Utah's GenLEX Initiative: Annual Report Year One: Baseline

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Utah's GenLEX Initiative
Annual Report: Year One - Baseline

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Utah's GenLEX Initiative: Year One – Baseline Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2012, Utah's Department of Workforce Services (DWS), in partnership with Montana's Department of Labor, was awarded a Workforce Innovation Fund Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to carry out the consortium's "Next Generation Labor Exchange (GenLEX)" initiative.

As outlined by DWS in the original DWS Workforce Innovation Grant proposal:

"The GenLEX project is designed to: 1) mitigate mediated (staff-assisted) services use and make self-service LEX more successful; 2) provide LEX at a lower cost-per-participant; 3) address the strain on and access issues with physical One-Stop Centers; 4) assist job seekers and students with better connection to career pathways and related education opportunities; and 5) improve Common Measures and introduce new, innovative outcomes that more accurately measure LEX success."

This report presents a starting point, a baseline for the GenLEX Initiative in Utah and Montana. The findings reported reflect the time frame prior to implementation of the GenLEX test components and will be used to inform the next stages of the initiative. Quantitative baseline data provides a historical context, while the qualitative and process evaluation data add a rich foundation for understanding the personnel dynamics, agency challenges, political influences and user experiences related to the initiative.

Quantitative Data: The baseline data show that the 2008 recession had a dramatic, negative impact on the quality and likelihood of employment for job seekers using Utah's LEX. "New employment in current or next quarter" decreased from 55% to 35% for job seekers using the system. "Consecutive quarters with wages" decreased from around 2.5 to around 2, on average. Median wages in the next quarter decreased from around $2,500 before the recession to $500 during the recession. All of the job seeker outcomes have been slowly improving for the last several years, but at a slow pace.

One surprising aspect of the baseline data (dating back to 2005) is that, with the exception of the obvious effect of the recession, the users of the online system were relatively likely to find high quality, steady employment. Low-income users made up a much smaller percentage of the total system usage than was previously thought by many within the agency. Based on this data, if nothing dramatic changes in the job market, we expect to see the same steady improvement in outcomes for even the control group over the next several years. The question is, will the treatment group improve at a greater rate than the control group?

Because the employer data only extends to post-recession periods, it is hard to judge the impact that the recession had on these outcomes. However, it is clear that there is a steady increase in the number of non-mediated users on the online system as well as the number of jobs they are posting. A continued, steady increase in the number of users on the system and the number of job openings posted would be expected, even if no improvements were made to the system. In order to show a statistically significant increase in these outcomes, Utah will have to increase the rate of users above this baseline rate of improvement.

Baseline job seeker and employer satisfaction, as measured by the satisfaction scale within the online survey, is relatively high in both Montana and Utah. It will be especially challenging to the state agencies to increase these levels significantly over the span of the study. These data will be used in conjunction with the qualitative comments from users to understand if there were distinct characteristics within the LEX of each state that led to these levels of satisfaction.

Qualitative Data: In order to more fully understand and interpret the user satisfaction scale data and other outcome measures in both states, additional feedback regarding experiences with the LEX was gathered throughout the baseline period. During the baseline period, Montana job seekers, employers, and Job Services staff, and Utah employers were engaged in focus group sessions. Utah front line staff participated in online surveys. Feedback from each of these various stakeholders provides valuable insight into the starting point for the GenLEX initiative.

When commenting on challenges with the state LEX websites, job seekers in both states most often mentioned: general LEX functionality, quality of information and design in job postings, ineffective or poor quality matches, lack of jobs posted or available on the site, and a lack of information being available on the site. Job seekers seeking assistance in state offices had significantly low levels of education and were more likely to lack computer skills. Understandably, agency staff in both states tend to generalize the characteristics of job seekers they see in the office to the larger user base. However, a majority have at least a high school diploma/GED, are computer literate and are generally satisfied with the LEX overall.

Employer focus group participants in both states provided valuable information regarding: views of job seeker registered on the LEX, job posting, job matching, comparisons between the states' LEX and other online job boards, the use of social media, and how the LEX could be improved. Again, agency staff tend to generalize the needs of employers based on their experiences with those who seek assistance in accessing and managing job postings on the LEX. Despite a long list of suggestions for improvement, most employers are generally satisfied with the LEX but believe that most job seekers listed on the LEX are receiving UI and sometimes not really seeking employment.

The process of implementing the GenLEX initiative in the states has been quite challenging. Evaluating the fidelity of the implementation and the factors supporting and hindering the process has already led to important "lessons learned" for others attempting such innovations. Such as:

- Personnel changes which occur at critical junctures of program development and implementation can have a significant effect on the progress of the overall project.
- Technology development is non-linear. Changes in one part of the system require adjustments to other parts. Making changes within a live system is especially challenging.
- Unintentional (or intentional) undermining of the implementation process and evaluation needs to be addressed to maintain the vision and produce credible evidence from outcomes.
- All key stakeholders, including front line staff, need to be engaged in an ongoing two way communication process to secure buy-in and gain input from a variety of perspectives.

Attention to these factors over the life of the grant will assist teams in both states to implement and learn from the GenLEX initiative, producing an evidence base to be used by other states attempting similar innovations to better serve the job seekers and employers in all communities.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its creation in 1997, Utah's Department of Workforce Services (DWS) has effectively served the people of Utah as "Utah's Job Connection." Long recognized as a national leader in its successful use of technology, DWS is seeking to enhance the current labor exchange system (LEX) which was implemented in 2002 and has had minimal changes. Little is known about how online labor exchange systems can be altered to improve outcomes for job seekers and employers.
This has become an even larger concern as financial resources continue to limit the availability of personnel to assist job seekers and employers in connecting.

In June 2012, Utah's DWS, in partnership with Montana's Department of Labor, was awarded a Workforce Innovation Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to carry out the consortium's "Next Generation Labor Exchange (Gen LEX)" initiative. This initiative was based on the hypothesis that "LEX outcomes can be improved for both employers and job seekers through enhancements to online functionality and comprehensive bridges to career pathways and education and training opportunities." By receiving the Workforce Innovation Grant, the consortium obtained the funding necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of test components added to the labor exchange system, the GenLEX initiative.

In response to a request for proposals, the University of Utah's Social Research Institute (SRI) submitted a proposal and was subsequently awarded the contract to provide a research design and statistical analysis for evaluation of LEX test components introduced through the GenLEX project. This report presents findings from the first year of the grant which cover the baseline period prior to implementation of system changes. During this time, data were collected from multiple sources including state LEX system data and input from various users such as job seekers, employers and state staff.

STUDY SCOPE AND PURPOSE

As outlined by DWS in the original DWS Workforce Innovation Grant proposal:

> The Utah GenLEX project is designed to: 1) mitigate mediated (staff-assisted) services use and make self-service LEX more successful; 2) provide LEX at a lower cost-per-participant; 3) address the strain on and access issues with physical One-Stop Centers; 4) assist job seekers and students with better connection to career pathways and related education opportunities; and 5) improve Common Measures and introduce new, innovative outcomes that more accurately measure LEX success.

While the goals are broad in scope, the specific overarching hypothesis stated that, "LEX outcomes can be improved for both employers and job seekers through enhancements to online functionality and comprehensive bridges to career pathways and education and training opportunities." This hypothesis will be tested through the rigorous evaluation of test components introduced into the LEX over the course of the grant period.

The primary research questions presented by the GenLEX project and that this evaluation attempts to answer, as appropriate to Utah and Montana, include:

1) Does the introduction of the GenLEX project test components result in improved outcomes (percentage of job seekers acquiring new employment, employee labor market attachment, and quarterly wages) for job seekers using the system? (UT only)

1a) In Utah, where the LEX data and means tested program participation data are collocated in DWS, are there any significant differences in the outcomes listed in Question 1 for those who have used means tested assistance programs? (UT only)

2) Do these test components result in increased usage of the LEX by employers in the state as measured by employer website activity, number of non-mediated job orders to labor exchange, weekly count of employers using LEX? (UT only)

3) As each group of components is added, what is the marginal effect of each group of components on the outcomes listed in Questions 1 and 2? (UT only)

4) What is the level of customer satisfaction among job seekers and among employers using the LEX and do these levels of satisfaction increase as additional test components are introduced? (UT & MT)

5) Was the intervention implemented as intended to the targeted recipients? (UT & MT)

6) What factors (external or internal) acted to support or frustrate efforts to implement the study components as intended to the targeted recipients? (UT & MT)

DWS is able to combine a much broader set of data to measure outcomes thus several research questions will only be answered in Utah. Montana does not have the technical capacity to match elements such as wage data linked to specific employers to determine if a customer had secured a job through the LEX.

FINDINGS

In determining a baseline for each question, a multi-pronged evaluation strategy was employed. These strategies were used to a greater or lesser degree depending on how the method related to the baseline period. Because this was the baseline period not all questions are addressed in this initial report. However, baseline data will be reported to establish a starting point from which to measure change over time. Data are also presented from tests of the randomization process. Testing the randomization provides confidence that when new components are added, any problems associated with randomization would have been fixed.

The list of outcome measures to be evaluated for the GenLEX initiative is presented in Table 1. After consultation with the Utah Department of Workforce Services, it was decided that "Employer Website Activity" as measured by the number of clicks on the site would not be a meaningful

outcome. Due to the way that the site is designed a "hit" in one time period is not the same as a "hit" in another time period. Thus, it will not be possible to distinguish between a change in the measurement and a meaningful change in the way that the site was being used. All other outcomes remain the same as those proposed in the final Evaluation Design Report (EDR).

