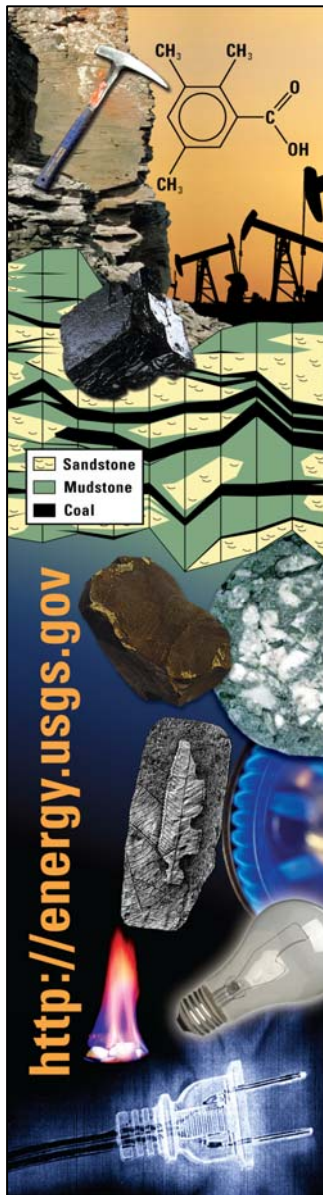




U.S. Geological Survey Customer Satisfaction/Outcome Survey:



The Energy Resources Program Newsletter

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

Introduction

In July 2006, the ERP launched a revised, integrated website to improve delivery of information and web services to customers. Coincident with this launch, the ERP Newsletter was initiated. This quarterly newsletter highlights the latest ERP research, activities, publications, and information resources available from the ERP website, <http://energy.usgs.gov/>, and other sources. More information on the ERP Newsletter, including archived issues, is available from: <http://energy.usgs.gov/newsletter.html>. The USGS subsequently conducted a customer satisfaction survey to elicit feedback on the ERP Newsletter. Persons contacted for this survey were pooled from two strata:

- A random sample of 200 persons from the list of ERP Newsletter subscribers who had received 1 or more newsletter issues AND indicated their willingness to participate in customer surveys;
- A random sample of 50 USGS scientists and other employees who are affiliated with ERP research activities.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with respect to various aspects of the Newsletter as well as their overall satisfaction with this information service. Respondents were also asked to provide information regarding what Newsletter features they use, how they use the information contained in the Newsletter, what decisions may have been affected by the information, and recommendations for improving the Newsletter.

Following is a condensed overview of all survey responses and a description of changes the USGS is implementing based on the collective feedback.

Summary of Results

The ERP Newsletter Customer Satisfaction Survey began on May 19, 2008. Data collection ended on June 17, 2008. The survey was administered via email. Respondents linked to a webpage to complete the questionnaire online. The following table summarizes the number of persons contacted per each stratum and the corresponding response rate:

Stratum	Sent	Responded	Response Rate
Newsletter Subscribers	193	45	23%
USGS	46	18	41%

Overall customer satisfaction levels with the ERP Newsletter are high (fig.1A): the total satisfaction level (the sum of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses) from each sample stratum exceeds 98%.

Survey participants were asked about the utility of the Energy Spotlight feature of the Newsletter. This feature focuses on a specific theme and contains an extended background summary with links to several related publications and information services. The vast majority of survey respondents (fig. 1B) indicated that this was a useful newsletter feature.

A majority of survey respondents (fig. 1C) indicated they had accessed web links included in Newsletter issues as a means of obtaining more information about a research activity or publication. In addition to receiving current newsletter issues via email, a significant portion of survey respondents (58% for subscribers and 44% for USGS) indicated they had accessed archived Newsletter issues from the ERP website: <http://energy.usgs.gov/newsletter.html> .

