

Survey and Testing Solutions



The University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education Conference Center and Hotel successfully implemented two of Scantron's software solutions to meet the challenges presented by their surveying and testing processes. The Center uses eListen to quickly and easily administer surveys to measure satisfaction with its educational programs, services and environment. With this survey software, the Georgia Center has increased its survey responses, decreased processing time, and improved customer satisfaction. The Center employs ParSystem to quickly and accurately create, administer and score tests for their adult education classes. With this integrated software suite, the Georgia Center has accelerated response time, reduced the amount of manual labor and improved cost efficiency.

Surveys - eListen

Challenge

- Needed to process more than 15,000 surveys annually
- Inability to compare events and analyze trends
- Struggled with unreliable, difficult software

The Georgia Center provides lifelong learning opportunities through its continuing education programs. The center offers a unique combination of instructional design, event planning and hospitality services all under one roof.

With an array of classes, conferences and special events each year, the Georgia Center needed a reliable survey solution to measure participant satisfaction. Further, the state of Georgia requires course evaluations to be administered to all learners in courses offering continuing education units (CEU).

"Our previous survey software did not work well," said Kendra Banton, a data management specialist at the Georgia Center. "The software was down more than it was up. It wasn't Windows-based, which made it difficult to use. Perhaps most important, it also didn't allow us to compare one event to another, so we couldn't analyze trends."

Solution

- Question libraries and customizable forms to streamline survey creation
- Surveys deployed via the web to increase data accuracy
- Fast and reliable processing—completed within minutes, not days
- Reports that could be generated quickly and e-mailed to departments

The Georgia Center began using eListen in 2005. eListen provides a robust tool set that allows users to easily create, deploy, collect and analyze survey data. "Of everything on the market, eListen best met the Georgia Center's needs," said Banton. "We like that eListen is Windows-based. It's very easy to use. A key benefit is that we can now collect all our events into one database to continuously track and improve customer satisfaction. So, if in January we had a problem but by February it was fixed, we can see if responses improved in that area."

The Georgia Center used eListen to create five surveys, one for each type of program offered. “We selected questions from eListen’s question libraries and customized them to meet our needs. It saves time because you don’t have to start from scratch,” said Banton. “eListen also allows us to use the university logo, which is easily imported as a JPEG file. Our surveys are now much better looking.”

The Georgia Center deploys most surveys via the web. “We e-mail the survey to participants so it’s waiting for them when they get home,” said Banton. “With eListen, the surveys are much easier for customers to complete. One of eListen’s great features is that it branches questions. If you answer a question a certain way, you can then avoid questions that wouldn’t pertain to you.”

The survey answers are automatically collected and stored in eListen’s database. The Center likes to wait two weeks following the conclusion of an event before it generates a report and e-mails it to the department that sponsored the event.

In addition, twice a year, Banton exports the data to a custom database for review, analysis and reporting.

“For each of the five surveys we do, I go in and change the events list once a month — that’s the only question that changes. This way, we can use the same survey month after month and collect the data into one database for trend analysis. This allows us to measure customer satisfaction for everyone who took that survey, whether they took it last week or last year,” said Banton.

Results

In the last two years, the Georgia Center has deployed 45 surveys to 33,500 participants using eListen. In that time, the survey return rate increased approximately 50 percent. In addition, because most surveys are web-based, the response time has decreased.

“With paper-based surveys, we’d have to wait for someone to key in all the data before we could run the report,” said Banton. “With eListen’s web-based surveys, the data is immediately accessible and accurate, which has improved our reporting.”

In addition, the survey process is more cost-effective. “Since our previous software was down a lot, IT was here all the time. eListen requires no IT support. It’s very easy to use. We can collect all our data in less than five minutes a day,” said Banton.

Thanks to their success, the Georgia Center is earning recognition both inside and outside the university. “Because of the success of our survey work, we’re now asked to do more surveys,” said Banton. “Each year, there’s a conference on public service and outreach at a different university. We’ve been asked to host the survey portion every year, no matter what university hosts the conference.”

