

Secure Access Usability Study Materials

Call for Participants

Help Improve Secure Access for e-Services - Call for Participants

The MITRE Corporation, a not-for-profit organization, in partnership with IRS Office of Online Services, is seeking tax professionals who use the IRS e-Services suite to participate in a study to improve and enhance the registration process for e-Services.

How you can help

If you are a tax professional and an e-Services user, **contact the research team lead, [Name], at [\[email\]](#)**. You will be asked to complete a quick 10-minute questionnaire emailed in a PDF format to determine if you are eligible to participate in the study. Those who are eligible will be contacted to schedule a one-hour session with the research team.

Who can participate?

Participants may come from a range of experience in the tax services industry. Participants will be current users of e-Services. The Usability Study will take place **throughout October and November 2018**. The study will take place at a time agreed upon with participants and over the phone.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and support in improving IRS.gov!

Recruiting Questionnaire

Secure Access for e-Services Usability Study Questionnaire

Please complete the following questionnaire to participate in the Secure Access for e-Services Usability Study.

The Paperwork Reduction Act

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

Questionnaire

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What category describes your current age?

- 17 years and under
- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 44 years
- 45 to 54 years
- 55 to 64 years
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 to 84 years
- 85 years and over
- Prefer not to say

What is your primary role as a tax professional?

- Enrolled Agent
- Certified Public Accountant
- Tax Attorney
- Enrolled Actuary
- Retirement Plan Agent
- Return Preparer (PTIN holder)
- Unenrolled Agent
- Reporting Agent
- Other Tax Professional: _____
- I do not work in the Tax Services Industry

How many years of experience do you have in Tax Services Industry?

- Less than one year
- 1-2 years
- 2-4 years
- 4-6 years
- More than 6 years
- None
- Don't know

I have a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

I am an Authorized IRS e-file Provider (ERO)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

I am registered for e-Services

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

I use the following e-Services applications. Select all that apply.

- Transcript Delivery Service (TDS)
- TIN Matching
- Secure Object Repository (SOR)
- E-File Provider Services
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) Services
- Income Verification Service (IVES)
- State Agency Services (State TDS or State Extracts)
- Other: _____

List the top three IRS services that you have used in the past year (include services offered via web, phone, fax, and in-person)

- [Text Box - Optional]

How often do you use IRS services? Please select one.

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- Never

Have you downloaded the IRS2Go mobile application?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I have availability on weekdays, between 8am and 6pm, for a 1-hour interview

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I have access to a quiet, uninterrupted space for a 1-hour interview

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I have access to a computer with high speed internet

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

The software on my personal smartphone is currently up to date.

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

I share my personal account passwords or pin numbers:

- Never [SKIP FOLLOWING QUESTION]
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Frequently

I share my personal account passwords or pin numbers with the following:

Select all that apply.

- My husband, wife, partner or significant other
- Close family members (parents, children, siblings, grandparents)
- Extended family members (aunts, uncles, cousins)
- Friends
- Colleagues
- Technical support staff
- Other (please describe)

I reuse the same password or pin number:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometime
- Often
- Frequently

I use similar passwords or pin numbers (similar words, numbers, or topics):

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometime
- Often
- Frequently

I secure my smartphone using the following method(s):

Select all that apply.

- Password
- Pin number or pattern
- Biometric (for example, fingerprint, face, voice)
- Other, please describe: _____

I use my smartphone to log in to the following types of personal accounts:

Select all that apply.

- Bank account
- Social media account
- Accounts with online retailers
- Email account
- Healthcare related accounts
- Work related accounts (email, time sheets, documents)
- I do not use my smartphone to log in to any personal accounts

Facilitator Script

Welcome and Research Purpose

Hi, my name is [name], I am a Human Factors Engineer at the MITRE Corporation. My colleague [name] is also on the line with us today. I am conducting research sponsored by the IRS on a potential new method to register for online services.

