

OMB Package

A Cognitive & Behavioral Study For IRS W&I SPEC **Of The Effectiveness Of Neighborhood Network Center And Weed & Seed** **Communications Materials Prepared By IRS**

Introduction

This research will help the IRS evaluate the effectiveness of communications materials focused on IRS Services which were sent to HUD grantees and DOJ sites. The IRS was hopeful that the recipients would aid the IRS by sharing the communications materials with their constituents at the Neighborhood Network Centers (HUD's contacts) and Weed & Seed (DOJ's contacts).

Background / Overview

Prior to the 2005 tax season, IRS (W&I Spec Area specifically), prepared and sent communications materials to HUD Neighborhood Network Centers and DOJ Weed & Seed groups in selected areas. The IRS now wants to conduct a cognitive and behavioral study among recipients of the materials to secure feedback on the materials, perceptions of them, to measure the effect of the materials on recipient behavior, and to determine the effectiveness of the materials against the objectives of the communications program.

The materials were sent to a total of 550 Neighborhood Network Center and Weed and Seed Site Coordinators, and IRS SPEC can provide a list of the 550 coordinators including name address and telephone numbers of the recipients of the materials.

Objectives of Research

The objectives of this research are to:

- Determine the IRS relationship with the target audience;
- Evaluate target reactions to the communications materials;
- And assess target feedback on possible expansion of the IRS' relationship with them.

Methodology

This study would be conducted via telephone methodology because of the availability of phone numbers for potential respondents (and because it is unlikely they can be reached via the Internet and because it would be prohibitively expensive to conduct the survey in person, with the centers widely dispersed). All interviewing would be conducted from Russell's national telephone interviewing center in Wayne, NJ, using Russell's executive staff interviewers (who are trained in both completion of ample sample sizes among small universes and in probing to reach below surface responses to secure deeper feedback and perceptions).

Starting with a limited list (550), and assuming both a 10-minute length of interview and Russell having the ability to contact potential respondents "on behalf of IRS, HUD, and DOJ", Russell expects that it can secure interviews with approximately 200 of the 550 materials recipients within the proposed number of labor hours.

However, Russell does not know either the reachability of potential respondents or the level of involvement (or recall) potential respondents will have in the communications materials, and since reachability and involvement are important factors in completion of a survey of this type, Russell cannot guarantee the 200 completed surveys. It is possible that Russell can secure more than 200; and it is possible that Russell will not be able to reach 200, perhaps settling in somewhere between 150 and 200.

In addition, in order to stimulate response from these targets and to spur their memory of the materials, potential respondents will be pre-contacted via electronic mail about 3-5 days in advance of the start of interviewing attempts.

After completing all fieldwork, Russell will tabulate the data by areas relevant to each agency (HUD, DOJ) and IRS Area Office, analyze all data, and prepare a report of findings. Note: DOJ list is not separated by IRS Area Office.

The survey package is being forwarded to OMB for approval. Attachment 1 contains the finalized survey.

Sample Design

The population will include the 550 Neighborhood Center and Weed and Seed Center Coordinators.

Data Collection Date

The survey will be collected via telephone by Russell Research from July 12, 2006 until August 4, 2006.

Data to be collected

This survey will collect the feedback, perceptions, and effect of the communications materials on recipient behavior, and to collect feedback on the effectiveness of the materials against the objectives of the communications program.

How data will be used

Data will be used to report findings about the effect of the communications materials on recipient behavior and any needed improvements to these materials for future efforts.

How data will be analyzed

Analysis of the survey data will be conducted by Russell Research.

Who is conducting research?

This research will be conducted by Russell Research. Russell Research will forward the raw data in an excel spread sheet to W&I Research.

Location

This Survey will be fielded via telephone interviewing from Russell's national telephone interviewing center in Wayne, NJ.

Stipend

Survey participants will not be paid a stipend for participation.

Burden Hours

The survey contains 23 questions. The majority of the questions are simple multiple choice. The survey should take a maximum of ten minutes to complete.

Based on the in-going goal on n=200 ending sample size the response rate will likely be as high as 75%. With this 75% figure, a total of 267 Neighborhood Center and Weed and Seed Center Coordinators will have to be called in order to reach the 200 who agree to participate in the study, leaving 67 not participating.

