

Title: eAuthentication User Observations

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

Currently IRS.gov is the most utilized public interaction tool. It is one of the easiest and cheapest ways for the public to interact with the IRS. The IRS.gov website will be adding an authentication feature to move all applications under this one, enterprise wide authentication solution. This is not only a government-wide requirement, but also involves many NIST guidelines. We need to ensure that we are building a solution that is both usable and one that taxpayers will actually trust.

We are planning on observing users as they interact with this new system to ensure we are creating an easy to use user experience and ensure that the general public will be willing to use this.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The purpose of conducting these user observations is to ensure we are meeting the needs of our taxpayers and creating a secure environment to help taxpayers feel more comfortable about interacting with the IRS in a digital environment. We also are using this information to make any updates that are necessary to ensure this tool can be used by all types of taxpayers with all different types of education levels.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

The user observations will be completed using a prototype on IRS machines. User will have scenarios to run through with dummy data. We will be observing the users as they use the system to ensure it is usable and meets user expectations.

4. Duplication of Information

Prior testing has not been completed on release 2 of this application.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

Careful consideration has been given to reduce burden time of those participating. Since we will be observing participants taking one of the paths through the application we will only take the allotted time outlined by standard user observations best practices, no more than 1 hour.

We will only be observing tax professionals and individuals.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

Not conducting this research will not allow the IRS to understand and meet our users' needs and wants. Nor will it allow us to properly design and build a solution for an enterprise-wide authentication. This application is being developed to meet NIST standards with regards to authentication. In a recent GAO "statement of facts", they commented on how the IRS isn't meeting all of these standards. This application will help us do so.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The observations that will occur and data collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

The observations will be conducted with individuals from the Tax Professional community and individual taxpayers, however, we will not be consulting with any outside agency.

9. Payment or Gift

We request approval for an incentive of \$75 per person. The OMB standard of \$40 per person for this type of testing is insufficient to secure the desired participants. As we are looking for a particular segment of the population (see criteria below), an advertisement in the paper or on the internet is insufficient. The contractor hired to screen and recruit participants has attempted to do so offering the \$40 incentive. They were unsuccessful at getting any individual to agree to participate in testing. Parking at the building where the usability testing is to take place is \$35 which makes it extremely difficult for the contractor to actively recruit tax professionals and individuals (with a variety of backgrounds) at this \$40 limit. All 17 people who fit the study criteria said no to the \$40 incentive.

Participant Criteria:

External Customers Target #

Tax Professionals and Individual taxpayers

- 15 to 20 tax professionals
- 15 to 20 individuals 30 to 40
- General knowledge of the internet with frequent use of the internet
- General knowledge of tax filing and processing
- Knowledge of / responsible for individual tax filing
- Current or potential user of IRS.gov applications

10. Confidentiality:

The user observations will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. 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 to the extent allowed by law 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.

11. Sensitive Nature

No questions will be asked of sensitive or personal nature.

12. Burden of Information Collection

The total annual burden hours requested (60 to 70 hrs.). The estimated time to complete the participant screener questions is three minutes and a 40 percent response rate is assumed. We expect to contact 600 ($600 \times 1/180 = 3.33$) potential participants of which 30 to 40 are expected to participate in the user observations. The contact time to determine non-participation is 1 minute.

Type of Collection	Participation	Response Time (minutes)	Total Burden (Hours)
Potential participants	600	3.33 minutes	.30
Participation in User Observation	40	1 hour	40.
Grand Total (column 4)			70

13. Costs to Respondents

Not Applicable.

14. Costs to Federal Government

\$54,730

15. Reason for Change

Not applicable.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

There won't be any "results" only an observation report of how users interacted with the application. What users like, didn't like, ease of use, etc.

From this report, updates will be made to the application to enhance the user experience.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

Not applicable

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

19. Dates Collection of Information will Begin and End

June, 2013.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

Tax Professionals and Individual will be asked to participate in the user observations using the below criteria. Since we are using a recruiting service, we want to observe a minimum of 30 participants, but will not have time for more than 40 participants.

External Customers	Target #
Tax Professionals and Individual taxpayers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15 to 20 tax professionals• 15 to 20 individuals	30 to 40

- General knowledge of the internet with frequent use of the internet
- General knowledge of tax filing and processing
- Knowledge of / responsible for individual tax filing
- Current or potential user IRS.gov applications

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Participants will be utilizing a prototyped (working) version of the application so that we can observe them using the application based on the scenario given to them. Users will be taken to a room with a laptop and asked to complete a scenario with data that is supplied to them. They will use the application and complete the scenario. We will be observing as they do this.

The following are examples of objectives that address these areas.

- Content
 - o Content needs to be clear and concise
 - o Writing for the web practices need to be used
 - o Bullets, instead of long paragraphs
 - o Examples if necessary
 - o Help Content is easily understood
 - o Information displayed regarding user's tax information is easily understood
- Navigation
 - o Can user's move through the application without feeling lost
 - o Error recovery rate
 - o Do user's understand where they are within the application
- Design
 - o Easy to understand design
 - o Clean and concise
 - o Overall opinion of look and feel

3. Methods to Maximize Response

Participants will be utilizing a prototyped (working) version of the application so that we can observe them using the application based on the scenario given to them. Users will be taken to a room with a laptop and asked to complete a scenario with data that is supplied to them. They will use the application and complete the scenario. We will be observing as they do this.

Data will be collected to evaluate the following areas;

- Usability
- Ease of use for each tool/ service
- Content readability
- Clear navigation

A reminder participation email will be sent to the user prior to their appointment.

4. Testing of Procedures

There will be a total of 30 to 40 participants over the course of 2 days. The user observations of the application will have users access the application using provided scenarios and data. Each participant will be with a trained user experience specialist. The specialist will observe as the user interacts with the application.

Notes will be collected by the user experience specialists while observing users interacting with the application.

The moderator will complete an introduction, and provide an overview of the process and ask the participant to sign a consent form. The form will explain what the participant is going to be doing and how the IRS plans to use the information gathered from the discussion.

No personally identifiable information will be shared during observations.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

For questions regarding the user observations contact:

Beth Krappweis
OLS, Online Experience and Operations Management
Beth.A.Krappweis@irs.gov
202-283-4844

Attachments

1. Moderator Checklist
2. Consent Form
3. Sample Participant eMail
4. User Scenarios
5. Solicitation Script