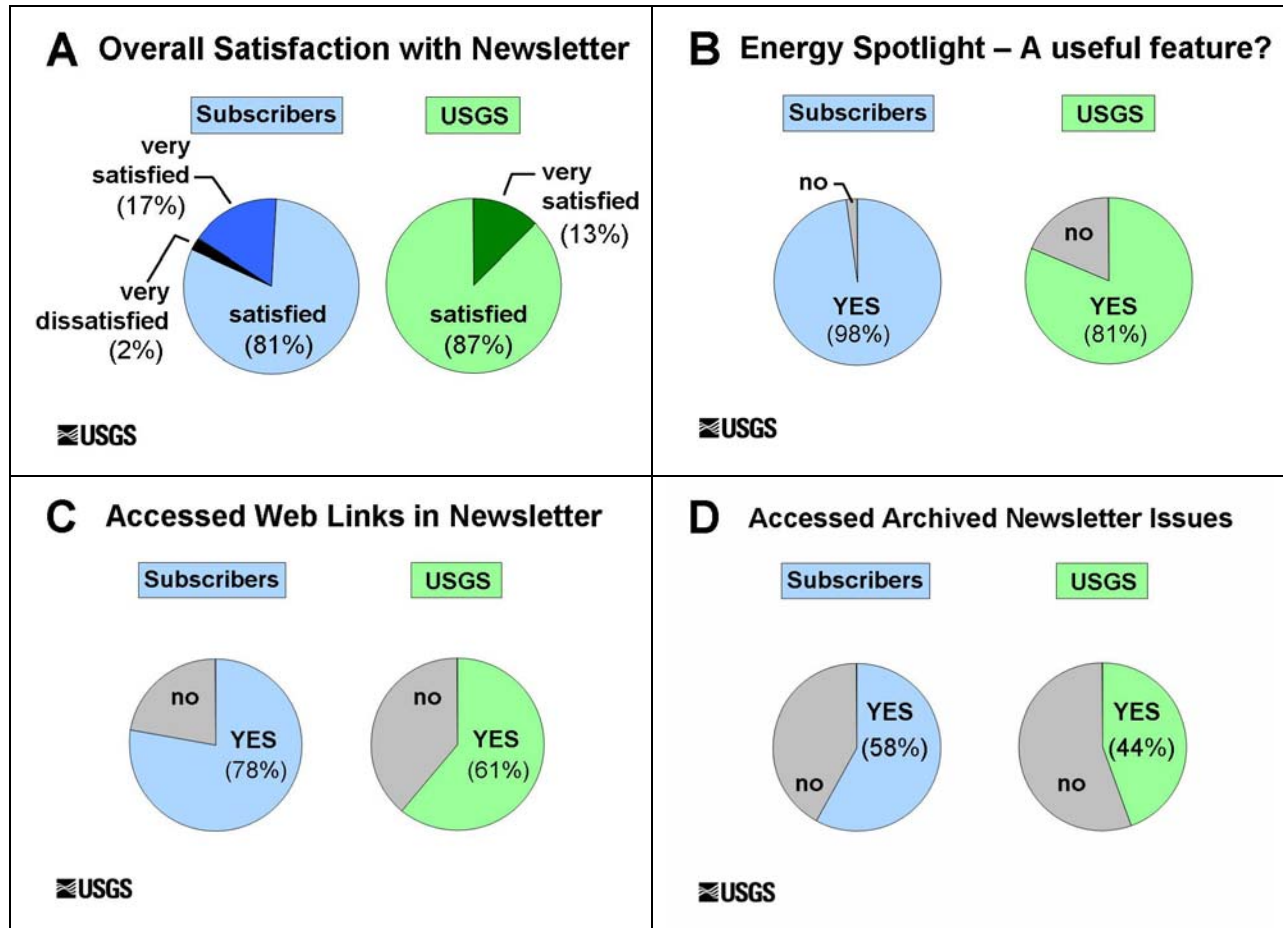


Figure 1. Graphical summary of survey responses to several aspects of the ERP Newsletter, including: (A) overall level of satisfaction with the Newsletter, (B) the utility of the ‘Energy Spotlight’ newsletter feature, (C) the degree to which Newsletter recipients access web links contained in the Newsletter, and (D) the extent to which survey respondents had accessed archived Newsletter issues.

