



Evaluating businesslink.gov.uk, the online channel for the Business Link programme

The Challenge

Businesslink.gov.uk is the national online channel for the Business Link programme and is delivered by Serco on behalf of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Launched in 2004, it delivers information and services for businesses under thirteen section headings and has a number of guides and toolkits that assist firms to complete particular tasks. From 2008, businesslink.gov.uk is set to become the single online entry point for all business interaction with government.

Since 2004, we have worked closely with businesslink.gov.uk and its stakeholders to provide solutions to several of their research challenges, including:

- Monitoring the level of awareness and use among its target market of businesses in England, despite the fact that users are not required to register with the site
- Demonstrating the benefits enjoyed by its business users to key stakeholders
- Establishing and monitoring key performance indicators for customer satisfaction
- Aligning new service developments and the migration of other government website content with business needs.

The Approach

The core evaluation comprises a telephone survey of around 7,000 of its core target market of businesses in England and is designed to establish awareness and use of the site among start-up and established businesses in all major industry sectors. To ensure that the data collected are as robust as possible, the sampling approach for each evaluation is informed by our most recent data, enabling us to design the sample structure to obtain interviews with a representative sample of around 900 users of businesslink.gov.uk content.

To support businesslink.gov.uk in making effective strategic and tactical decisions we have also conducted research since 2006 to:

- Determine the likely market sizes for new services and services for new markets; estimating the kinds of benefits that businesses might enjoy as a result
- Develop an interactive segmentation model, delivered as an online tool to enable the businesslink.gov.uk team to explore the market themselves in real time
- Inform the development of new sections and themes.

inspired market research

The Outcome

The research we have conducted has supported businesslink.gov.uk to:

- Establish that the service has saved businesses in England over £250m per year
- Demonstrate the level of awareness and use of the service
- Identify user satisfaction and ways to improve their existing service
- Prioritise service developments and the migration of other government-based websites on the basis of business needs
- Segment the market to identify opportunities for growth and support future marketing.



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