

Customer Satisfaction Survey Report, FY 2003

Bureau of Economic Analysis
March 2004

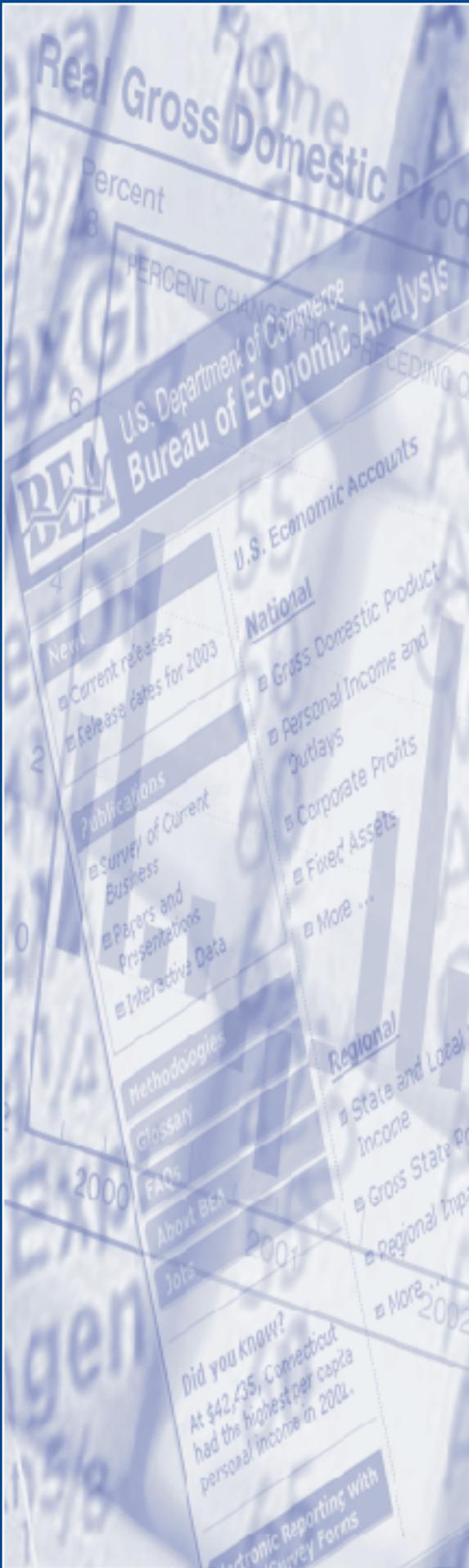


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A.	FY 2003 Customer Satisfaction Survey
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1.0 Background and Summary

In May of 2003, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) conducted its third customer satisfaction survey. This survey provides BEA with crucial information about its customers' preferences. The survey can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs, products, and services at BEA. This survey was previously distributed to BEA's customers in Fiscal Years (FY) 2000 and 2002. This year, the survey was mailed to 5,100 customers, 2,000 more than last year. BEA's audience includes a wide range of customers from the Federal government, librarians, academia, and businesses.

The survey was administered via both the mail and the Internet in FY 2003, FY 2002, and FY 2000. The surveys were mailed to subscribers of BEA's *Survey of Current Business*, customers who have ordered BEA products (such as CD-ROMs, diskettes, and printouts), librarians, and members of data user groups.

This year BEA received 448 responses by mail and 88 responses on-line for a total of 536 responses. In FY 2002, the Bureau received 192 responses by mail and 224 on-line; the response rate for the FY 2000 survey was 441 by mail and 92 on-line.

The FY 2003 customer satisfaction survey sought feedback in three cardinal areas:

- customer satisfaction,
- data products used, and
- Web site features.

This report summarizes the results of the survey findings. The results provide BEA with customer feedback on how to better address its customers' needs and continue to improve its products and services.

BEA maintained a high score in the customer satisfaction area. For the third successive year, BEA received high marks on satisfaction with overall quality of BEA products and services. In response to the question, "How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the BEA products/services?" *respondents rated BEA 4.4 on a 5 point scale* in FY 2003, an increase from FY 2002 and FY 2000, both rated 4.3.