Table 1: Outcome Measures

Outcome	Operational Definition	Analysis Strategy	Source
Job Seeker Outcomes			
1. Percentage of job seekers acquiring new employment	A user is defined as acquiring new employment if they have a new relationship (i.e. pairing of SSN with employer id with at least $1 in wages reported) with an employer in the quarter during or following the first login to the system.	HLM- Logistic DV	State Wage Data
2. Employee labor market attachment	Number of subsequent quarters with at least $1 in wages (up to 4).	HLM- Poisson DV with exposure term	State Wage Data
3. Quarterly job seeker wages	Earnings per quarter in dollars for the quarter following the start date.	HLM	State Wage Data
4. Job seeker satisfaction	Score on a Likert scale questionnaire from a random sample of LEX users. Satisfaction is given on a rolling basis, using a sampling strategy.	HLM	Online Survey
Employer Outcomes			
1. Number of non-mediated job orders to labor exchange	Number of non-mediated job orders on labor exchange system per week *This is a weekly count.* Non-mediated refers to postings that did not require the mediation of a DWS worker.	Simple Interrupted Time Series Analysis (ARIMA)	UWORKS Database
2. Weekly count of employers using LEX	Number of employers using labor exchange during a given week. (Usage of the system means at least one job posting during the week. An employer id can count only once)	Simple Interrupted Time Series Analysis (ARIMA)	UWORKS Database
3. Employer satisfaction	Measured using a Likert scale given to employers using the site. Satisfaction is given on a rolling basis, using a sampling strategy.	Simple Interrupted Time Series Analysis (ARIMA)	Online Survey

*UWORKS refers to the Utah LEX, including the database of users with associated social security number, demographic information and usage statistics. UWORKS is used by both employers posting jobs and job seekers searching for jobs.

Note: All measures are collected on an ongoing basis. There is no discrete point in time where data will be collected. Data sources from UWORKS and the state wage data will be transferred to evaluators. Self service job orders and employers' usage of the LEX are available for the past 8 years. Employer website activity is available for the past 5 yrs.

JOB SEEKER OUTCOMES

A randomized controlled trial research design will be used to answer Research Question 1 and a portion of Research Question 4. This design will only be used in Utah as only Utah has the capacity to maintain two labor exchange platforms simultaneously. While no test components were implemented during the baseline period, testing of the randomization system was conducted.

Randomization Testing

Using the baseline randomization model (See Attachment 1), the randomization system began testing in April of 2014. In order to be sure that the system was not accidentally creating bias between the groups, several group comparisons were run to examine differences before any components were added to the treatment condition. Mathematically, there should be no differences in large samples between randomized groups before any treatment is implemented, but in non-laboratory settings there can be any number of hidden sources of bias.

The following analyses found no significant differences in gender, age at randomization, percentage of low-income clients or wages in the last year between the two groups.

Table 2: Gender by Randomization Group

	Control		Treatment	
	N	%	N	%
Female	22633	50.5%	22171	49.5%
Male	23273	50.1%	23152	49.9%

A chi-squared test of independence was performed to determine whether or not gender groups were divided evenly between the two conditions and no significant differences were found ($\chi^2(3)=.347, p>.05$).[1]

Table 3: Low-Income by Randomization Group

	Control		Treatment	
	N	%	N	%
Low-Income	41553	50.2%	41168	49.8%
Other Income	4473	51.1%	4288	48.9%

No differences were found between the selection of low-income/non-low-income groups between treatment conditions ($\chi^2(1)=2.14, p>.05$).

[1] There were three degrees of freedom because of small "other" and "missing groups" not reported in the table

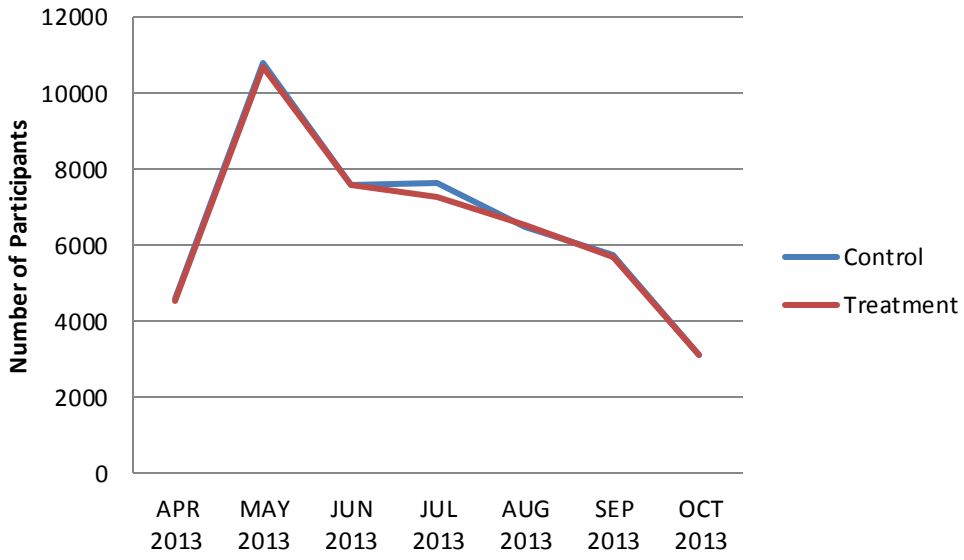
Table 4: Age and Wages Last Year by Randomization Group

	Control	Treatment
Low-Income	35.0	35.0
Other Income	16418	16373

T tests were performed to determine whether there were group differences on age or wages in the last year. There were no significant differences found between median wages in the previous year ($t(91479)=.613, p>.05$) or age at the time of the qualifying event ($t(91480), p>.05$).

Figure 1 shows the number of new eligible clients randomized by month. It should be noted that the October data was only collected until the 17th of the month. The final sample size for that month will be larger. There was an initial spike at the outset because of the eligible existing clients that were randomized into one of the two conditions.

Figure 1: Number Randomized by Month



Historical Analysis of Outcome Measure Data

As part of the process of validating the job seeker outcomes defined for this study (specifically job seeker outcomes 1 – 3), a historical sample of users from jobs.utah.gov, dating back to 2005, was gathered. The purpose of these analyses was twofold: 1) changes over time in the outcomes will help identify whether these outcomes have been recorded consistently over time and 2) the historical trends will contextualize observed changes over the course of the study and help researchers understand systematic changes happening in the demographics of the typical system users. For example, if the treatment condition in this study shows a 20% gain in quarterly income compared to the control condition, this can be compared to the drop in income experienced by the average user from before the 2008 recession to after the recession.

For these analyses, a new episode of activity was defined as the use of online services after at least 90 days of no use of online services. Because web logs were not saved for the past 10 years, this section had to utilize formal service codes like "job referral" or "online LMI". This may have excluded users who logged into the system, but did not open the details of any jobs.[2] All outcomes

[2] When job seeker outcomes are examined in the future, the web log will be used to determine new sessions.

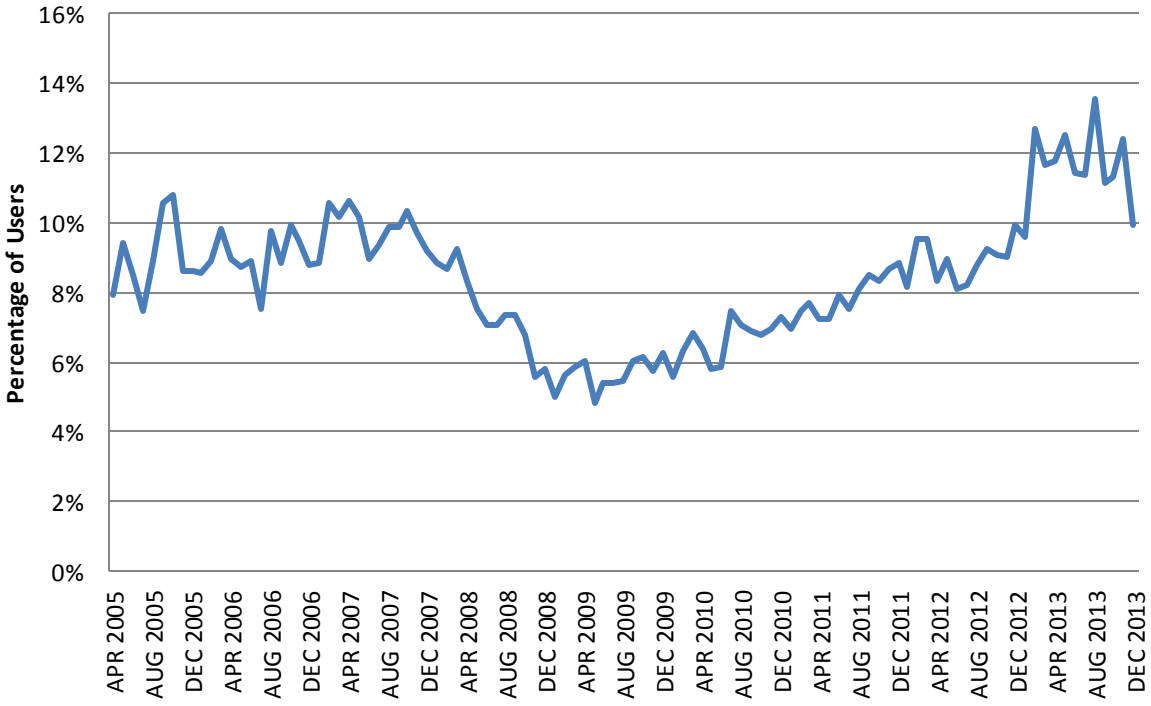
were recorded from the first day of the new period of activity. A user could appear multiple times in each analysis. It should be noted that users who were consistently using the system to search for jobs, without periods of inactivity, would only appear once in the data when they first began job searching.

Low-Income Users

An important consideration in making the proposed changes to the LEX was the impact on low-income users. In order to evaluate for disproportionate effects it was necessary to identify those determined to be "low-income" (defined as having received a service or benefit associated with a cash assistance program or SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formally food stamps) in the three years prior to the target date of interest) and compare this group to "other-income" users. On average, 8.1% of the users on jobs.utah.gov are low-income. This rate dropped to a low of 5% in May 2009, and reached a high of 14% in Aug 2013.

