

IPONZ User Feedback options

The following request comes from Jira ticket [IWS-272](#):

...it would be great please to have some examples or options for collecting feedback from our users on our website.

You mentioned the one at the bottom of <https://www.eat.companiesoffice.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/> which looks quite good at first glance - I'm wondering if there are different types of feedback modules that suit different pages/sites? E.g. might want to give different feedback options from a case study vs contact us or a practice guideline etc?

Would you recommend feedback options that just relate to the page or to the service overall (but appreciate that quickly gets into a fuller survey which people would need to have motivation to complete).

Chrometoaster response

There are two main decisions to make:

1. What mechanism(s) should you use for asking questions and collecting the answers?
2. What questions should you be asking (and which mechanisms work best for each)?

Feedback mechanism

There are two main options for the feedback mechanism: **passive/opt-in**, or a **prompt/nudge**.

These options could be used in tandem, for example by using opt-in measures for more general feedback and longer questionnaires, and relying on short, prompted questions for getting higher volumes of less detailed feedback.

Option 1: Passive/opt-in

An example of this would be a link or button at the top of the page footer. This does not prompt the user to engage, other than by being visible to them.

This option could be used for every page on the site, or could be targeted at a specific subset of pages you are interested in collecting feedback for. Using this feature on fewer pages should reduce the amount of “banner blindness” (people’s tendency to increasingly ignore common elements which appear on every page).

Within this option there are two sub-options:

- **Option 1A – Off-page form**

The link/button links to a survey page. However, rather than using the same link on every page, we could allow the text and destination to vary between pages. For example, some pages could have a “Was this page helpful?” link, while others could use “Would you recommend this site?”

The surveys themselves can be implemented using user-defined forms, providing a lot of flexibility and require no additional development, but the ability to individually select which form each page goes to would be new.

Low engagement rate, low user disruption, high survey flexibility.

- **Option 1B – On-page form**

A new on-page form which opens when the user clicks the button/link, or is placed at the bottom of the page. This new functionality would need to be developed.

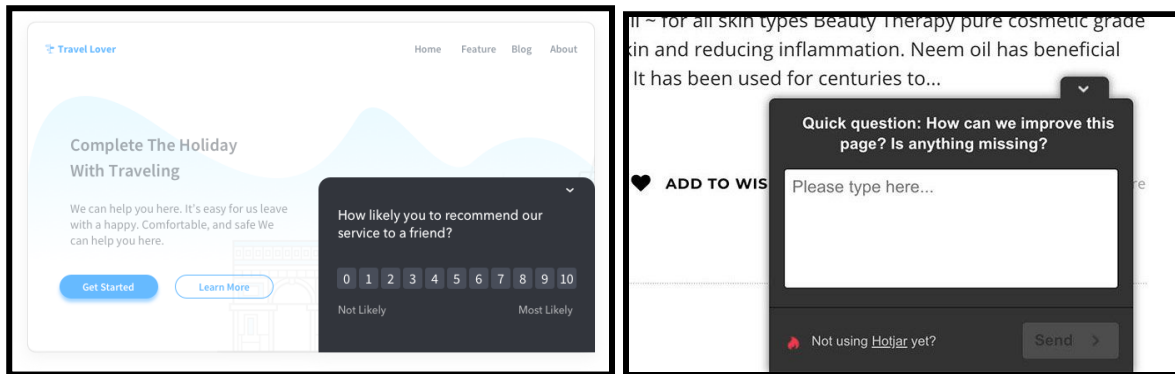
Engagement is likely to be higher than with an off-page form as the user does not need to leave the page, and can remain in-context while providing feedback. On-page forms should be shorter and simpler than off-page forms, ideally just a single question related to the page the user is viewing.

Unlike an off-page form, this approach is not well suited to gathering a broad range of feedback from a single user (e.g. about their experience overall).

The Companies Office example mentioned in the ticket is an example of this approach.

