

2009 Census Rehearsal Evaluation Internet Services

January 2010

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2009 Rehearsal – Internet Services

1. Definition and scope for rehearsal

Internet Services for the 2011 Census will comprise two linked public facing websites which shall:

- offer help and advice to respondents as well as background information and emerging updates about Scotland's Census; and
- allow respondents the opportunity to complete their questionnaires online.

For the rehearsal, the scope was to develop, test and implement these websites and to measure whether they:

- delivered user friendly questionnaires and supporting information to the specifications of the questionnaire design team;
- delivered and updated content as required by the publicity team;
- contained content in both English and Gaelic where appropriate;
- conformed to usability and accessibility standards;
- were available and functional throughout the operational period; and
- generated statistics, questionnaire data and user feedback to inform the 2011 channel management strategy.

Note: Throughout this document references to IPA refer to Internet Public Assistance and IDC to Internet Data Capture.

What was tested:

- IDC: Authentication;
- IDC: User behaviour;
- IDC: Quality of response;
- IDC: Systems used to inform field of an IDC return;
- IDC: Interface with Print and Paper Data Capture (PDC) (geography database, respondent data);
- IDC: Load testing, graceful deferrals, user testing;
- IPA: Electronic Contact Facility (ECF);
- IPA: Content creation (dynamic and manual);
- IPA: Training ;
- IPA: interface with helpline;
- user feedback facility (its operation and content of responses);
- publicity team and strategy integration;
- uptake;
- usability & accessibility;
- bilingual content: uptake and impact;
- bilingual content: operational implications of using two languages;
- collaborative relationship and design with contractors;
- incident management procedures; and
- quality management and service level reporting.

What could not be tested:

- major volume testing – will ramp up testing for 2011; and
- effect of publicity on take up (but will inform for 2011).

2. Evaluation findings

- Pre – determined evaluation points

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
<p>1) Bilingual content: uptake and impact</p>	<p>a) Was Gaelic content accessed and used?</p> <p>b) Were members of the public aware of the option to find help and complete their questionnaire in Gaelic?</p>	<p>a) The IPA statistics show that the Gaelic site was one of the top ten viewed pages almost every week during the rehearsal period.</p> <p>b) Some comments that it was not clear how to access the Gaelic online questionnaire.</p>	<p>A separate button/link for Gaelic IDC is required on the front page of the IPA. To be looked at as part of redesign of front page.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>
<p>2) Bilingual content: operational implications of using two languages</p>	<p>How easy was it to produce/update the site(s)? Were messages consistent? Did the different language versions of the site integrate well?</p>	<p>IPA: Decisions were made by the Web Approvers Team about which English articles should be translated into Gaelic – not everything was translated, therefore both IPA sites were not consistent.</p> <p>A total of 65 Gaelic change requests were translated.</p> <p>IDC content was consistent, but required significant</p>	<p>Firmed up guidance required on what types of content should be updated into Gaelic.</p> <p>User testing to include Gaelic review and consistency checks.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
		review to ensure that this consistency was achieved.		
3) IDC authentication	<p>a) Were there any reported issues with instructions and codes on the questionnaires?</p> <p>b) Did respondents know how to access the IDC system using their IQAC & postcode?</p> <p>c) Did the password system for resuming questionnaire completion work?</p> <p>d) Was integrity of personal data secured?</p>	<p>a) Unable to tell the difference between the number zero and the letter 'O'.</p> <p>b) No problems highlighted with how to access the IDC.</p> <p>c) Some issues highlighted that people were unable to log back into system because it did not recognise their password – this was not a problem found in internal or external user testing however.</p> <p>d) The contractor's evaluation indicated that no issues had been found and that the integrity of personal data was secured.</p>	<p>a) Need to revise which letters and numbers should be excluded when an internet questionnaire access code (IQAC) is created.</p>	August 2009

