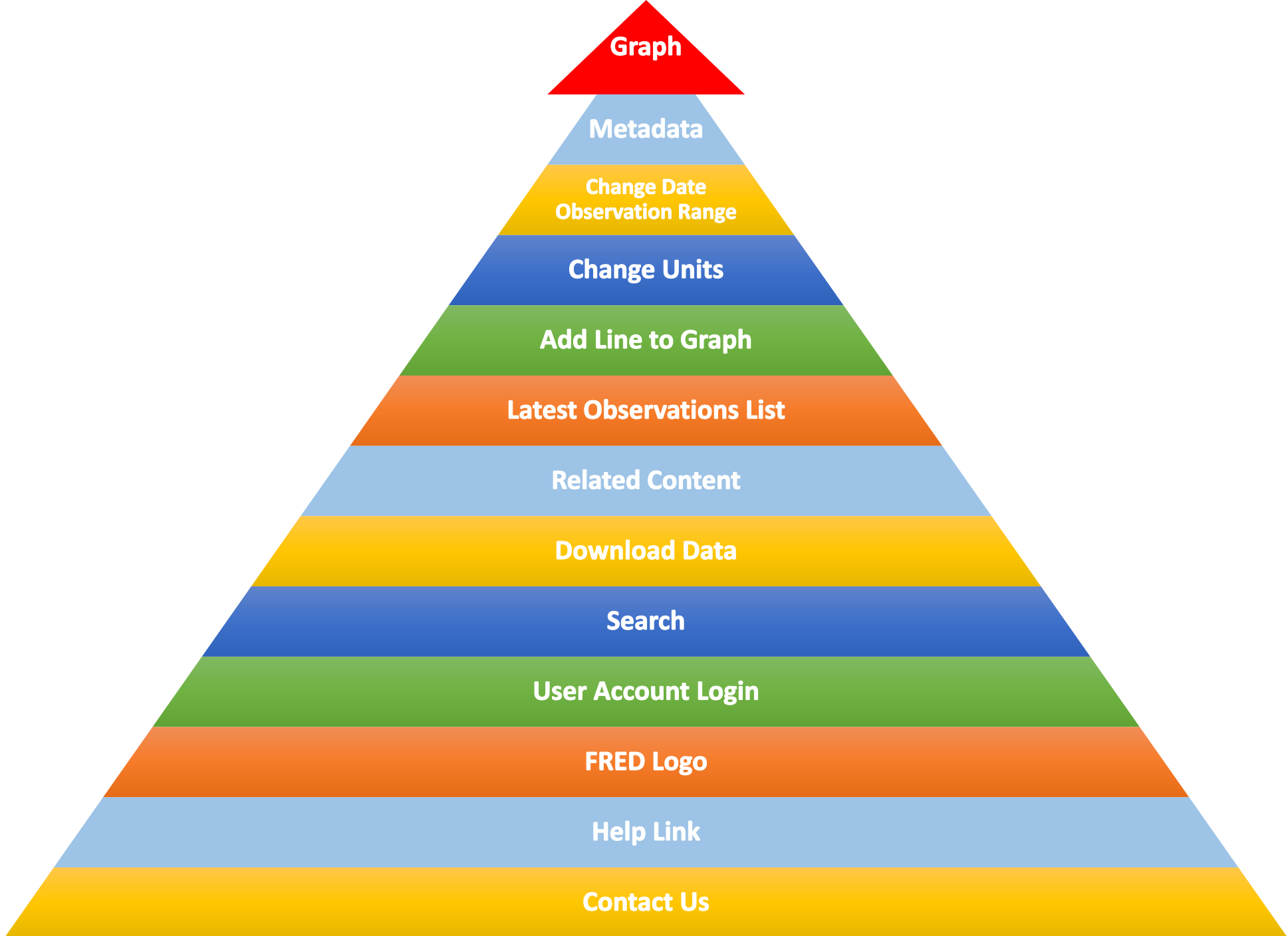


FRED's Top 10* Events . . .

1. Zoom bar
2. Change Date
3. Line transformation menu
(e.g., % Change)
4. Line frequency
(e.g., *Quarterly*)
5. Search box @ top right
6. Download data link
7. Notes tab
8. *View Data* link
9. *+ see more* (recent observations)
10. Frequency aggregation method
(e.g., *Average, Sum, End of Period*)



Elements in Priority Order



Objectives & Limitations

Objectives

- Series page simplification
- Graph page gets some series page elements
- No change for sake of change
 - Masthead & footer to remain
- Improvements for 1st time users
 - Simplify interface
 - Add context
 - Link to additional content
- Improvements for existing users

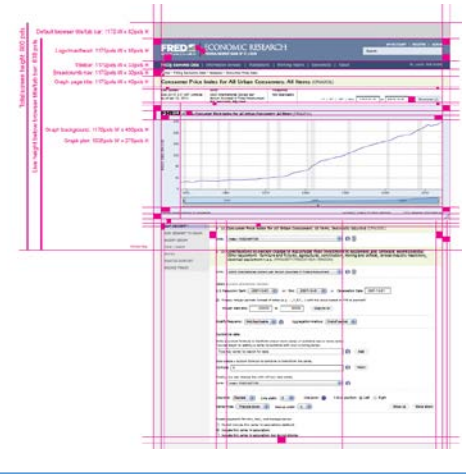
Limits

- Minimal changes to masthead
- Page only changes as necessary for goals
- Graph shape, size, and design may not change
- Browser-sensitive design

