OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT
FOR THE STUDY TO MEASURE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
OF IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT e-help Survey (Option Year 1)
January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009
TIRNO-05-Z-00014

Introduction

The e-help Operations, Strategy, and Support (EOSS) Office resides in the Wage and Investment (W&I) Customer Account Services (CAS) Operating Unit and is responsible for providing policy direction and oversight to four customer contact centers known as the e-help Desk. The e-help Desk provides support to external customers who experience technical problem using IRS online electronic products. e-help Desk customers include: electronic return originators, enrolled agents, intermediate service providers, reporting agents, financial institutions, software developers, and transmitters. Electronic products include online services such as e-file, Modernized e-file, Electronic Federal Tax Payment System, and e-Services.

The purpose of the e-help Customer Satisfaction Project is to establish baseline customer satisfaction levels and to track e-help Desk performance over time. The key goals of the e-help Customer Satisfaction Project include surveying e-help Desk customers to identify:

1) Customer satisfaction with help desk services (including call handle/hold times, accuracy of assistor responses, etc.);
2) Customer needs (including preferred method of contact); and
3) Work processes that need improvement.

e-help Survey

The government contractor will be experienced and knowledgeable in administering and analyzing quantitative and qualitative customer satisfaction data. To maximize the feedback received from e-help Desk customers, the contractor shall administer the telephone survey. The survey will be administered using a 5 point rating scale, with “5” being the most satisfied and “1” being the least satisfied.

The survey will be conducted via an automated computer system. The contractor will administer the survey by phone (IVR) on a continuous basis. Standard procedures will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible. The contractor should provide for making changes to, or adding “drill down” questions on at least a semi-annual basis.

Design and Methodology

The contractor must plan to complete approximately 400 telephone interviews per site per quarter or approximately 6,400 e-help Desk telephone customers per year, stratified by each of the four e-help Desk sites. This requires making five attempts per day, five days per week for 52 weeks to yield approximately 5,200 attempts per quarter, but the contractor will devise and implement the sampling plan. A precision margin of 5% and confidence interval of 95% is expected. The telephone universe is just under 500,000.

The contractor will develop the sampling specifications for W&I to apply to the sampling databases and provide training on the sampling instrument. Each of the e-help Desk sites will report its sampling efforts to the vendor on a daily basis. The contractor will monitor the sampling process to ensure the procedures provide the desired number of respondents and will coordinate with appropriate W&I personnel on sampling and related matters.

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 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 e-help Desk customers responding to the survey are guaranteed anonymity. The overall satisfaction item is, “Everything considered, please rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received during this call” or for e-mail “Everything considered, please rate your overall satisfaction with the service you received.

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 four e-help Desk sites.
- Overall level of customer satisfaction for the e-help Desk.
- Averages and frequencies for all ratings questions.
- Differences in satisfaction ratings across customer segments.
- Areas of service, in priority order, where the e-help Desk should focus efforts to improve overall satisfaction.
- Cross tabulations of variables.
- Analysis of open-ended comments
- Quarterly comparisons with prior months cumulative data

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. Separate open-ended comments will be provided within 30 days after the end of each quarter.

The national reports will show the calculation of a weighted fiscal year cumulative score for overall Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction compared to the same period for at least the prior fiscal year, if available.

Raw data will be provided to a distribution list of IRS personnel and made available through Pinpoint within five business days of the end of each month.

Within five business days of the end of each month, the contractor will e-mail the calculation of percent overall weighted dissatisfied and percent overall weighted satisfied for the month to a distribution list of IRS personnel.

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 e-help Desk service items and improvement priorities. This report will provide results for each of the four W&I e-help Desk sites. The contractor will weight the survey responses to reflect accurately the entire customer base.

The contractor must also produce a one-page quarterly summary report in Word format and distribute it via e-mail to individuals specified by the IRS.

As an option, the contractor will at a mutually convenient time, make a presentation to appropriate IRS staff summarizing the e-help Desk survey findings and recommendations for change and implementation.

The contractor will prepare quarterly reports and an annual national report with site-level information. The quarterly reports will be delivered within 30 days after the end of each quarter. The annual report will be delivered within 30 days after the end of each fiscal year. The contractor will also deliver anonymous monthly data files within 5 days of the end of each month and open-ended comments each quarter as described in Task 5. The contractor will calculate monthly overall satisfaction and dissatisfaction rates and e-mail the results to IRS personnel.

The contractor will also provide the Summary report each quarter.

<u>Estimates of the Burden of Data Collection</u>

The e-help Survey is attached. Completion each interview is expected to take approximately 8 minutes. The questionnaire includes rating questions and open ends with a 60% response rate. The total number of burden hours is estimated to be 924 hours.

Respondents: 853 hours (6,400 completed interviews x 8 minutes)
Non-respondents: 71 hours (4,267 attempts x 1 minute)

The contractor will document the sampling plan, including the target population and sampling frame, sampling specifications, expected reliability of the sample estimates, sampling limitations, preliminary sampling weights, and the strategy for achieving target quotas within key strata.

<u>Cost Estimate</u>

The estimated cost for administering this survey is $116,757.00.

Statistical Contact

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

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