

**OMB STATEMENT FOR THE
TE/GE TOLL-FREE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY – OPTION YEAR 1 CY08
WAGE & INVESTMENT DIVISION
January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008
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. The TE/GE Toll-free function within the Customer Accounts Services (CAS) Operating Unit of Wage and Investment (W&I) Business Operating Division (BOD) is responsible for responding to customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues and working related issues. As an important customer interface for W&I, TE/GE Toll-free needs feedback from customers to continuously improve its operations. 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.

The key goals of the TE/GE Toll-free Customer Satisfaction Survey are: 1) to survey and track customer satisfaction by site and overall, with the TE/GE Toll-free line; 2) to analyze respondent data and identify actions IRS can take to improve customer satisfaction with the TE/GE toll-free service; and, 3) to gauge the effectiveness of changes to such service. The TE/GE Toll-free Customer Satisfaction Survey results will also be used to track changes in customer satisfaction attributable to specific changes made to this service, such as adding or changing scripts and/or features of the system.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The phone survey (attached) is conducted via an automated computer system. Completion of the survey takes approximately ten minutes. The questionnaire covers the following areas: satisfaction with the automated answering system, wait time, IRS representative, issue resolution, and various demographics. The results help to facilitate more effective management of W&I by:

- Providing insight from the customer's perspective about possible improvements.
- Providing useful input for program evaluation and execution at the programmatic and area office level of service delivery.
- Providing additional information on important "drill down" areas.

Survey scoring for this contract is based on the Customer Satisfaction Survey Score response average to the keystone question – "How would you 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 generated are kept confidential. The vendor ensures that taxpayers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity.

The TE/GE Toll-free 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 ten minutes. It contains a standard set of questions, but allows certain “drill down” questions that vary as needed. To maintain the ability to compare results from quarter to quarter, changes that impact the meaning of questions will occur minimally. For costing purposes, changes may occur every six months.

The contractor will administer the survey by phone and IVR on a continuous basis. Standard procedures will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible.

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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Design and Methodology

For each of the two sites, Cincinnati and Ogden, the contractor should plan to complete approximately 180 – 200 interviews per site per quarter, to yield a precision margin of 5% and confidence interval of 95%. Overall, there will be approximately 360 – 400 completed interviews per quarter. W&I will consider alternative sampling approaches recommended by the contractor.

The contractor will provide the sampling specifications to W&I to apply to the sampling databases. Each site will report its sampling efforts to the vendor on a daily basis. The contractor will monitor the sampling process to ensure the procedures are producing the desired number of respondents and will coordinate with appropriate W&I personnel on sampling and related matters. Sampling will be performed continuously by IRS quality control monitors in the TE/GE Toll-free sites according to the procedures developed by the contractor.

The survey responses will be scored on a 5-point rating scale, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. All survey responses will be confidential. The contractor shall ensure that taxpayers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity. The overall satisfaction item is, "Everything considered, rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call."

The contractor will include any relevant database variables in the analysis. The contractor and W&I will agree on the exact specifications and contents of reports. If it is determined that the results need to be weighted, the percent satisfied and dissatisfied will reflect weighted percents. Separate open-ended comments will be provided within 30 days after the end of each quarter.

The quarterly national reports will show the calculation of a Fiscal Year cumulative score, weighted if necessary, along with a comparison to the prior year Fiscal Year cumulative score for overall Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction. Raw data, in SPSS and one other format to be determined will be provided to a distribution list of IRS personnel and made available within 5 business day after the end of each month.

The contractor will produce reports that include:

1. Leverage Analysis
2. Satisfaction mean scores of rating questions
3. Distribution of dissatisfied, neutral, and satisfied % of rating questions
4. Quarterly comparisons with prior year's cumulative data
5. Summary

At the end of each fiscal year, the contractor will summarize the quantitative ratings and produce one annual national report showing overall satisfaction scores for all Toll-free service items and improvement priorities. This report will provide results for each of the TE/GE Toll-free sites. The contractor will, if necessary weight the survey responses to reflect accurately the entire customer base.

Evaluation

The contractor will use basic and advanced statistical techniques including, but not limited to, analysis of variance and the prioritization of improvement initiatives, to provide:

- Survey counts and overall response rates for the 2 sites.
- Overall level of customer satisfaction for TE/GE Toll-free.
- Averages and frequencies for all ratings questions.
- Differences in satisfaction ratings across customer segments.
- Areas of service, in priority order, where Toll-free should focus efforts to improve overall satisfaction.
- Crosstabulations of variables.
- Driver analysis
- Coding and analysis of open-ended comments

Estimates of the Burden of Data Collection

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 7 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 maximize response rate. Using the response rate of 60%, the total burden in hours is estimated to be 47 hours (400 surveys x 7 minutes/60 minutes). Note that 7 minutes reflects the time to get into the automated survey (less than 1 minute) as well as the time to complete the survey (7 minutes maximum). For non-respondents, the total number of burden hours is estimated to be 4.5 hours (267 surveys x 1 minute/60 minutes).

The grand total is estimated to be 51.5 hours.

Estimated Cost

The estimated cost for this survey is \$62,557.00.

Statistical Contact

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

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