

HSE Statistics User Engagement report 2018

Introduction

HSE's statisticians are continually looking to improve the quality of their statistical outputs and engaging with users helps to shape such improvements. In addition, ongoing and future outputs are developed in line with current good practice (that applies to all Government Departments' statistical releases), and by working with HSE's communications experts to ensure that the most appropriate platforms for engaging with the user community are fully utilised. This report is a summary of the findings from two surveys that were conducted in 2016 (user personas) and 2017 (assessing improvements to booklet and tables). Where appropriate, the number of respondents for a particular question will be indicated (e.g. n=176).

Main findings

2016 (user personas) survey (n=255):

- About half of the respondents visited the website to access the HSS and or At-a-glance report
- A quarter of respondents were looking for statistics relating to the Construction industry
- Based on the respondents' activity, nearly half spanned all three user persona groups*

Improvements: More interactivity

2017 (booklet and tables refresh) survey (n=290)

- Regarding the new booklet, about three-quarters of respondents were positive about the change
- Similarly, for the tables, around three-quarters of respondents were positive
- For both the booklet and tables, Three-quarters of respondents said they would use them again

Improvements: There were only 19 respondents who offered ideas for improvement.

'Presentation' and 'not enough detail' were the two main themes, but these numbers are small compared to the overwhelming positivity in the statement responses.

Recruitment methods

There were two short online surveys (each approximately 10 mins to complete), hosted on the Survey Monkey platform. For both surveys, respondents were recruited via the Statistics eBulletin (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/news/subscribe/answers.htm>) and there was also a link on the Statistics homepage. For the 2017 survey, those respondents completing the 2016 survey who had provided their email addresses voluntarily (to possibly take part in future engagement activities) were invited to participate.

*Users personas are mentioned throughout this report, with a full explanation included in Annex 1

2016 Survey – User personas

In 2014, the Office for National Statistics carried out research to determine the behaviour and needs of their users, and developed the concept of “User personas” (see <https://digitalblog.ons.gov.uk/2014/04/02/the-persona-touch/>). Consequently, three persona types were developed: *Inquiring citizen*, *Information forager* and *Expert analyst*. A more detailed description is provided in Annex 1, but broadly an *Inquiring Citizen* is looking for top level information, and an *Expert analyst* is looking for the greatest depth of detail. It is important to note that a respondent can be categorised into more than one user persona group based on their needs and activities.

This survey was to explore the user persona types that used HSE’s Statistics Website, with the primary aim for its statisticians to establish whether its outputs meet the needs of the users.

Twelve statements were developed to explore how respondents use the Website and were asked to tick all which apply (see Figure 1). Unknown to the respondents, each was a characteristic of a particular user persona; there were four statements for each persona. Of the 255 respondents, 56% exhibited *Inquiring citizen* characteristics, 45% *Information forager* and 45% *Expert analyst*.

Figure 1 shows the responses for each question. *Access to the HSS main documents* was the most popular activity (47%), followed by *Finding out about current and newsworthy events* (39%) and *Summaries that provide me with context for deeper understanding* (38%). The remaining *Inquiring Citizen* statements were the next most popular activities.

Figure 1: How respondents use the HSE Statistics Website (n=255)

		%
Inquiring Citizen	High level statistical summaries using plain English	35%
	Charts and infographics to give me a visually engaging overview of key data and trends	34%
	Finding out more about current and newsworthy events	39%
	Access the Health and Safety Statistics and/or At-a-glance annual reports	47%
Information Forager	Data that can be used to make practical/strategical decisions for my business	32%
	Summaries that provide me with context for deeper understanding	38%
	Time series and comparison data (e.g. local v national)	13%
	Produce charts and statistics in spreadsheets to support my arguments/viewpoints	30%
Expert Analyst	Reading detailed commentaries on e.g. a particular health topic	26%
	Finding and accessing data tables for reference purposes	34%
	Finding and accessing data tables for my own data analysis	23%
	Finding out which data sources are available and which are the most appropriate for my needs	24%

When aggregating this information, close to half of the respondents (44%) exhibited characteristics across all three personas; there were only 22% that were categorised in to a single persona (see Figure 2). This indicates that around four-fifths of visitors to HSE’s statistics Website are looking for more than one piece of information, and at different levels of detail.