FRED Re-Design Process

Retain outside consultant

Specs for wireframe



Assemble Team

Developers
Data
Analytics
Project Mgmt

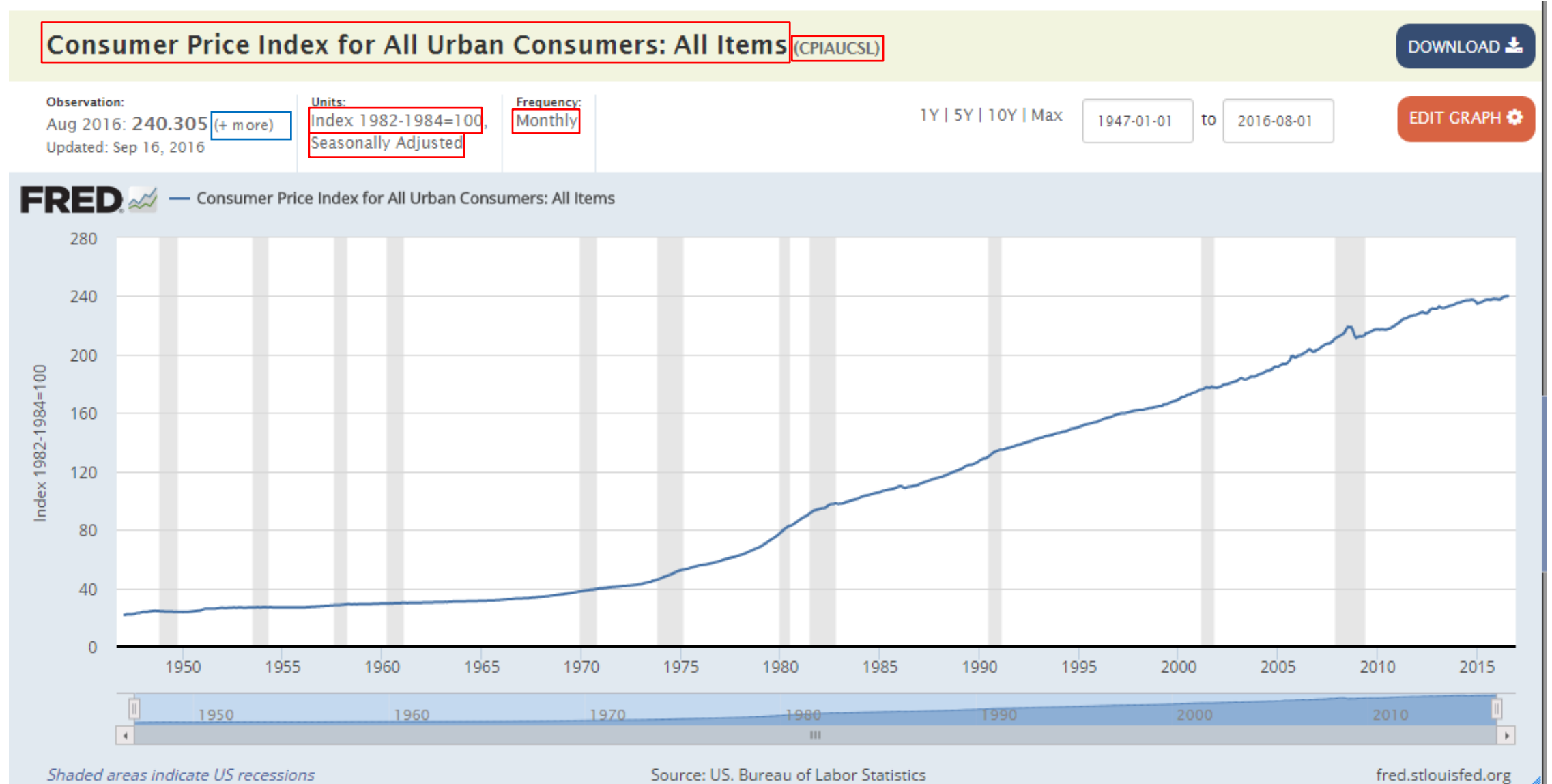
Listen to users

Focus groups
Email responders
Support legacy features
Contrary responses?

