

Survey PCLIA ID Number: 4627  
Date of Approval: December 22, 2019

## **SURVEY DESCRIPTION**

*Full name and acronym of the Survey.*

Online Account Usability Testing - October 2019 v2, SU-4627

*Type of Survey:*

Survey

Note: the remaining questions will be simplified to refer to *the Survey* but still apply to Telephone Interview or Focus Group. If Telephone Interview or Focus Group, a copy of Interview Questions or the Moderator's Guide will be requested by the Privacy Analyst.

*Is this a new Survey?*

Yes

*Is this a reoccurring Survey?*

No

*Provide the dates collection of information will begin and end:*

10/29/2019-1/30/2020

*Does this survey have an SOI (Statistics of Income) control number?*

No

*Does the Information Collection Request require OMB clearance?*

No

## **GENERAL BUSINESS PURPOSE**

*What is the general business purpose of this Survey? Provide a clear, concise description of the Survey, the reason for the Survey, and the benefits to the IRS mission.*

The purpose of this study is to collect taxpayer feedback on redesigned elements of IRS Online Account (OLA), particularly elements related to making online tax payments. The IRS can use the insights from this study to improve the user experience of IRS.gov, with the ultimate goal of increasing voluntary compliance.

## PII DETAILS

*Is Personally Identifiable Information (PII) used, collected, received, displayed, stored, maintained, or disseminated in the Survey; or is PII used to select participants? (i.e. names, addresses, email addresses, etc.)?*

Yes

*Please specify the types of PII:*

Name

Phone Numbers

E-mail Address

Internet Protocol Address (IP Address)

Photographic Identifiers

Biometric Identifiers

Employment Information

Tax Account Information

*Are there other types of PII collected in the Survey?*

Yes

*Describe the other types of PII that are applicable to this Survey:*

Age range, annual household income range, ethnic background, highest education level reached, gender, occupation, tax filing habits, employment status, US citizenship and types of IRS forms filed. Participants will be observed real-time during the test sessions. Audio and video recordings of the test sessions will be produced. The recordings are used exclusively for post-testing analysis. They are created and stored on a local device and are not shared with anyone outside of the Mediabarn research team. No transcripts are produced. The moderator from Mediabarn reviews the recordings to cover gaps in his/her notes and to collect quotes for the final report. The quotes, which are de-identified, bring the research findings to life and remind readers that the designs will ultimately be seen and used by real people.

*Is any PII data collected, disclosed, or studied on employees, taxpayers, stakeholders or other individuals who choose not to participate?*

Yes

## **PRIVACY ACT & SYSTEM OF RECORDS**

*Is there a System of Records Notice(s) or SORN(s) that addresses the PII records in this Survey?*

Yes

*Enter the SORN number(s) and the complete name of the SORN(s):*

IRS 00.001 Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files

IRS 10.004 Stakeholder Relationship Management and Subject Files

## **PRIVACY ACT NOTICE**

*Based on the information you have provided, does the Survey require a Privacy Act Notice to be provided to the participants?*

Yes

*Please provide the Privacy Act Statement:*

The authority requesting the information is 5 USC 301. The primary purpose of asking for the information is to determine steps the IRS can take to improve our services to you. The information may be disclosed as authorized by the routine uses published for the following Privacy Act System of Records: (1) IRS 00.001 Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files and (2) IRS 10.004 Stakeholder Relationship Management and Subject Files. Providing the information is voluntary. Not answering some or all of the questions will not affect you.

## **RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**

## OFFICIAL USE ONLY

## **INCOMING PII INTERFACES**

*Does the employee/taxpayer PII come from the IRS, Treasury, or other Government system(s), application(s) or data base(s)?*

No

*Does the data come from other sources?*

Yes

*Describe the source of the information:*

The information is self-reported by respondents who volunteer to participate in Mediabarn's market research studies.

## **PII SENT TO EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS**

*Are the Survey results disclosed to any other Federal or State Government? (For example, the Federal Viewpoint Survey/Questionnaire - OPM gets the results.)*

No

*Are any external resources used to create the database of the participants?*

No

## **SURVEY PARTICIPATION**

*Who will the Survey be administered to?*

Taxpayers

*Explain how participants are selected. Include a detailed description of the method and reason of selection. If selection is random, please explain.*

Participants are selected from a database (owned and maintained by MediaBarn) of volunteers who have opted-in for a variety of market research studies based on their self-reported familiarity with estimated tax payments and availability.

