

WSF VEHICLE RESERVATION SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

Analysis of Fall Customer Survey Results January 2013

USER SURVEY ANALYSIS

Overview of Survey Respondents

In total, 1,619 customers took the survey. The survey request was sent to customers that made a reservation for travel during October 2012.

Exhibit 1 shows the number of respondents by route and Exhibit 2 shows the number of respondents by account type.

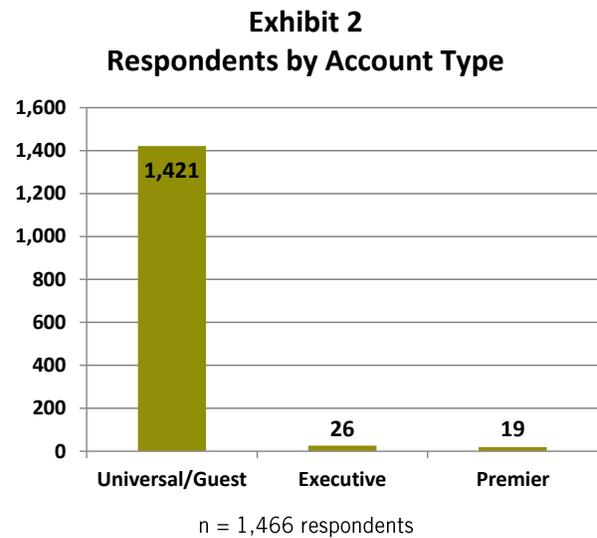
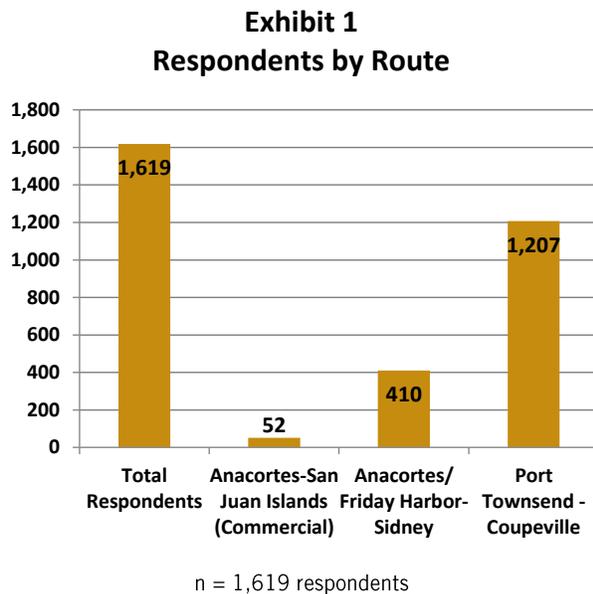
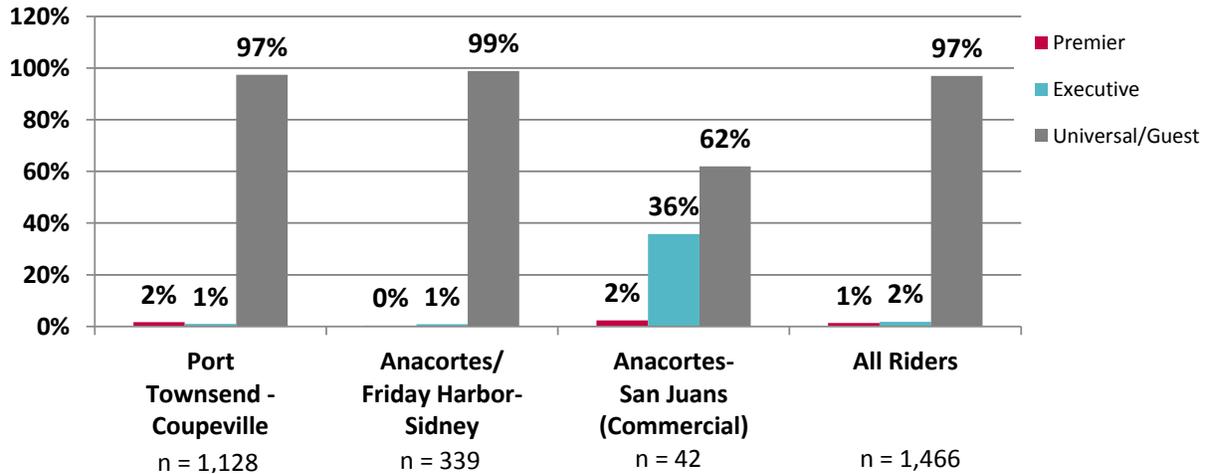


Exhibit 3 summarizes the account types that respondents reported using to make their reservation. Many customers responded that they did not know whether or not they had used an account and which type of account they had used. These customers are grouped with customers that responded “Universal.”

**Exhibit 3
Account Types by Route**



Note: Only customers with an Executive Account are currently able to use reservations on the Anacortes-San Juan Islands routes. Results showing that respondents used a Universal/Guest or Premier Account to travel on this route are likely due to customer confusion about account types, since results are self-reported.

Making a Reservation

Exhibit 4 shows the breakdown for how customers made a reservation – either online or by phone – by route. In this survey, we did not ask customers who made a reservation by phone what account type they were using.

