

OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT
STUDY TO MEASURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
PRACTITIONER PRIORITY SERVICE SURVEY– CY2010
JANUARY 1, 2010 - DECEMBER 31, 2010
TIRNO-05-Z-00014

Introduction

Background/Overview

IRS engages a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. The Customer Account Services (CAS) organization of Wage and Investment (W&I) Division is responsible for the Practitioner Priority Service (PPS). It is a nationwide toll-free accounts-related service for all tax practitioners and the practitioners' first point of contact for clients with account-related questions. This service replaced the former Practitioner Hotline (PHL). All employees answering these calls received specialized training, including relationship training. Relationship training is designed to provide representatives with an in-depth knowledge of the specialized treatment and priority needs of the tax practitioners. This initiative is part of the Service-wide system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862, which requires all government agencies to survey their customers and incorporate customer preferences in their process improvement efforts.

Objectives of Data Collection

This service was implemented to:

- Improve the overall consistency and quality of service provided to practitioners,
- Improve accessibility into the system, and
- Reduce wait times.

The mean overall satisfaction response reported is the Practitioner Customer Satisfaction Measurement for Customer Accounts Services (CAS) Accounts Management.

Methodology

Sample Design

The PPS survey is conducted on the phone through an external automated survey system managed by PCG. The toll-free Practitioner Priority Service is administered through five (5) campus sites. For each of the five sites, the goal is to achieve 200 completed surveys per reporting period. We anticipate a 51% response rate. Standard procedures are used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible. To allow for quarterly validity at the site and national levels, the following sample size (stratified by 5 W&I sites) has been determined:

- 200 completes per site per quarter
- 1000 completes nationally per quarter
- 800 completes per site annually
- 4000 completes nationally annually

The contractor monitors the sampling process to ensure the procedures are providing the desired numbers of practitioner respondents and will coordinate with appropriate W&I personnel on sampling and related matters.

The contractor documents the sampling plan, including the target population and sampling frame, sampling specifications, expected reliability of the sample estimates, sampling limitations, preliminary sampling weights, and the strategy for achieving target quotas within key strata. Weighting procedures have been used to help ensure that national results are reflective of PPS customers at all five sites. The need to weight data is assessed on an annual basis.

Data to be Collected

W&I Practitioner Priority Service customer satisfaction response data is collected.

How Data is Collected and Used

The survey data is collected via an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone questionnaire. Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “Overall, with everything considered, please rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call?” Questions utilize a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses are released only as summaries. The contractor shall hold the identities, of the taxpayers responding to the survey, private to the extent permitted by law.

PCG supplies the IRS with a random sampling plan from which call center supervisors select callers for invitation to the survey. Variables for selecting the calls include the day of month, time of day, and identification numbers for each site’s PPS CSRs.

PPS site supervisors notify the CSRs when their calls are selected for the survey. When the business of the call is complete, the CSR invites the caller to participate in the survey. Callers who agree to participate are transferred to the automated survey.

The survey permits CAS Accounts Management to assess customer satisfaction by providing quantitative data about the tax practitioners’ perception of knowledgeable and personal resolution of issues. Finally, survey results may be used to improve the program and enhance the skills and relationship training given to the employees.

Dates of Collection Begin/End

Data collection runs the 2010 calendar year from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

Who is Conducting the Research/Where

The survey is conducted by Pacific Consulting Group (PCG) and their subcontractor, Pinpoint Research. PCG determines the sample and conducts data analysis. Pinpoint Research administers the telephone surveys and provides the dataset to PCG.

Cost of Study

The estimated cost of the study is \$96,055.00.

Expected Response Rates

The expected response rate is 51%

Methods to Maximize Response Rate

The questionnaire length is minimized to reduce respondent burden; thereby, tending to increase response rates. Respondents are assured anonymity of their responses. Also, weighting procedures can be applied to adjust aggregated data from those who do respond.

Test Structure and Design

The PPS Customer Satisfaction Survey has already been developed and is currently in use. The survey is conducted via an automated computer system. Completion of the survey takes approximately six minutes. It contains a standard set of questions, but allows flexibility to vary questions as needed. To maintain the ability to compare results from quarter to quarter, changes that impact the meaning of questions will occur minimally.

Efforts to not Duplicate Research

The W&I Priority Practitioner Services Customer Satisfaction survey is currently the only practitioner services study being conducted for customer satisfaction by the business operating unit of W&I CAS.

Participants Criteria

The survey is conducted as an automated survey administered to Tax professionals who call PPS line. At the conclusion of the PPS call, callers are randomly selected and ask to participate. Willing participants are asked a few questions and then transferred into the survey.

