

Federal Trade Commission
Supporting Statement for FTC Administrative Activities
OMB Control No. 3084-0169

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1) Description of Sampling Methodology

The FTC uses convenience sampling to survey users of the FTC's complaint intake systems. For the ReportFraud.ftc.gov website, consumers who submit a report are presented with an invitation to complete the survey. In addition, the FTC collects feedback on customer experience with the FTC Consumer Response Center ("CRC") by asking all callers to respond to a short survey. Surveyors for the CRC do not contact any individual more than once in any 90-day period even if the user has contacted the call center repeatedly. The FTC also distributes surveys to all active users of the Consumer Sentinel consumer reporting system. A fraction of users return completed surveys.

The FTC does not conduct sampling for surveys regarding the FTC's advocacy program and interviews concerning the effectiveness of Commission divestiture orders. Program managers use the qualitative feedback received from questionnaires regarding the effectiveness of the advocacy program to assess and improve programs, products, or services. The accuracy, reliability, and applicability of the results of these feedback activities are adequate for their purpose.

2) Description of the Information Collection Procedures

As discussed more fully in Part A of the Supporting Statement, FTC staff solicit feedback from stakeholders in several different ways. Consumer Response Center customer satisfaction questionnaires are completed online and by phone. Consumer Sentinel surveys are conducted online. Drawing reliable conclusions from the large volume of surveys regarding the CRC (typically over 20,000 by phone and over 45,000 online) and the Consumer Sentinel Network (approximately 2,500) does not require one hundred percent participation of stakeholders. In contrast, the FTC collects a smaller number of feedback questionnaires regarding Commission advocacy comments and divestiture orders (approximately 35-37) in a year. Accordingly, the FTC solicits only qualitative feedback relating to its advocacy comments and divestiture programs.

For the online CRC customer satisfaction survey, data is collected randomly from site visitors. The data is then loaded to the portal and suite overnight to apply the methodology weighting for impacts. For the phone customer satisfaction survey, responses are collected using outbound interactive voice response ("IVR") technology. Following the file cleaning process, all telephone numbers are automatically dialed once by the outbound IVR system. Recipients of these outbound calls are invited to respond to a short survey regarding their recent experience contacting the FTC. Respondents are asked to use their telephone keypad to enter their responses.

For the online Consumer Sentinel Network survey, active users are directed to a short online survey where they are asked to answer multiple-choice and freeform questions.

The FTC seeks feedback regarding the FTC's advocacy program and divestiture review from stakeholders through online questionnaires or phone interviews. To gauge the effectiveness of the advocacy program and divestiture review, the FTC provides these feedback questionnaires to approximately 20 recipients of advocacy comments and approximately 15-17 recipients of Commission divestiture orders.

3) Methods to Maximize Response Rates/Reliability of Sample Data

The FTC's customer satisfaction surveys for its consumer complaint reporting systems are not designed to yield generalizable quantitative findings. They are designed to obtain useful customer input, but they do not yield data about customer opinions that can be generalized. For the online CRC customer satisfaction survey, the methods used to improve the usefulness of the data include the following: (1) adjusting the sampling percentages (visitors who will receive the invite if the loyalty factor requirement is met); (2) adjusting the loyalty factor (minimum number of page visits in a session needed to qualify for survey invitation); (3) adjusting the persistent cookie (amount of time before visitor can be presented with another survey, typically between 30-90 days); (4) ensuring the code is properly set up on all site pages; and (5) adjusting the number of excluded URLs from invitation presentation. For the phone customer satisfaction survey, the surveyors do not contact any unique telephone number more than once within a 90-day period to maximize response and minimize consumer burden.

4) Testing of Procedures or Methods Undertaken

No pretesting is undertaken regarding the activities within this clearance for which evaluative surveys or interviews are conducted. For surveying concerning the FTC complaint reporting system, surveyors test and evaluate the surveys for accuracy and usability using the American Customer Satisfaction Index ("ACSI") model. The ACSI methodology is a well-vetted approach for measuring and interpreting customer satisfaction data, having been widely used across the Federal government since 1999.

5) Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspect of the Surveys

The online CRC customer satisfaction survey for ReportFraud.ftc.gov is conducted by Verint ForeSee, customer experience measurement specialists. They can be reached at 2373 Oak Valley Drive, Ste 200, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. For the phone customer satisfaction survey, the expertise to employ and interpret the ACSI methodology resides within CFI Group, the only organization licensed to provide the ACSI methodology to the Federal Government. CFI Group can be reached at 625 Avis Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108.

To reiterate, no limited sampling and statistical approaches are employed in soliciting feedback from those who receive Commission advocacy comments or from buyers of divested assets in the first year after a divestiture's completion. For those programs, staff seeks input from the respective full affected universe.