**Exhibit 4
Method of Making Reservation**

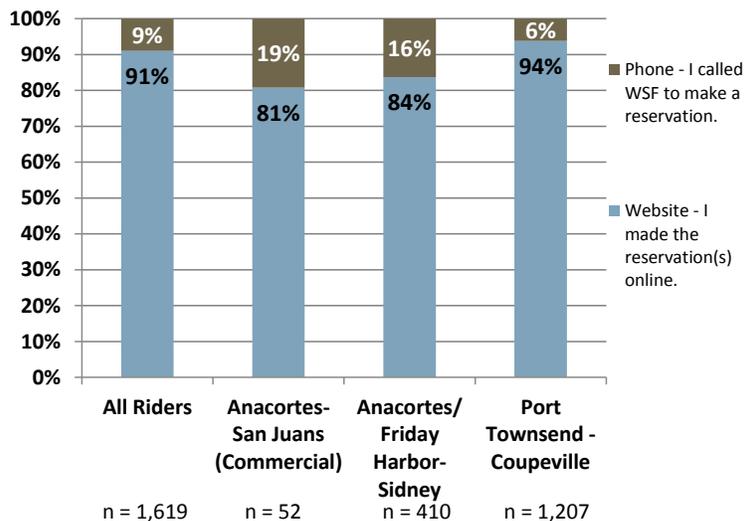
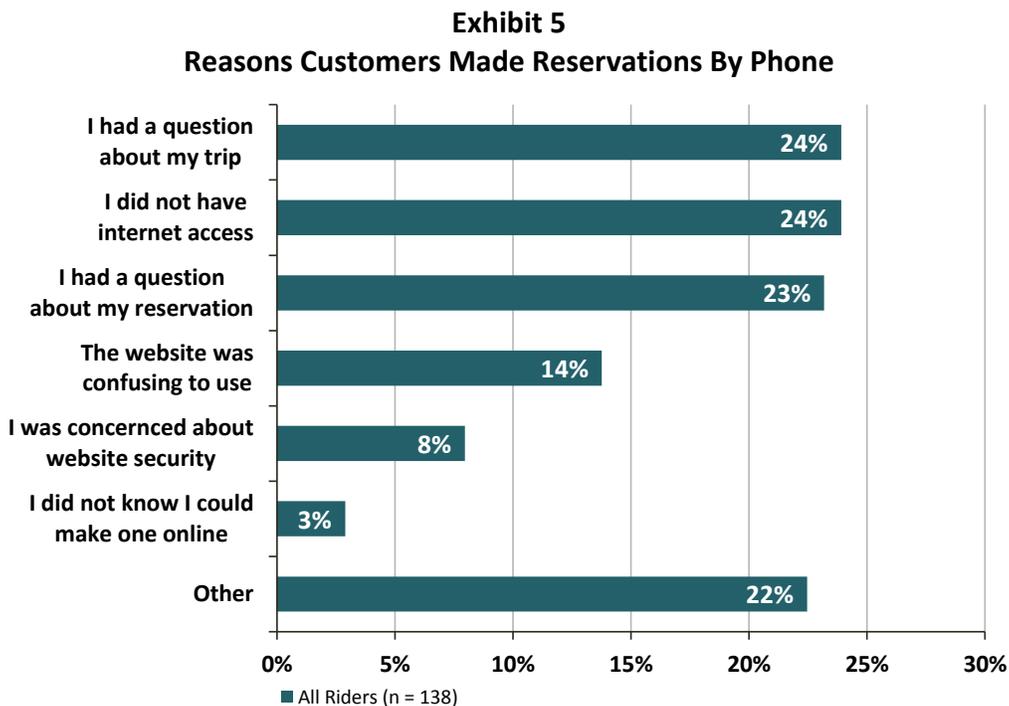


Exhibit 5 shows reasons why customers elected to make reservations by phone instead of on the WSF website.

