USER EXPERIENCE STUDY

IRS AUTHORIZATIONS PROTOTYPE

OFFICE OF ONLINE SERVICES

Recruiting Script

Hi, my name is __________, and I'm calling from Focus Forward, an independent marketing research and consulting firm.

We are inviting you to participate in a website usability study. This session will take place September 20, 2014, and will last for 60 minutes. You will be paid **$40** for your time.

[Screener Questions follow.]

1) May I ask you a few questions to see if someone in your household qualifies to participate in the study?

Yes – Continue

No – TERMINATE

2) We are interested in speaking to adults who are taxpayers. We are also interested in speaking to adults who are tax preparers such as an attorney, CPA or accountant. Is there someone there who fits this description?

Yes – Continue

No – TERMINATE

3) May I speak to that person?

Yes – Continue

No – Ask if you can speak to that person at another time.
If a different person comes to the phone, reintroduce yourself and continue.

4) Would you be able to answer additional demographic questions to see if you are fully qualified to participate in this study?

Yes - Continue

No – TERMINATE

OK, your answers will be kept confidential and any information you give me will not be saved or used for any marketing purposes.

5) What is your age? ________

Please make sure that respondent is 18 or older. Please recruit a mix.

- 18 – 27 (Gen Y)
- 28 – 43 (Gen X)
- 44 – 61(Boomer)
- 61+

6) Do you own a webcam that is connected to your computer?

We would like you to use it so we can see you during the study.

Are you comfortable to use it for our online study?

Are you agreeable to be recorded during the online session?

YES - Proceed

NO to any - TERMINATE

Share, if needed: We will conduct the study using web conferencing software and we will ask that you connect using your webcam so we can observe you during the session.

7) What is your gender? __________.

Please recruit a mix.

- Male
- Female

8) What is your ethnicity? __________.

Please recruit a mix.

Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin (ethnicity)?

o Yes

o No

What is your race? Please select one or more. Are you… [ACCEPT ALL MULTIPLE ANSWERS.]

o White

- Black or African American
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaskan Native

9) What is the highest level of education you have completed? ________.

Please recruit a mix.

- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- College graduate
- Masters/PhD/Professional graduate degree

10) Are you currently employed by local, state or the federal government?

__________.

Yes - TERMINATE

No – Continue

11) Which of the following best describes your experience with IRS? __________.

- Taxpayer
- Licensed Tax Preparer
- Unlicensed Tax Preparer
- Other: _______________________

12) In a given week, how much time do you spend using the Web, not counting email? __________.

Please recruit a mix.

- Fewer than three hours a week - TERMINATE
- Four to 15 hours a week
- More than 15 hours a week

13) In what city and state are you located? ___________________

Please recruit a geographic mix.

• If D.C., Maryland or Virginia - TERMINATE

Conclusion:

Thank you! We would like to include you in our study. Your perspective as a taxpayer / tax preparer will provide us with valuable insight. The session will give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and provide feedback. No one will attempt to sell you a product or service, and you will not be contacted as a result of your participation.

The study will take about 60 minutes to complete. You will be paid $40 after the study has been completed.

We will send you a confirmation email that will include the date and time of your scheduled session, and follow up with you a couple of times prior to the date of the study. This email will also include instructions for dialing in with your phone and computer. If for any reason you are unable to attend, we ask that you *please* call us at **XXXX**.

Before I hang up, let me confirm your email address: ___________________________

Great! We will see you September 20, 2014 at **TIME**. Thanks again!

In case we need to contact you regarding this study, please confirm your contact information.

Name ____

BEST Phone Number _________________

Email ____

Thank you, your participation is appreciated.

Recruiting Letter

IRS Authorizations Online - Usability Testing

Date: September 8, 2014

Timeframe: September 20, 2014

Location: Kansas City

Dear Recruiter:

Thank you for your help in finding the right people for our study. We not only want people who fit our specifications, but also people who are articulate and ready to share their thoughts with us. Your role in helping us find the model participants is key — we appreciate your efforts.

We will conduct three focus group sessions on Thursday, September 20, 2014 Each session will consist of six to eight participants and last approximately 60 minutes.

1:00- 2:00 pm 6-8 participants

2:30-3:30pm 6-8 participants

4:00-5:00 pm 6-8 participants

These sessions will be conducted online. The online sessions will be conducted using Web conferencing software that has a screen share capability. IRS team members will be invited to attend the online sessions. The demographics of the participants should match the following:

- Taxpayers or Tax preparers: We are looking for adult taxpayers, or adult professionals who help others prepare taxes. This can include attorneys, CPAs, accountants, etc.
- Computer Experience: Any level, though all individuals should have experience using basic computer peripherals (e.g., mouse, keyboard) and accessing the Web.
- Gender: No requirements.
- Income: No requirements.
- Age/Education/Ethnicity: Please recruit a mix of participants. We have no specific preferences, but prefer to have a variety of backgrounds and experiences represented in our testers.

