

Experian In Talks for PPIP Contract

Credit-reporting company **Experian** is negotiating for a contract to help assign values to mortgage loans and bonds purchased through the federal government's Public-Private Investment Partnership.

The assignment would come via an Experian unit, launched less than a year ago, that produces software designed to link data on household and individual borrowing and payment behavior to the performance of securitization pools. Determining prices for assets purchased through PPIP has been among the thorniest issues to surface in the program's development.

Experian maintains data on 225 million American households. Officials from the Dublin-based company say they have already signed on a number of clients for the newly developed service, including large asset managers, and would win even more private-sector business with a PPIP mandate under their belts. "The government, I think, is going to be an early adopter of many of these information solutions," Experian senior vice president **Tony Hadley** said.

Experian competitors **TransUnion** and **Equifax** are developing similar software. But Experian claims to have an advantage, as it has hired 80 number-crunchers from the structured-finance industry to help present its data in a usable format.

PPIP seeks to relieve banks of toxic mortgage assets via investment partnerships between private-sector players, the **U.S. Treasury Department** and the **FDIC**. ♦