There was a general decrease in the percentage of low-income users leading up to and during the initial portion of the recession. As unemployment benefits ran out and jobs were still hard to find, the portion of low-income users increased. In early 2013 there was a sharp increase in the percentage of low-income users because of rule changes requiring SNAP recipients to use the online system to complete job search activities as a requirement to receive benefits.

Figure 2: Percentage of Low-Income Users

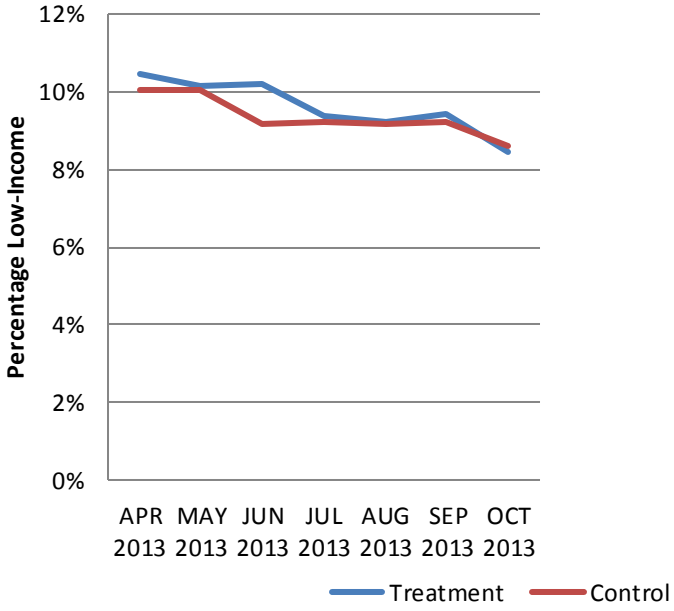


The absolute number of other-income system users more than doubled during the 2008 recession, and has only recently started to decline back to pre-recession levels. The low-income users remain a small proportion of the overall system usage, but have steadily increased in numbers from a little over 1,000 new episodes per month in 2005 to over 2,000 episodes per month in 2013. In the past

year, the proportion of low-income users has increased mostly because the numbers of other-income users has decreased with the tapering recession.

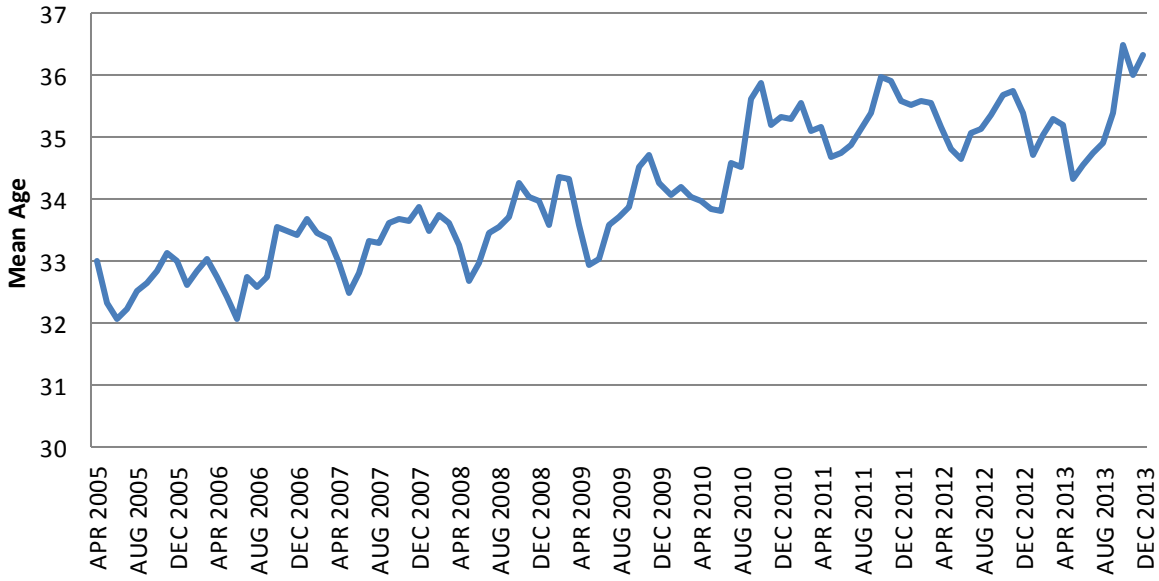
Figure 3 shows the percentage of low-income users randomized by month into the treatment and control conditions. It is clear that both groups have similar rates of low-income users, indicating no bias relative to income. This was a concern as DWS case managed users were excluded from the study.

Figure 3: Percentage Low-Income by Group

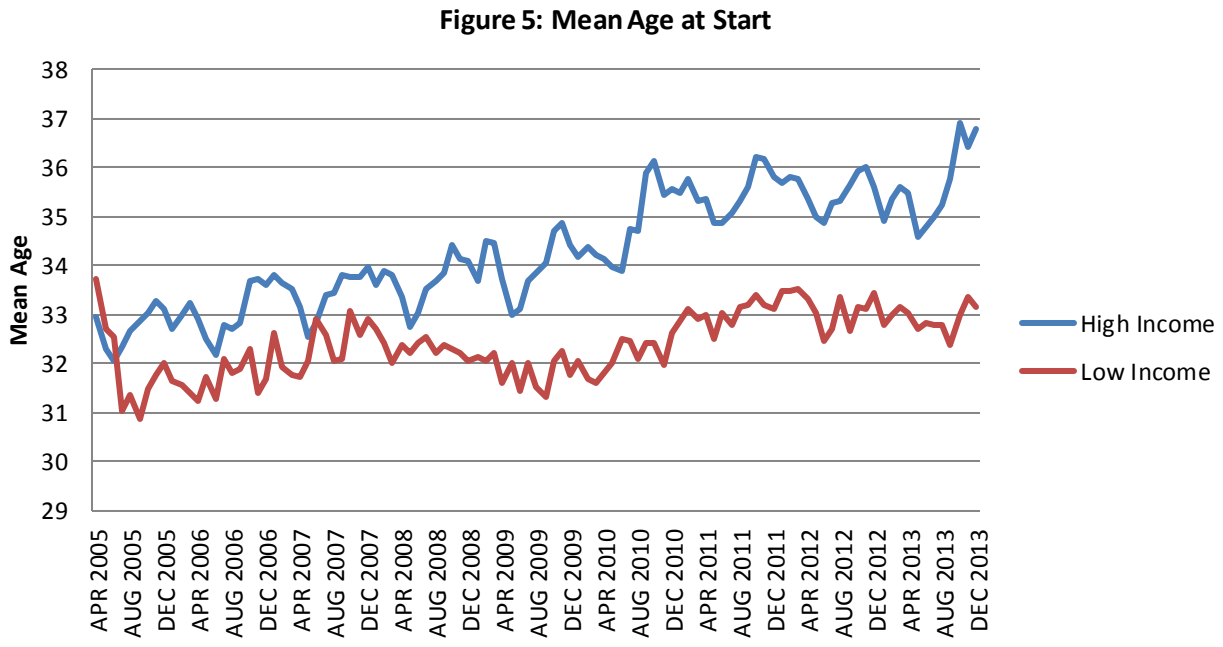


Age at Start of Activity: The mean age of the user on jobs.utah.gov (Figure 4) has been getting progressively older over the course of the past decade, but within each year the system experiences significant seasonal variation. Every May the mean age on the system experiences a local trough coinciding with annual high school and college graduations. The annual peak age is less consistent, but typically occurs in October or November, perhaps representing the removal of some college and high school students from the labor force.

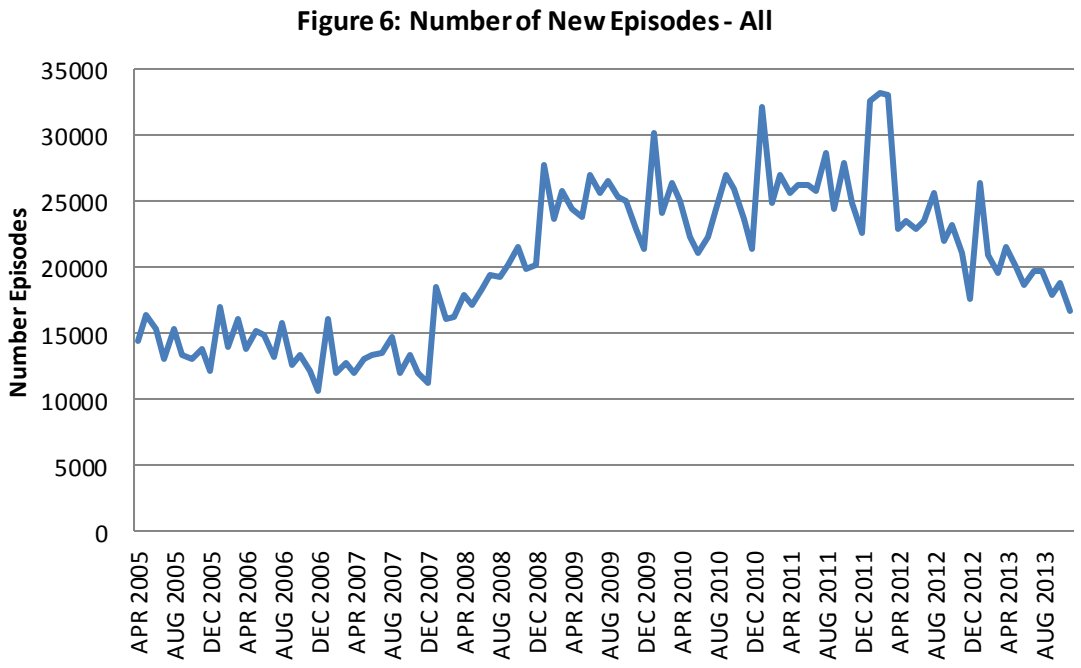
Figure 4: Mean User Age by Time



In Figure 5, both the low and other-income groups have been trending upward for the last 8 years, although the low-income group has been consistently younger than the other-income group and trended younger during the 2008 recession.