We'll start by learning about you and your work, review a new process the IRS could use to register individuals for access to online services, and then hear your thoughts about it. Your input today will help the IRS create future products and services to better serve tax professionals such as you.

Informed Consent Verbal Script

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to end our session at any time. This interview will take approximately 1 hour. We would like to record this interview. The recording is for research purposes only and your name will not be associated directly with the content in the recording. Instead, the content of all interviews will be aggregated to identify key issues, which would be non-attributional.

Do you have any questions about this research?

Do you agree to participate?

Do you consent to the use of the recording by MITRE?

If participant declines, STOP RECORDING and DELETE digital audio file.

If asked further details about privacy: Your name and contact details are stored in an encrypted file that is only available to the MITRE research team, which will be destroyed on completion of this study. Your name will not be linked to anything you say in any reporting within MITRE or to the IRS. There are no expected risks of participation.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Interview Questions

Background Questions

1. How long have you been a tax professional?
2. What is your role at your firm? What are you responsible for?
3. How many clients would you say you are working with you over the course of a year?
4. Which IRS online systems do you currently use? Do you use any scripting and/or automation in your work?

Experience, opinion about current identity proofing and authentication

1. To access IRS e-Services, you use an identity verification process called Secure Access. Did you go through the Secure Access process recently? How did it work? Were you able to complete the registration for online Financial Validation in Secure Access, or in person (called exception processing)?
2. Identity proofing involves providing evidence to prove you are who you say you are. In the current secure access, you are asked to provide some financial account information for verification (the last eight digits of their credit card number or car loan number or home mortgage account number or home equity (second mortgage) loan number or home equity line of credit). What was your experience like providing this?
3. Have you used a smartphone to access sensitive, personal accounts, such as your bank? Have you used you phone to submit documents, like checks or receipts? What are your thoughts on using your phone to do these types of tasks?

Prototype walk through

Today we'll assume that to ensure security, all individuals must be vetted to access IRS e-Services. We're going to explore an illustration of a potential process the IRS could use in the future.

Facilitator: Use open ended, neutral questions such as: "what comes to mind" and "how might you respond at this point." Reflect back participant language, especially in reference to technology terminology.

Display wireframes over skype. Ask participants what they would do next and where they might click before advancing to the next screen for them.

Screens	Topic	Questions
1-3	Onboarding	How might you respond at this point? What are your thoughts on the process? How long do you think it will take? Is it similar to anything you've done in the past?
4-8	Mobile App Onboarding	What are your thoughts on downloading a mobile app to proceed? What concerns or frustrations do you have during any of these interactions? What are your expectations during these interactions? What causes you the most frustration?
9-12	State ID Upload	What is your reaction to submitting your license? Is it similar to anything you've done in the past? What's your expectation during this type of interaction? What concerns might you have during any of these interactions (probe for any usability or accessibility concerns)?
13-16	Selfie with Liveness Testing	Is it similar to anything you've done in the past (facial recognition, interacting with your camera image)? Will this ensure you are who you say you are? What's your expectation during this type of interaction? What concerns might you have during any of these interactions

		(probe for any usability or accessibility concerns)?
17-18	Remaining steps	What's your expectation during this type of interaction? What concerns might you have during any of these interactions (probe for any usability or accessibility concerns)?

In depth feedback on the early concept prototype

1. How willing do you think tax professionals are to do identity proofing remotely, using their smartphone? What about you?
2. The identity proofing process we just reviewed added a state photo ID as a key document to use to register for e-Services. What are your thoughts on this?
3. How might tax professionals respond to the IRS2Go using facial recognition to compare you to the image on your ID?
4. How might the IRS better design initial notification and instructions on how to identity proof?

Conclusion

That concludes our interview. Thank you so much for your participation today! While the features I've described above are only hypothetical at this time, the IRS is actively trying to find ways to improve your experience and that of the individual taxpayer. Your input will help us to craft our future vision for the IRS website and its functionality. Thanks again - we appreciate your time and thoughtfulness. If you think of anything else feel free to reach out to us at any time.