Beta Test

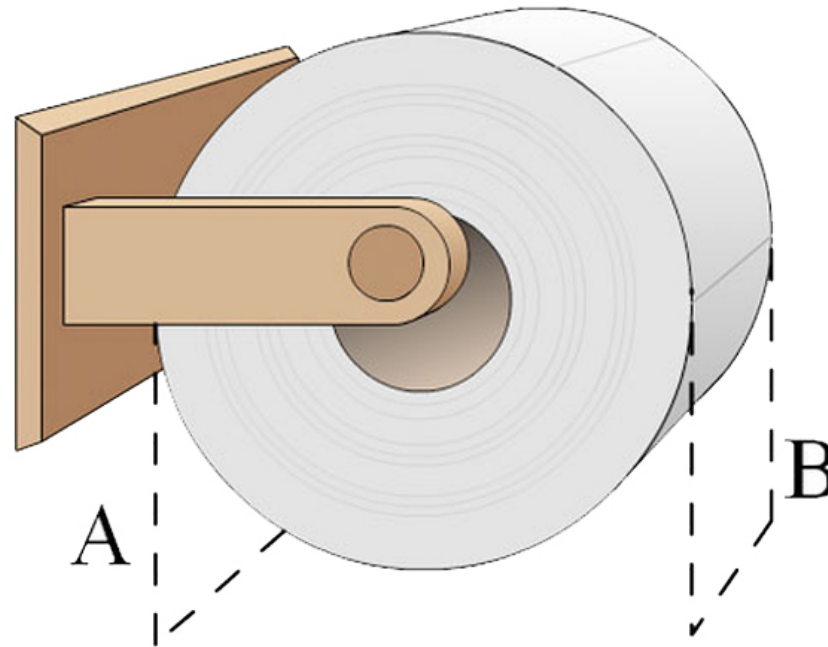
Bugs & Frustrations

FRED's “Zero-Click” Elements



What does this have to do with FRED?

THE GREAT DEBATE



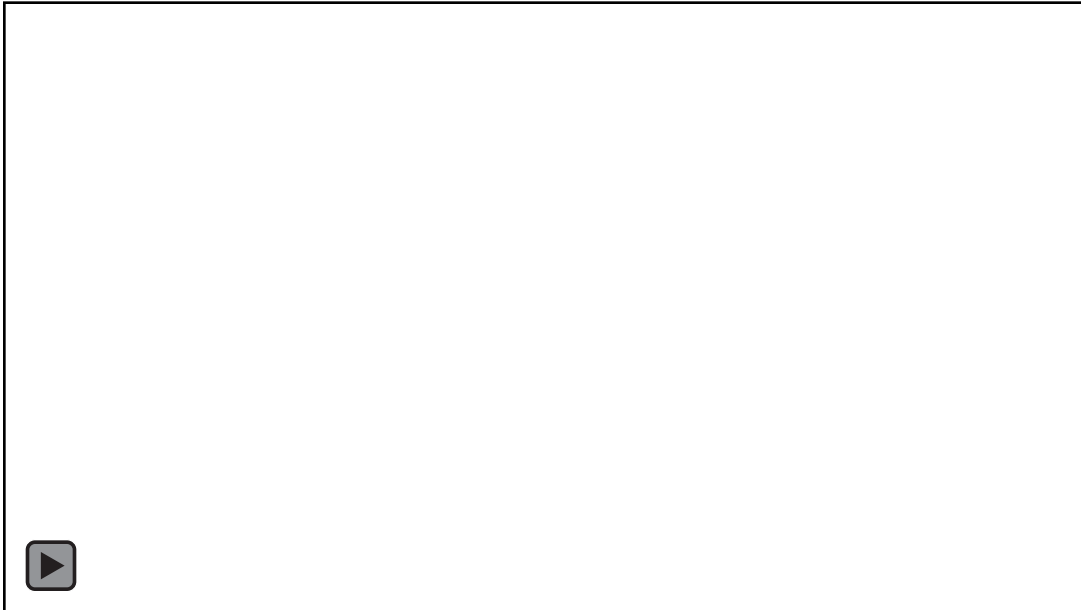
OVER \$100,000 US DOLLARS WAS SPENT ON A STUDY TO DETERMINE WHETHER MOST PEOPLE PUT THEIR TOILET PAPER ON THE HOLDER WITH THE FLAP IN FRONT OR BEHIND; THE ANSWER: THREE OUT OF FOUR PEOPLE HAVE THE FLAP IN THE FRONT