Figure 2: Allocation of respondents to user persona groups (n=187)

Inquiring citizen	Information forager	Expert analyst	%
✓			13%
✓	✓		11%
✓	✓	✓	44%
✓		✓	9%
	✓		3%
	✓	✓	3%
		✓	6%
			11%

In addition to the User Persona theme, the survey asked some further questions. These are the highlights of the responses:

- In terms of how often respondents visited the HSE Statistics Website, 26% visited weekly, 25% monthly, and 10% each for daily and yearly (n=255)
- Regarding area of interest, 59% related to industrial sectors (n=194); of these, 39% was Construction, followed by Agriculture (10%), Manufacturing (9%) and Human health and social work activities (9%) (n= 114)
- Free-text responses were collected on positive aspects of the Website. Grouped together, the main themes were ‘well laid out, clear good format’ (17%), ‘quality/trustfulness of data/info’ (17%), ‘gives me what I want’ (13%), ‘good high-level summary info’ (12%) and ‘Good accessibility’ (11%) (n=142)
- Likewise, free-text responses relating to improvements were grouped as ‘Presentation/interactivity’ (18%), ‘Industry/occupations’ (17%), ‘accessibility/usability’ (12%), ‘more on HSE interventions/initiatives and good practice (11%)’ (n=83)

2017 Survey – assessing improvements to our main booklet and tables

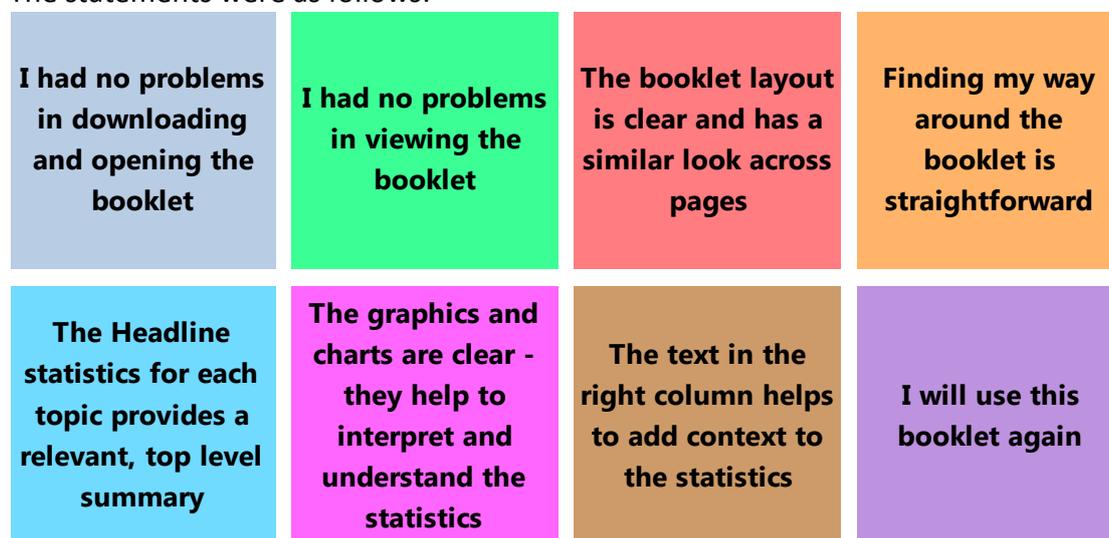
For the 2015/16 HSS release, there were major changes to the main booklet and the Excel tables, primarily to improve user experience. The main booklet was totally revamped and brought up to date in terms of content and presentation; the At-a-glance booklet was discontinued. The tables introduced interactivity, mainly through the addition of filters, which also resulted in a significant reduction in the number of tables produced.