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
<p>4) IDC user behaviour</p>	<p>a) Essentially, how did users behave on the site?</p> <p>b) Could they answer the questions?</p> <p>c) Were there any problems, sticking points or recurring complaints?</p>	<p>a) Many positive comments left by users and overall this points to a good experience.</p> <p>b) Some usability issues however were raised.</p> <p>c) The system is smart enough to automatically route when appropriate, some respondents complained about having to complete sections about the marital status of children based on date of birth. This is a statistical issue but it does point to the users wanting the online questionnaire to be even smarter to ease respondent burden.</p> <p>Complaints made about the three lines of 17 characters used instead of one box of 51 characters for address etc.</p> <p>Complaints also made by some people that they</p>	<p>Review of all questions where feedback has been received, possible redesign or guidance messages. Further usability testing is essential.</p> <p>Discussions with Office for National Statistics (ONS)/ Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency (NISRA) about harmonisation will also take place.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
		received a security warning. This was investigated and resolved.		
<p>5) IDC systems used to inform field of an IDC return</p>	<p>a) Was the information provided to field staff timely and accurate?</p> <p>b) Could they access the system?</p> <p>c) Did they actually use it as frequently as expected?</p>	<p>a) Generally a success, the information was available to field staff with a few minor usability issues. Online reporting was considered the best way by field staff.</p> <p>b) System was unavailable for three days over rehearsal weekend due to a very minor maintenance issue which was resolved.</p> <p>c) Evaluation of the field operation indicated that this was used as expected by field staff.</p>	<p>a) Minor usability issues to be addressed as part of review of Field IT systems</p> <p>b) Further automatic monitoring systems in place, working and tested regularly.</p> <p>c) Incorporate this functionality into the redeveloped field services site to further improve ease of use for field staff.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>
<p>6) IDC & IPA user feedback facility (its operation and content of responses)</p>	<p>a) How many people used this facility?</p>	<p>a) Almost 1000 people fed comments/requests back to the helpline.</p>	<p>a) Valuable lessons learned both during and after operational running through feedback facility. Recommend that this facility is used again in 2011, but we will have to be aware of the increased</p>	<p>August 2009</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
	<p>b) What topics did they cover? Did we get the information we needed?</p> <p>c) Did we get it in the format we needed?</p>	<p>b) This ranged from queries about questions to general feedback. We also received a number of Gaelic comments back. Webmail system was very slow.</p> <p>c) Emails came in to the helpline when the address could not be found on the postcode database.</p> <p>The email system very slow and did not integrate well with General register Office for Scotland (GROS) desktops. Not appropriate for 2011.</p>	<p>volume of correspondence.</p> <p>c) Alternative required to the email system.</p>	
<p>7) IDC load testing, graceful deferrals, user testing</p>	<p>a) What were the triggers for graceful deferral?</p> <p>b) Were they set at the right levels? Were the messages accurate?</p>	<p>a) Internet solutions provider advised that there were no graceful deferrals triggered even during the outages we encountered.</p> <p>b) Graceful deferrals were written and planned to be implemented should any of</p>	<p>a) Despite the downtime of the IPA graceful deferrals were not triggered.</p> <p>b) Deferral messages should be provided if the public have no visibility of the IDC</p>	<p>August 2009</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
	Did we learn enough to extrapolate towards 2011? How did the helpline react to any incident?	the following occur :the primary census site fail, reduced capacity on secondary site, both sites fail, there is network congestion(ISP), if the system is slow, if there is saturation, a software problem, login problems or a malicious attack occurs.	regardless of whether the servers are running or not. Need to review the responsibilities on the contractor to deliver the overall service.	
8) IPA, ECF	a) Was the ECF used by the public?	a) ECF allowed people to request a census questionnaire, request a visit from a member of our field staff or contact them to pass on any feedback too. This was also used to allow those people whose address was not on the postcode database to have their request directed to the appropriate enumerator.	a) ECF request system worked, but helpline staff should be able to intervene and send messages to field staff themselves. Investigate an alternative to prevent system being swamped and consider if this is a necessary feature.	August 2009
9) IPA content creation (dynamic and manual)	a) Did GROS in-house content update procedures work effectively?	a) It took a long time to get Adobe Contribute installed on each person's pc and issues resolved including ports enabled etc. Once installed site was easy to	a) May need to revamp the form going forward for 2011 for authorised change requests. Certainly need more people to approve changes, edit and publish	August 2009