DAILYRANDOMFACTS.COM

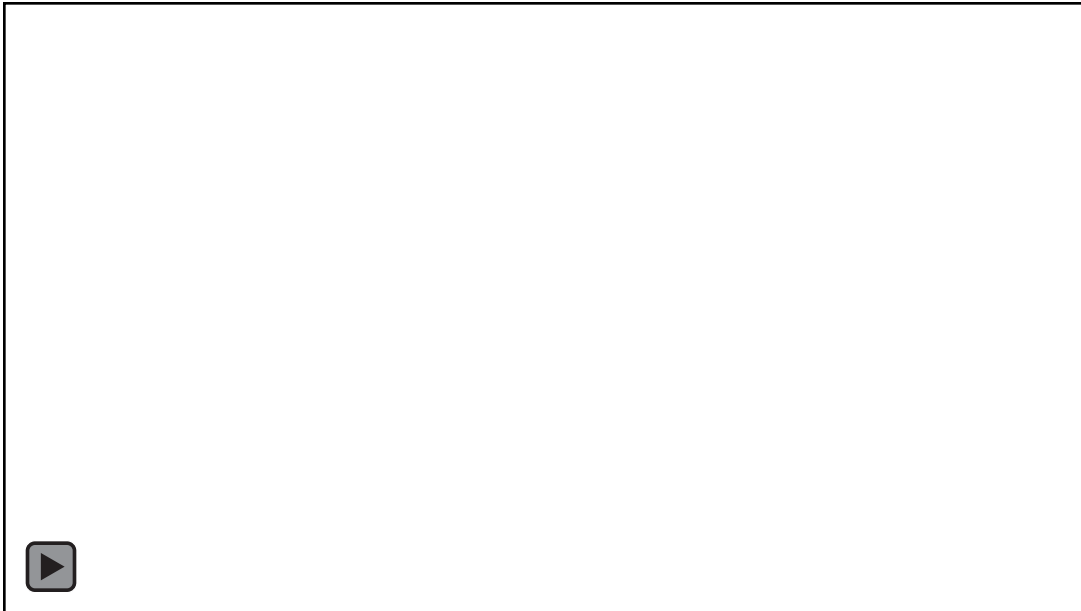
User Testing



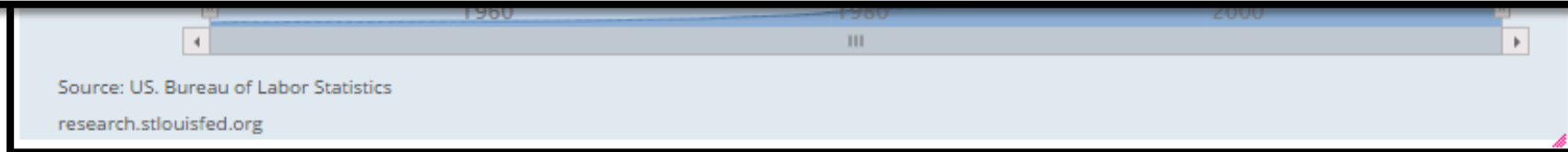
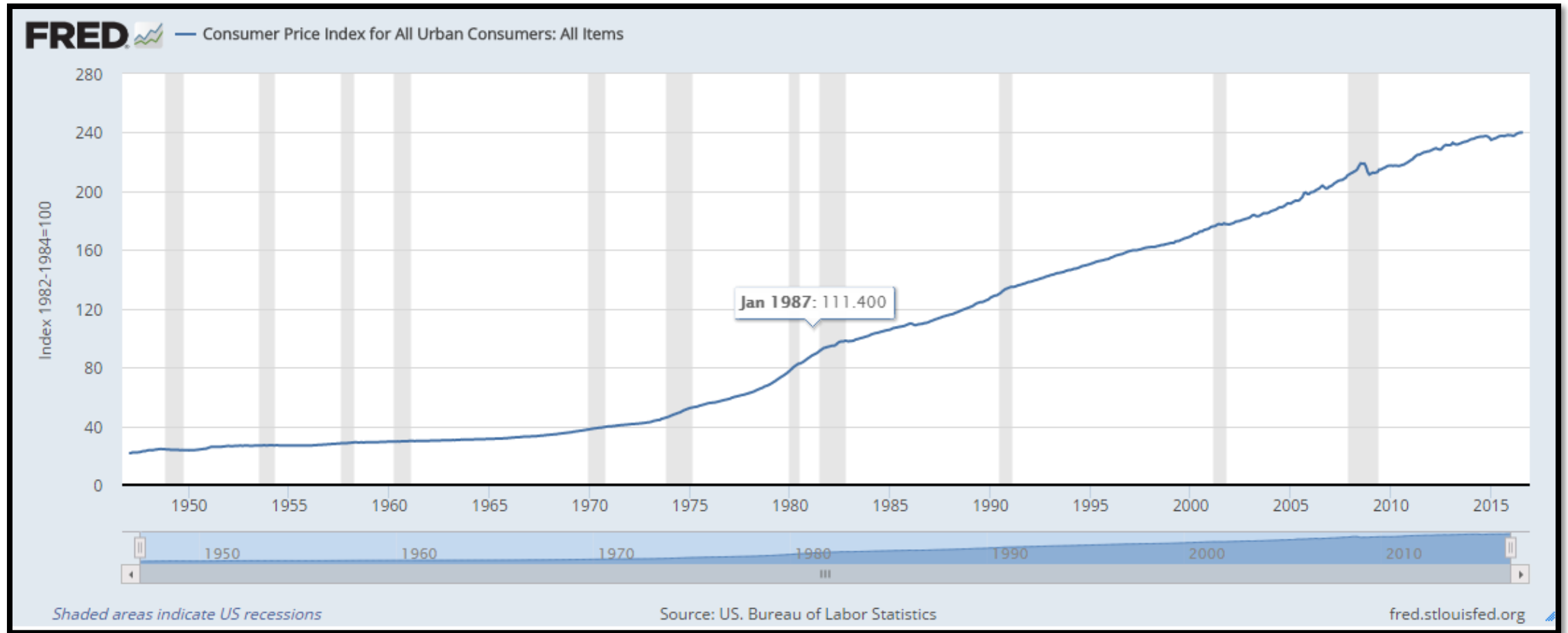
User Testing



User Testing




FRED Graph got wider and flatter



Returning to the Metadata . . .

That was then . . .

 **Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items**

2015-11: **238.111** Index 1982-1984=100 (+ see more) Units

Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted, CPIAUCSL, Updated: 2015-12-15 9:03 AM CST

Frequency Seasonality Series ID Title

This is now:

Home > Categories > Prices > Consumer Price Indexes (CPI and PCE)

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items (CPIAUCSL)