- As mentioned earlier, to stimulate response IRS will send an email communication alerting all 550 Neighborhood Center and Weed & Seed Center Coordinators of the telephone interview to follow. Assuming all 550 Coordinators read the 1 minute mailing, the resulting burden for **Coordinators** would be $550 \times 1 = 550$ minutes / 60 minutes = **9.17 burden hours**.
- The contact time to determine non-participation could be up to 1 minute, with the resulting burden for **non-participants** being $67 \times 1 = 67$ minutes / 60 minutes = **1.12 burden hours**.
- Then, those **Neighborhood Center and Weed and Seed Center Coordinators who do participate**, the length of the survey is 10 minutes, with the time burden for that group being 200×10 minutes = 2,000 total minutes / 60 minutes = **33.33 burden hours**.
- **Thus, the total burden hours for the study would be (9.17 + 1.12 + 33.33=) 43.62 hours.**

Efforts to not duplicate research

This research will provide original perspective because no information currently exists on the feedback, perceptions, and effect of the communications materials on recipient behavior, and feedback on the effectiveness of the materials against the objectives of the communications program. This research will provide the first insight on the opinion and effectiveness of these communications materials and possible ways to improve them.

Privacy, Security, Disclosures, Confidentiality

The tabulated responses returned to IRS W&I Research will not have any form of identifying information relating specific records to individual Neighborhood Center and Weed and Seed Center Coordinators. Research Personnel will ensure that privacy, security, and confidentiality of the aggregated results will receive utmost attention. Public and official access to the information will be tightly controlled. The computer files containing this tabulated information will remain password protected at all times. Data security approaching level C-2 will be accomplished using the Windows XP operating system.

Attachment I

Questionnaire for the survey.

RESPONDENT INFO

RESPONDENT ID# _____ (1-5)

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____ ST CODE _____

PHONE # (AC-____) _____

RECORD DATE, TIME & DISPOSITION FOR EACH ATTEMPT ON THIS PERSON

				<u>Disc</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>Unavail</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>NQ</u>	<u>Comp</u>	
1	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...12
2	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...13
3	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...14
4	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...15
5	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...16
6	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...17
7	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...18
8	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...19
9	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...20
10	DATE: _____	TIME: _____	(am) (pm)	1	2	3	4	5	6	...21

INTERVIEWER _____

AFTER REACHING POTENTIAL RESPONDENT, INTRODUCE YOURSELF WITH:

Hello, I am _____ of Russell Marketing Research in New York, an independent national survey research firm. The Internal Revenue Service has asked us to contact a sample of grantees of the Department of Housing And Urban Development and the Department of Justice who have been sent materials about IRS services. This survey is a follow up to the IRS Memorandum of Understanding with DOJ and HUD. As part of the agreement, the IRS provided marketing material to our MOU partners in support of the IRS electronic initiatives (e-file program). In order to provide enhanced customer service, the IRS would like to ask some questions regarding their efforts.

While your participation in the survey is voluntary, we encourage you to take this unique opportunity to share information and offer feedback regarding the IRS' recent communications efforts.

All information you provide will be held in strict confidence. Only aggregated responses will be reported and no specific response can be traced back to any individual respondent.

The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and we'd appreciate your participation. Would you be willing to participate in the survey?

- >> IF "YES", CONTINUE.
- >> IF "NO", THANK & RECORD AS "Ref" ON LINE FOR THIS ATTEMPT IN BOX ABOVE.

1. First, what Federal agency are you affiliated with? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).....	1	...09
Department of Justice (DOJ)	2	
Other (specify: _____).....	x	

2a. Next please tell me what town or city your center or site is located in?

Town or City Center or Site Located In..... 37-09

2b. And which state is your center or site is located in?

State Center or Site Located In..... 37-09

3. Did your center or site receive the IRS marketing material regarding electronic filing?

Yes (CONTINUE WITH Q. 4 NEXT)..... 1 ...09
 No (SKIP TO Q. 13 NEXT)..... 2

IF "YES" TO Q 3, ASK:

4. In total, how many copies of the IRS marketing materials did you receive?

of Marketing Material Distributions Received..... 09-09

4a. How did you receive these marketing materials? (READ LIST & CHECK ONE ANSWER.)