Medium engagement rate, low user disruption, medium-low survey flexibility.

Option 2: Prompt/nudge



A new piece of functionality which prompts users to give feedback directly on the page. Done carefully, this should not impact the user's experience too badly, but it is certainly more disruptive than passive/opt-in methods.

As with the passive options, you don't need to use these on every page, and there are advantages to using it more selectively. Users typically don't respond to multiple prompts in a session (in fact the system would usually be configured to specifically *avoid* prompting the same user multiple times), so using it only on pages you really want feedback on can help ensure that your 'one shot per visitor' is well spent.

Because they can annoy users, prompt-based feedback mechanisms usually include additional methods of targeting specific users or behaviour you are interested in. These options vary between solutions, but tend to include things like:

- Only prompt users who scroll at least X% of the way down the page.
- Only prompt users when they appear to be about to leave the page.
- Only prompt users who have already visited X pages on the site.
- Only prompt users from specific countries.
- Only prompt [mobile/desktop] users.

These 'surveys' need to be very short, generally a single question. This means this option is not well suited to collecting broad, detailed information. However, this option may have higher engagement rates than 'opt-in' feedback mechanisms.

Within this option there are two sub-options:

- **Option 2A – Off-the-shelf**

There are a number of products which deliver this type of feedback mechanism.

Any of these options would need to be analysed and integrated into the site and customised appropriately. It's worth nothing that while these tools usually allow some customisation, they aren't likely to look as visually 'integrated' into the design of the site as a custom-designed solution (such as options 1B or 2B).

Below are some popular options which we think could work well for iponz.govt.nz (note that all these options incur a monthly cost).

Both **Hotjar** and **LuckyOrange** are likely to do what you need, and come with some additional functionality such as heatmaps which may be useful. Of the two, Hotjar appears more modern and has a larger user base, but is somewhat more expensive. If the higher cost is acceptable, **Qualaroo** offers more depth and flexibility.

- **Hotjar**

Well priced for medium-pageview sites (under 20K/day), comes with additional useful functionality, widely used.

Site: <https://www.hotjar.com/tour/#feedback-polls>

Pricing: <https://www.hotjar.com/pricing/>

- **LuckyOrange**

Cheaper than Hotjar for low-pageview sites (under 200K/mo), and lower-priced plans allow multiple domains on a single account. Comes with additional useful functionality.

Site: <https://www.luckyorange.com/polls.php>

Pricing: <https://www.luckyorange.com/pricing.php>

- **Qualaroo**

More expensive than other options, and does not include other features such as heatmaps. However, offers: More flexible survey and question structures, more detailed targeting of surveys, and more in-depth analytics.

Site: <https://qualaroo.com/features/>

Pricing: <https://qualaroo.com/pricing/>

- **Option 2B – Custom build**

We design and build the functionality directly into the site. This would provide a lot of flexibility, and achieve the most visually appealing result, but comes with upfront development costs (we have not sized this work). This might be appropriate if none of the off-the-shelf options provide the experience you're looking for, or if you need to avoid any ongoing cost.

What questions should you be asking?

There are a few broad categories of questions to consider, depending on what information you want to gather. Categories include questions to gauge usefulness, to troubleshoot page performance, to gauge a user's understanding, and to gauge a user's experience.

Gauging usefulness

In the simplest and most common case, you can ask a question about a specific page of content, to gauge how useful it is. The simpler the question and its answers are, the more likely it is that users will engage with it, so ideally these would be simple Yes/No question.

It's worth adding that while rating scales (e.g. 4/5 stars) can be useful for overall experiences, they aren't a great fit for assessing usefulness. It can be unclear how the scale maps to the user's experience, and working this out requires extra thought on their part, without much benefit over a yes/no question.

Examples:

- Was this helpful? – Yes | No
- Was this useful? – Yes | No
- Did this answer your question? – Yes | No

In the case of a “No” response, you have the option to ask a follow up question.