DOWNLOAD 

Observation:
Aug 2016: **240.305** (+ more)
Updated: Sep 16, 2016

Units:
Index 1982-1984=100,
Seasonally Adjusted

Frequency:
Monthly

1Y | 5Y | 10Y | Max

1947-01-01

to

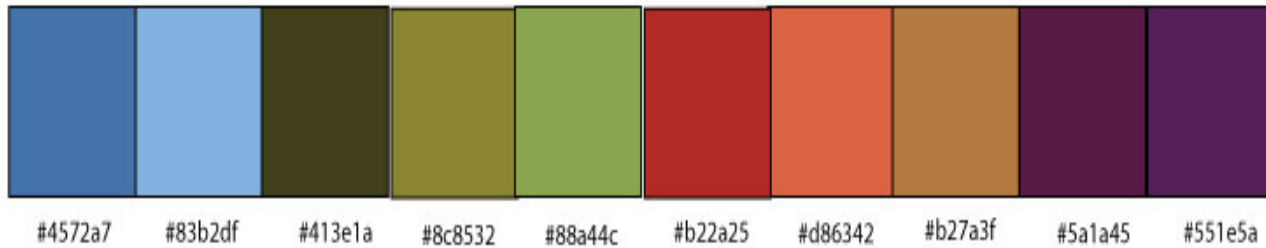
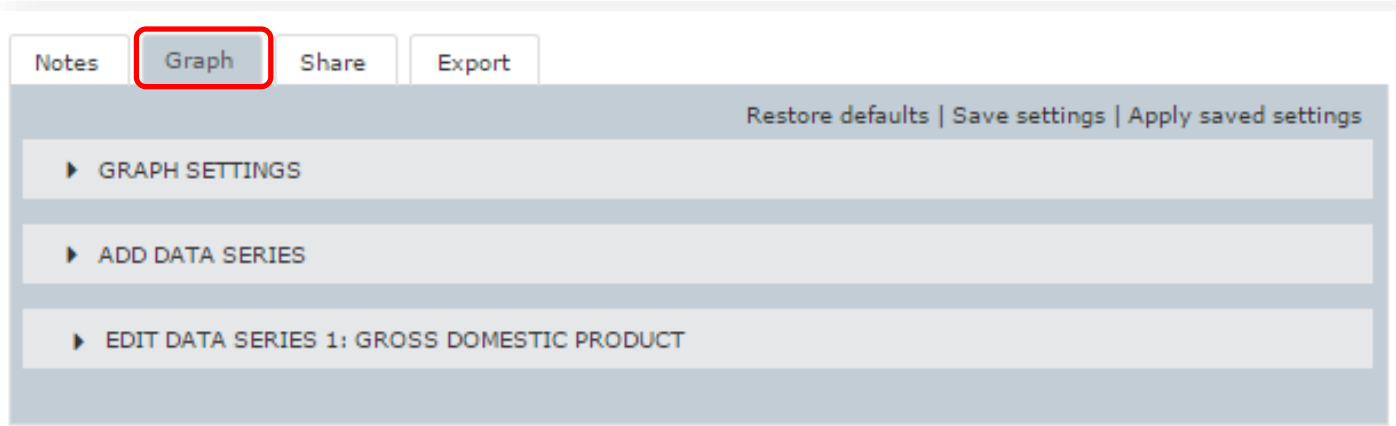
2016-08-01

EDIT GRAPH 

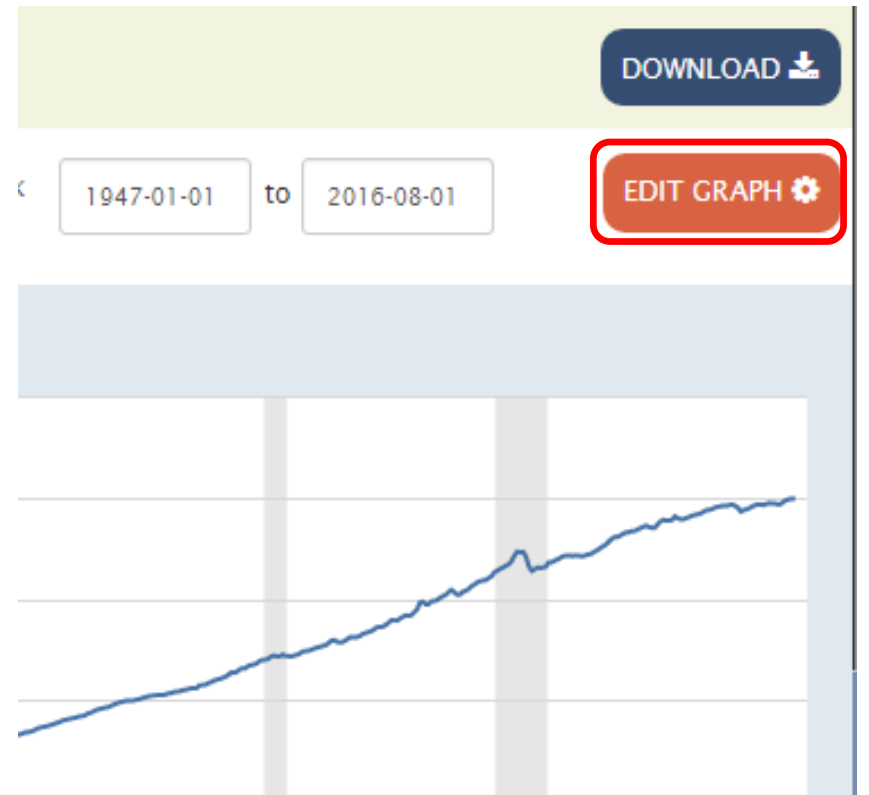
What if?