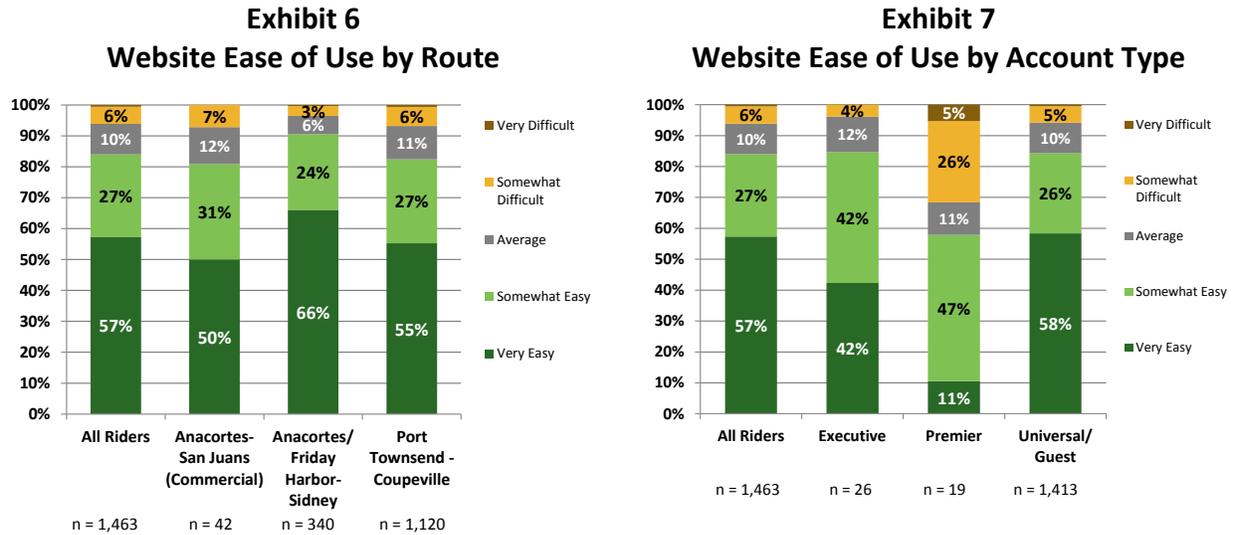


- Most customers who made a reservation by phone did so because they had a question about their trip or reservation they wanted to clarify with a customer service agent (47%) or because they did not have internet access (24%).
- About 22% of respondents selected other. Of these respondents, most noted that they just prefer to use the phone over the internet. Additional responses included special scenarios such as vehicles that were too long to make a reservation for online and bugs or glitches with the reservations website.
- Respondents traveling on the Anacortes-Sidney route were more likely than other respondents to say they had a question about their reservation (33%, versus 23% of all customers).

General Customer Experience

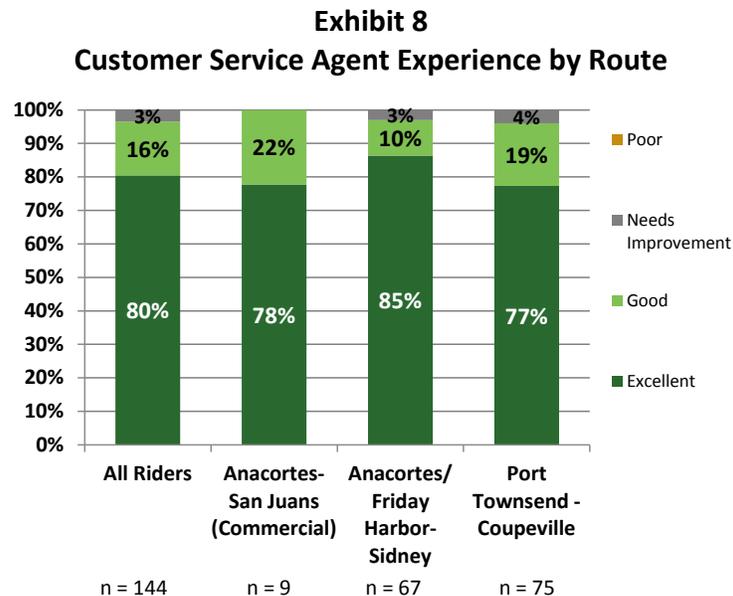
Website

Exhibit 6 and Exhibit 7 show how survey respondents rated the website on how easy it was to use. This chart only shows survey respondents that used the Save a Spot website – about 10% of survey respondents did not answer this question.



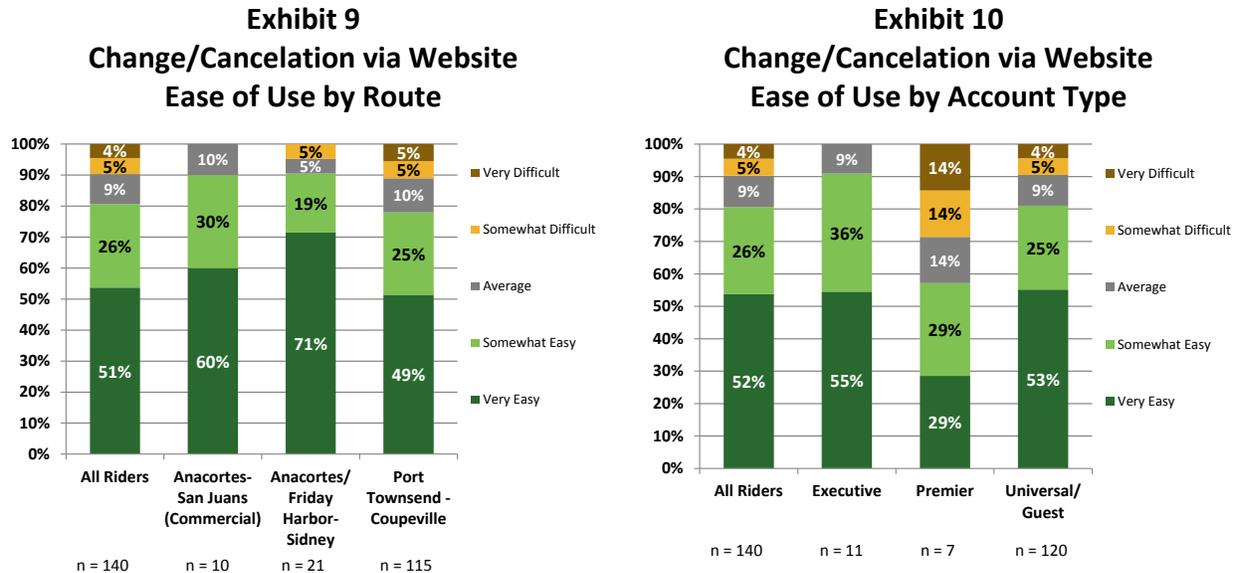
Customer Service Agents

Exhibit 8 shows how survey respondents that spoke with a Customer Service Agent to make their reservation rated their customer service experience. About 9% of survey respondents spoke with a Customer Service Agent. In this survey, we did not ask customers who made a reservation by phone what account type they were using.

