

Creating a listening organisation

The UIS aims to work together with the collegiate University to enable excellence in education, research and operations through Information Services. In order to succeed the UIS needs to develop excellent communications. Communication includes the open sharing of information and active listening. This paper sets out how we plan to work on channels of communication to develop active listening.

Four main channels of communication are being discussed or are being developed. These are:

1. **User Satisfaction Metrics:** The purpose of user satisfaction metrics is to understand the user reaction to current systems. This will not tell us which systems to 'Buy or Build' in the future, but should allow us to understand where 'pain points' are so we can focus attention and action where it is most needed and measure improvement when we make changes. A likely metric for adoption is the Net Promoter Score. The idea here is that an intelligent organisation captures the immediate emotional response of a user to their interaction with a system, and uses it as one of several inputs to gauge how customers feel about the services they use.
2. **Regular and Ad-Hoc Surveys:** Surveys can be institution-wide or targeted. Survey techniques are often appropriate to identify new services that might usefully be considered for introduction. Surveys can also be used to obtain quantitative validation of conclusions from qualitative research. Examples might include relationship manager conversations with customer groups, or user research as part of a design process. A regular comprehensive attitudes survey can provide trend information that provides evidence of improvement¹.

The UIS plans to make increased use of survey tools such as Qualtrics to administer surveys for quantitative analysis. The work will take into account existing surveys, such as the National Student Survey and PTES. Where a survey is targeted at particular user groups, the 'user panel management' features of the survey software will be used to select respondents.

3. **Representative groups and committees:** There is a strong tradition in the University of representative groups and committees to provide input and guidance on the workings of a University body. The UIS has already engaged actively with several existing groups – Heads of Department through the Vice Chancellors termly meetings, Departmental and College computer officers through DITMG and CITMG, and through representation on many University committees. These memberships will be kept under continuous review and new representative groups will be proposed where needed. Potential new groups may also be thought of as 'user panels'.
4. **Relationship Management:** The restructuring of UIS that is underway includes the creation of two relationship management divisions. Staff entering relationship management roles will undergo continuous development of communication skills. The UIS aims to be systematic in the capture, analysis, synthesis, validation of understanding, and recommendations for action, that arise from these interactions. A key outcome should be a qualitative, documented understanding of customer needs and priorities.

Opening all of these channels at once has the potential to overwhelm the organisation, especially when demand-management is still in early stages of maturity. But it is likely that some will turn out to be more effective than others, so it is reasonable to start with a range of approaches and refine the picture as relative effectiveness becomes clear. Representative groups will be the hardest to shut down politically, so should be started with caution.

Specific initial proposals for survey development work:

1. We will aim to run a one-off 'pain-point' survey in January 2016. It is anticipated that this will involve an open-response question or small number of questions (1-5). The questions will be made available to User Needs Committee members in advance and will be tested on a subset of users before full deployment.
2. We will run the first of a longitudinal surveys of user satisfaction before the end of 2015-16.
3. We will investigate the MIT model of alumni 5-years-on surveying to establish feasibility for Cambridge.
4. We will establish a system of pseudo anonymisation so that results can be matched to data from other systems and analysed by demographic. The proposed system for pseudo anonymity will be reviewed by the Computer Laboratory and referred to an appropriate institutional review board.
5. We will establish a web presence for results (including user satisfaction metrics). This may be public or 'Cam-Only' depending on the nature of the information.

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ⁱ This model reflects Gartner best practice as described at <http://www.gartner.com/document/1861115>

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