Based on the FY 2003 survey results, the most significant needs expressed by customers are:

- availability of more information on BEA's Web site,
- availability of a search engine on BEA's Web site,
- data in an easy-to-use format on the Web site,
- accurate BEA estimates, and
- quality products and services.

These requirements will drive BEA's areas for improvements in FY 2004.

1.1 Survey Structure

The FY 2003 survey maintained the same overall format and questions as used in the FY 2000, 2001, and 2002 surveys. The data products section included questions on frequency of usage of general products and specific industry, international, national, and regional products. The customer satisfaction section included ten specific questions, targeting key areas of BEA products and services. The Web site section focused on four questions regarding importance of specific Web site features.

Respondents were also permitted to provide written comments and suggestions on areas for improvement in BEA products and services.

1.2 Arriving at the Customer Satisfaction Measure

BEA regards the overall customer satisfaction measure as the key indicator in the survey. This measure is based specifically on customer response to the question "How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the BEA products/services?" To determine the rating, the total amount of rating points received (on a scale of 1-5) from respondents to this question are divided by the total number of respondents who provided a rating on this question. For FY 2003, this formula was:

$$\frac{2242 \text{ total rating points}}{511 \text{ respondents providing rating}}$$

Using this formula the overall customer satisfaction measure in FY 2003 was 4.4. The measure was 4.3 in both FY 2002 and FY 2000. In calculating the measure in FY 2003 and FY 2002, both mail and on-line survey responses were included; the FY 2000 survey included only mail responses.

2.0 Results

This section presents an overview of the results of the FY 2003 survey, and compares the results with those obtained from previous surveys.

2.1 Customer Satisfaction Dimensions

In addition to the key customer satisfaction question noted in Section 1.2 above, customers were asked nine other questions concerning areas of service within BEA. The most noticeable changes included increases in how satisfied customers are with BEA's estimates and the Web site.

Among survey respondents who expressed opinions on specific questions, key findings were:

- C Satisfaction with the timeliness of BEA service increased; 80% of customers are satisfied or very satisfied with the timeliness of the BEA estimates. This is up 5% from the FY 2002 survey. As a part of BEA's ongoing strategic plan, BEA continues to accelerate several key data series.
- C Customer perception of the accuracy of BEA data remained high; 81% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the accuracy of BEA estimates.
- C Satisfaction with BEA's adaptation of methodologies to changes in the economy edged up 1 percentage point to 77%.
- C The number of customers satisfied or very satisfied with the format (ease of use) of BEA's data increased 4 percentage points to 82% in FY 2003.
- C Customer satisfaction with documentation of data was 79%, the same as in FY 2002.
- C Satisfaction with staff courtesy remained high; 86% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied in FY 2003.
- C Satisfaction with the expertise of BEA staff was 89% in FY 2003, the same as in FY 2002.
- C The number of customers satisfied or very satisfied with BEA's responsiveness to suggestions remained at 70% in FY 2003, the same as in FY 2002.
- C Regarding technological improvements, 82% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with BEA's Web site, an increase of 3 percentage points.

These results indicate that BEA's customers continue to have a high level of satisfaction with available products and services.

2.2 Comparison of FY 2003, FY 2002, and FY 2000 Findings on Overall Satisfaction

A summary of overall satisfaction findings among BEA's customers, comparing information from customer surveys conducted during three recent fiscal years, is provided in Table 1, on the next page. Comparison of the responses from the earliest to the most recent fiscal year indicates that BEA has increased its score on every satisfaction measure. Most notable increases in user satisfaction from FY 2000 to FY 2003 occurred in the following areas:

<u>Satisfaction Measure</u>	<u>FY 2003 Result</u>	<u>FY2000 Result</u>
Timeliness of estimates	80%	71%
Format of BEA data	82%	68%
Documentation of BEA data	79%	71%
Responsiveness to suggestions	70%	53%
BEA Web Site	82%	74%

Table 1 provides additional details on the satisfaction measures and increases in each area over the last three fiscal years.