Edit Data



[Color Palette](#)



Change Observation Range



Change Units—Popular & we wanted to have it in a predominant spot

Notes Graph Share Export Cite

Restore defaults | Save settings | Apply saved settings

GRAPH SETTINGS

ADD DATA SERIES

EDIT DATA SERIES 1: CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR ALL URBAN CONSUMERS: ALL ITEMS

Line Style:
Solid

Mark Type:
None

Line Width:
2

Mark Width:
2

Color: ■

Frequency:
Monthly

(a) Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items, Index 1982-1984=100, Seasonally Adjusted (CPIAUCSL)

Units: Index 1982-1984=100

Create your own data transformation: [+]

move up move down

EDIT LINE 1 ADD LINE FORMAT X

EDIT LINE 1

(a) Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items, Index 1982-1984=100, Seasonally Adjusted (CPIAUCSL)

Units: Index 1982-1984=100

Modify frequency: Monthly

Customize data:

Write a custom formula to transform one or more series or combine two or more series.

You can begin by adding a series to combine with your existing series.

Type keywords to search for data Add

Now create a custom formula to combine or transform the series.
Need help? [+]

Formula: a Apply

Finally, you can change the units of your new series.

Units:

Adding Data Series Got Divorced . . .

REGISTER EDIT LINE 1 ADD LINE FORMAT X

EDIT LINE 1

(a) Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items, Index 1982-1984=100, Seasonally Adjusted (CPIAUCSL)

Units:

Index 1982-1984=100

Modify frequency:

Monthly

Customize data: **i**

Write a custom formula to transform one or more series or combine two or more series.

You can begin by adding a series to combine with your existing series.

Type keywords to search for data

Add

Now create a custom formula to combine or transform the series.

Need help? [+]

Formula: a

Apply

Finally, you can change the units of your new series.

Units:

Notes Graph Share Export Cite

Restore defaults | Save settings | Apply saved settings

GRAPH SETTINGS

ADD DATA SERIES

FRED Series

Type keywords to search for data

☒ Add new series ☐ Modify existing series

Data Series 1

Add Series

EDIT DATA SERIES REGISTER EDIT LINE 1 ADD LINE FORMAT X

Add data series to graph:

Type keywords to search for data

Add data series

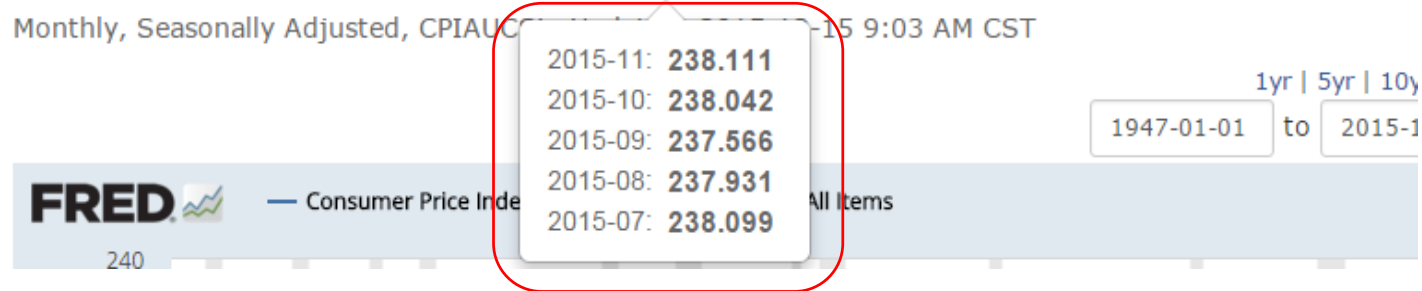
Create user-defined line? [+]

List of Observations ... See More get More

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items

2015-11: **238.111** Index 1982-1984=100 (+ see more)

Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted, CPIAUCSL 15 9:03 AM CST



Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items (CPIAUCSL)

DOWNLOAD

Observation:

Aug 2016: **240.305** (+ more)

Updated: Sep 16, 2016

Units:

Index 1982-1984=100,
Seasonally Adjusted

Frequency:

Monthly

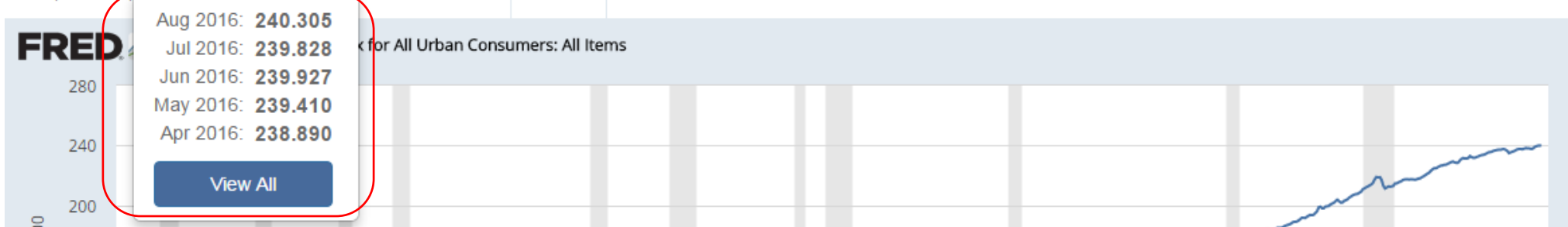
1Y | 5Y | 10Y | Max

1947-01-01

to

2016-08-01

EDIT GRAPH



Some elements stayed, but not because of us



- **Dear Webmaster: On your new FRED website, do you have an option to “View” the data like before? I searched but couldn’t find that option. Thanks.**
- What happened to the view data screen? It was very useful.
- ***Please Bring Back view data!!!!***


Related Content

Related Categories


- GDP/GNP
- National Income & Product Accounts
- National Accounts

RELATED CONTENT


Related Resources




FRASER Historical Document
The National Income and Product Account




Newsletter
GDP: Does It Measure Up?




