

**OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR
ACCOUNTS MANAGEMENT (ADJUSTMENTS) – OPTION YEAR 1 CY08
THE STUDY TO MEASURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
OF IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT DIVISION
January 2008- Ongoing
TIRN0-05-Z-00014**

Introduction

IRS has replaced its traditional measures of accomplishment with a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. The Accounts Management sections within the Customer Accounts Services (CAS) Operating Unit (OU) of both the Wage and Investment (W&I) division will be responsible for responding to taxpayers' technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, providing account settlement (payment options), and working related issues. As an important customer interface for Wage & Investment, Accounts Management will need feedback from customers (i.e., taxpayers) to continuously improve its operations. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to establish a 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.

This project has two primary goals: 1) to track customer satisfaction at the five W&I Accounts Management sites and nationwide; and 2) to identify operational improvements.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The customer satisfaction survey is attached. Completion of the survey is expected to take approximately three minutes.

The objective of the survey will be to gauge customer expectations and perceptions about the Accounts Management process. The questionnaire is based on the vendor's Net Impression methodology, which asks respondents to evaluate various aspects of their experience and to provide an overall summary evaluation. The questionnaire was developed based on inputs from a focus group with customers who had received correspondence from the IRS regarding their tax return or who had filed an amended return. The results should facilitate more effective management of W&I Accounts Management by:

- Providing insight from the customer's perspective about possible improvements.
- Providing useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and field office level of service delivery.

The survey will include several ratings questions evaluating service delivery during the Accounts Management process as well as several demographic items. In addition, ample space will be provided for suggestions for improvement.

Survey scoring for this contract will be based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – “How would you rate your overall experience with the way your issue was handled?” Questions will utilize a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses generated will be confidential. The vendor shall ensure that taxpayers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity.

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.

We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all taxpayers. 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 taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

Design and Methodology

The sample universe will consist of taxpayers with closed cases controlled in IDRS. The vendor will select 6,667 taxpayers per quarter (stratifying by the ten W&I Accounts Management sites), resulting in a total of 1,00 completed questionnaires each quarter (100 per site) and 4,000 completed questionnaires per year (400 per site).

The vendor will administer the survey by mail on a monthly basis [January 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008](#). Standard procedures will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible for the mail survey. These will include at a minimum: 1) an advance letter about the survey; 2) the initial survey with a cover letter; 3) a postcard reminder; and, 4) a second letter and survey to non-respondents.

The vendor will, on a quarterly basis, summarize the quantitative ratings and produce a national report showing customer satisfaction scores on all Accounts Management survey items and overall improvement priorities for the function. The vendor will deliver one national report each quarter and 10 site reports a year. The reports will contain individual site scores on each of the survey items and improvement priorities for the

individual sites. The vendor will include any relevant database variables in the analysis and will weight the survey responses as necessary to reflect accurately the entire customer base.

Reports of survey findings will be distributed to the IRS each quarter. Each report will be delivered approximately five weeks after the survey cut-off date for the quarter.

Evaluation

For the quarterly reports, 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.

- Survey counts and overall response rates for the local partners.
- The overall level of customer satisfaction with services provided by Accounts Management.
- The averages and frequencies for all ratings questions.
- The differences in satisfaction ratings and attitudes across customer segments.
- Which areas of service, in priority order, Accounts Management should focus its resources to improve overall satisfaction.
- Cross tabulations of variables for the customer surveys.
- Analysis of the relationship between survey responses.
- Analysis of the one open-ended question for improvement suggestions. The vendor shall transcribe and code the responses to the open-ended question and will conduct content analysis in order to provide Accounts Management with the top ten categories of concern.

Estimates of the Burden of Data Collection

The Accounts Management survey has been designed to minimize burden on the taxpayer. The time that a respondent takes to complete the survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The average time of survey completion is expected to be 3 minutes. The questions are generally one sentence in structure and on an elementary concept level.

We have made every attempt in designing this survey to reach a 60% response rate. The total burden in hours is estimated to be 333 hours (4,000 completed surveys x 3 minutes + 2 minutes for the pre-notification letter). For non-respondents, the total number of burden hours is estimated to be 74.23 hours (2,227 surveys X 2 minutes for the pre-notification letter). The grand total is estimated to be 408 hours for the year.

Other Information

The following information will be provided to Human Capital Office 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 questionnaires

Cost Estimate

The estimated cost for administering this survey is \$108,955.00.

Statistical Contact

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

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