

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will conduct usability testing of the Internet reporting application for the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS). The MWTS collects data on the dollar values of merchant wholesale sales, and end-of-month inventories. The resulting data provide estimates of sales and inventories for wholesale trade industries. The electronic version of the MWTS, which is delivered through our online Centurion system, will be available in October, 2009.

Usability testing of the Internet application will focus on issues such as the layout of questions and screens, the navigation within and between screens, and edits. Attention will also be paid to the main menu, review/submission screens, and the Internet site's toolbar. The MWTS electronic survey is currently under development and will not be completely available until just before the proposed usability testing dates. Copies of the current screen shots, as well as the first draft of the testing protocol, are enclosed. When available, final screen shots of the instrument to be tested will be forwarded to OMB.

From mid-July through mid-August, 2009, we will conduct two brief rounds of usability interviews with respondents from up to 18 businesses in two major cities to be determined. We will attempt to obtain interviews with businesses that vary in size and complexity. Findings will be used to revise the MWTS Internet application.

Interviews will be conducted at the business site by staff from the Establishment Survey Methods Staff within the Economic Directorate of the Census Bureau. Subject area specialists from the MWTS staff will accompany the usability tester on most, if not all, of the interviews. They will assist with respondent debriefing, especially in cases where additional clarification of the subject matter is required. Interviews will be audio recorded, with the participants' permission, to aid researchers in accurately reporting findings and recommendations.

After businesses are recruited, participants will receive follow-up reminders about their appointments by fax, telephone, or e-mail via the Census Bureau's Secure Messaging Center (SMC). Participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by Census Bureau or special sworn employees involved in the research project. We will not be providing monetary incentives to participants in this study.

We estimate that it will be necessary to interview only one respondent at each company. We estimate the length of the interviews will average 1 hour. Thus, the maximum estimated burden for this research is 18 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is:

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