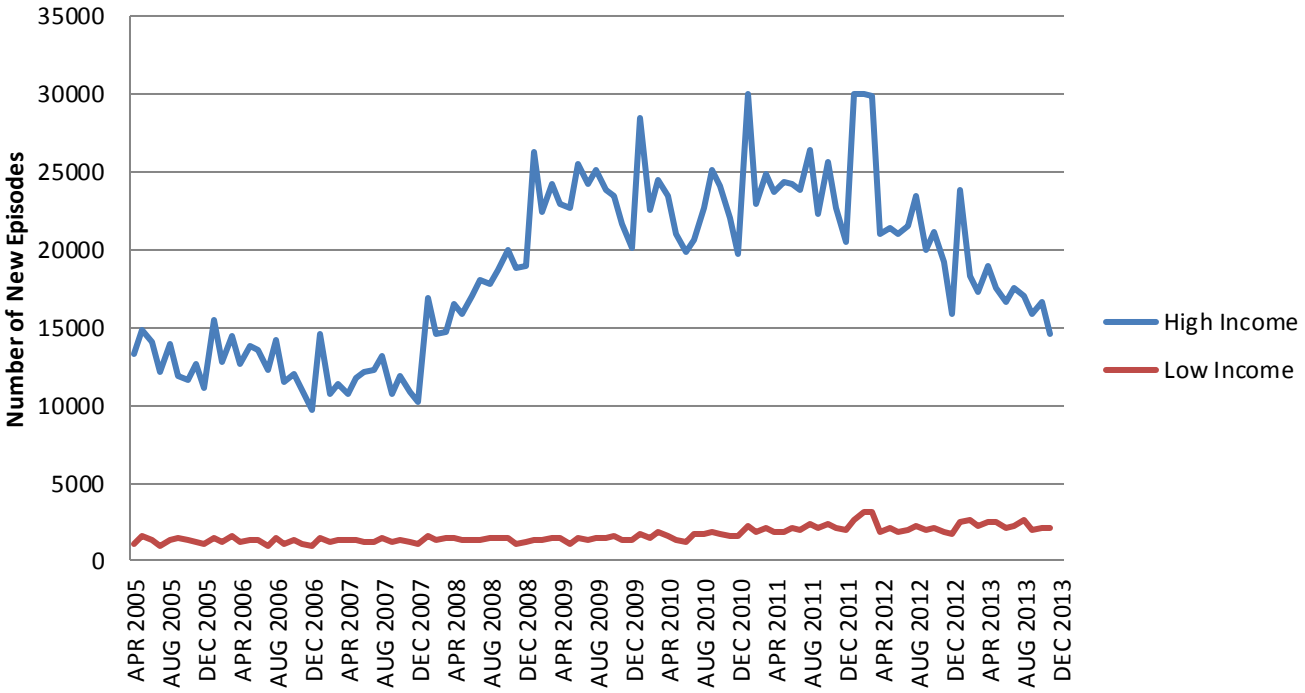


Number of New Episodes of Activity (As defined for the historical analysis): In Figure 6, the use of jobs.utah.gov increased relatively sharply at the onset of the 2008 recession, reached a peak in February of 2012 and has been trending toward pre-recession levels since then. The system consistently experiences a seasonal peak of returning and new users every January.



When the number of new episodes is separated by income it is clear that the low-income account for only a small portion of the episodes (Figure 7). As was stated above, this is to be expected as low-income users only represent, on average, 8.1% of the overall user base.

Figure 7: Number New Episodes by Income



Number and Proportions of "Active" Users Over Time: For this analysis, "active" is defined as an individual having at least one qualifying online service in a quarter. As shown in Figures 8 and 9, the actual number of active other-income users more than doubled during and immediately following the recession, peaking at nearly 150,000 in the first quarter of 2012. While low-income users also reached a high level (16,269) at the same point, this group continued to grow reaching 18,861 at the beginning of the third quarter of 2013. While the total number of active users changes dramatically, the proportion of each group changes little as the other-income group is much larger than the low-income users overall.

Figure 8: Number of Active Users by Low/Other-Income

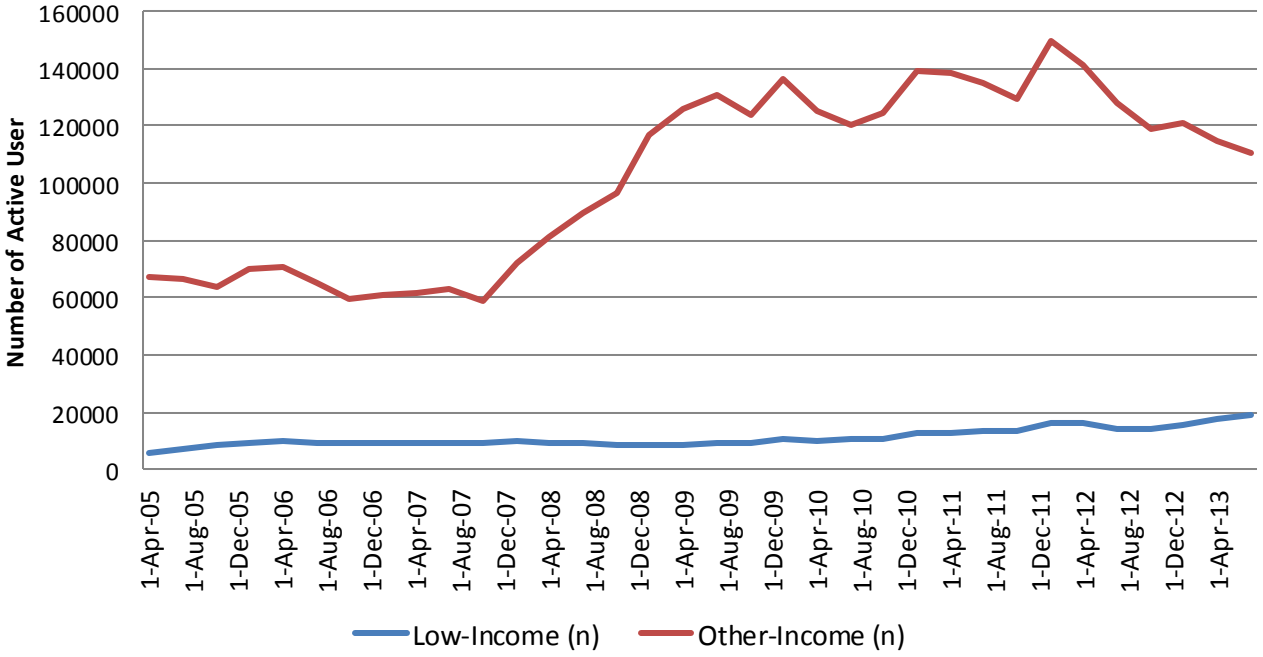
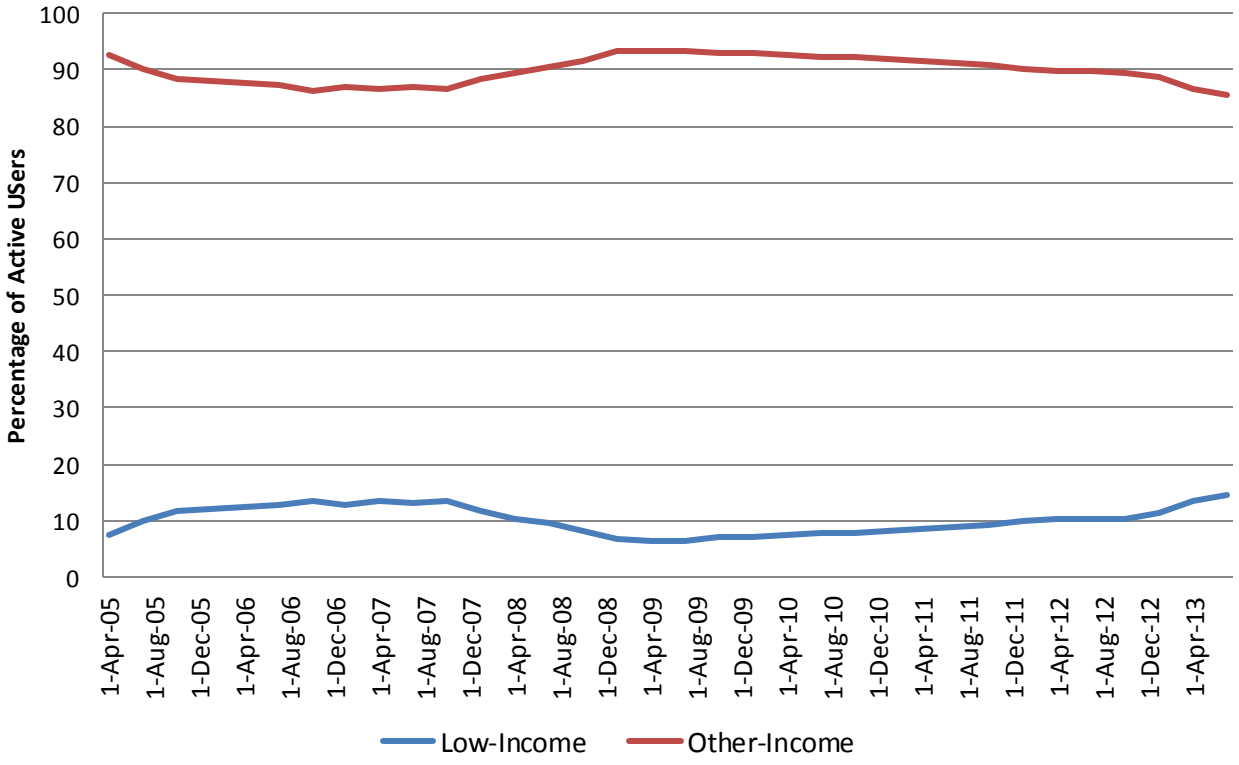


