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Survey on the Value of User Surveys
A Brief in Law Librarianship Issue *Volume 16*

By Karen S. Linitz, Caitlin Elwood and Elena Azadbakht

Although the majority of law libraries use surveys of some variety or another, the law library literature does not reflect this. A handful of articles published within the last decade discuss the different kinds of surveys available, their respective strengths and weaknesses and why they are important. While many of these findings are also applicable in a law library setting, there is a need for more specific analysis of user surveys from this perspective.

Surveys have been found to be a relatively efficient and inexpensive data collection technique. In recent years, production and distribution of surveys has been made even easier through online survey authoring tools such as Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey. Undoubtedly, ease of use and low cost contribute to making user surveys a popular option among librarians *but should they be?* How effective are surveys as a feedback mechanism, and is the data used to implement real change? This brief focuses on how law libraries use surveys, and to what extent the data collected is put to use.

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