

Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Data Collection
(OMB #1545-1432)

US Hispanic Phone Survey for Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Study

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) needs to understand the characteristics of US Hispanics who may qualify for assistance from TAS. This information is not readily available from existing data sources. TAS must survey US Hispanics to acquire the information needed to better understand our unacculturated and “underserved” taxpayers. This will help TAS better serve all taxpayers who qualify for assistance.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The purpose of this phone survey is to evaluate US Hispanic knowledge, beliefs, barriers and perception of TAS and the IRS, and provide information on their health insurance coverage, demographics, psychographics and digital media habits and practices. The feedback received will not institute new policy, yet enable TAS to effectively meet taxpayer needs.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

The TAS survey will be administered via phone. The phone methodology is a more robust/representative methodology than online given the sample being targeted. TAS considered other options, but decided phones were the best option for the target group.

4. Duplication of Information

The goal of the research is to build upon the foundation already laid by previous research efforts. While similar questions and answer option lists may be used in the current research in order to ensure continuity of data across studies, the research design team has reviewed the previous research studies conducted in the past by TAS in order to avoid duplication of the research.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

Small business or other small entities will only be involved if they decide to participate in the survey. TAS will minimize the burden on them by reminding them the choice to participate in the survey is voluntary.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

TAS completes the survey annually to keep abreast of the changing profile and needs of our customers. The failure to collect this information will hurt the ability of TAS to adequately serve the needs of all qualified taxpayers.

7. Special Circumstances

NA

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

Forrester Research was consulted for study design and data collection decisions.

9. Payment or Gift

No direct payment and/or gift will be made to respondents.

10. Confidentiality (this is the only instance this term should be used)

TAS will not ask for any information that could be used to identify the taxpayers on the survey. TAS designed the survey to ensure that no personally identifiable information (PII) is captured.

The data returned to IRS will have no identifying information relating specific records to individual taxpayers. Nonetheless, IRS will ensure that privacy to the extent allowed by law and security of the aggregated results will receive the utmost attention. Public and official access to the information will be tightly controlled. The computer files containing this tabulated information will remain password protected at all times. Data security approaching level C-2 will be accomplished using the Windows XP operating system.

We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all taxpayers. 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 taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

11. Sensitive Nature

A few questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature. These questions are needed because individual life experiences can have a direct impact on taxpayers' need for assistance from TAS (e.g., hardship in paying medical bills may make it difficult to pay one's taxes). We try to keep these questions to the absolute minimum, and we allow taxpayers to skip the answer if they are uncomfortable answering.

12. Burden of Information Collection

Overall we plan to complete 1,000 interviews and anticipate a response rate of 10 percent. To achieve 1,000 interviews we expect to call 10,000 people, 9,000 of whom either refuse to participate, or do not qualify for the study. As shown in the table below, the contact time to screen participants could be up to 1 minute, resulting in 150 burden hours for non-participants. (9,000 x 1 = 9,000 minutes / 60 minutes = 150 burden hours).

For participants, the time to complete the survey is 20 minutes. There is a 333 hour time burden for this group, including screening. (1,000 x 20 minutes = 20,000 total minutes / 60 minutes = 333 burden hours).

The total burden hours for the study would be (150 + 333) 483 hours.

Type of Collection	Estimated Burden		
	Number of Respondents	Hours per Response	Total Hours
Screening potential participants (ultimately do not participate)	9,000	1 minute	150 hrs
Screening and responding to survey (actual participants)	1,000	20 minutes	333hrs
Total			483 hrs

13. Costs to Respondents

Not Applicable.

14. Costs to Federal Government

\$131,903.80

15. Reason for Change

Not applicable.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

Once OMB approval is received, survey participants will be contacted via phone using RDD (random digit dial). It is expected that we will need approximately three months to field and complete survey administration.

The data analysis will commence once fielding is completed and the final report is expected soon thereafter. The final report will be a PowerPoint summary of key data findings looking at respondent demographics, awareness and use of TAS services, whether encountered problems related to filing or payment of Federal taxes, knowledge of tax rights and tax preparation methods used.

TAS will use this data to uncover key areas of focus for better assisting US Hispanics.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

We are requesting no exemption.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

19. Data Collection Date

Survey administration will begin in January 2013 or one to two weeks after OMB approval is received. The study will end in April 2013 or approximately three months after beginning date.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

The primary purpose of these collections will be for internal management purposes; there are currently no plans to publish or otherwise release this information.

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

We are looking to mimic the overall US Hispanic adult population (male/female, young to old, lower income to higher income, etc.). Respondents will be recruited based upon the following parameters: US Hispanic adults using a RDD (random digit dial) methodology focused on HDHA (High Density Hispanic Areas) with a penetration of 33% or higher (guarantee of 1,000 responses). Within this Hispanic subset, the data will be balanced using age, gender, household income and region. The sample will be weighted to the characteristics of the overall Hispanic population based upon data from the U.S. Census Bureau. This methodology (landlines) will deliver a sufficiently representative sample and the sample will also be weighted to better align it with the overall US Hispanic population.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Calls will be made to potential respondents using RDD. Respondents will be screened to a Hispanic subset, and balanced using age, gender, household income and region. Calls will be made from a center with 110 Internet-enabled stations that operate 16 hours a day, seven days a week. Eligible Hispanic adults will be interviewed on the phone and data will be entered into the CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing system complete with data checks and automated skip patterns).

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The vendor, Forrester along with Luth Research, will strive to maximize response and cooperation rates among those respondents that are contacted via phone using RDD

(random digit dial). To maximize response rates, Luth Research will use experienced interviewers and offer respondents the opportunity to take the survey in the English or Spanish language.

4. Testing of Procedures

Because of vendor experience, it is not expected that the procedures will require testing.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Several contacts will be available for assistance with the statistical requirements. TAS Research will provide analysts with expertise in statistics to assist this effort. The vendor (contractor) will provide experts with knowledge of statistics as well.

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