Table 1, Comparison of Customer Satisfaction Survey Findings by Fiscal Year

Question	FY 2003: % satisfied/very satisfied			FY 2002: % satisfied/very Satisfied			FY 2000: % satisfied/very satisfied		
	mail	Web	mail & Web	mail	Web	mail & Web	mail	Web	mail & Web
AHow satisfied are you with the overall quality of the BEA products/ services?@	94%	95%	94%	93%	95%	94%	94%	73%	91%
AHow satisfied are you with the timeliness of BEA estimates?@	80%	80%	80%	72%	77%	75%	71%	73%	71%
AHow satisfied are you with the accuracy of BEA estimates?@	80%	82%	81%	83%	85%	84%	77%	81%	78%
AHow satisfied are you with the adaptation of BEA methodologies to changes in the economy?@	78%	73%	77%	75%	77%	76%	71%	71%	71%
AHow satisfied are you with the format of BEA data?@	82%	81%	82%	78%	78%	78%	70%	59%	68%
AHow satisfied are you with the documentation of BEA data?@	79%	76%	79%	81%	78%	79%	72%	61%	71%
AHow satisfied are you with the courtesy of BEA staff?@	86%	86%	86%	86%	89%	88%	85%	65%	83%
AHow satisfied are you with the expertise of BEA staff?@	89%	91%	89%	87%	92%	89%	86%	73%	85%
AHow satisfied are you with BEA responsiveness to your suggestions?@	73%	56%	70%	67%	73%	70%	55%	36%	53%
AHow satisfied are you with BEA Web site (www.bea.gov)?@	82%	79%	82%	82%	76%	79%	76%	60%	74%

2.3 BEA Data Products

BEA is committed to providing customers with products that can be used to understand the changing economy. The BEA data products section of the survey informs BEA about the most requested data products and how they are accessed. The survey covered five categories of products: general data, industry, international, national, and regional. The survey data was collected prior to the launch of a new Web site in July 2003.

For respondents who expressed an opinion, the key findings by type of data products were:

General Data Products:

The general data products consist of the *Survey of Current Business*, CD-ROMs, BEA's Web site (www.bea.gov), STAT-USA Web site (www.stat-usa.gov), Telephone Access to staff, and e-mail access to staff; 73% of the customers used information frequently or often (weekly/monthly) from BEA's Web site. This is down 5 percentage points from the FY 2002 survey. Of those customers who expressed an opinion; 73% obtain BEA data frequently or often through the Web site. BEA's Web site survey results declined by 5 percentage points. The BEA Web site was redesigned in response to customer comments. To address customer feedback from the FY 2002 survey findings, most of BEA's data can be downloaded for free on the redesigned Web site.

Frequent usage of the *Survey of Current Business* surged to 56 percent in 2003, a 13 percentage point increase from FY 2002.

Industry Data Products:

Industry Data Products consist of gross product by industry, input-output tables, and satellite Accounts; 36% of the customers used the gross product by industry data. This is a 2 percentage point increase from the FY 2002 survey.

International Data Products:

The International data products consist of U.S. international transactions (balance of payments), U.S. exports and imports of private services, U.S. direct investment abroad, foreign direct investment in the United States, and U.S. international investment position; 29% of the customers used the U.S. international transactions (balance of payments) data, an increase of 10 percentage points from the FY 2002 survey.

National Data Products:

National data products consist of national income and product accounts (NIPA) gross domestic product (GDP), NIPA underlying detail data, and capital stock (wealth) and investment by industry; 64% of the customers frequently or often used the GDP data, an increase of 7 percentage points from FY 2002.

Regional Data Products:

Regional data products consist of state personal income (SPI), local area personal income, gross state product by industry, and RIMS II regional multipliers; 55% of the customers used the SPI data, a decrease of 4 percentage points from FY 2002.

