

The Student-Centered Starter Kit is a series of tools that you and your colleagues can use to explore the content and design of your website through the lens of prospective and current students. These worksheets are intended to be considered in sequential order, but can also be independently deployed depending on your current needs. Above all, the tools provide easy-to-use methods and prompts that will help you bridge the gap between your prospective student's desires and your college's priorities, providing opportunities and insights for decision making and resource allocation related to your website.

*Worksheet content developed by SmallBox.*



# Surveys

## INTRO (PURPOSE + BENEFIT)

Surveys allow us to learn from individuals already engaged with our services. We can use surveys to capture both qualitative and quantitative data to enhance our understanding of our audiences and their needs.

## PROCESS

- **Review what we know and identify what we would like to learn**

Individually or with a group of colleagues, consider the depth of understanding you have established around your audiences. Are there any gaps? Do you have assumptions that could be validated or challenged? What would enable you to serve your audience better if you had the opportunity to ask them questions directly?

- **Determine how the survey will be implemented**

Surveys can be delivered in a variety of ways. At SmallBox, we use a service called HotJar for its convenient deployment and integrated reporting but you could use another service or use a simple text document. The implementation method may impact the survey format so selecting a direction prior to developing questions is recommended.

- **Develop the survey questions**

Considering what you want to learn, create a list of corresponding questions. As you develop questions, consider how you will use the captured data. To get started you may consider using a Who, What, When, Where, Why and How framework. For instance, when considering "Why" we are looking for insights related to motivations such as: Why are you visiting the site today? What are you trying to accomplish through the website? More examples in the following pages.

*Tip: Close-ended vs open-ended questions*

In some instances, you will want to use close-ended questions that can be answered with a yes or no or by selecting from a defined set. Close-ended questions are great for segmenting and categorizing participants. In other instances, you may consider open-ended questions that allow the participant to enter a custom response. Open-ended questions provide qualitative information that can lead to deep insights but require more effort to analyze and may have lower participation percentages.

- **Implement the survey**

Determine a proper amount of time the survey should run. If engagement is low, you may need to run the test for longer periods to accumulate enough useful data.

- **Analyze the results**

Once the survey run is complete, examine the results by looking for patterns.

- **Document discoveries**

Rather than distribute the raw data, convert your discoveries into clear stories. For instance, rather than reporting that 60% of the participants work full-time, 20% part-time, and 20% are unemployed we might consider grouping insights around a point of view such as: *With the majority of individuals interested in our services working full-time jobs, they may have limited time to pursue other opportunities. We need to ensure we provide content that helps these individuals envision how they can balance employment while pursuing an education .*

## TIPS

- Be brief (For pop up web survey, suggest 3 minutes maximum)
- Avoid leading questions (Example: What did you find most useful? What was the best part about your web experience?)
- Continually document possible questions (refer to the iterative process)

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

### WHO

- What is your current employment status?
  - How long have you worked at your current organization?
  - Are you actively looking for employment?
  - In what industry do you work?
- Are you a primary caregiver to any children?
  - If so, how many?
- Do you have any friends or family that have attended community college?

### WHAT

- What is most important to you as you consider furthering your education?
- What is the most significant barrier to you furthering your education?
- Do you have any questions that you cannot find an answer for on the website?

### WHERE

- Do you typically perform online research using a mobile device, desktop/laptop computer or both?
- Are you interested in online learning, in-person learning or a combination of both?
- How far away from campus do you live?

### WHEN

- When do you imagine making a decision about applying?
- What is the most significant barrier to you furthering your education?
- Have you visited this website before? If so, did you find what you were looking for?

### HOW

- How did you hear about our community college?
- Will anyone else help you decide whether or not to enroll? If so, who?
- How does the website make you feel?

### WHY

- Why did you come to the website today?
- Why are you interested in furthering your education?