Education Resource
Analyzing the Elements of Real GDP in FRED Using Stacking




Education Resource
Editing the Legend and Changing Colors by Mapping an Oil Boom




Education Resource
Tools for Teaching with GeoFRED®: Editing the Legend and Changing Colors by ...




GeoFRED
Unemployment Rate by County for October 2009




Dashboard
The Great Depression in Three Graphs



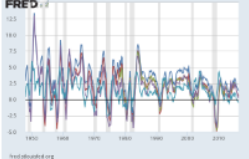
FRASER Historical Document
The National Income and Product Account




FRED Blog
GDP revisions



FRED Blog
A counterclaim on countercyclical policy

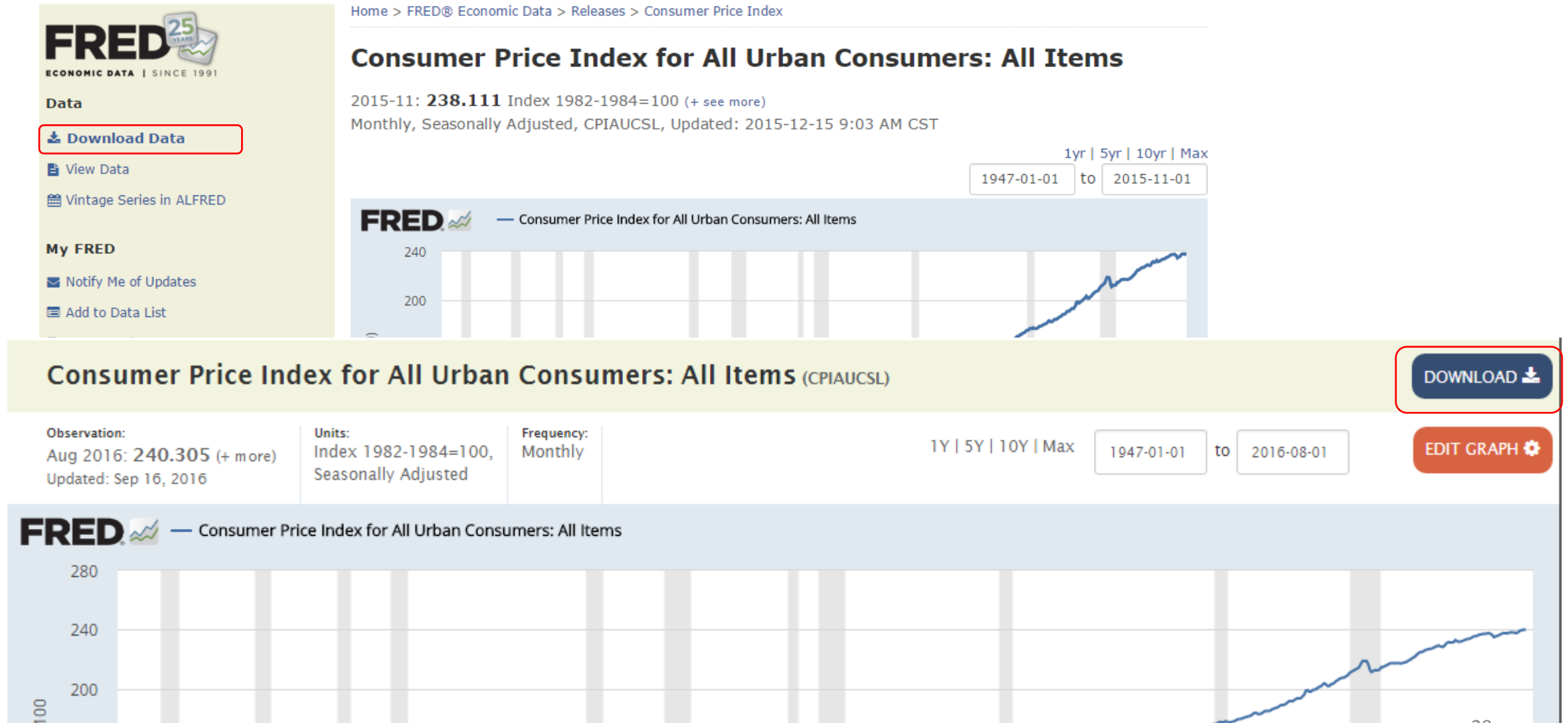


FRED Blog
Measure for measure: Judging the economy

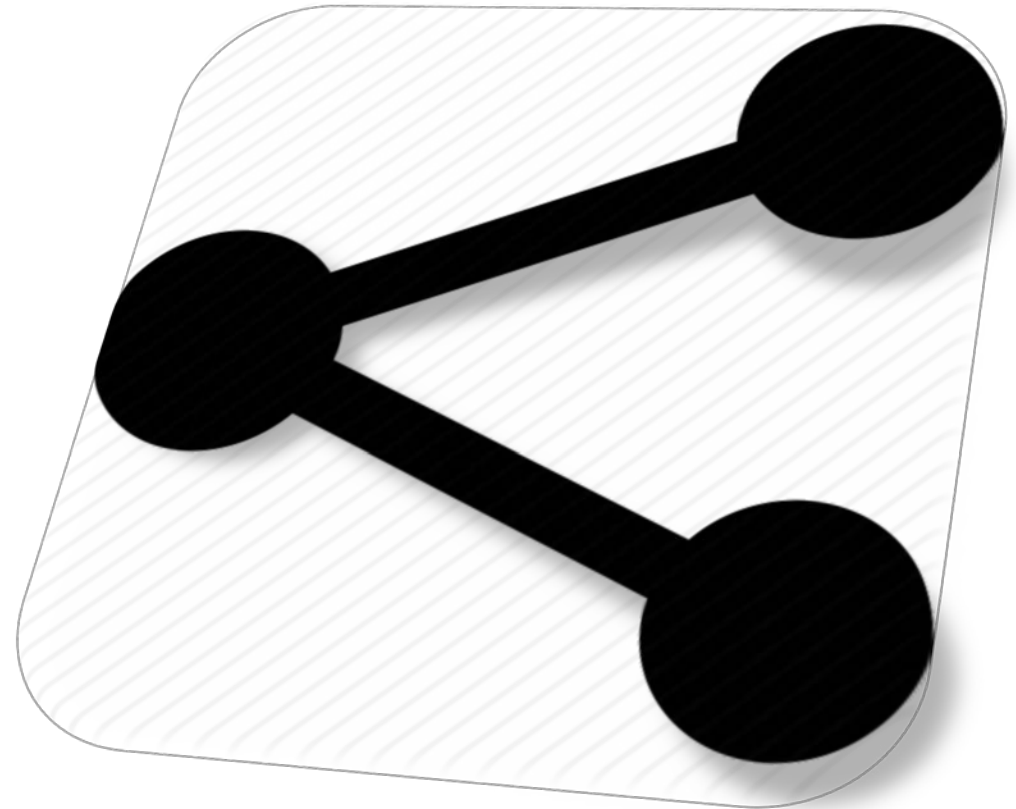


ALFRED Vintage Series
Real Gross Domestic Product

Download data



The “Share Icon” Connundrum



- I cannot find where to save the graph to "My Graphs" in this new version. Am I missing something obvious?
- **I can't see how to save an edit of a graph.**
- **After customizing a graph, how do I save the new settings for the next time I view? Thank you. If this is addressed in tutorials, instructions, or otherwise, direct me there.**
- With these new changes I cannot figure out how save or share charts. Have these features been removed?
- **Is it still possible to save Graphs? As some time ago?**
- **Could the "Save graph" option be more obvious like in previous version rather than in the edit graph function? That would be perfect! Cheers for the new version.**

FRED Help—take disorganized stuff and put it back together.

Need Help?

- [Learn about Tags](#)
- [Tutorials](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Email Us](#)

▪ [Email Us](#)



FRED Help

Need Help?

- [Learn about Tags](#)
- [Tutorials](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Email Us](#)

NEED HELP?

Questions or Comments

FREDhelp

