

Using Google Forms to Produce a Survey.

Presentation by Peter Andersen To SeniorNet Federation Symposium 10 May 2017.

Hello. My name is Peter Andersen and I am the chairman of SeniorNet Hutt City.

I am going to talk today about how we use Google Forms to produce our members' survey, and I will also be touching on a couple of other things that you might wish to use the Google Empire goodies for your own ends.

You may have noticed in the notes circulated by the Federation on the proposed contract between Federation and SeniorNet clubs an item calling for annual surveys of our members. Grant has asked me to describe how we have surveyed our members. We have surveyed in 2014 and again in 2016.

The backstory.

Some time ago Hutt City SeniorNet decided to revamp it's website to make it more appealing and usable and also to make it adaptive for small screen users.

We settled on the Joomla open source content management system. This has enabled us to produce a website that is easy to upgrade and hopefully easy for our members to use.

You may see how our website adapts by visiting it using both a traditional screen, and a phone or tablet screen.

Another Joomla based site is that of Nelson SeniorNet. Kapiti SeniorNet site is based on the Wordpress CMS system.

By way of contrast, the Federation site is not adaptive, so is less easily used by small screen visitors.

<http://www.seniornet-huttcity.org.nz/>

<https://www.seniornetnelson.org.nz/>

<https://kapiti.seniornet.co.nz/>

<http://www.seniornet.co.nz/>

As part of our website redevelopment we wished to have an online application form so that intending members could apply for membership at any time of the day or night. I'm the website

administrator. I used a Joomla extension for this but unfortunately this was misused and abused by Russian criminals. So I took the extension down and I looked for something to replace it. I decided to use Google Forms as something which would be flexible, easy to produce and because of the Google Empire much harder to be misused by those pesky Russian criminals.

Since publishing this form we have had 70 applications via our website.

Once I had the form up and running and had had a little experience with it I found a suggestion on one of the sources of information I used that the same system could be used for a survey. In 2014 we had as a committee already decided that we needed to get a better handle on how the changes that were occurring in the computing landscape were affecting our members. So I wrote what I thought was a quite comprehensive survey and we sent this out to our members. Around 25% of our members have responded and we found that the information received back was very useful.

When we looked at the information that had come back it was apparent that there were a few areas where we could have better information, so in 2016 it was decided that we would send out a second survey. This latter survey was to be divided into two parts, "What SeniorNet could do for it's members" and a second part (which was in fact a second survey) which was "What you can do for SeniorNet."

Our 2016 Surveys

I will show you the survey we used and also the results of the members survey. The second part survey has quite a lot of personal information so I won't be showing you the results from that, but I will describe them.

Insert: show the graphic for the first survey and discuss the various items.

Insert: show the graphic for the results of the first survey and discuss the various items.

Insert: shows a graphic for the Second survey. Discuss the results of this.

If you have ever been involved with writing the HTML code for website forms you'll have no problem with using the Google Forms. However if you have had no experience whatsoever you can still produce very good forms with not a lot of effort or time.

You can produce your own surveys and also of course your own web forms using Google Forms which you will find at forms.google.com. You need to sign in and if you don't have a Google account then just sign up for Gmail and this will give you to access to all the Google goodies.

The various items that you can use are as follows :

Short answer suitable for name, email address or phone number.

Paragraph type input suitable for notes or perhaps name and address

Multiple choice. These are usually called radio buttons and only one button may produce a result

Check boxes. These are used when several choices are offered and more than one choice may be selected .

Drop down. This is offered where you wish to have one choice from quite a number of possible alternative, such as a year.

Linear scale. This is where you wish your submitter to select an alternative from a linear scale from say 0 to 100. I have not used this.

Multiple choice grid. This is useful where you wish to have a number of items graded for example A B or C.

You can also insert time and date Fields.

You can make most Fields mandatory if this is required. You can also check the input of Fields to ensure that it is correct, such as ensuring that a valid email address has been inserted. It is also possible to make your fields fail if some miscreant puts a URL where there shouldn't be one.

The hardest thing that I found in producing the Survey was working out what questions to ask. Once I had come to grips with this it was pretty plain sailing.

Once completed it is a trivial task to get the link to the survey and email it to your members in a covering email.

Then it's just sit back and wait for the responses and, be guided accordingly.

I have produced a file which you can download which contains the following;

These speaking notes (Contains links listed under)

Link's to a dummy members survey and a dummy what they can do for us survey.

Link to a dummy application form

The graphics they have used to illustrate this talk.

Copy of emails to members.

These items and dummy forms/surveys will be deleted at the end of May.

Links

[Dummy members survey](#)

[Dummy results of members survey](#)

[Dummy What they can do for SeniorNet survey](#)

[Dummy results of What they can do for SeniorNet survey](#)

[Dummy Application form \(this will generate an email to the email address of the applicant\)](#)

[Dummy Application Form results](#)

Other Google services you may wish to use.

First draft of these speaking notes were produced using Google voice typing which you may find under tools in Google docs. You need to use Chrome web browser and have a microphone on your computer.

You can produce forms for your website using Google Forms.

We are setting up using Gmail with filters so that members can book spaces on courses simply by clicking a link in the schedule of courses. There is also a link on the catalogue entry should people wish to contact the course convenor for more information. The system protects the tutors email addresses whilst ensuring that input is directed to the relevant tutor. This has been under development for some time and is not yet ready for deployment. There is a reasonable amount of work (and time needed) to develop and launch this.

That concludes my presentation. I now open the floor for questions.