*How are participants notified of the Survey?*

MediaBarn contacts the potential participants as identified in the database by phone to verify their eligibility and availability. The phone number used to contact these voluntary respondents was self-reported when they opted-in to participate in MediaBarn market research studies.

*Is the Survey voluntary?*

Yes

*How is notice given that the Survey is optional?*

The outreach messaging states that participation is voluntary.

*How will the Survey be conducted?*

Web Based

*Explain the procedure:*

Please refer to Phone explanation below.

Phone

*Explain the procedure:*

At the scheduled date and time, the Mediabarn moderator will speak with the respondent over a Webex conference line. The respondent will use his/her own equipment to view and test the prototype over Webex. To supplement notes taken during the session, the Webex session will be recorded using Mediabarn's locally run software. For these remote sessions conducted over the WebEx (video and audio), observers will be able to watch the video and listen to the audio in real-time through WebEx. Participants are informed and consent to being observed. At no time will the observers interact with the participant. While observers will be able to see participants on a screen, only aggregated and de-identified PII will be shared. Information about a specific participant will never be attributed to specific responses or insights. Observers will be stakeholders from both Treasury/IRS and Mediabarn: Treasury/IRS employees or their representatives who are either a) assisting with the administration of the user research activity or b) have a vested business interest in the insights from the user research activity. MediaBarn (vendor)employees who work on administering the user research activity to include the moderator, project lead, notetaker, designers, and content creator/developer, and recording technician. There will be up to 10 observers each from Treasury/IRS and vendor (MediaBarn). The moderator and designated notetaker will take the notes that will be used for report synthesis. Observers are provided a scoresheet to track participant behavior/responses to tasks/questions. At the end of the session, the scoresheets are collected by the vendor (MediaBarn), not incorporated into analysis of the study and promptly destroyed as they are merely used as a technique to keep observers focused and quiet during the session. Observation by stakeholders provides a number of benefits including, but not limited to, creating an empathetic connection to the taxpayer as they attempt to use a product or a website to achieve their goals; allows stakeholders to experience the participant's emotional and mental burden for themselves; and fosters collaboration and insights in order to improve the taxpayer's experience.

Other

*Please explain:*

Mediabarn In-lab testing. At the scheduled time, the respondent will meet with the Mediabarn moderator to test a locally run prototype on Mediabarn's lab-owned equipment. To supplement notes taken during the session, the screen and audio will be recorded using locally run software. For these in-person sessions, observers who are also on-site will be able to watch and listen to a live feed in real-time from another room on a TV screen. Observers who are not on-site will also be able to watch and listen in real-time through WebEx (as in the remote sessions above). Participants are informed and consent to being observed. At no time will the observers interact with the participant. While observers will be able to see participants on a screen, only aggregated and de-identified PII will be shared. Information about a specific participant will never be attributed to specific responses or insights.

Observers will be stakeholders from both Treasury/IRS and Mediabarn: Treasury/IRS employees or their representatives who are either a) assisting with the administration of the user research activity or b) have a vested business interest in the insights from the user research activity. MediaBarn (vendor)employees who work on administering the user research activity to include the moderator, project lead, notetaker, designers, and content creator/developer. There will be up to 10 observers each from Treasury/IRS and vendor (MediaBarn). The moderator and designated notetaker will take the notes that will be used for report synthesis. Observers are provided a scoresheet to track participant behavior/responses to tasks/questions. At the end of the session, the scoresheets are collected by the vendor (MediaBarn), not incorporated into analysis of the study and promptly destroyed as they are merely used as a technique to keep observers focused and quiet during the session. Observation by stakeholders provides a number of benefits including, but not limited to, creating an empathetic connection to the taxpayer as they attempt to use a product or a website to achieve their goals; allows stakeholders to experience the participant's emotional and mental burden for themselves; and fosters collaboration and insights in order to improve the taxpayer's experience.

## **SURVEY PROCESS**

*Does the IRS administer or perform analysis of the survey?*

Neither

*Does a contractor/vendor administer or perform analysis of the survey?*

Both

*Provide the name of the contractor/vendor:*

Mediabarn

*Has a Contracting Officer or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) verified:*

*That all applicable FAR requirements are met to engage a contractor to perform the survey?*

Yes

*That all required "non-disclosure" clauses are contained in the contract.*

Yes

*That all contractor employees who will have access to the data have signed non-disclosure agreements and the non-disclosure forms are on file with the COR.*

Yes

*What is the level of access and background investigation completed on contractor employees prior to access to PII about employees or taxpayers? Any contractor or subcontractor who will have access to the PII should have at least a "Moderate Risk" (NACIC) investigation. See Publication 4812 - Contractor Security Controls.*

Contractor Users: Read-Only Moderate

Contractor Sys. Admin.: Read-Only High

## **INFORMATION PROTECTION**

*What information/results will be provided to the business owners (IRS Requestors) of the Survey?*

The deliverable will be a report that details aggregated user perceptions and usability issues.