A fiscal year comparison of customer satisfaction with BEA data products is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2, Customer Satisfaction with BEA Data Products by Fiscal Year

Which data products do you use?	FY 2003		FY 2002		FY 2000	
	Frequent-ly or often (wkly or monthly.)	Infrequent-ly/rarely or never	Frequent-ly or often (wkly or monthly.)	Infrequent-ly/rarely or never	Frequent-ly or often (wkly or monthly)	Infrequent-ly/rarely or never
General Data Products						
<i>Survey of Current Business</i>	56%	44%	43%	57%	53%	47%
<i>CD-ROMs</i>	27%	73%	31%	69%	46%	54%
<i>BEA Web site (www.bea.gov)</i>	73%	27%	78%	22%	73%	27%
<i>STAT-USA Web site (www.stat-usa.gov)</i>	25%	75%	33%	67%	33%	67%
<i>Telephone access to staff</i>	11%	89%	12%	88%	12%	88%
<i>E-Mail access to staff</i>	9%	91%	10%	90%	7%	93%
Industry Data Products						
<i>Gross Product by Industry</i>	36%	64%	34%	66%	40%	60%
<i>Input-Output Tables</i>	22%	78%	26%	74%	23%	77%
<i>Satellite Accounts</i>	11%	89%	9%	91%	7%	93%
International Data Products						
<i>U.S. International Transactions (Balance of Payments)</i>	29%	71%	19%	81%	23%	77%

Which data products do you use?	FY 2003		FY 2002		FY 2000	
	Frequently or often (wkly or monthly.)	Infrequently/rarely or never	Frequently or often (wkly or monthly.)	Infrequently/rarely or never	Frequently or often (wkly or monthly)	Infrequently/rarely or never
U.S. Exports and Imports of Private Services	22%	78%	15%	85%	21%	79%
U.S. Direct Investments Abroad	19%	81%	13%	87%	20%	80%
Foreign Direct Investment in the U.S.	20%	80%	14%	86%	21%	79%
U.S. International Investment Position	19%	81%	12%	88%	17%	83%
National Data Products						
National Income and Product Accounts (GDP)	64%	36%	57%	43%	59%	41%
NIPA Underlying Detail Data	44%	56%	41%	59%	40%	60%
Capital Stock (Wealth) and Investment by Industry	24%	76%	22%	78%	25%	75%
Regional Data Products						
State Personal Income	55%	45%	59%	41%	55%	45%
Local Area Personal Income	51%	49%	58%	42%	57%	43%
Gross State Product by Industry	45%	55%	42%	58%	44%	56%
RIMS II Regional Multipliers	16%	84%	25%	75%	21%	79%

2.4 Web Site Features

In Fiscal Years 2003, 2002, and 2000, the survey sought information on the frequency with which customers use various data products and services. Although the survey findings show most BEA customers who responded to the survey with an opinion on specific questions used products via the Web, in FY 2003 it indicated a 5 percentage point decline compared to FY 2002 results. However, BEA implemented its redesigned Web site three months after the survey’s distribution. Therefore customers were not able to provide feedback about BEA’s new and improved Web site in this survey. Specific questions were also posed related to the importance of Web site features. For the third year in a row, customers reported the feature of greatest importance was “selective access.” Selective access is the ability to select specific data sets by series, by time period, and by frequency. “Downloadable data” was the second most important feature. The Downloadable data consist of data on the Web site that can be downloaded by customers from their personal computers.

A fiscal year comparison of customer satisfaction information for Web site features is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3, Customer Satisfaction with BEA Web Site Features by Fiscal Year

How important are the following Web site features to you?:	FY 2003		FY 2002		FY 2000	
	very important or important	Neither important nor unimportant/ unimportant or very unimportant	very important or important	Neither important nor unimportant/ unimportant or very unimportant	very important or important	Neither important nor unimportant/ unimportant or very unimportant
Selective Access: Ability to select specific data sets	93%	7%	94%	6%	94%	6%
Key Word Search: Ability to search BEA-s Web site via key words	81%	19%	79%	21%	78%	22%
Online Documentation	80%	20%	86%	14%	85%	15%
Downloadable Data: Ability to download series directly into spreadsheet software	89%	11%	93%	7%	94%	6%

2.5 Customer Comments

As a part of BEA's efforts to obtain customer feedback, customers were invited to add their comments and suggestions. In FY 2003, 33% of survey respondents provided comments, compared with 38% in FY 2002, and 42% in FY 2000. Again during FY 2003, an overwhelming number of comments addressed the electronic dissemination of data.

Key themes emerging from customer comments were:

- the need for historical data,
- more timely estimates on the Web site for all data,
- even though more data are available, many of the comments noted that navigating the Web site is still difficult and urged BEA to install a better search engine, and
- the ability to download data series in Excel or other formats.