Electronically (CONTINUE WITH Q. 4b NEXT)..... 1 ...09
 Or through the mail (CONTINUE WITH Q. 4c NEXT)..... 2

IF "Electronically" TO Q 4a, ASK:

4b. And how did you disseminate the marketing material to the residents/constituents? (READ LIST & CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Electronically (ASK) Was that...?
 Through a mass e-mail 1 ...09
 Shared individually as an inquiry was received 2
 Placed on an Internet Page..... 3
 Other (specify: _____) 4
 (DON'T READ, BUT CIRCLE IF) Don't Know/No Answer .. 5
Printed or copied (ASK) Was that...?
 Shared directly
 with customers during one-on-one interactions..... 6
 Material placed in a public area for customer viewing... 7
 Provided as handouts during
 conferences, seminars or other public forums..... 3
 Other (specify: _____) 8
 (DON'T READ, BUT CIRCLE IF) Don't Know/No Answer .. 9

IF "Through The Mail" TO Q 4a, ASK:

4c. And how did you disseminate the marketing material to the residents/constituents? (READ LIST & CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Shared directly
 with customers during one-on-one interactions..... 1 ...09
 Material placed in a public area for customer viewing 2
 Provided as handouts during
 conferences, seminars or other public forums..... 3
 Other (specify: _____) 4
 (DON'T READ, BUT CIRCLE IF) Don't Know/No Answer 5

5. How satisfied were you with the timing of the receipt of the IRS marketing materials? Were you...(READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

Completely Satisfied 5 ...09
 Very Satisfied... .. 4
 Somewhat Satisfied 3
 Not Very Satisfied 2
 Not At All Satisfied 1

6. **Would you say that you received the IRS marketing materials...? (READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)**

- Too Soon 1 ...09
- Just In Time 2
- Too Late..... 3

7. **If you were to receive IRS marketing materials in the future, what method of delivery would you prefer? (READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)**

- Paper/Direct Mail 1 ...09
- Electronic/email..... 2

8. **Next I'm going to read a list of the IRS marketing materials that you should have received. After I read each one please tell me how effective you feel that specific IRS marketing material is by using a scale of *Extremely Effective, Very Effective, Somewhat Effective, Not Very Effective and Not At All Effective.* (CIRCLE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH MATERIAL LISTED)**

	<u>Extremely Effective</u>	<u>Very Effective</u>	<u>Somewhat Effective</u>	<u>Not Very Effective</u>	<u>Not At All Effective</u>
e-File Brochure.....	5	4	3	2	1
EITC Pamphlet.....	5	4	3	2	1
Volunteer Return Program.....	5	4	3	2	1
e-file Electronic Payment Brochure.....	5	4	3	2	1
Child Tax Credit Brochure	5	4	3	2	1
Questions and Answers for Taxpayers.....	5	4	3	2	1
Key Messages regarding e-file, EITC, Volunteer Return Program, Child Tax Credit, Direct Deposits, Electronic Payments.....	5	4	3	2	1

9a. **Did you receive feedback from your clientele regarding the IRS marketing materials?**

- Yes (CONTINUE WITH Q. 9b NEXT) 1 ...09
- No (SKIP TO Q. 10 NEXT)..... 2

IF "YES" TO Q 9a, ASK:

9b. **Judging from the feedback received, how helpful do you think the materials were to your clientele? After I read each one please tell me how helpful that specific IRS marketing material is by using a scale of *Extremely Helpful, Very Helpful, Somewhat Helpful, Not Very Helpful and Not At All Helpful.* (CIRCLE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH MATERIAL LISTED)**

	<u>Extremely Helpful</u>	<u>Very Helpful</u>	<u>Somewhat Helpful</u>	<u>Not Very Helpful</u>	<u>Not At All Helpful</u>
e-File Brochure.....	5	4	3	2	1
EITC Pamphlet.....	5	4	3	2	1
Volunteer Return Program.....	5	4	3	2	1
e-file Electronic Payment Brochure.....	5	4	3	2	1
Child Tax Credit Brochure	5	4	3	2	1
Questions and Answers for Taxpayers.....	5	4	3	2	1
Key Messages regarding e-file, EITC, Volunteer Return Program, Child Tax Credit, Direct Deposits, Electronic Payments.....	5	4	3	2	1

IF "YES" TO Q 9a, ASK:

9c. Did any of your clientele indicate that they needed other materials from the IRS?

- Yes (CONTINUE WITH Q. 9d NEXT) 1 ...09
- No (SKIP TO Q. 10 NEXT)..... 2

IF "YES" TO Q 9c, ASK:

9d. Please tell me what additional materials your clientele indicated that they need from the IRS?

IF "YES" TO Q 4, ASK:

10. How interested are you in continuing to receive IRS marketing materials in the future? Would you say you are...(READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

- Extremely Interested 5 ...09
- Very Interested 4
- Somewhat Interested 3
- Not Very Interested 2
- Not At All Interested 1

11. How satisfied were you with the IRS Partnership? Would you say you are...(READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

- Completely Satisfied 5 ...09
- Very Satisfied..... 4
- Somewhat Satisfied 3
- Not Very Satisfied 2
- Not At All Satisfied 1

12. How likely are you to continue your relationship with the IRS Partnership? Would you say you are...(READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

- Extremely Likely 5 ...09
- Very Likely 4
- Somewhat Likely 3
- Not Very Likely 2
- Not At All Likely 1

ASK ALL:

13a. During the course of this partnership, did you have any interaction with your local IRS office?