The screenshot shows the FRED Economic Data website. At the top, there is a header with the FRED logo (Economic Data | St. Louis Fed) and the text "ECONOMIC RESEARCH" and "FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS". To the right of the header is a search bar labeled "Search FRED" and links for "REGISTER" and "SIGN IN". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "FRED Economic Data", "Information Services", "Publications", "Working Papers", "Economists", and "About". On the far right of the navigation bar is a link to "St. Louis Fed Home". Below the navigation bar is a row of tabs: "FRED", "ALFRED", "GeoFRED", and "API". The "FRED" tab is selected. Below the tabs is a row of icons with labels: "Data" (with a list icon), "Graphs" (with a line graph icon), "Account" (with a person icon), "FAQ" (with a question mark icon), and "About" (with an information icon). The "Data" tab is selected. Below this row is a list of help topics, each with a right-pointing arrow: "How can I find data on FRED?", "How can I download data from FRED?", "What can I do with FRED Data Lists?", and "Understanding the Data". The "How can I find data on FRED?" topic is expanded, showing a list of sub-topics: "Use the search bar", "Browse categories", "Browse by release", "Browse by source", and "Browse using tags".

FRED ECONOMIC DATA | ST. LOUIS FED | ECONOMIC RESEARCH | FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

REGISTER | SIGN IN

Search FRED

FRED Economic Data | Information Services | Publications | Working Papers | Economists | About | St. Louis Fed Home

FRED | ALFRED | GeoFRED | API

Data | Graphs | Account | FAQ | About

How can I find data on FRED?

- > Use the search bar
- > Browse categories
- > Browse by release
- > Browse by source
- > Browse using tags

How can I download data from FRED?

What can I do with FRED Data Lists?

Understanding the Data

33

Voices from the crowd

- Much better than the previous version. Thanks for the effort to keep improving.
- I love the new look. Great job!
- Happy with the new design, just a short learning curve to get the new menus
- FRED, Have you suddenly changed everything?? I just clicked on the series HOUST and found a very unfamiliar page.
- What have you done to Fred Graph that existed just a month ago?
- **ARE YOU KIDDING ME?**
- *Your new site f*#%+@? sucks. The graph page is bulls%+@?.*
- *IF IT AINT BROKE DONT FIX IT, D%#& A\$,\$!*

FRED Takes a Vacation