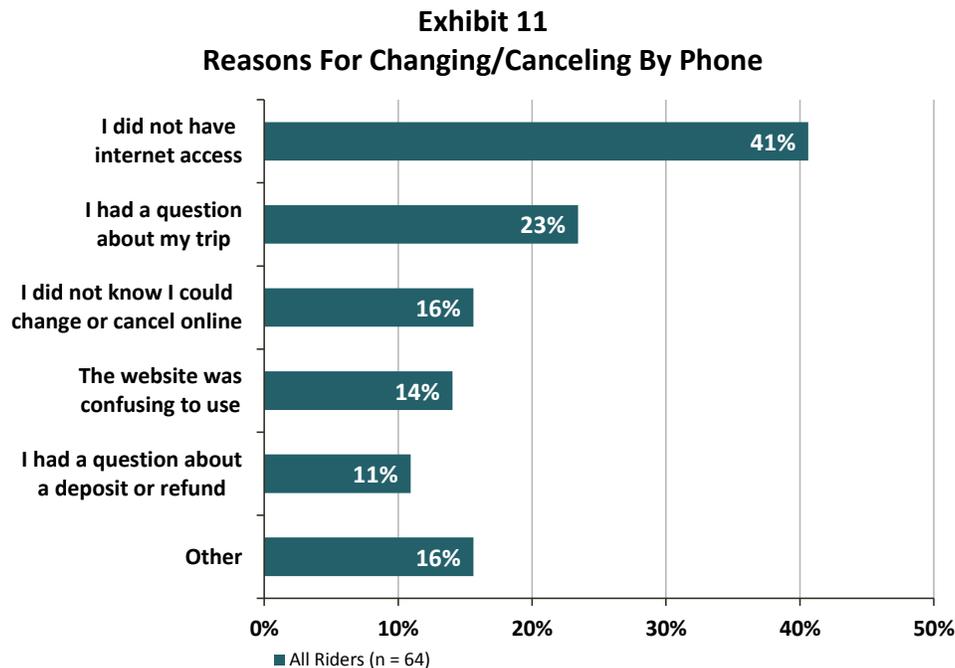


Changing or Canceling a Reservation

Overall, 206 respondents (about 13% of total) changed or canceled their reservation. Of those that made a change or cancellation, 140 respondents (68%) did so online. Exhibit 9 and Exhibit 10 show how respondents that made a change or cancellation via the website rated the site's ease of use.



The remaining 66 respondents (32%) made their change or cancellation by calling a customer service agent. Exhibit 11 summarizes the reasons why these respondents used the phone instead of the website. The most commonly selected reason was that they didn't have internet access, following by needing to speak to a representative to answer questions about the trip. About 16% of respondents did not know they could make a change or cancellation online.



Checking in at the Terminal

Exhibit 12 shows how respondents felt about the clarity of the reservation check-in process. Survey respondents were asked if they knew in advance about specific aspects of check-in, such as when to arrive, what they should bring, that their deposit would be credited toward their fare, and that they would owe some additional fare at the tollbooth.

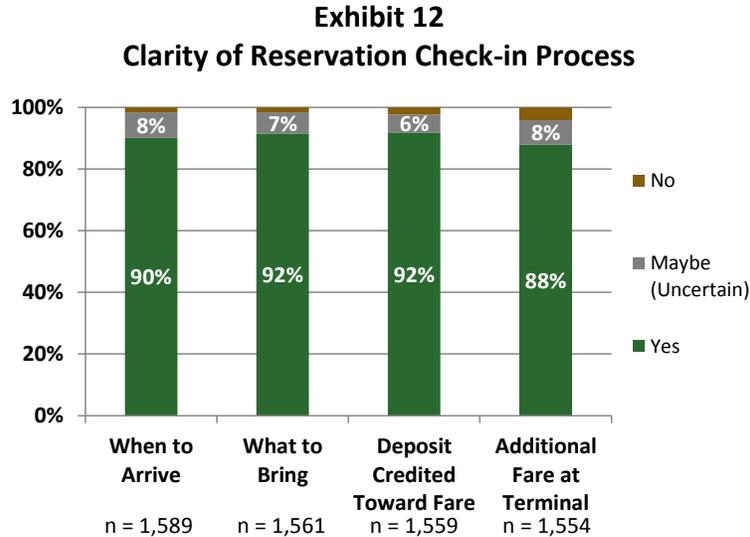


Exhibit 13 and Exhibit 14 show whether or not survey respondents brought their printed confirmation page or printed barcode to the terminal, by route and by account type.

