Date of Approval: 07/05/2024
Questionnaire Number: 1324

Basic Information/Executive Summary

What is the name of your project (system, database, pilot, product, survey, social media site, etc.)?

OLS Digital Communication Options

Business Unit

Taxpayer Services

Preparer

For Official Use Only

Subject Matter Expert

For Official Use Only

Program Manager

For Official Use Only

Designated Executive Representative

For Official Use Only

Executive Sponsor

For Official Use Only

Executive Summary: Provide a clear and concise description of your project and how it will allow the IRS to achieve its mission.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Online Services (OLS) business unit is interested in finding new ways to drive taxpayers towards digital service channels. With that in mind we want to discuss the various potential digital service options that may become available to tax professionals and taxpayers to gauge their awareness of these options. Specifically, we are interested in understanding taxpayers’ interest in and willingness to use potential digital communication options that may become available within the OLS Online Account (OLA). Additionally, one area of focus of the IRS Taxpayer Experience Strategy is to expand digital services by improving self-service digital channels through expansion of individual online accounts and the introduction of accounts for tax professionals. We will also collect data regarding digital notices.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Will this project use, collect, receive, display, store, maintain, or disseminate any type of Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU), Personally Identifiable Information (PII), or Federal Tax Information (FTI)?

Yes

Please explain in detail how this project uses sensitive data from inception to destruction (data lifecycle).

Tax practitioners attending the in-person 2024 IRS Nationwide Tax Forums (NTF) will be verbally asked if they are willing to participate in a focus group. If they are willing to participate, the recruiter will ask them a screener question to see if they are eligible to participate for this focus group. Again, they will be informed that the focus group is entirely voluntary. If they are eligible for the focus group, are still interested and agree to participate, the participant will inform the recruiter which date/time they would prefer and verbally provide their first name for the recruiter to write it on the associated sign-up sheet. The recruiter will then verbally provide the date, time, and location for the focus group along with a reminder card. When the participant shows up to the focus group session, the moderator will stand at the front door to ensure the participants' first name is listed on the sign-up sheet. Once the participant enters the focus group room, they will be instructed to write their first name only on the name card placed at the tables. The purpose of writing their first name is for the moderator to directly call on participants for engagement and/or for participants to respond and interact with each other. The introduction section of the moderator guide will ask the participant to introduce themselves to the group by sharing their first name only. The notetaker will not capture or write their first names in the focus group notes. Though, if their Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data (first name) is inadvertently captured in the focus group notes, it will immediately be redacted before it is saved. There will be no information within any notes or report that could identify an individual participant.

Please select all types of Sensitive but Unclassified data (SBU)/Personally Identifiable Information (PII)/Federal Tax Information (FTI) that this project uses.

Name

Cite the authority for collecting SBU/PII/FTI (including SSN if relevant).

PII for federal tax administration - generally IRC Sections 6001 6011 or 6012

Product Information (Questions)

1.12 What is the IRA Initiative Number?

4-Deliver cutting-edge technology, data, and analytics to operate more effectively.

1.13 What is your research method(s) used (i.e., survey, telephone interview, focus group, etc.)?

Focus Group (in person)

1.14 Is this a new survey, telephone interview, focus group, or usability testing? Throughout the rest of this questionnaire, we will use the term "survey" to include all of these.

Yes

1.19 Which Business Unit (BU) is requesting this survey?

Online Services

1.21 Who will the survey be administered to?

Tax professionals at the 2024 Nationwide Tax Forums

1.22 Is this a reoccurring survey?

No

1.22 What is the start date?

07/8/24

1.23 What is the end date?

9/14/24

2.11 Will the survey capture any type of PII or is PII (names, addresses, email addresses, etc.) used to select participants?

Yes

2.12 If any PII data is collected, disclosed, or studied on individuals who choose not to participate, please describe the data.

No PII (i.e., name) will be collected, disclosed or studied for individuals who choose not to participate.