In addition, nearly all respondents (100% from subscribers and 93% from USGS) indicated the Newsletter is helpful as a means of staying up-to-date with the latest ERP research activities, products, and web information and services. When asked if the text summaries in the ERP Newsletter included sufficient details to be informative, 86% of subscriber respondents and 100% of USGS respondents indicated that the level of detail was “just right.”

Comments and Suggestions

In addition to the survey questions, the respondents were asked what could be done to improve the Newsletter to better meet their needs. Below are some of the comments and suggestions we received:

From Subscribers:

- “Ask me again next time. No suggestions right now.”
- “ERP Newsletter is a little bit too US-biased, something that is obvious, because your first target is USA. However, one must agree that in practical sense USGS has worldwide influence. So it would be good too if you could add some more articles dealing with worldwide interest. Another aspect is the lack of figures. At least in comparison with Margins Newsletter, Fire in the Ice, etc.. A reasonable balance between text and figures could attract more readers.”
- “I clicked on the Topica url for reporting unsolicited email and was apparently unsubscribed. No url including "confirm subscription" allows me to resubscribe. Newsletter management could be better.”
- “Is it possible to add on more category named: available GIS datasets and organize this category with geographic and thematic criteria.”
- “it is okay as is”
- “Provide hyperlinks from the contents entry to it`s corresponding item in the newsletter. Would save scrolling down to find what I`m looking for.”
- “Publish more often.”
- “Slightly greater detail required.”

From USGS:

- “Make a hyper link from the Index in the beginning of the newsletter to the corresponding section. This will save time to the reader if they are only interested in one or two items.”
- “Newsletter needs to include all of the science that is being sent out and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals.”
- “The Energy Spotlight is too long in most issues. I would keep the spotlight brief and about the same amount of text as the other features.’

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments. Below are some of the comments we received:

From Subscribers:

- “Excellent newsletter! Keep up the great work!”
- “Have just signed up so I havn` t had a chance to fully utilize this resource. However, from what I have reviewed, the publication should be helpful to me when analyzing other basins and plays and applying this research... .”

- “I appreciate your information.”
- “I have not spent much time looking at the info and reading the newsletter”
- “Since I remember signing up for the newsletter I don’t believe it’s ever been delivered to my email. This survey request was the first thing I received ... and that was months if not longer ago.”

From USGS:

- “Great document. Well put together. Kudos to the writer(s). Is there a chance it’ll come out more frequently than quarterly?”
- “The list of primary areas of interest above should include: -Spatial Data (GIS) - Interactive Maps”

Next Steps – Addressing Customer Feedback

The responses and comments regarding the Newsletter are encouraging in that several of the existing Newsletter features appear to be meeting customer needs. Given this feedback, we will continue these features – such as the Energy Spotlight feature, the web links included within the Newsletter, and the archived issues – in the future. There were also several comments addressing aspects of the Newsletter that could be expanded and(or) improved. In response to this feedback, we will be implementing the following changes in upcoming Newsletter issues:

(1) Hyperlinks will be added to the PDF version of the Newsletter to facilitate faster access between the Table of Contents and a particular feature.

(2) A regular GIS/Geospatial feature will be added to the Newsletter to highlight the most recently available GIS coverages. This feature will complement our web-based GIS DataFinder, accessible at <http://energy.usgs.gov/search.html> , a new application that enables customers to search or browse through the Energy Resources Program’s vast collection of GIS-related products including Maps, GIS Datasets and Interactive Map Services from a single portal. Users of this new application can discover, access and download products based on a variety of product attributes including spatial location, content type, keyword or research topic.

(3) The Newsletter scope will be expanded to better reflect the entire spectrum of ERP research, including ERP information, products, and activities that appear in other venues external to the ERP website.