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	<p>b) To what extent was the Adobe Contribute content management system used (frequency and types of changes).</p>	<p>edit and publish. Issues were due to reliance on internal SCOTS (infrastructure.</p> <p>Ongoing issues still with getting the Registrar General (RG) Blog available to edit from within Scottish Office Technical Strategy (SCOTS) infrastructure, however the service provider provided assistance and an interim workaround to enable content to be edited.</p> <p>b) Once software installed and all issues resolved, updating was very easy to do.</p>	<p>these changes.</p> <p>b) Wider access to content management system required (due to greater volume of updates in 2011).</p> <p>Ensure plenty of time given for this task when new software version is used in 2011).</p> <p>Dedicated web content manager to be part of the publicity team.</p>	

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<p>10) IPA training provided</p>	<p>Relevance and quality of training by: the contractors and Census and Statistics Information Technology (CaSIT) (roll out to rest of GROS).</p>	<p>Helpline staff shown IPA site by Internet services team initially.</p> <p>Limited formal internal training provided to GROS staff on the IPA.</p> <p>External training on Contribute content management system (CMS) provided by service provider, which was found to be useful by all content editors.</p>	<p>More time for training required to all those with a stake in IPA. Level of training will depend on responsibilities.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>
<p>11) IPA content consistency with helpline</p>	<p>a) Were helpline staff telling the public the same thing as can be found on the IPA?</p>	<p>a) Helpline staff were advised that the IPA site was to be used when advising members of the public. Helpline team leaders were advised when any updates were made to the IPA site and which sections so that helpline staff could review new content.</p>	<p>a) Need to agree a formal way of the helpline /team leaders at the helpline raising the appropriate paperwork should an error or update need action.</p>	<p>August 2009</p>

Description	Success Criteria	Outcome against success criteria	Recommendation	Timeframe
12) Publicity	<p>a) Did the internet services meet the needs of the publicity strategy? Were there good lines of communication between the branches?</p> <p>b) Conversely, did the publicity strategy meet the wider objectives of GROS for promoting the internet services?</p>	<p>a) Communications and internet services teams worked collaboratively and worked well together.</p> <p>b) Logo and branding changes caused problems with design of IPA site. Need to agree publicity elements much further in advance.</p> <p>The prioritising of work which impacted the GROS web team resulted in delays.</p>	<p>a) GROS communications and Internet Services continue to sit on each other's IPTs when appropriate.</p> <p>b) Any content/links/news we may also want to have on the GROS website (about the Scotland's Census site) need to be given appropriate priority.</p>	August 2009
13) Uptake of IDC	<p>a) Did we measure this accurately?</p> <p>b) Do we have enough statistics, information and feedback on the internet services to help us plan for 2011?</p>	<p>a) Statistics are available for both the IDC and the IPA.</p> <p>b) Details include number of people completing the IDC each day, number of people visiting the timeline e.g. on the IPA site etc. Some of these statistics</p>	<p>a) Need a fuller range of statistics, e.g. British Sign Language (BSL) clips accessed, pages accessed within the news section etc.</p> <p>b) Need to liaise with each stakeholder to find out what they would like to get from the statistics so that we ask for the right ones.</p>	August 2009

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		have been collated for the publicity team to use.		
14) Usability & accessibility	<p>a) Were the standards complied with?</p> <p>b) Did we get positive feedback from specified user groups?</p>	<p>a) External user testing took place with 15 members of the public.</p> <p>b) Feedback was as expected or the same as that documented from internal testing carried out prior to the external testing. No negative feedback was received from internal users.</p> <p>Some comments fed back about the time to download the BSL clips – not very quick, but that can be caused by the user's machines and/or software and it appeared fine in testing.</p>	<p>a) External testing needs to include a much wider audience throughout the project.</p>	August 2009