

**2014 GfK Roper Survey  
Supporting Statement  
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB #1545-1432)  
7-23-13 Revised**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

IRS has an annual subscription with a private sector market research firm, Growth for Knowledge (GfK) for Roper services. GfK provides the IRS with favorability surveys and analyses that help IRS track the public's perceptions about IRS, over time.

**2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

The objective of this research is to provide IRS data on IRS favorability trends over time through surveys of a representative sample of Americans over the age of eighteen to better understand how IRS favorability rates may correlate with relevant consumer behavior or attitudes.

**3. Consideration Given to Information Technology**

8,240 interviews total would be conducted via two online surveys (4,120 interviews each) from a stratified sample of adults 18 years of age or older in the United States using GfK Online Consumer Panel volunteers.

**4. Duplication of Information**

In conducting this research, IRS will coordinate with its research community to ensure that the research is conducted in such a way that it will provide maximum benefit to sound tax administration. Information from past and ongoing IRS research will be considered. No similar data are known to be gathered or maintained by the Agency or other sources.

**5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities**

N/A

**6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

The IRS would no longer be able to get critical customer satisfaction data to help track taxpayer's perceptions about IRS, for which we have continuous data since 1983.

**7. Special Circumstances**

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be used for statistical purposes.

**8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency**

It is expected that GfK will conduct this research and that the analysis will be conducted in GfK's offices in New York, NY.

**9. Payment or Gift**

As an incentive to participate, GfK offers members of its Online Consumer Panel points that can be redeemed for various merchandise and gift cards, etc.

**10. Confidentiality**

The survey will be conducted via two online surveys, and no sensitive personally identifiable information will be shared with IRS. Additionally, the vendor will take steps to ensure specific records cannot be tied to individual taxpayers. Research personnel will ensure that privacy and security of the results will be adhered to as allowed by law. Public and official access to the information will be tightly controlled. Additionally, GfK requires its personnel to sign confidentiality agreements.

**11. Sensitive Nature**

IRS' single proprietary favorability question contains no sensitive personally identifiable information, and no sensitive personally identifiable information will be provided to IRS.

**12. Burden of Information Collection**

The study will be conducted via two one-minute online surveys conducted among a sample of 4,120 respondents each, for a total of 8,240 interviews.

Screened/Interviewed	No. of Respondents per Survey	Participation Time per Survey	Burden per Survey	Total Burden for Two Surveys
Total Screened	32,960 (65,920 for 2 surveys)	N/A (IRS has no screeners in GfK's survey)	N/A	N/A
Total Participants	4,120 (8,240 for 2 surveys)	1 minute per respondent	<b>68.7 hours</b> (4,120 x 1 min.)/60	<b>137.3 hours</b> (8,240 x 1 min.)/60
<b>Total</b>			<b>68.7 hours</b> (0 + 68.7)	<b>137.3 hours</b> (0+137.3)
<b>Estimated Response Rate per survey:</b> 12.5% (Total Participants/Total Screened)				

**13. Costs to Respondents**

Not Applicable.

**14. Costs to Federal Government**

\$85,000 for the 2014 subscription (for all subscription services, including survey)

**15. Reason for Change**

Not applicable.

**16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans**

The data will be collected using two online surveys in March/April 2014 and September/October 2014, which is an externally driven schedule. IRS' single question asking how favorably respondents view IRS contains no sensitive personally identifiable information and will be assembled into a database in which responses are anonymous and tabulated into aggregate level results that summarize taxpayers' favorability toward IRS and their relationships to key demographics. The data will help track IRS favorability.

Because the expected response rate is less than 50%, no critical decisions will be made solely from the analysis of the data from this favorability question. The results of this question are simply one piece of a larger set of information needed to assess taxpayers' attitudes to help track IRS favorability.

#### 17. Display of OMB Approval Date

Not applicable

#### 18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

#### 19. Dates Collection Begin and End

The surveys would be conducted between March 1, 2014, and April 31, 2014, and September 1, 2014 and October 31, 2014, pending receipt of OMB clearance.