By carefully analyzing its survey data, the Center is beginning to see positive results from its work. “It’s very important to look at trends to ensure you’re moving in the right direction,” said Banton. “At the Georgia Center, the trend is that customer service is improving and our customers are happy.”





Testing - ParSystem

Challenge

- Tests were sent off-site for scoring and processing, preventing a quick turnaround
- Unable to compare individual question response rates
- Selecting and arranging test questions from the question databank was difficult

With an assortment of classes, the Georgia Center sought a way to improve the process for creating, administering and scoring tests. The primary concern was improving the time it took to score the tests and then report the results back to the students. The Center sent their tests to an outside source to have them graded and have reports created.

“Since the testing we do is for adult education classes, people want to know their score within 24 hours of completing the course and taking the test,” said Banton. “One group of adult education students is business owners who are required to pass a state exam in order to operate their businesses in the state of Georgia. It is important we get their test results to them in a timely manner.”

The Center faced other challenges as well. Questions which continually received incorrect responses over a period of time could not easily be identified and evaluated. Those creating the tests found it difficult to select the questions from the question databank and mix them up as needed. In addition, the Center was unable to create multiple versions of the same test quickly.

Solution

- Scoring and reporting is internalized, saving time and money
- Tests can be administered, scored and reported within 24 hours
- Multiple versions of the same test can be created quickly and easily
- Questions can be fairly and accurately assessed over time

Soon after their successful implementation of eListen, the Georgia Center began using ParSystem. ParSystem is an integrated suite of powerful software modules that allow users to create, administer and score tests on paper, via networks or over the Internet. The modules include ParTest, ParTest Online and ParScore.

“ParTest and ParScore allow us to implement and score tests on the same day,” said Banton. “We no longer have to use an outside service. We are now able to take on the internal testing needed so that we save the cost of external services and provide the quick response our clients want.”

With ParSystem, the Center is able to quickly and easily create tests. 100 questions are selected from the 300 question databank and organized as the instructor sees fit. Similarly, 100 base questions can easily be selected and arranged as needed in order to create multiple versions of the same test.

The Georgia Center can also better identify and pull out those questions that need to be evaluated due to a lack of correct responses. “Previously, we were unable to compare individual question response rates over a given period of time,” stated Banton. “With ParSystem in place we can provide a fair and accurate assessment of questions over time.”

Results

Since implementing ParSystem, the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education has seen a vast improvement in the time it takes them to create, administer and score tests, and then report the results. In addition to saving time, the process also saves money, eliminating the need to send tests to external vendors for scoring and reporting.

“The process is much more efficient,” said Banton. “No manual work is needed. The system is automated and the scoring time is down to a few seconds per sheet. This quick turnaround has improved customer (student) satisfaction.

“We have found that scoring and reporting is more accurate as well,” continues Banton. “In one pass, the system automatically records the test score and percentage for that student.”

A student’s test scores can then be reported, tracked and analyzed over time. In addition to analyzing trends for students and question responses, administrators can also track trends pertaining to tests, subtests, classes and courses. More than 30 comprehensive reports are available.

The improved efficiency in testing and scoring allowed the Georgia Center to devote their resources to better serve their students. “Having the time and the tools to identify strengths and areas of improvement benefits everyone involved,” said Banton. “The feedback has been positive and has indicated increased satisfaction among instructors and students alike.”



“ELISTEN IS VERY EASY TO USE. WE CAN COLLECT ALL OUR DATA IN LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES A DAY.”

“PARTEST AND PARSCORE ALLOW US TO IMPLEMENT AND SCORE TESTS ON THE SAME DAY... WE ARE NOW ABLE TO TAKE ON THE INTERNAL TESTING NEEDED SO THAT WE SAVE THE COST OF EXTERNAL SERVICES AND PROVIDE THE QUICK RESPONSE OUR CLIENTS WANT.”

KENDRA BANTON
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Please visit us at www.scantron.com for a complete overview of eListen's and ParSytem's system requirements or call us at (800) 722-6876 for more information. P/N 203063011

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