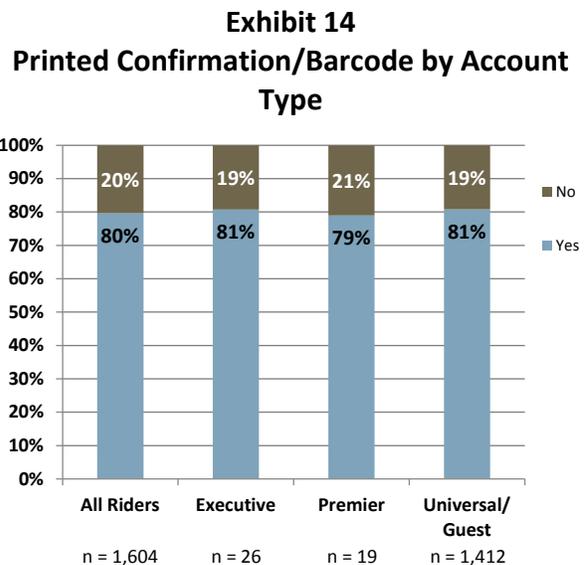
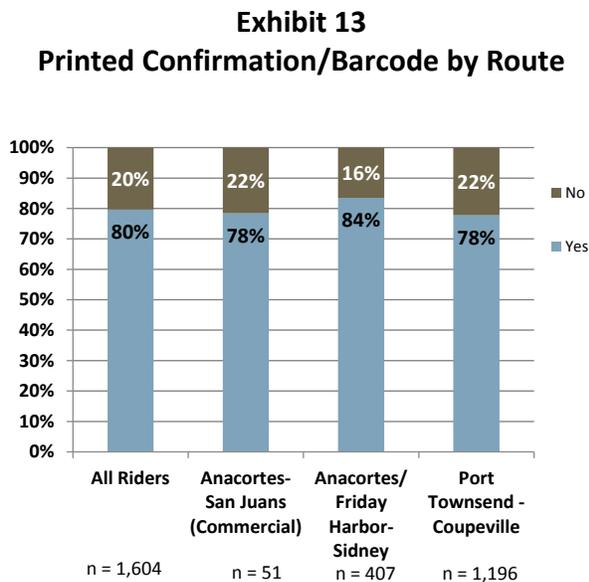
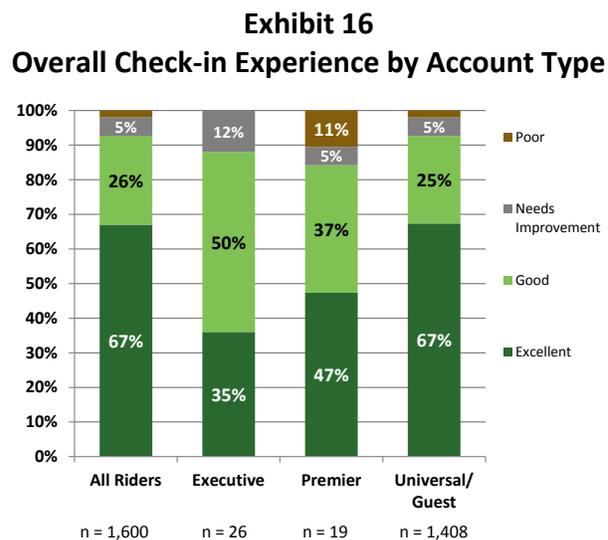
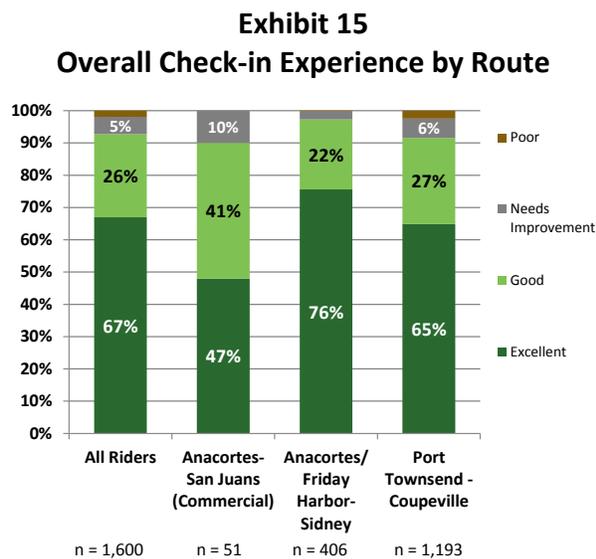
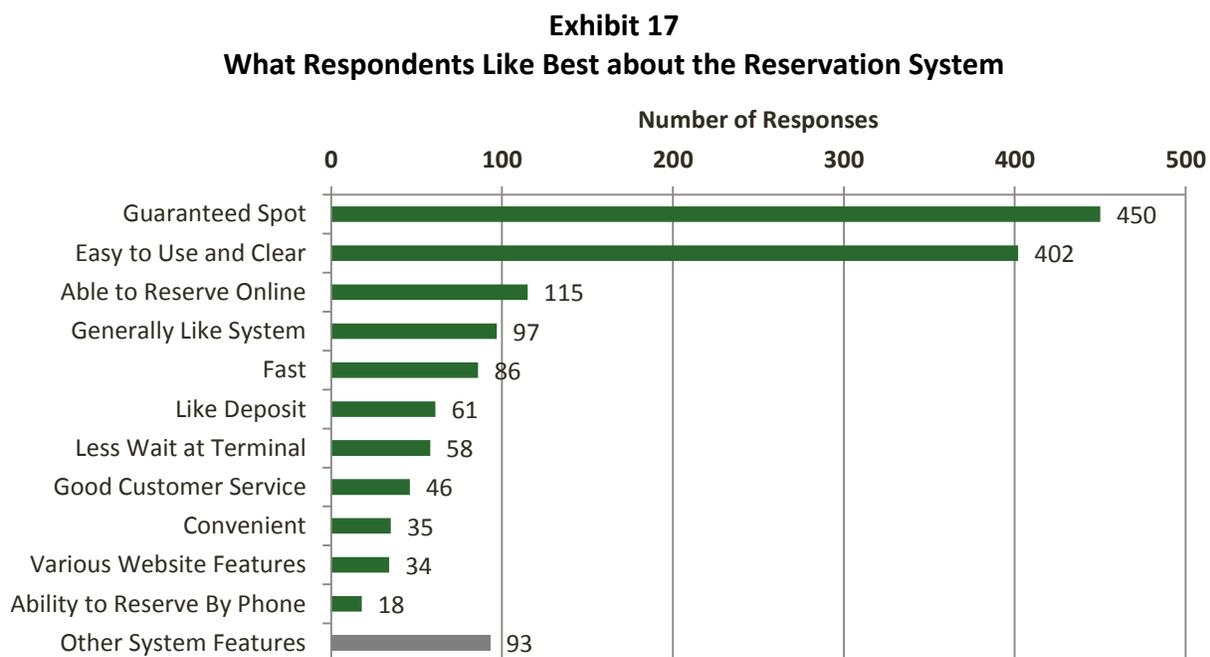