- Location: We would like a range of individuals from across the United States. However, please exclude individuals in D.C., Maryland and Virginia.
- A webcam is required in order to participate.
- Exclude market researchers, Web designers and Developers, and current state and federal government employees.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number for this study is **1545-2256**. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to:

Internal Revenue Service
Tax Products Coordinating Committee
SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP
1111 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20224

Consent Form

I agree to participate in the study conducted and recorded by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). I understand that the study will take approximately 60 minutes.

I understand that participation in this usability study is voluntary and I agree to immediately raise any concerns or areas of discomfort during the session with the study administrator.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number for this study is 1545-2256. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to:

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SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP
1111 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20224

Please sign below to indicate that you have read and you understand the information on this form and that any questions you might have about the session have been answered.

Date ______________________________

Please print your name ______________________________

Please sign your name ______________________________

Thank you! We appreciate your participation.

Introduction

1. Hello! My name is ___________, and I'm going to be walking you through this session today.

   Before we begin, I have some information for you, and I'm going to read it to make sure that I cover everything.

2. You probably already have a good idea of why we asked you here, but let me go over it again briefly. We are working with the Internal Revenue Service to gather user response on their Disclosure Authorizations Prototype. We're asking people to try using the prototype that we're working on so we can see whether it works as intended. The session should take about an hour and a half. The first thing I want to make clear right away is that we're testing the prototype, not you. You can't do anything wrong here.

3. As you use the prototype, I'm going to ask you as much as possible to think out loud: to say what you're looking at, what you're trying to do, and what you're thinking. This will be a big help to us.

4. If you have any questions as we go along, just ask them. I may not be able to answer them right away, since we're interested in how people do when they don't have someone sitting next to them to help. If you still have any questions when we're done I'll try to answer them then. If you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.

5. With your permission, we're going to record what happens on the screen and our conversation. The recording will only be used to help us figure out how to improve the site, and it won't be seen by anyone except the people working on this project. And it helps me, because I don't have to take as many notes. Also, there are a few people from the Web team observing this session.

6. If you would, I'm going to ask you to sign a simple permission form for us. It just says that we have your permission to record you, and that the recording will only be seen by the people working on the project.

7. Do you have any questions so far?

8. OK. Before we look at the site, I'd like to ask you just a few quick questions.

   - First, what's your occupation?
   - What do you do all day?
   - Now, roughly how many hours a week altogether would you say you spend using the Internet, including Web browsing and email, at work

and at home?
- What's the split between email and web browsing—a rough percentage?
- What kinds of sites are you looking at when you browse the Web?
- Do you have any favorite Web sites?

Usability Script

Tax Professional

SCENARIO: A potential client, Martin Lee would like you to represent him before the IRS for income received in 2009 and 2010. You would like to view Mr. Lee's tax information prior to taking him on as a new client. You would like the IRS to disclose Mr. Lee's tax information to you for both years.

Task 1
Log in to your account on IRS.gov and find the resource that would designate you as a third party appointee with the authority to review Mr. Lee's tax information for the tax type and years he is requesting representation for.

Expected Path: *Log In > from My Account page select Menu > Authorizations*

Task 2
Complete and submit the Tax Information Authorization for Mr. Lee.

Expected Path: *from Authorizations click New Authorization > choose Tax Information Authorization*

SCENARIO: You and the IRS notified Mr. Lee that there is a Tax Information Authorization (TIA) awaiting his review and approval.

Task 3
Find the status of the Tax Information Authorization you initiated for Mr. Lee.

Expected Path: *return to Authorizations*

SCENARIO: You examined Mr. Lee's tax information and need to discuss his tax matters with the IRS.

Task 4
Find the resource that would allow you to discuss Mr. Lee's tax matters with the IRS.

Expected Path: *from click New Authorizations button > choose Power of Attorney*

Task 5
Complete the process necessary to initiate a Power of Attorney.

Task 6
Find the status of the completed Power of Attorney for Mr. Lee.

Expected Path: *return to Authorizations*
SCENARIO: One of your other clients, John King has decided he no longer needs your services for income received in 2012.

Task 7
Withdraw yourself from the Power of Attorney for income received by Mr. King in 2012.

Expected Path: *from Authorizations > click Withdraw From*

Individual Taxpayer

SCENARIO: You have decided you need assistance with your tax returns and would like John Smith, a CPA to represent you before the IRS for income received in 2009 and 2010. Mr. Smith would like to review your tax information for those years. He has initiated a Tax Information Authorization (TIA) that requires your signature.

Task 1
Log into your IRS.gov account. Find and sign the TIA request from John Smith.

SCENARIO: After reviewing your tax information, John Smith has agreed to represent you before the IRS. He initiated a Power of Attorney (POA) that requires your signature.

Task 2
Find and sign the Power of Attorney from John Smith.

Task 3
Find the status of the Power of Attorney.

SCENARIO: You have decided that you no longer need John Smith to represent you before the IRS for income received in 2009 and 2010.

Task 4
Find and remove the Power of Attorney for John Smith..