A good option is something to direct a response that can be easily translated to potential future changes, for example:

- What was missing? — Text answer, or
- What could have been done differently? – Text answer

Which mechanism works best?

These questions are best asked in-context (right on the page) so **Option 1B – On-page form** is the simplest mechanism, or **Option 2A or B** can be used to drive higher engagement, at the cost of higher user disruption.

Troubleshooting

Sometimes you can see there is an issue with a particular page (e.g. because analytics show a very high bounce rate), but you aren't sure what's causing it.

You can ask questions to help discover what the issues are, fix them, and then re-check analytics to see if the situation has improved.

As you don't know exactly what you're looking for, these questions need to be open-ended enough to allow users to confirm their issue/problem. Short text answers work best.

Usually these types of questions would not be used long-term.

Examples:

1. What is missing from this page? – Text answer
2. What could this page do better? – Text answer
3. What's stopping you from continuing right now? – Text answer (more appropriate for pages which form part of a journey)

Which mechanism works best?

Visitors to poorly performing pages often won't get far enough to see passive/opt-in feedback opportunities (although on pages users really dislike, some will certainly go looking), so **options 2A or 2B** would tend to be better suited.

Gauging understanding

Sometimes you want to check whether a particular concept or idea has been received by users (or at least how well users feel it has been communicated). This can apply in a wide range of scenarios.

Rating scales can work well here, providing they are accompanied by a specific question to put them in context.

Examples:

- [Homepage] How well do you understand what IPONZ does based on this homepage? – Rating 1 (“Not well at all”) to 5 (“Very well”)
- [Content page] How well was [concept/topic x] described on this page? – Rating 1 (“Not well at all”) to 5 (“Very well”)

There is also the option of a follow up question for low or high ratings, such as:

- What was the main reason for your rating? – Text answer

Which mechanism works best?

For complex topics where you’d like to gauge users’ understanding on a variety of points, a separate off-page survey (**Option 1A**) can be appropriate. Engagement with longer, off-page feedback mechanisms will be lower, but you have much more flexibility.

For gauging understanding on a specific point, particularly on a content page, **Option 1B – On-page form** is the simplest mechanism, or **Option 2A or B** can be used to drive higher engagement, at the cost of higher user disruption. For non-content pages such as Home or section landing pages, **options 2A or 2B** would tend to work better, as the user will often not reach the correct part of the page to engage with a passive option.

Gauging experience

Firstly, it's worth noting that the Usefulness, Troubleshooting, and Understanding questions covered above all address specific aspects of users' experiences. However, sometimes you want an overall perspective.

One of the better ways to get an idea of users' overall experience of a site/page/app is to ask users if they would recommend it to others (the output of this is commonly called a Net Promoter Score). Traditionally, responses are on a 10-point scale, but a 5-point scale is easier for users to engage with and delivers very similar results.

Example:

- How likely is it that you would recommend this [page, site, tool] to a friend or colleague?
– Rating 1 (“Not at all likely”) to 5 (“Extremely likely”)

As mentioned previously, rating scales need fairly specific questions associated with them in order to work well. If users cannot easily gauge what you're asking for, and how to map their experience onto your scale (for example, a 5-star scale with no question and no description of the scale), engagement levels will be lower.

Scales also require more effort from customers than simple yes/no questions. The question above, for example, is more difficult to answer than the “Was this helpful?” question from earlier, and we'd expect it to see a slightly lower engagement rate.

Which mechanism works best?

If you'd like to gauge users' experiences on a variety of points (rather than a single overall summary metric) a separate off-page survey (**Option 1A**) can be appropriate. Engagement with longer, off-page feedback mechanisms will be lower, but you have much more flexibility.

For gauging overall experience using an NPS-style question **Option 1B – On-page form** is the simplest mechanism. Using **Option 2A or B** instead would tend to drive higher engagement, and may also somewhat reduce self-selection bias (the fact that you only hear from people who are willing to answer your questions).