Privacy, Disclosure and security issues

The IRS will ensure compliance with the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II. All participants will be treated fairly and appropriately.

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy of participants will be carefully safeguarded at all times. Security requirements are based on the Computer Security Act of 1987 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Appendices A7B. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. Audiotapes are stored in locked cabinets. Transcription of audiotapes are stored in locked cabinets or shredded. Data security at the appropriate levels has been accomplished. Systems are password protected, users profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails generated and reviewed periodically. The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record keeping practices to ensure privacy protection of all participants. This includes criterion for disclosure—laid out in the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, and Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code—all of which provide for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients. Privacy will be safeguarded; participants will not be identified to IRS personnel. In addition, no participant names will be mentioned in the reports or data files. Participants will be advised that comments will be audio taped. Privacy is assured by virtue of agency policy.

Pursuant to the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Title III of the E-Government Act of 2002, P.L. 107-347, the contractor shall provide minimum security controls required to protect Federal information and information systems. The term 'information security' means protecting information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction in order to provide confidentiality, integrity and availability.

The contractor shall provide information security protections commensurate with the risk and magnitude of the harm resulting from the unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction of information collected or maintained by or on behalf of the agency; or information systems used or operated by an agency or by a contractor of an agency. This applies to individuals and organizations having contractual arrangements with the IRS, including employees, contractors, vendors, and outsourcing providers, which use or operate information technology systems containing IRS data. The contractor shall comply with Department of Treasury Directive TD P 85-01, Treasury Security Manual TDP 71-10, and Internal Revenue Manual 10.8.1 Information Technology Security Policy and Guidance. The contractor shall comply with IRS Internal Revenue Manuals (IRM) and Law Enforcement Manuals (LEM) when developing or administering IRS information and information systems. The contractor shall comply with the Taxpayer Browsing Protection Act of 1997 - Unauthorized Access (UNAX), the Act amends the Internal Revenue Code 6103 of 1986 to prevent the unauthorized inspection of taxpayer returns or tax return information. Contractors systems that collect, maintain, operate or use agency information or an information system on behalf of the agency (a General Support System (GSS), Major or Minor Application with a FIPS 199 security categorization) must ensure annual reviews, risk assessments, security plans, control testing, a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA), contingency planning, and certification and accreditation, at a minimum meet NIST guidance, if required by the IRS.

The contractor shall be subject to at the option / discretion of the agency, to periodically test, (but no less than annually) and evaluate the effectiveness of information security controls and techniques. The assessment of information security controls may be performed by an agency independent auditor, security team or Inspector General, and shall include testing of management, operational, and technical controls of every information system that maintain, collect, operate or use federal information on behalf of the agency. The agency and contractor shall document and maintain a remedial action plan, also known as a Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M) to address any deficiencies identified during the test and evaluation. The contractor must cost-effectively reduce information security risks to an acceptable level within the scope, terms and conditions of the contract. The contractor shall maintain procedures for detecting, reporting, and responding to security incidents, and mitigating risks associated with such incidents before substantial damage is done to federal information or information systems. The contractor shall immediately report all computer security incidents that involve IRS information systems to the IRS Computer Security Incident Response Center (CSIRC). Any theft or loss of IT equipment with federal information / data must be reported within one hour of the incident to CSIRC. Those incidents involving the loss or theft of sensitive but unclassified (SBU) data (i.e. taxpayer, PII) shall be reported to CSIRC, first-line manager, and Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA). Based on the computer security incident type, CSIRC may further

notify the Treasury Computer Security Incident Response Capability (TCSIRC) in accordance with TCSIRC procedures.

Burden Hours

The survey interview has been designed to minimize burden on the taxpayer. The time that a respondent takes to complete the phone survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The average time of survey completion is expected to be 6 minutes. The 26 questions are generally one sentence in structure and on an elementary concept level.

We have made every attempt in designing this survey to maximize response rate. Based on an annual sample of potential respondents of 7800 and a response rate of 51%, we expect 4,000 survey participants, leaving 3,800 non-participants. The contact time to determine non-participants could take up to one minute, with the resulting burden for non-participants being $3,800 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 3,800/60 \text{ minutes} = 63 \text{ burden hours}$.

For participants, the time to complete the survey is 6 minutes. This reflects the time to get into the automated survey (1 minute) as well as the time to complete the survey (5 minutes maximum). The time burden for participants being $4,000 \times 6 \text{ minutes}/60 \text{ minutes} = 400 \text{ burden hours}$.

Thus the total burden hours for the survey would be $(63 + 400) = 463 \text{ burden hours}$.

Attachments

Practitioner Priority Service, Wage and Investment survey script.