Exhibit 15 and Exhibit 16 show how survey respondents rated their reservation check-in experience overall, by route and by account type.



Open-Ended Responses

This section documents the range of responses received for open-ended questions in the survey. Exhibit 17 shows the breakdown of responses to the question “Please describe what you like best about the reservation system.” Customers provided almost 1,200 responses to this question. Responses were reviewed and aggregated into the categories used in Exhibit 17. Some responses were counted in multiple categories.



The most common response “Guaranteed spot” refers to appreciation for the peace of mind and predictability that being guaranteed to get onto the ferry sailing of one’s choice brings. Survey respondents also noted that having a “guaranteed spot” makes it easier to plan travel, for business and

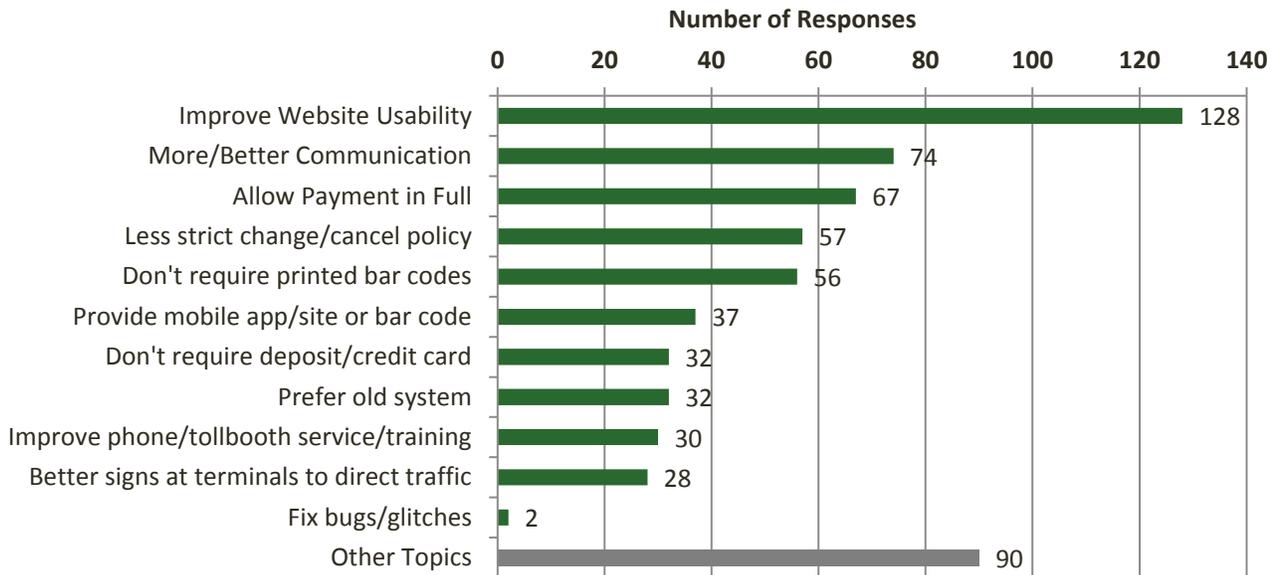
pleasure, while relying on the ferry system. The second most common category, “Easy to use and clear,” expressed respondents’ appreciation for the easy and clear nature of the ferry reservation system, many noting the accessibility of relevant information. Respondents often noted the pop-up calendar feature for picking reservation dates as a favorite information tool.