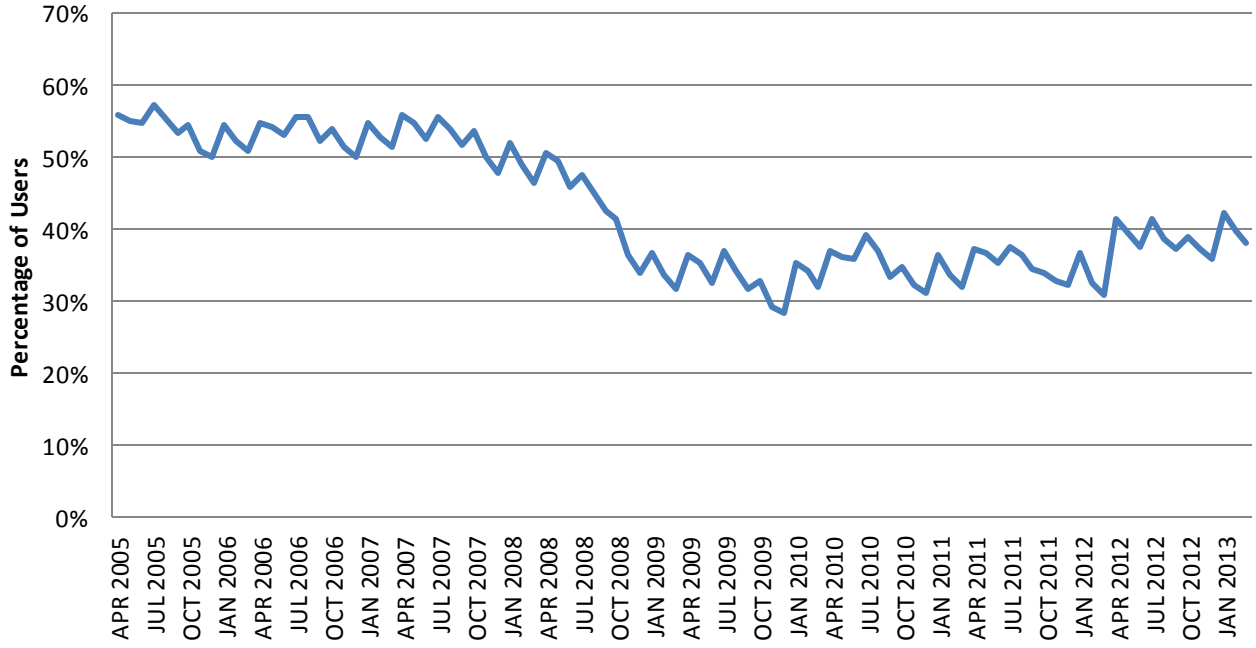
Figure 9: Percentage of Active Users by Low/Other Income



Historical Data Related to Specific Outcome Measures

The historical data available from the DWS data warehouse provides a valuable baseline for evaluating changes observed in three of the job seeker outcome measures.

Figure 10: Percentage of Users with New Employment



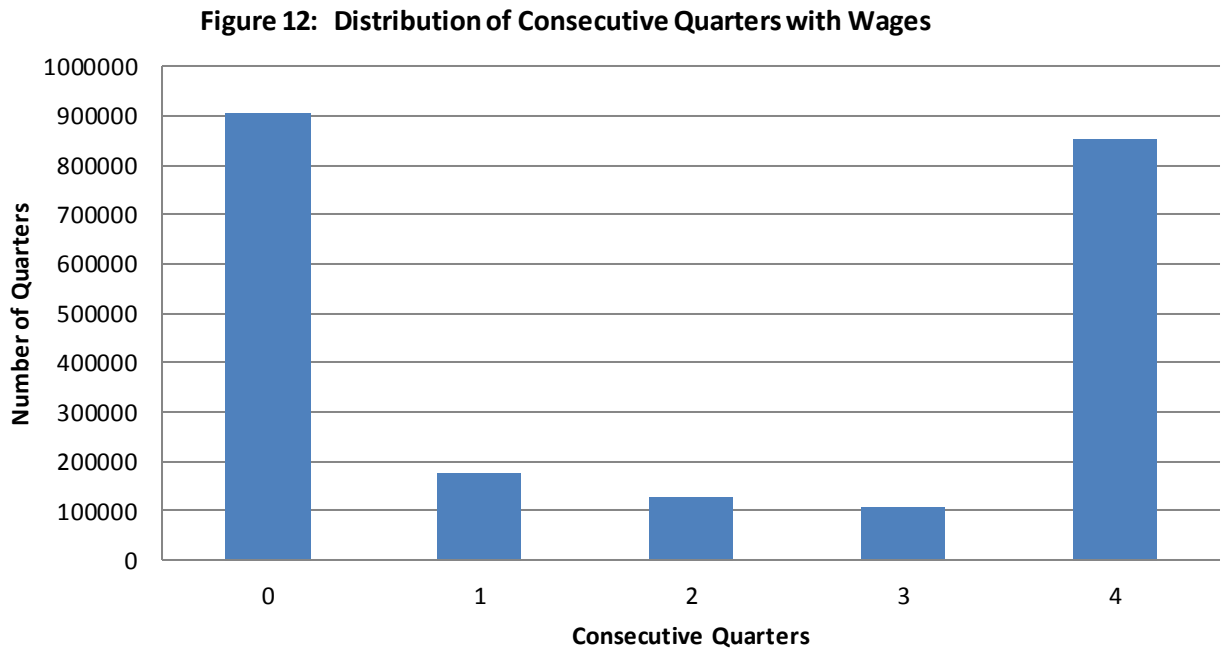
Users with New Employment: Users with new employment is a job seeker outcome measure used to answer, in part, Research Question 1. On average, 41% of jobs.utah.gov users have a new job in the quarter they started using the system or in the quarter following. Prior to the 2008 recession, this percentage was consistently above 50%. During the recession, this percentage dropped below 40% and only began to go above 40% in 2012.

Curiously, the low-income earners were roughly as likely to obtain new employment over the study period (Figure 11). As was noted previously, the jobs that the low-income individuals were obtaining were more likely to pay a lower wage. Additionally, the other-income earners were often looking for jobs to switch to, as opposed to the low-income earners that were more likely to be searching from an unemployed status.

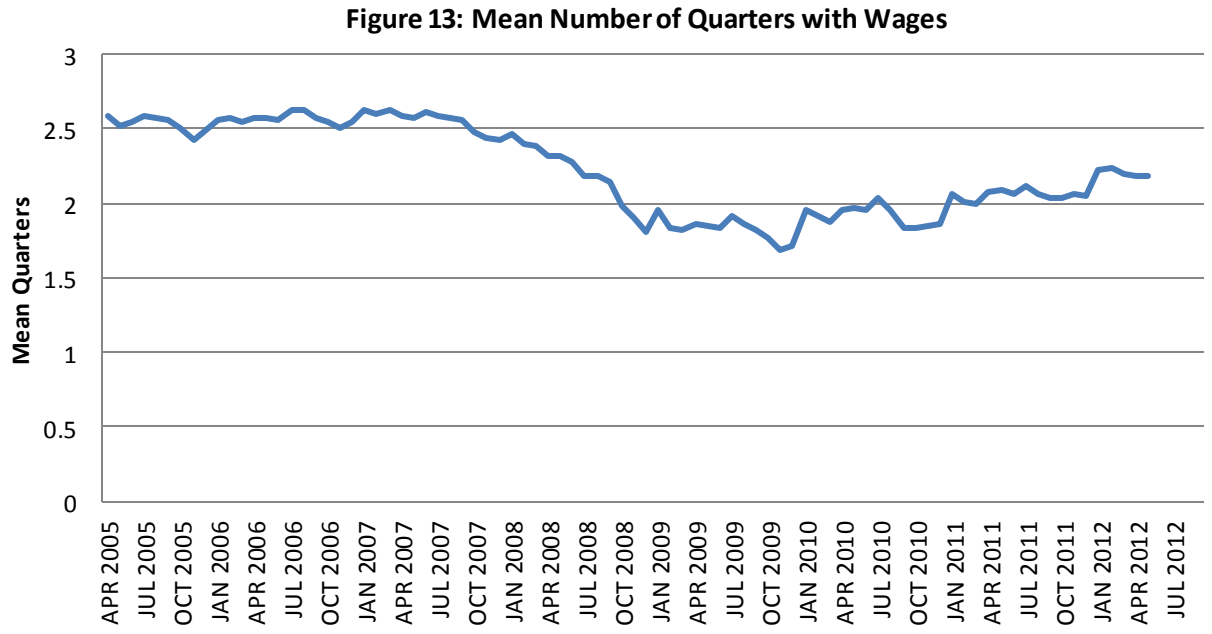
Figure 11: Percentage of Users Obtaining New Employment

Number of Consecutive Quarters with Wages: This is the second job seeker outcome measure evaluated to address Research Question 1. This is an important aspect of measuring the value of the online system as it is not simply whether an individual finds a new job, but how long an individual stays employed after the initial hiring. This outcome looks at how many consecutive quarters (up to 4) an individual has wages after starting a job search.

The mean number of quarters with wages was 1.91. Interestingly, this distribution did not follow the typical Poisson distribution. Rather, it followed a non-parametric bi-modal distribution with the majority of users either having no consecutive quarters with wages (41.7%) or having all four quarters with wages (39.3%) (See Figure 12).