### B. STATISTICAL METHODS

#### 1. Universe and Respondent Selection

General Information: A stratified sample of 8,240 adults 18 years of age or over in the United States will be interviewed for this study using the GfK Online Consumer Panel in two surveys (4,120 interviews each).

Sampling Method: The sample design uses a disproportionate pre-stratified sample, where the strata are levels of several known demographic variables that are found in the database record of each survey community member who is sampled for the projected. The starting point for the stratification is the distribution of these variables among the online population of the United States who are 18 years of age or older. Besides accounting for demographics in the sample draw, sample invitations are sent out according to a pre-determined distribution that accounts for rates at which each stratus tends to click on the survey invitation, thereby at least starting the survey. The following are the strata and levels used for drawing sample:

- Gender: Male/Female;
- Age: 18-24, 25-34, 35-44,45-54,55-64, 65+ (Age is stratified within gender for pre-stratification purposes);
- Region: Northeast, Midwest, South, West, conforming to four US Census regions;
- Education: Less than 4 years of college, 4 year college graduate or higher;
- Race: White, Hispanic, Black, Asian, Other **[Note: This racial category breakdown doesn't conform with OMB language; however, because IRS is piggy backing one question on a much larger existing consumer survey as a subscription service, we cannot change it. Contracting for a custom survey instead of leveraging an existing survey would significantly increase the cost of this data collection.]**
- Household Income: <\$25k annually, \$25k-\$74.9k, \$75k or more.

Weighting: All completed interviews are weighted to resemble the demographic characteristics of the online population age 18 years and older as defined by the MRI Fall 2012 survey weighted demos among online adults.

**2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

The data will be collected using two online surveys of 4,120 respondents each (8,240 interviews total) from the GfK Online Consumer Panel. The GfK Online Consumer Panel consists of adults 18 years of age or older. Online survey participants volunteer to become panelists. GfK offers points as a participation incentive, which can be redeemed for merchandise, gift cards, or other items. To become GfK Consumer Panel participants for online surveys, volunteers complete GfK's registration surveys and enter a CAPTCHA to verify their authenticity. Panelists' names and addresses are verified against 3<sup>rd</sup> party databases annually. Panel members are regularly issued profiling surveys to capture the most recent respondent information. Recruiting methodologies include banner advertising via targeted banners across hundreds of websites, affiliate marketing in which advertisers choose whether they want to run GfK's panel offer, co-registration arrangements between companies in which multiple offers are presented to recruit panelists, and e-mail campaigns in which an advertiser sends targeted e-mails with GfK's offer to recruit panelists. Panel members are invited to participate in surveys via e-mails, sms, mobile telephones, and web intercept invitations.

**3. Methods to Maximize Response**

GfK offers points as a participation incentive, which can be redeemed for merchandise, gift cards, or other items. GfK also:

- strives to keep surveys open for a minimum of 7-10 days
- delivers a reminder to non-completes
- manages the panel to maintain active definition
- requires panelists to re-register each year
- gives attention to questionnaire content to reduce confusion & maintain engagement
- tries to limit the length of interviews to reduce fatigue & drop-out
- gives panelists 24/7 access to surveys through the recently revamped and updated askGfK portal.

**4. Testing of Procedures**

The vendor will fully brief field staff responsible for data collection and the fieldwork will be monitored. Pretesting may be done with a limited number of internal GfK Roper staff (no more than 9). No external pre-testing is applied; however, if the number of pretest respondents were ever to exceed nine members of the public, the Agency would submit the pretest instruments for review under this clearance. All data will be cleaned and aggregated into a single database. The vendor is a member of CASRO and ESOMAR and adheres to the CASRO Code of Standards and Ethics for Survey Research Organizations as well as to internal quality assurance standards that address all components of the research process.

**5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

Kevin Cecco  
Technical Advisor to the RAS Director  
IRS  
(202) 874-0464