2.13 List any linkable data that the survey uses, collects, receives, displays, stores, maintains, or disseminates (gender, ethnicity, parts of address, tax filing information, etc.) or uses to select participants?

Name. The participant will provide their first name, and it will be written on the sign-up sheet. The participant will also display their first name on a name card in the focus group room and will verbally provide their first name at the start of the focus group session.

2.14 Explain how the participants are selected. Include a detailed description. Please provide your research plan as supporting documentation.

Data collection for this project will be completed through focus groups coinciding with the 2024 IRS Nationwide Tax Forums held between July 8, 2024, and September 12, 2024. Focus group participants will be solicited from individuals attending the IRS Nationwide Tax Forums. During the forums, we will recruit attendees that are registered participants at the forums. Attendees demonstrate interest in participating in the focus groups by visiting the recruitment booth. Alternatively, they may also be invited to attend by a recruiter approaching them and gauging their interest. The recruiter will then ask screener questions to determine if the attendee qualifies for the focus group. If the attendee is eligible to participate and voluntarily chooses to participate, the recruiter will then record the person's first name only on a sign-up sheet for the selected date and time of the focus group. The recruiter will then provide the focus group details, including date, time, and location, both verbally and in writing on a reminder card.

2.15 How are the participants notified (letter, postcard, email, etc.) of the survey, and if the survey is voluntary/optional, how is notice given? If it is not voluntary, please explain why it is mandatory.

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3.11 What tool(s) is/are used to conduct the survey? Please indicate if the anonymous feature has been set for the survey, if applicable.

The focus groups will be conducted in-person at each of the 2024 Nationwide Tax Forum (NTF) locations. The moderator will conduct the focus groups and a notetaker will be present to take notes of the discussion. The notetaker will take notes using a laptop computer and will transcribe the comments made during the focus groups. Names will not be used by the notetaker.

3.12 Will the survey be audio-recorded or video-recorded?

No

4.11 Does this survey retrieve information by any personal identifier for an individual who is a U.S. citizen, or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence? If the answer is Yes, you must have at least one SORN name and number selected in the SORNs section.

Yes

4.12 The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC § 552a(e)(3)) requires each agency that maintains a system of records to inform each individual requested to supply information about themselves. Do survey participants provide information about themselves?

Yes

4.13 Please provide the Privacy Act Statement.

Our legal authority to collect this information is 5 U.S.C. 301. We are requesting this information to gauge the tax professionals and taxpayers' awareness of various potential digital service options that may become available. The information may be disclosed as authorized by the routine uses published for Privacy Act System of Records IRS 00.001 Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files. Your responses to this focus group are voluntary. Not answering all of part of the questions will not affect you except it may affect our ability to obtain feedback and suggestions on potential digital service options.

4.14 Does the IRS administer (conduct) the survey?

Yes

4.15 Provide the name of the IRS office administering the survey.

Taxpayer Services

4.18 Does the IRS perform analysis of the survey results?

Yes

4.19 Provide the name of the IRS office performing the analysis of the survey.

Taxpayer Services

4.27 Identify the roles and their access level to the PII data.

Both the project manager and the notetaker will have full access to the list of names collected during the recruitment process.

4.28 Explain the precautions taken to ensure the survey results will not be used for any other purpose not listed in the Detailed Business Purpose and Need section and to ensure that employees or taxpayers who participate in the survey cannot be identified or re-identified under any circumstances and no adverse actions taken.

The qualitative data obtained from the focus groups will only be used for the project it was collected for and used for purposes identified in this PCLIA. Focus group participants will not be identified or be able to be re-identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. The IRS will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. The IRS will carefully safeguard the privacy to the extent allowed by law of the focus group participants. The note taker for the focus groups will not write the names of the participants in the notes so that the identity of the participant and what they say is kept private. Though no Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data should be captured and stored, if PII is inadvertently captured in the focus group notes, it will immediately be redacted before it is saved. All focus group notes will be consolidated and summarized before they are shared with the business owner(s). At project completion, findings and results are presented to the customer along with a review of how the results will be used to assure they will be used for their stated purpose. Additionally, Strategies and Solutions will routinely engage with their customers (Online Services) regarding the use and dissemination of the focus group results. There will be no information within any report that could identify an individual participant and there will be no adverse actions taken.