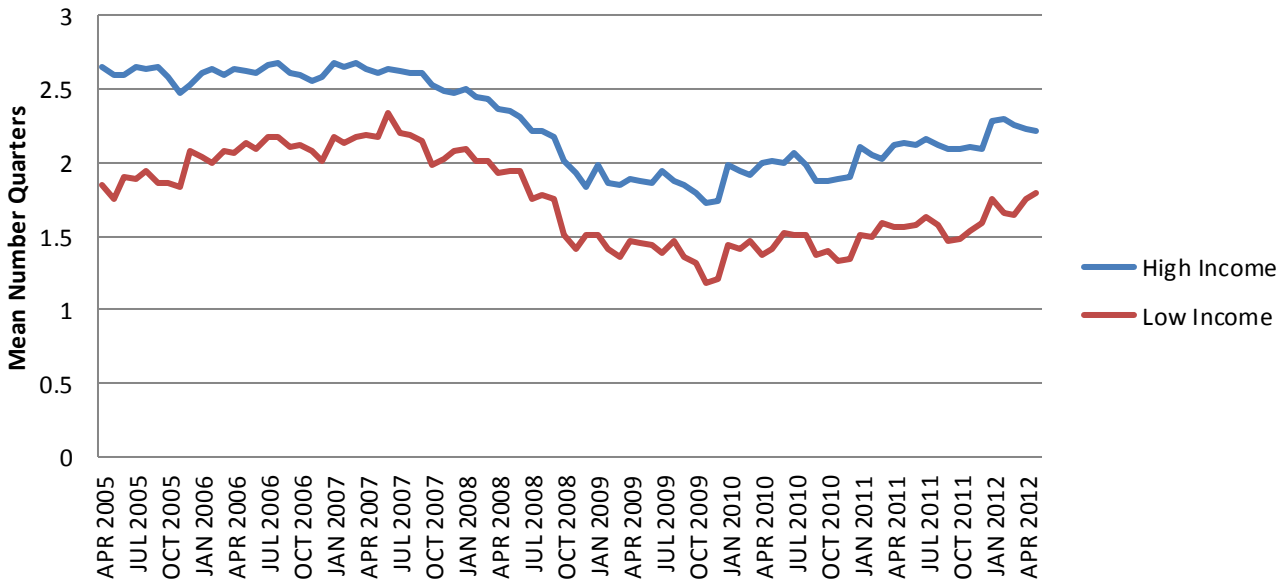


As shown in Figure 13, the mean number of consecutive quarters with wages pre-recession hovered very close to 2.5. During the recession it dropped below 2, with a low of 1.69 in November of 2009. Since then it has rebounded to a high of 2.23 quarters.



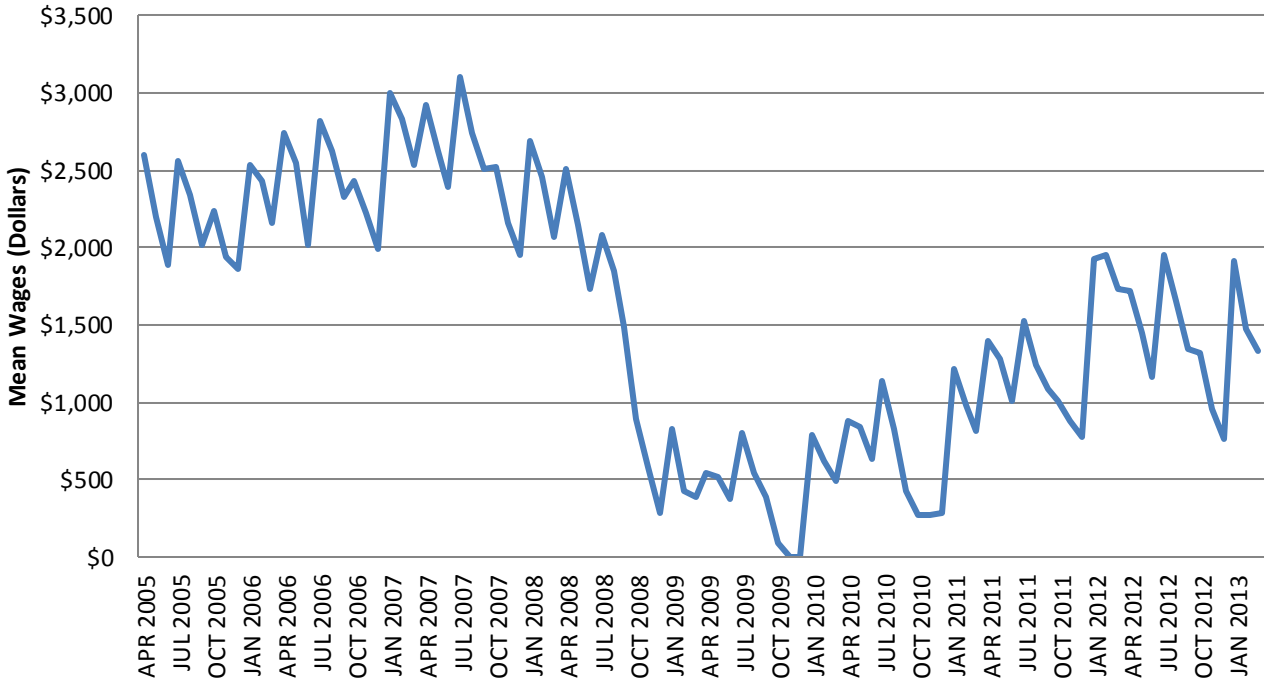
Both low and high income earners were affected by the recession in terms of consecutive quarters with wages, but the impact was roughly proportional to the pre-recession levels of each group. In September of 2007, the low-income group averaged 2.1 consecutive quarters with wages, while the high income groups averaged 2.6 quarters. Figure 14 shows that by March of 2009, the low-income earners were averaging 1.3 quarters, while the high income earners were averaging 1.8.

Figure 14: Consecutive Quarters with Wages

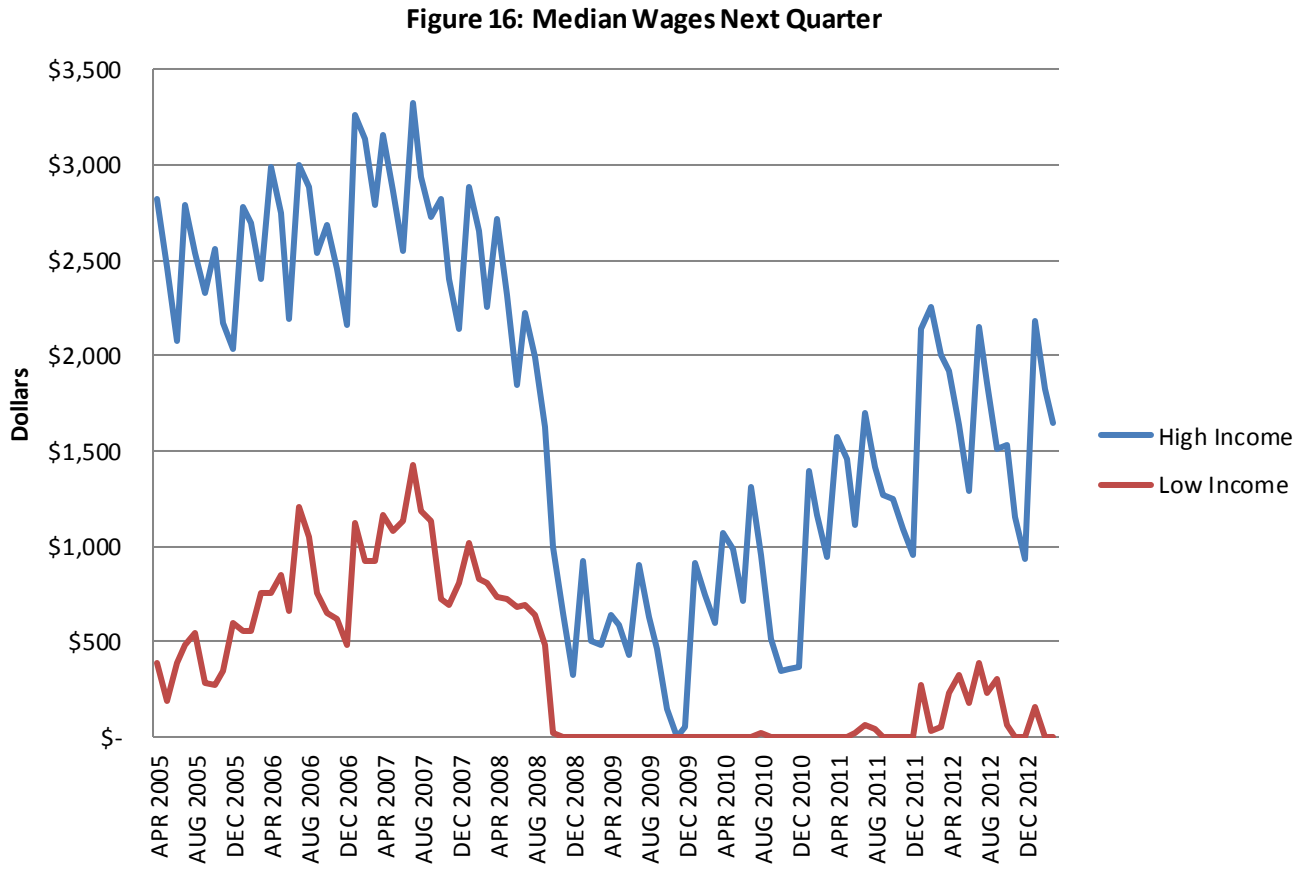


Median Wages in the Next Quarter: The third outcome measure used to answer Research Question 1 is the median wages in the quarter following the start of a new period of activity. This measure shows the greatest impact from the recession in 2008. Median quarterly wages for individuals using the system varied between $2,000 and $3,000 before the 2008 recession (See Figure 15). During and after the recession, quarterly wages were consistently below $900 and fell to $0 for two months of start dates. In other words, before the recession, half of the users looking for a job on the online system would make over $2,500. Immediately after the recession, about half of users starting a new job search would make over $500, the rest would make under $500.

Figure 15: Median Wages in the Next Quarter



Low-income earners were disproportionately affected by the 2008 recession. Their median wages fell to $0 for most of the recession and only started to rise in December of 2011. Non-low-income job seekers tended to stay above $500 a quarter with median wages steadily rising since then. (It should be noted that this metric is somewhat questionable because some high income earners would have been later reclassified as low-income if they failed to find a job and accessed benefits.)



