

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will conduct a usability test on the Census Bureau Website to identify issues that are problematic and frustrating to the user, with a specific focus on terminology and use of plain language or jargon on the site. Census.gov is the main Website of all Census Bureau data products and services. The purpose of the site is to provide information about the nation's economy and population, as well as supplemental resources on the methodology that is used by the Census Bureau to acquire the information (e.g., data collection, data utilization, survey procedures, etc.). All content is available to the public, and a multitude of diverse users search the site seeking a vast range of information.

The present study aims to evaluate the current state of the site with respect to language and terminology. It will serve as a baseline for future usability studies. In the coming year(s) the site will undergo redesign efforts to reduce jargon and employ more plain language content on the site. We plan to re-test annually in follow-up baseline studies to measure whether the redesign efforts are showing any improvement and to identify new issues that are potentially problematic and frustrating to users. This letter is only about the first baseline. All future follow-up studies will have their own letter.

Between February 2012 and March 2012, we will conduct a baseline usability test of Census.gov. We plan to recruit 10 novice and 10 more expert participants from the Washington DC metropolitan region. All participants will have a minimum of one year Internet experience and use the Internet at least three times a week to search for information. Novice participants will consist of people who have little to no experience using the Census.gov Website or products. They will be recruited from the Usability Lab database, which is composed of people from the Washington DC metropolitan area who volunteered to participate in studies after responding to a Craigslist.com posting or an ad in a local newspaper. Expert users will consist of people who have experience and knowledge about census data or methodology on any area including people, place or the economy (decennial-related, housing-related, American Community Survey-related) or any of the economic, governments, business and industry areas/content, etc. These individuals will be recruited by using listservs, word of mouth, local universities, and research institutes. Participants will come to the Usability Lab at the Census Bureau for the study and will be compensated \$40.00 for their participation.

During the study, participants will complete an electronic initial questionnaire about their computer use and Internet experience. They will answer some demographic characteristic questions. Then each participant will be given a set of tasks to use on the Web site. Tasks will be randomized such that no participant will receive the tasks in the same order. Participants will be asked to think-aloud while they are working on the tasks, and they will also be prompted to think aloud when they fall silent. Participants will also provide feedback on the Web site with two different questionnaires. The first questionnaire, composed of three questions targeting plain language usage on the site, will be given to the participant at the conclusion of every task. The second questionnaire targeting the participants' satisfaction with the Census Bureau Website on such design elements as the layout of page, ease of finding information, and use of Census terminology. This will be given to the participant at the conclusion of the session, as a final satisfaction questionnaire. Following the satisfaction questionnaire, the test administrator will ask final debriefing questions about the participant's experience with the Website. A copy of the

initial questionnaire, the demographic questions, the after-task satisfaction questionnaire, the final satisfaction questionnaire, participant tasks and debriefing questions are enclosed.

We estimate that users will spend one hour on average taking the study. This includes time spent working on all questionnaires, the usability tasks and the debriefing. Thus, the total estimated respondent burden for this research is 20 hours.

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

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