

Quantitative Research

Rating ICT user satisfaction Large government department

Project Outline

An Australian Government Department was given a significant budget to upgrade its ICT services and systems, and for the past two years has been surveying users (employees) on a regular basis. Of particular interest has been system availability and responsiveness, help desk support, IT training and how well new IT procurement procedures worked. In addition, the surveys probed how well users understood the different software systems they used regularly and asked them to rate their satisfaction with specific aspects of ICT service delivery as it affected them in their jobs.

This Department is distributed nationally and has different help desks depending on the system or telephony service being supported. Therefore, collecting information directly from users is an important way to complement and substantiate performance data collected by the help desks.

Information was used to understand how users respond to changes and to target further improvements to service delivery. Although help desk logs were an obvious way to identify areas which are causing the most problems, many users don't log problems because they don't know how to, hope someone else will do it, or don't have confidence in the process. Often, they rely on the knowledge of their workmates to fix problems.

Research Strategy

The Department provided ASR with a file of all users, which was loaded into Survey Manager. To prepare users for the survey, several messages from senior staff were disseminated through weekly electronic newsletters. All employees were emailed an invitation from the CIO to participate, and provided with a unique login and password.

Outcomes

While most users were fairly satisfied with the system, detailed demographic analysis indicated pockets of employees who were less satisfied or experiencing local problems. For example, in the last round of surveying, a significant proportion of employees indicated that system responsiveness had declined. One work area did not know how to contact any of the help desks, and in two locations some staff were not confident that problems would be resolved through their appropriate help desks.

A large body of free text comment was collected. In a previous round of surveying, free text comments revealed that newer employees (then comprising 20% of the Department's workforce) had more negative views than established employees, mainly because they had higher expectations of the departments ICT systems and services.

Detailed reports were presented to the client, along with all verbatim comments. ASR was able to use the Leximancer text analysis engine to build dictionaries of terms, determine occurrences and build concept relationships. Some data mining of the free text comments using new words and themes generated function-specific loci of problems, thus providing a new perspective of how employees were using one of the Department's most important software systems. Remedial action included urgently changing the way the software functioned.

Issues raised within the report have been tabled at various forums within the Department, and individual comments are being followed up to help ensure resolution of local problems and ultimately improve the overall ICT systems.

“Improving the ICT function improves individual productivity”