

# Tenant Satisfaction Survey Response: Calendar Invite

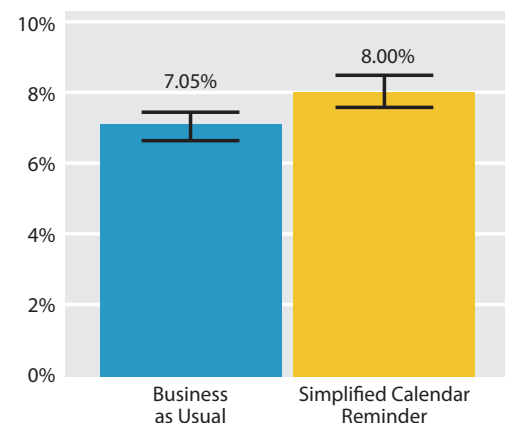
## *Simplification and calendar invitations increase survey response*

**Agency Objective.** Increase response rates in a workplace survey that directly informs Federal facility strategy.

**Background.** The General Service Administration (GSA)'s Public Buildings Service (PBS) owns or leases over 9,600 assets, with more than 370 million square feet of space for over a million Federal employees. Each year, PBS sends Federal employees the Tenant Satisfaction Survey (TSS), the results of which help determine Federal facilities strategy. In 2014, PBS collaborated with the Office of Evaluation Sciences (OES) to simplify the survey and test different messages for launching the survey, with the goal of increasing response rates.

**Methods.** Pilot TSS announcement emails were randomly assigned to a randomly selected sample of 29,997 employees at agencies using Federally owned or leased office space. A *Business as Usual* launch email was sent to 14,997 employees, with content based on the previous year's announcement materials, emphasizing that the survey was online and saved the government paper and time. A *Simplified Calendar Reminder* launch email was sent to 15,000 employees, emphasizing what the email was requesting ("please take the survey today!"); it also had a clear, mobile-optimized button linking to the survey and an embedded link to a calendar invite recipients could use to set a reminder to take the survey at the official launch time. The two emails had distinct links to two identical versions of the survey, allowing tracking of survey views, starts, and completions by email group.

**Results.** One week after sending the emails, the *Simplified Calendar Reminder* email resulted in a nearly 1 percentage point ( $p < 0.01$ , 95% CI [0.35, 1.5]) higher completion rate amongst people sent the email, a 13.5 percent higher relative completion rate. The *Simplified Calendar Reminder* also promoted survey completion conditional on starting the survey—among those who viewed and started the survey, it led to completion rates that were 3 percentage points higher ( $p < 0.01$ , CI [2.15, 4.25]).



**Conclusions.** A simplified, clear request, with an embedded reminder and a button to easily follow through, led more people to view, begin, and complete a workplace survey. Two days following the pilot, the more successful version of the pilot launch message was sent out in the full TSS launch, helping to immediately scale insights from the pilot test to help PBS reach their goal of gathering feedback from as many Federal tenants as possible.



<sup>77</sup>Background information on the Public Buildings Service is available here: [gsa.gov/portal/content/104444](https://gsa.gov/portal/content/104444)

<sup>78</sup>Todd Rogers, Katherine L. Milkman, Leslie K. John, and Michael I. Norton, "Making the Best Laid Plans Better: How Plan-Making Increases Follow-Through," *Behavioral Science and Policy* (forthcoming).