4.29 Does the administrator of the survey have access to information identifying participants?

Yes

5.11 For employee or taxpayer satisfaction surveys explain how you have ensured that no "raw" or unaggregated employee or taxpayer data will be provided to any IRS office.

We (IRS - Taxpayer Services, Strategies and Solutions) will administrator/ conduct the focus groups and perform the analysis of the qualitative data. The participant list that contains the first name only of the participant and the name card where the participant will be instructed to write their first name on will be destroyed following the completion of that focus group session. PII data (first names) will not be included in the focus group notes or the results that will be sent to the requestors of this focus group. The IRS will carefully safeguard the privacy to the extent allowed by law of the focus group participants. Only IRS employees from the Strategies and Solutions and the Online Services office will be present in the focus group room. The note taker for the focus groups will not write the names of the participants in the notes. Though no Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data (first name) should be captured and stored, if PII is inadvertently captured in the focus group notes, it will immediately be redacted before it is saved. All focus group notes will be consolidated/aggregated and summarized into a report that will uncover overall themes. The report will not include any PII and will not be able to identify an individual participant. The report will be shared with the business owner(s).

5.12 If the survey maintains records describing how an individual exercises their rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, explain the First Amendment information being collected and how it is used.

Not Applicable. The focus groups will not collect information about how an individual exercises their First Amendment rights. The focus groups will only collect and use information that pertains to the research questions outlined in the moderator guide.

5.13 Does the individual about whom the information was collected or maintained expressly authorize its collection/maintenance?

Yes

Interfaces

Interface Type

Other Organization

Agency Name

N/A

Incoming/Outgoing

Incoming (Receiving)

Transfer Method

Other

Other Transfer Method

If attendee is eligible to and chooses to participate, the recruiter will record their information.

Systems of Records Notices (SORNs)

SORN Number & Name

IRS 00.001 - Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files

Describe the IRS use and relevance of this SORN.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Online Services (OLS) business unit is interested in finding new ways to drive taxpayers towards digital service channels. With that in mind we want to discuss the various potential digital service options that may become available to tax professionals and taxpayers to gauge their awareness of these options. Specifically, we are interested in understanding taxpayers' interest in and willingness to use potential digital communication options that may become available within the OLS Online Account (OLA). Additionally, one area of focus of the IRS Taxpayer Experience Strategy is to expand digital services by improving self-service digital channels through expansion of individual online accounts and the introduction of accounts for tax professionals. We will also collect data regarding digital notices. The purpose of this project is to gather information from tax professionals regarding their personal awareness of certain IRS digital service options and to estimate the awareness of their clients of those same service options. The feedback will be used in the following ways: a. The feedback will inform efforts related to increasing the awareness of IRS OLA amongst tax professionals and taxpayers in general. b. The feedback will gauge taxpayer interest in certain IRS OLA functions. c. The feedback will gauge taxpayer interest in new correspondence methods within the OLA. d. The feedback will gauge taxpayer interest in using digital methods to respond to digital notices.

Records Retention

What is the Record Schedule System?

General Record Schedule (GRS)

What is the retention series title?

Public Customer Service Records

What is the GRS/RCS Item Number?

6.5/ RCS Item 010

What type of Records is this for?

Both (Paper and Electronic)

Please provide a brief description of the chosen GRS or RCS item.

Evaluations and feedback about customer services

What is the disposition schedule?

Temporary. Destroy 1 year after resolved, or when no longer needed for business use, whichever is appropriate.

Data Locations

What type of site is this?

Teams Collection

What is the name of the Teams Collection?

NTF 2024

Please provide a brief description of the Teams Collection.

This will be a collection of all moderator guides and notes from the Nationwide Tax Forums.