Job Seeker Satisfaction

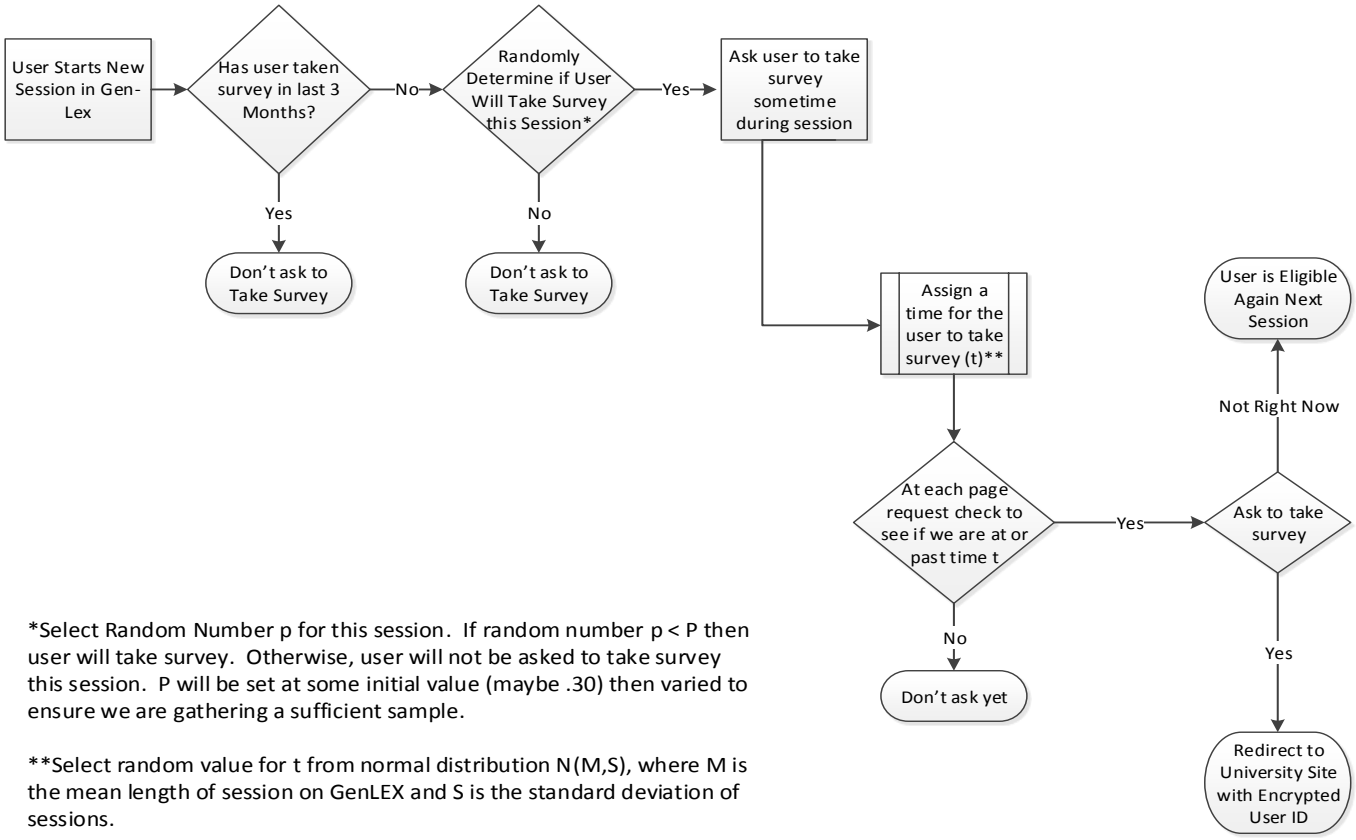
Satisfaction surveys are a method of collecting information regarding perceptions of the current LEX. The satisfaction surveys for job seekers (and employers) consisted of questions designed in partnership by the Social Research Institute, the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and the Montana Job Service. The quantitative and open-ended questions were analyzed to uncover overall satisfaction with the LEX, satisfaction with specific LEX components and identify suggestions for change. Satisfaction surveys were self-report and voluntary (See User Consent – Attachment 2), therefore, there are some limitations to the survey data as we do not know how the responses of those who completed versus did not complete the surveys might differ in terms of satisfaction. The results of this analysis were used to describe the dominant views of job seekers and employers (Employer satisfaction, pg. 34) who agreed to share their views via the satisfaction surveys.

Two methods of data collection were used to provide baseline data regarding job seeker satisfaction (Research Question 4). The first method used involves a simple online survey presented as LEX users in both Utah and Montana access the system.

***Sampling**:* The survey uses the following sampling procedure (see Figure 17):

1. Job seekers are only eligible to take the survey if they have not taken a survey in the last 3 months. [3]
2. Online sessions are sampled randomly (with probability initially set at 30%).[4]
3. If the current session is sampled, the user is invited to participate at a random time during the session using the pop-up window.

Figure 17: Customer Satisfaction Online Survey Sampling Procedure



[3] When reviewing the satisfaction survey data from the first year, it was observed that participants were being asked to take the survey even if they had completed one in the last three months (contrary to the sampling design). To correct this problem, the survey from each individual that was the most complete was selected. In the event of a tie, a random survey was selected. (See Attachment 7 for list of changes.)

[4] It was also observed that the initial probability of receiving the survey was set at 10%. This percentage resulted in an adequate number of surveys in both Utah and Montana and will thus be retained.

***Data Collection*:** The online surveys were (and continue to be) made available to potential participants through a pop-up invitation to participate. An individual chooses to participate in the study by clicking on the "START SURVEY" button. This link redirects the job seeker to a secure site hosted by SRI. The participant is first asked to review the informed consent document (See Attachment 3). If the person clicks NEXT, they enter the survey.

The scale for the satisfaction survey is embedded in the online survey. The scales are similar but not identical in the two states. Participants are asked to rate their level of agreement with or rating of each for the following questions:

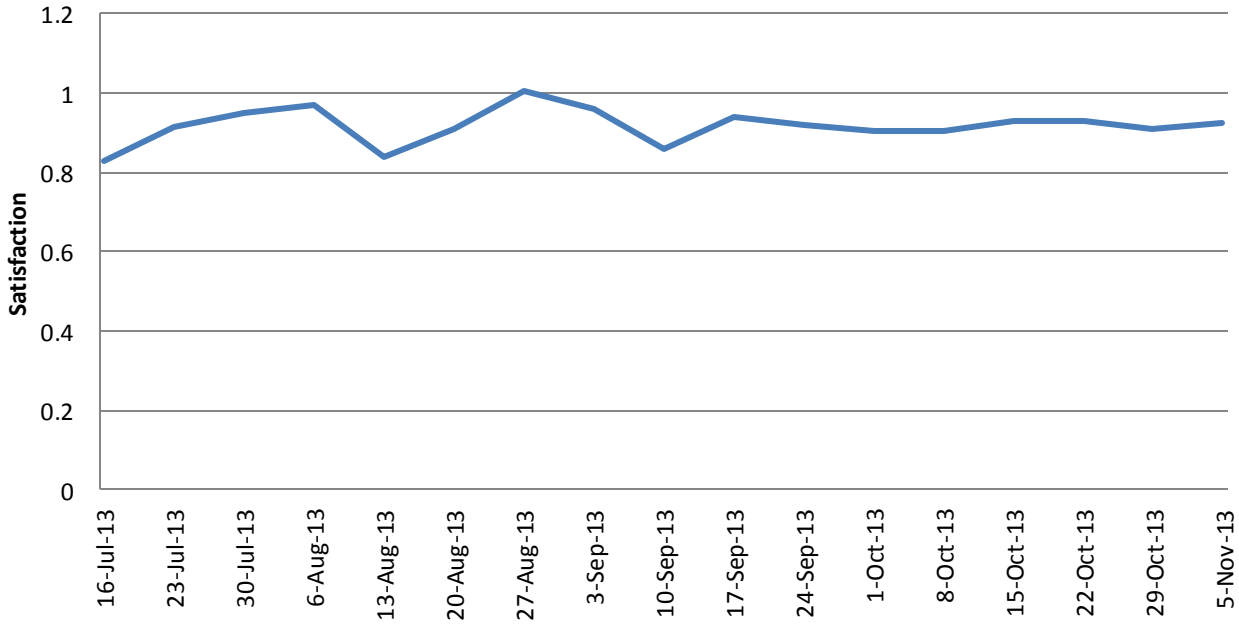
- It is hard to find what I need on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- Overall, jobs.utah/mt.gov is easy to use
- Creating my job search account on jobs.utah/mt.gov was easy
- Searching for jobs on jobs.utah.gov is hard
- I often have trouble "signing-in" to job search
- I can't find jobs that match my skills and abilities on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- Jobs.utah/mt.gov provides job matches that meet my search criteria
- Applying for jobs is easy using jobs.utah/mt.gov
- The jobs posted on jobs.mt.gov are not up-to-date (MT only)
- I would recommend jobs.utah/mt.gov to other job seekers
- I would return to jobs.utah/mt.gov in the future to job search
- Overall, I am satisfied with my job search on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- Quality of the information
- Overall appearance
- How well the site is organized

Each item was scored from -2 to +2, with higher scores indicating more satisfaction and lower scores less. (Items that were reversed scored reflected this convention.) The scores were averaged for each scale. The results of the satisfaction scale score for each state provide a baseline job seeker satisfaction, unadjusted for response weights of different subgroups. The particular method for adjusting these scores will be developed over the course of the next year after examining the baseline data. This system will be used when examining any differences between treatment and control conditions in later years. These results should all be considered "initial" and "unadjusted."

Job Seeker Satisfaction Results - Utah: There were a total of 5044 surveys started by job seekers during the baseline period of July 12, 2013 – November 12, 2013. Of this group, 4025 completed at least 70% of the questions on the satisfaction scale and thus were included in the analysis of the satisfaction scale scores. Utah job seekers averaged a satisfaction score that would correspond to just below "Agree" on average. Their score averaged .91 with a standard deviation of .60. As shown in Figure 18, average weekly scores varied between .83 and 1.0 for the baseline period.

