

OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Automated Collection System (ACS) Support
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY – 2008
WAGE AND INVESTMENT (W&I) DIVISION
January 2008- Ongoing
TIRNO-05-Z-00014

Introduction

IRS has replaced the traditional measures of accomplishment with a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction, to assess how well it is achieving its mission and objectives. The Automated Collection System Support (ACS Support) Sections within the Compliance organization of Wage and Investment (W&I) is responsible for responding to customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, providing account settlement (payment options), and working related issues. As an important customer interface for W&I, ACS Support will need feedback from customers (i.e., taxpayers) to continuously improve its operations.

ACS is an electronic inventory system that stores taxpayer delinquent accounts (TDA) and taxpayer delinquent investigations (TDI). Cases are stored on the ACS system. TDAs and TDIs are routed automatically to one of eight ACS call sites (Atlanta, Austin, Buffalo, Fresno, Jacksonville, Puerto Rico, Kansas City, and Seattle) for resolution if the taxpayer does not fully respond to notices. The customers served by the ACS Support sites would have previously received a written notice from the IRS regarding their account. Currently, we have two ACS Support sites (Kansas City and Fresno) to work any follow-up actions the call sites might need. There are two types of customers ACS Support services, correspondence customers and Collection Due Process (CDP) customers.

The support sites receive all incoming correspondence resulting from ACS Notices sent on taxpayer's accounts. It is the support sites' responsibility to review the correspondence and respond to the taxpayer with the appropriate solution to their inquiry. It is at this time of the response that the Support Staff input the case history, closing actions and/or system updates to the ACS database and Integrated Data Retrieval System (IDRS). When closing actions are taken or a taxpayer follow up is required, the Support employees issue correspondence notifying the taxpayer of the above information.

Another important area of support is Collection Due Process (CDP). In January 2002, the CDP work was consolidated into two campuses for W & I, Fresno and Kansas City. The CDP units process request for CDP hearings mailed by taxpayers. These cases are tracked using the CDP Tracking System (CDPTS). It is the job of the CDP units to process the request and contact the taxpayer, by phone or mail, and make every effort to resolve the account before sending it to Appeals. However, if the taxpayer still wants to appeal or no resolution is reached or the case requires "no taxpayer contact", the CDP unit will prepare a package of specific documents to be forwarded to Appeals for review. At this point the CDP "front-end" case is considered closed and the CDP group input case history, actions and/or system updates to the ACS database and Integrated Data Retrieval System (IDRS).

This project has three primary goals: 1) to identify customer expectations of ACS Support through focus group research; 2) to track customer satisfaction at two ACS Support sites located in Fresno and Kansas City, and 3) to identify improvement opportunities.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

It was determined that Support customers could not distinguish ACS services from that of ACS Support. Therefore, IRS made the decision to survey the Correspondence customers only. The one-page survey instrument consists of rating questions, demographics, and space for open-ended comments.

The IRS will assume responsibility for printing the survey with the assistance of Media and Publications, using the print contractor through GPO.

Design and Methodology

A 60% survey response rate has been assumed. The contractor will design a sample that will result in enough completed surveys to produce survey estimates with 90% confidence and 5% precision at the national level on a quarterly basis. The contractor should stratify the sample by the two W&I ACS Support sites, to produce survey estimates with at least 90% confidence and 5% precision for each site on an annual basis. Closed cases will come from correspondence filings. Each ACS support site closes about 5,500 from correspondence case filings per month. Also, the contractor will need to develop weighting factors and weight the completed survey responses, as necessary, to be representative of the ACS Support case population.

Disclosure, Security & Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be safeguarded. The data collection process, participants will be identified to IRS personnel by their first names only. In addition, no participant's names will be mentioned in the focus group report. Participants will be advised that observers from the IRS may be behind the one-way mirror and that their comments will be audio and videotapes.

The survey will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Survey participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the survey respondents. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of information as well as its releases to authorized recipients.

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Evaluation

The vendor will use basic and advanced statistical techniques including, but not limited to, analysis of variance and the prioritization of improvement priorities using vendor's established technique.

The contractor will, on a quarterly basis, summarize the quantitative ratings and produce a national report showing customer satisfaction scores on all ACS Support survey items and overall improvement priorities. The contractor will deliver site-level reports (Kansas City and Fresno)

annually. The contractor will include any relevant database variables in the analysis and will weight the survey responses to reflect accurately the entire customer base and provide documentation of any weighting methodologies and formulas applied to IRS. The contractor will continue this process through four quarters covered by the contract.

Simultaneously with delivery of the reports, the contractor will deliver to the designated IRS official anonymous data files as well as files containing open-ended comments each quarter. Verbatim and data files will be cleansed of any taxpayer and employee names before delivery to vendor. Data files will include full variable names. Complete record layouts will accompany these files. Files will be delivered in Microsoft Excel format and SPSS format and not be write-protected. Delivery will be by mailing a CD-ROM to Chief, Planning and Analysis in W&I in Atlanta, GA. Documentation will be provided for all statistical techniques employed in producing the reports. During the first quarter of survey administration, the contractor will supply a report template for approval by W&I ACS Support and Planning & Analysis. Reports will include:

- Survey counts and overall response rates
- The overall level of customer satisfaction with services provided by ACS Support
- The averages and frequencies for all ratings questions
- Which areas of service, in priority order, ACS Support should focus their resources to improve overall satisfaction.
- Cross tabulations of variables with survey questions.
- Analysis of the relationship between survey responses.

Estimates of the Burden of Data Collection

The questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and is comprised of 21 rating questions, 3 of these open-ended questions. A total of 5,280 questionnaires will be mailed out during the 12-month period. Based on a response rate of 60%, 3,168 taxpayers are expected to complete this survey for the year. The burden hours are 264 hours for the year (3,168 completed questionnaires x 5 minutes = 15,840 minutes or 264 hours).

Other Information

The following information will be provided to Corporate Planning and Performance within 60 days after the close of the survey data collection operations:

- Findings: A brief summary of significant findings that were evidenced in the results.
- Actions taken or lessons learned: A brief summary of any action taken or lessons learned as a result of the findings.
- Number of completed surveys
- Survey period

Cost Estimate

The estimated cost for administering this survey is \$102,000.00.

Statistical Contact

For questions regarding the study or questionnaire design or the statistical methodology, contact:

Elaine Lowitz
Pacific Consulting Group
399 Sherman Avenue, Suite 1
Palo Alto, California 94306
(650) 327-8108