

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Generic Clearance for Usability Data Collections
OMB CONTROL NO. 0693-0043

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

Data clearance methods and procedures will vary for collections conducted under this generic clearance. Some of the individual clearances may use statistical methods to select respondents and analyze results. In such cases, NIST will provide OMB with the specific statistical information typically covered by Questions 1 thru 5 of this section as a part of the individual information clearance submission or request.

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The activities under this collection may involve samples of self-selected customers, as well as convenience samples, and quota samples, with respondents selected to cover a broad range of customers to conduct usability testing of certain products or services. Results will not be used to make statements representative of the universe of study, to produce statistical descriptions (careful, repeatable measurements), or to generalize the data beyond the scope of the sample. The specific sample planned for each individual collection and the method for soliciting participation will be described fully in each collection request.

Qualitative surveys are tools used by managers to change or improve products, or services. The accuracy, reliability, and applicability of the results of these surveys are adequate for their purpose.

The samples associated with this clearance are not subjected to the same scrutiny as scientifically drawn samples where estimates are published or otherwise released to the public.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring

specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Data collection methods and procedures may vary and the specifics of these will be provided with each collection request. NIST experts may use a variety of methodologies for these collections; and commercial survey-specific software to automate its collection and analysis of feedback. Usability testing is user-center interaction but may also involve physical copies, information collection instruments may be electronically disseminated and/or posted on target pages of a NIST web site. Telephone scripts, personal interviews, and focus groups with professional guidance and moderation may also be used and if applicable, will be provided as a part of the submission.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Information collected under this generic clearance may not yield generalizable quantitative findings; however, it can provide useful input about the usability of NIST products that can be generalized.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Pretesting may be done with internal staff, a limited number of external colleagues, and/or customers familiar with the programs and products. If the number of pretest respondents exceeds nine members of the public, NIST will submit the pretest instruments for review under this generic clearance.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

If statistical methods are used, NIST will obtain and provide information from the statisticians involved in the development, design, conduct, and analysis of usability data collections to be conducted, when appropriate. NIST will provide the name and contact information of the persons consulted in specific information collection requests submitted under this generic clearance.