A few other notable categories include:

- **Various Website Features.** Comments in this category included appreciation for the following features, among others:
 - Seeing space availability for reservation spots and stand by spots.
 - The convenience of having account information stored in the system.
 - Availability of sailing schedule and tide information.
 - Being able to track reservations and account activity online.
 - Easy to navigate, aesthetically pleasing website layout.
- **Other System Features.** Comments in this category included appreciation for the following features, among others:
 - The 24/7 availability of the website reservation system, allowing people to make reservations outside of business hours.
 - Emailed confirmations.
 - Printed confirmation pages.
 - The system works on smart phones.
- **Like Deposit.** This category included appreciation for one main aspect of the deposit feature:
 - That the reservations are free and the deposit is applied to the final fare. Many compared this to BC Ferries which charges for reservations.

Exhibit 18 shows the breakdown of responses to the question “please describe how we can improve the reservation system. Are there any additional features you would like to see?” Customers provided more than 600 responses to this question. Responses were reviewed and aggregated into the categories shown in Exhibit 18. Some responses were counted in multiple categories.

Exhibit 18
Topic Areas Suggested for System Improvement



The most common responses related to improving the general usability of the website and improving and increasing communication, respectively. With these broad categories there were many specific comments, the most common of which were:

- **Improve website usability.** Comments in this category included, among others:
 - Wanting an easier or clearer process to book a round trip.
 - Wanting a way to book multiple trips or round trips at the same time.
 - Confusion about setting up an account of whether or not an account is needed at all.
 - Wanting a way to bypass setting up an account or to make a reservation as a guest, without an account.
 - Wanting a way to make reservations for people eligible for reduced fares (e.g. seniors, children, etc.) online.
- **More/better communication.** Comments in this category included, among others:
 - Wanting more clarity on how much additional money will be owed at the tollbooth.
 - Wanting more descriptions/direction to help determine vehicle sizes.
 - Wanting more information on how far in advance customers should arrive at the terminal.
 - Wanting the printout to contain more or clearer information, such as departure times, directions, arrival time windows, improved formatting, an itemized receipt, balance due at tollbooth etc.

A few other categories of note are:

- **Don't require deposit/credit card.** This category has two main buckets:
 - Some people do not want to pay upfront because they risk losing their deposit or it's financially difficult to pay up front for more than one trip at a time.
 - Some people do not want to provide their credit card information online due to privacy concerns.
- **All other topics.** Comments in this category were extremely varied, and included but were not limited to:
 - Offering reservations for motor homes and RVs.
 - Allowing bulk or recurring reservations or reservations more than one month in advance.
 - Allow additional methods of payment, such as ORCA, Good To Go!, Paypal, or multi-ride cards.

SUMMER AND FALL SURVEY COMPARISON

For the most part, results of the summer and fall customer surveys were fairly similar in terms of customer satisfaction and customer behavior. There were a few areas of difference and improvements in performance, which are identified below.

Exhibit 19 shows that the percent of customers that said the website was easy to use increased from 72% in the summer survey to 84% in the fall survey. Correspondingly, the percent of customers who said the website was difficult to use dropped from 16% to 6%.

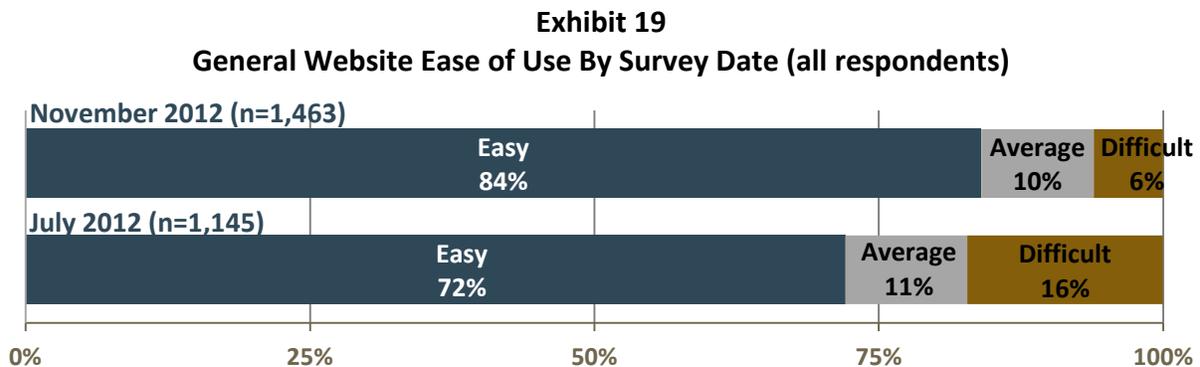


Exhibit 20 shows that the percent of customers who found the website easy to use to make a change or cancellation increased from 57% in the summer survey to 81% in the fall survey.