These comments provide a focus for continued improvement of BEA products and services.

3.0 Next Steps

The FY 2003 Customer Satisfaction Survey once again provided crucial information about BEA's overall performance. BEA will continue to use customer feedback to measure and drive the commitment to achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction.

The FY 2003 Customer Satisfaction Survey enables BEA to:

- identify and prioritize what changes are needed,
- measure customer satisfaction with BEA products and services, and
- build a culture focused on customer success.

BEA is proud the FY 2003 Survey results indicate that improvements were achieved for the overall quality of BEA's products and services. However, the FY 2003 Survey has indicated areas in which BEA can improve. BEA is committed to taking action to address these areas. BEA's first strategic objective is to make its economic accounts and services more responsive to the needs of its customers and partners. To this end, the findings of the FY 2003 Survey will continue to be an important factor in BEA's strategic plans and future goals.

APPENDIX A.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS
Washington, D.C. 20230

May 2003

Dear BEA Customers:

We at the Bureau of Economic Analysis are committed to providing quality products and services to our customers in a relevant, timely, and cost-effective manner.

We request your help in identifying your needs with respect to our products and informational materials by the completion of the attached Customer Satisfaction Survey. Your participation is voluntary, and you have the options of completing the survey either online at www.bea.gov or by hand and folding, stapling and mailing it. All responses are treated as confidential, and your participation in this survey should take no more than 15 minutes.

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to hearing from you and continuing to serve your needs for economic statistics and a better understanding of the United States economy.

Sincerely,

J. Steven Landefeld
Director

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

1. Which data products do you use?

	Frequently (every week)	Often (every month)	Infrequently	Rarely	Never	Don't know or not applicable
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(On a scale of 1-5, please circle the appropriate answer.)

GENERAL DATA PRODUCTS

Survey of Current Business	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
CD-ROMs	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
BEA Web site (www.bea.gov).	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
STAT-USA Web site (www.stat-usa.gov).	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Telephone access to staff.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
E-Mail access to staff	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

INDUSTRY DATA PRODUCTS

Gross Product by Industry.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Input-Output Tables	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Satellite Accounts	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

INTERNATIONAL DATA PRODUCTS

U.S. International Transactions (Balance of Payments)..	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
U.S. Exports and Imports of Private Services	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
U.S. Direct Investment Abroad.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Foreign Direct Investment in the United States	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
U.S. International Investment Position	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

NATIONAL DATA PRODUCTS

National Income and Product Accounts (GDP).	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
NIPA Underlying Detail Data	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Capital Stock (Wealth) and Investment by Industry	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

REGIONAL DATA PRODUCTS

State Personal Income	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Local Area Personal Income.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Gross State Product by Industry	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
RIMS II Regional Multipliers.	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

2. How satisfied are you with:	Very		Neither		Very	Don't know
	satisfied	Satisfied	dissatisfied nor satisfied	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	or not applicable
(On a scale of 1–5, please circle the appropriate answer.)						
the overall quality of the BEA products/services?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the timeliness of BEA estimates?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the accuracy of BEA estimates?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the adaptation of BEA's methodologies to changes in the economy?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the format (ease of use) of BEA's data?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the documentation of BEA's data?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the courtesy of BEA staff?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
the expertise of BEA staff?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
BEA's responsiveness to your suggestions?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
BEA's Web site (www.bea.gov)?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

3. How important are the following Web site features to you:	Very		Neither		Very	Don't know
	important	Important	important nor unimportant	Unimportant	unimportant	or not applicable
(On a scale of 1–5, please circle the appropriate answer.)						
Selective Access: Ability to select specific data sets (e.g., by series, by time period, by frequency).	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Keyword Search: Ability to search BEA's Web site via keywords	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Online Documentation	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Downloadable Data: Ability to download series directly	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

4. Please give us specific ways in which we could improve our products/services, including our Web site.

Thank you for your participation!

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: Your response is voluntary, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Public reporting burden is estimated to average 15 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden to Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BE-1), Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Act Project 0691-0001, Washington, DC 20503.



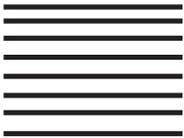
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