*Can you confirm that employees or taxpayers who participate in the survey cannot be identified under any circumstances?*

No

*Please explain:*

Mediabarn's market research division maintains a list of who participated in each study. This information is not forwarded to the IRS.

*Can you confirm that no adverse actions can be taken against participants regarding the participant's answer?*

Yes

*For employee or taxpayer Satisfaction Surveys, can you verify that no "raw" or un-aggregated employee or taxpayer data will be provided to any IRS office?*

N/A

*Are there any employee or taxpayer identifiers that are obtained as a result of responding to the survey?*

No

## RECORDS SCHEDULE

*Are the Survey records covered under the General Records Schedule (GRS), or have a National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) archivist approved a Record Control Schedule for the retention and destruction of official agency records stored in this Survey?*

Yes

*How long are the records required to be held under the corresponding RCS and how are they disposed of? Explain how long any PII data will be retained by the contractor if they are conducting the Survey on behalf of the IRS. In your response, please include the complete IRM number and specific item number and title.*

The Survey "Online Account Usability Testing - October 2019 v2" will be managed using GRS 6.5, Item 010 Public Service Operations Records. Temporary. Destroy 1 year after resolved, or when no longer needed for business use, whichever is appropriate. Any additional records developed from the "Online Account Usability Testing - October 2019 v2" maintained by the IRS will be scheduled as coordinated with the IRS Records and Information Management (RIM) Program and IRS Records Officer. IRM 1.15.1, Records and Information Management, The Records and Information Management Program.

## DATA SECURITY

*How does the administrator of the survey guarantee that the PII regarding employees or taxpayers will not be compromised, lost or stolen when housed on IRS computers? Where and how is it stored and protected?*

The PII will not be stored on IRS computers. Mediabarn's market research recruiting division has a privacy policy (<http://www.mediabarnresearch.com/privacy/>) that precludes sharing PII with clients, including the IRS, and has implemented a procedural firewall that prevents IRS Federal employees and the Mediabarn client team supporting them from accessing the PII.

*Does a contractor/vendor administer or perform analysis of the survey?*

Yes

*Please provide the Cyber security approved security and encryption used when data is transferred electronically from IRS to Contractors and back to the IRS.*

No data is shared with the IRS, only the aggregated test results in report format.

*When data is not sent electronically, provide in detail the information regarding the transfer back and forth from the IRS to contractors?*

N/A

*How is the survey PII protected and stored when it is housed at a contractor's site, on contractor's computers? Please provide detailed information that the contractor uses regarding the physical and electronic security and protection of the data before, during, and after the survey.*

The procedure for handling research study data that contains personally identifiable information is described as follows. Recruitment Screener: 1.) Recruiting screener data will be de-identified (meaning the removal of participant names and contact information, as well as any other personally identifiable information contained in screener responses) and stored for archival purposes in an encrypted file within Mediabarn, Inc. 2.) Access to these files will be limited only to certain Mediabarn market research division staff. Participant Scheduling: 1.) Participant scheduling spreadsheets (often referred to as "grids") are managed by Mediabarn's market research division. 2.) The origin file will be de-identified and stored for archival purposes in an encrypted file within Mediabarn, Inc. 3.) Access to these files will be limited only to certain Mediabarn market research division staff. 4.) Any working copies will be destroyed within 60 days after a study is completed. Audio/video Recordings: 1.) Audio/video recordings of study participants will be deleted within 60 days after a study is completed. 2.) Audio/video recordings will not be used in any research reporting. 3.) Select participant quotes and observations gleaned from audio/video recordings may be shared in research reporting provided they have been de-identified. Informed Consent: 1.) An informed consent script will be read aloud to each participant by the moderator of the study; 2.) Participants will be asked to provide verbal consent on an audio/video recording and the audio/video recordings.

## **CIVIL LIBERTIES**

*Does the Survey maintain records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment (including, but not limited to information regarding religious and political beliefs, freedom of speech and of the press, and freedom of assembly and petition)?*

No

*Will this Survey have the capability to identify, locate, and monitor individuals or groups of people?*

No