- Yes (CONTINUE WITH Q. 13b NEXT) 1 ...09
- No (SKIP TO Q. 14 NEXT)..... 2

IF "YES" TO Q 13a, ASK:

13b. How satisfied were you with the support you received from the local IRS office? Would you say you are...(READ LIST AND CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

- Completely Satisfied 5 ...09
- Very Satisfied..... 4
- Somewhat Satisfied 3
- Not Very Satisfied 2
- Not At All Satisfied 1

ASK ALL:

14. Did you establish a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site after being contacted by the local IRS office?

Yes (SKIP TO Q. 16 NEXT) 1 ...09
No (CONTINUE WITH Q. 15a NEXT)..... 2

IF "No" TO Q 14, ASK:

15a. Would you consider establishing a VITA site in the future?

Yes (SKIP TO Q. 16 NEXT) 1 ...09
No (CONTINUE WITH Q. 14b NEXT)..... 2

IF "No" TO Q 15a, ASK:

15b. Which of the following are reasons why you would not consider establishing a VITA site in the future? (READ LIST AND CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

Due to a lack of computer equipment 1 ...09
Due to a lack of training 2
Due to a lack of volunteers 3
Due to a lack of space 2
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)..... 1

ASK ALL:

16. Approximately what percentage of your clientele used any of the IRS services described in the marketing materials (i.e., electronic filing, direct deposit, etc.)?

Percentage of Clientele Who Used IRS Services37-09

17. The IRS is always interested in improving its services to its partners. The IRS would appreciate any feedback you may have about your partnering with the IRS. Would you like to offer any feedback at this time?

CLOSING COMMENTS

That completes the survey. The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that we report an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Approval Number for this study is 1545-1349. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to the:

Internal Revenue Service
Tax Products Coordinating Committee
SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP
1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224

Wording for the internet e-mail notifying HUD and DOJ of the survey

HUD – Neighborhood Network Center Staff

Sarah,

Thank you for partnering with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) this past filing season in the dissemination of our marketing materials regarding IRS programs and services to the Neighborhood Network Centers (NCCs) for reaching their customers.

The IRS is interested in improving service to its customers. Russell Marketing Research will assist us in a survey to obtain feedback from the NCC staff. The objectives of the survey are to:

- Determine the IRS relationship with the target audience
- Evaluate target reactions to the communications materials
- Assess target feedback on possible expansion of the IRS's relationship with HUD

The contractor will conduct telephone interviews with select Centers for collecting information from them concerning the distribution and use of our products and services. The survey will begin July 12, 2006, and continue through August 4, 2006. Russell Marketing Research will use the NCC lists you previously provided to IRS for the direct mailing campaign.

We would appreciate your assistance and support in a successful delivery and outcome from the survey. We're requesting that you contact the NCC staff of the upcoming telephone survey to stimulate responses from them and to spur their memory of the communication materials.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter, and we look forward to receiving feedback from our outreach efforts. If you need additional information or have questions regarding the survey, please contact Christine Allen at 202-282-0500.

DOJ – Weed and Seed Coordinators

Colleen,

Thank you for partnering with the Internal Revenue Service this past filing season in the dissemination of key messages to your Weed and Seed Coordinators addressing IRS programs and services.

The IRS is interested in improving service to its customers. Russell Marketing Research will assist us in a survey to obtain feedback from select Weed and Seed Coordinators. The objectives of the survey are to:

- Determine the IRS relationship with the target audience.
- Evaluate target reactions to the communications materials.
- Assess target feedback on possible expansion of the IRS's relationship with DOJ.

The contractor will conduct telephone interviews with the Coordinators for collecting information from them concerning the distribution and use of IRS products and services. The survey will begin July 12, 2006, and continue through August 4, 2006. Russell Marketing Research will use the Weed and Seed Coordinator list you previously provided to IRS.

We would appreciate your assistance and support in a successful delivery and outcome from the survey. We're requesting that you notify the coordinators of the upcoming telephone survey to stimulate responses from them and to spur their memory of the communication materials.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter, and we look forward to receiving feedback from our outreach efforts. If you need additional information or have questions regarding the survey, please contact Christine Allen at 202-282-0500.