To assess whether the new styles of the booklet and tables were an improvement, respondents were asked to rate a series of statements (eight relating to the booklet, and seven relating to the tables), being given a choice of 'strongly agree', 'somewhat agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'somewhat disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

Respondents were asked if they had used the booklet and/or the tables. 18% had used both, 29% had used the booklet only, 9% had used the tables only, and 44% had used neither. (n=290)

Booklet

The statements were as follows:



n=137

The main findings were as follows:

- For all statements, between 75% and 80% said they *Strongly* or *Somewhat agree*
- Around two-thirds *Strongly agreed* that they had no problems downloading/viewing the booklet
- About half *Strongly agreed* with the remaining statements regarding clarity and formatting
- Three-quarters said they *strongly* or *somewhat agreed* that they will use the booklet again

Respondents were asked to provide free-text comments regarding positive aspects of the booklet. Grouped together, the main themes were: 'relevance to *Inquiring citizens* (49%), 'clear presentation' (39%) & 'Passing on info to others' (12%). (n=57)

Similarly, respondents were asked to provide free-text comments regarding areas for improvement. There was only a small number of responses, but Presentation (37%) and not enough detail (32%) were the two themes that dominated. (n=19)

Furthermore, respondents were asked to suggest other statistical subjects or themes Three-quarters related to additional breakdowns, mainly Health and social care. (n=39)

Tables

The statements were as follows:

I had no problems in downloading and opening the tables	I had no problems in viewing the tables	The table layouts are clear and have a similar look across different tables	Finding my way around the tables is straightforward
Being able to filter the data helps me find what I am looking for quickly and easily	The guidance provided within the spreadsheets is clear and easy to understand	The explanatory notes within the spreadsheets are clear and easy to understand	

n=79

The main findings were as follows:

- For all statements, between 70% and 80% said they *Strongly* or *Somewhat agree*
- Around half *Strongly agreed* with all statements apart from being able to filter the data (39%)
- Three-quarters said they *Strongly* or *somewhat agreed* that they will use the tables again

Respondents were asked to provide free-text comments regarding positive aspects of the booklet. There were not many responses, but the main theme was that the tables were clear/easy to understand. (n=24)

Similarly, respondents were asked to provide free-text comments regarding areas for improvement. There were only a few responses, none of which were noteworthy, nor had recurring themes. (n=19)

Annex 1 – an introduction to User Personas

This is a brief description regarding the characteristics of user personas (based on users to the ONS website). For more detailed information, see <https://digitalblog.ons.gov.uk/2014/04/02/the-persona-touch/>).

Inquiring citizens – The Inquiring Citizens search for the unbiased ‘truth’ about topics raised by the media and political parties – immigration, house prices, inflation, cost of living – to make informed decisions about their pensions and investments. They want simply-worded, visually engaging summaries, charts and infographics. They engage with social media and browse the ONS site on a smartphone or tablet

Information foragers – They look for data to make practical, strategic business decisions so want high level summaries, narratives and charts to keep up with the latest economic and population data. They don’t know exactly what to search for, until they come to it. Using ONS data provides added value or advantage over competitors. Supermarkets, for example, use ONS data to inform their product ranges and pricing strategies.

Expert analysts – They download particular Excel spreadsheets into their own statistical models to create bespoke datasets. They know exactly what they want and can be frustrated by not being able to find it quickly on the ONS website. They need reliable, high quality data to feel confident in their own analyses.

It is important to note that a single individual may shift between persona types. Academics for example, might be *Expert analysts* for their research, but may forage for information on issues outside of their expertise to support their teaching. At home they may search the ONS site for the most popular baby names along with many other inquiring citizens.

Our research suggests that we should simplify our Website layout and reduce the complexity of language used. Of course, Simpler shouldn’t mean dumbing down! It just means gaining the same level of knowledge with reduced cognitive overload!

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