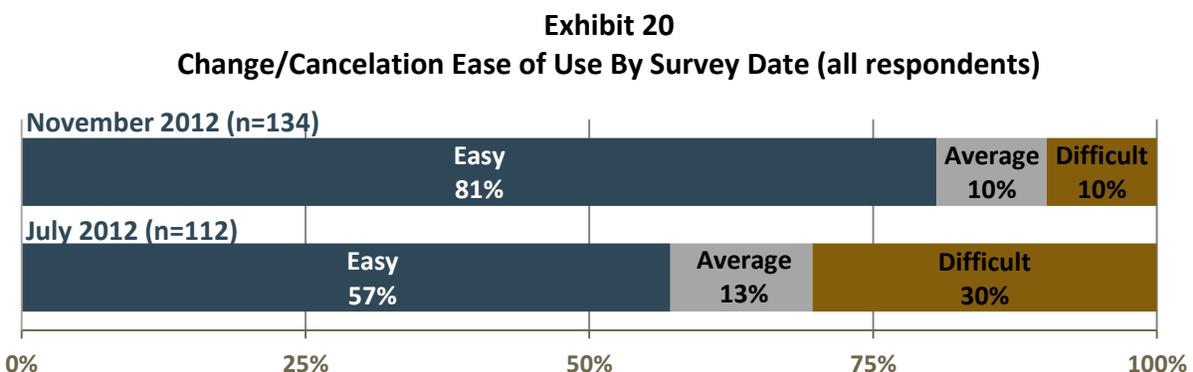
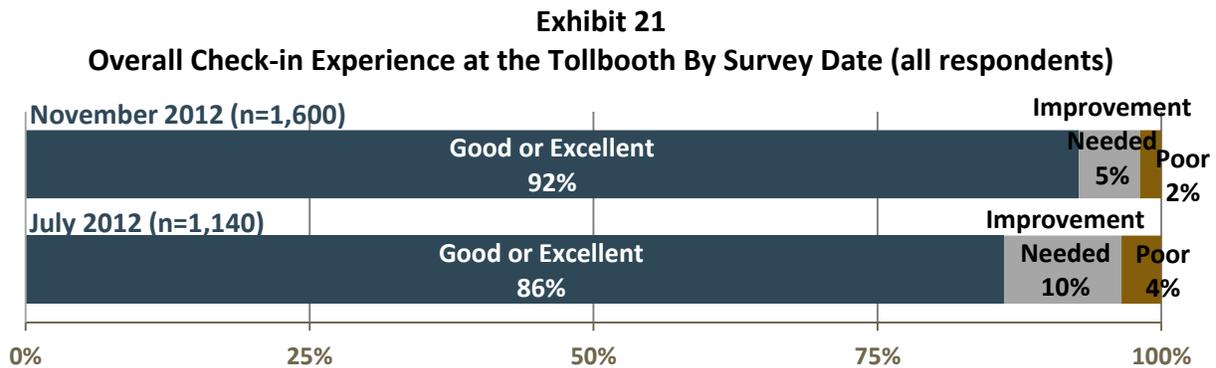


Exhibit 21 shows how customers rated their overall experience checking in at the tollbooth. The percent of respondents that stated this experience was good or excellent increased from 86% in the summer survey to 92% in the fall survey.



One other area of improvement was found in the open-ended responses to the question “please describe how we can improve the reservation system. Are there any additional features you would like to see?” From the summer to fall survey, the number of suggestions to fix bugs or glitches in the website plummeted from 45 in the summer survey to only 2 in the fall survey, suggesting that WSF has responded well to fixing website performance issues.

NON-USER SURVEY ANALYSIS

WSF also surveyed customers that traveled on either the Port Townsend-Coupeville or Sidney routes without a reservation during October 2012. WSF only received 31 responses to this survey, which prohibits making broad conclusions about results, but still provides some interesting insights into why some customers choose to travel without a reservation.

Respondent Characteristics

- The plurality of respondents were infrequent users that use the ferry once per month or less (40%), about 28% of respondents were moderate users (one to three roundtrips per month), and about 32% of respondents were frequent users that make more than three roundtrips per month.
- About 76% of respondents had previously traveled on their route using a reservation.
 - About 26% of respondents make a reservation all or most of the time they travel.
 - About 53% of respondents make a reservation some of the time they travel.
 - About 21% of respondents never use the reservation system.

Survey Responses

- The factors that affect respondents’ decision to make a reservation or not include:
 - Expected wait time at terminal (46%)
 - Likelihood of needing to make a last-minute change or cancelation (46%)
 - Availability of reservations for the preferred sailing (31%)
 - About 54% of respondents listed another reason such as no computer/phone access, risking loss of a deposit due to unforeseen circumstances such as traffic, and not being sure of their arrival time at the terminal.

- Customers were also asked why they did not make a reservation:
 - Some customers do not want to pay a deposit because it is too high or they did not want to risk losing it due to uncertain plans.
 - Some respondents had concerns about policies, such as change and cancelation policies and available forms of payment (such as a regular multi-ride card), as well as having multiple people make reservations within the same company.
 - A few customers said the website was difficult to use or they did not have a computer.
 - Some people either did not know they could make a reservation, or chose not to because they expected a short wait at the terminal.
- Customers were split on whether they plan to use reservations in the future. About 50% said they were very or somewhat likely to use reservations in the future, while about 50% said they were very or somewhat unlikely to do so.

Customers were also asked to suggest ways that WSF can increase their use of the reservation system.

- Many customers requested changes to make the system more flexible, including less strict deposit policies or elimination of deposits, less strict arrival times, and being able to make reservations closer to sailing departure.
- A few customers requested that they be able to use their Wave2Go passes as payment.