While total scale scores provide the best general mechanism for reporting satisfaction over time, it is helpful to track changes in responses to specific questions. Significant changes in specific items may help pinpoint areas of improvement or need as changes are introduced into the system. Baseline results for the individual satisfaction scale questions are presented in Attachment 4.

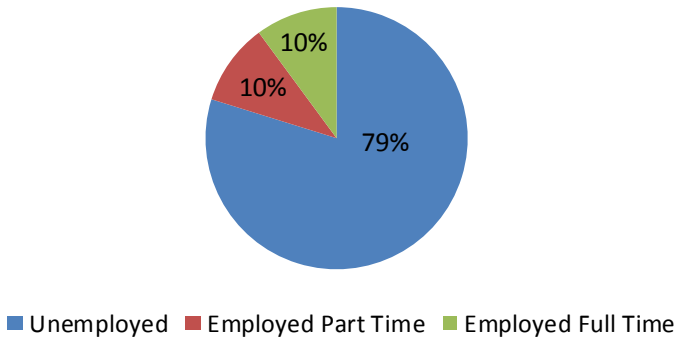
Figure 18: Utah Job Seeker Satisfaction by Week- Baseline - (Unadjusted)



Additional Job Seeker Qualitative Data - Utah: In addition to the Likert scale questions, a small number of additional questions (both listed response and open-ended) were added to the survey. These questions provided demographic information (education level and employment status), objectives in using the website, access points, and a place to add general comments regarding the website and sponsoring agency. This information provided an opportunity to further understand differences in user satisfaction that might be experienced by those in different groups.

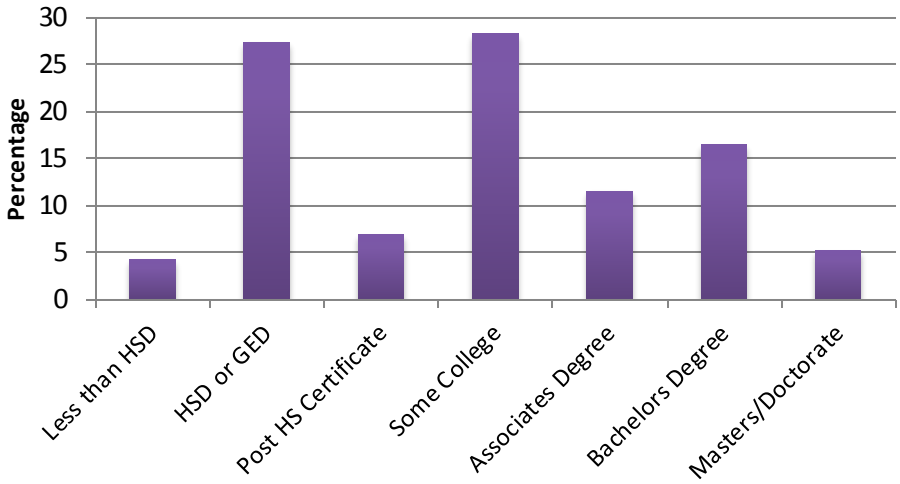
Questions outside the satisfaction scale questions provided additional insights into the job seekers using jobs.utah.gov. As shown in Figure 19, one fifth of all job seekers were employed at the time they participated in the online survey.

Figure 19: Employment Status



Job seeker education levels show that the majority has at least some college and one-fifth has a Bachelor's degree or higher (Figure 20). This data shows that job seekers registered in the system are more likely to have at least a high school diploma (HSD) than the general population in Utah (Census, 2010).

Figure 20: Job Seeker Education Levels

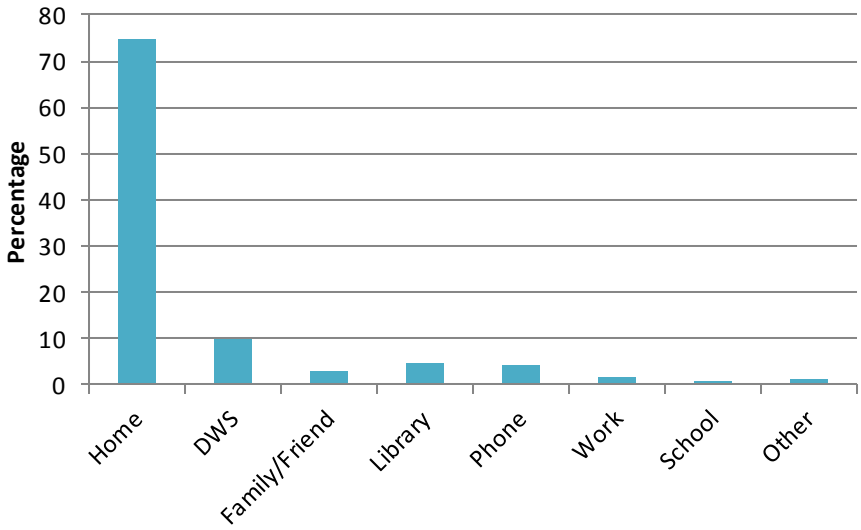


As noted above, respondents were also asked where they most frequently access the website. As shown in Figure 21, nearly three-quarters of users access the website primarily from their home.

Interestingly, those with lower education levels were more likely to report DWS as their primary point of computer access. Also, those reporting DWS as the main point of computer access had significantly higher satisfaction scores.

Respondents were also asked how they first learned about the website. Most reported first learning about jobs.utah.gov through a DWS worker (35.3%), a friend or family member (21.5%), or through searching the web on their own (18.9%).

Figure 21: Website Access Point



Utah's LEX is unique from many other states in that job search is just one of many tasks that can be completed on the website. The integration of public assistance, Unemployment Insurance and the

Table 5: Uses of Jobs.utah.gov

Search for jobs	87.0%
Update registration information	41.3%
Apply for or check benefits	54.6%
View workforce correspondence and notices	51.4%
Register for online workshops/training	36.9%
Submit Paperwork (UI Job logs, reviews)	53.7%
Look for information (e.g. LMI, job fairs, etc.)	54.9%
Other	7.0%

LEX within one agency creates the opportunity for users to complete many tasks in one place. As shown in Table 5, job search is still the most frequently reported activity on the site, however more than half of the respondents use it to complete tasks related to benefits (e.g. UI, cash assistance, food stamps, etc.), view personal DWS communications , and view job related information. The most common "other" response referenced using the site to create or update a resume.

Comments: Respondents were provided an opportunity to share suggestions for improving the website or any other thoughts about DWS and jobs.utah.gov. The challenges most often mentioned included technical problems with LEX functioning, quality of information/design in job postings, ineffective or poor quality matches, lack of jobs posted/available on the site, and a lack of information being available on the site.

The problems most often mentioned referred to the general functioning of the LEX and website. Job seekers mentioned many different issues including:

- Sign-on difficulty
- Navigation issues (e.g. finding where to go on the site – terms are not intuitive on links; words across top don't look like tabs or links)
- Appearance/design issues (e.g. cannot see the buttons/tabs)
- Searching issues (e.g. search terms do not produce appropriate results, sorting results)
- Difficulty updating registration information
- Freezing/system log outs/resets
- Email notifications of jobs unable to be found or viewed online
- Out dated job postings on site
- Unable to upload personal resume/editing auto-generated resume is difficult
- Skills list section has inadequate choices
- Skills list section should not limit you to 20 skills
- Software issues (e.g. Adobe requirements)

Job seekers discussed multiple frustrations with job postings, the quality of information, the formatting and the general appearance.

- Symbols appearing in job posting text – making reading difficult
- Lack of formatting: large block text with no break or emphasis (bold, italic, etc.) for reader
- Disorganization (e.g. job postings are hard to read, all one paragraph, symbols inserted into job postings)
- Job postings on jobs.utah.gov that are no longer hiring
- Lack of employer information within the ad
- Lack of wage ranges; often stating "negotiable"
- Advertisements providing inaccurate information – shifts, benefits, wages, job description

Ineffective or poor quality matching is also a frustration for job seekers. When providing feedback, details were given regarding various issues. Their concerns include difficulties such as:

- O*net codes: difficult to choose for best fit; inadequate descriptions for STEM fields

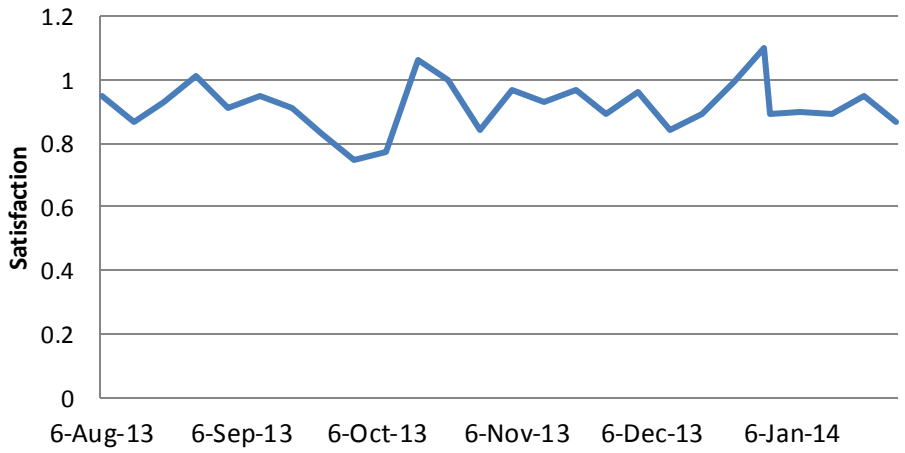
- Job matches presented do not match individuals qualifications
- Non-intuitive matching: how skills translate between industries, job titles
- Searching provides inappropriate results (e.g. VP - Executive Director receiving entry-level job postings)
- Poor sorting of results
- Limited skills list do not allow experience to be matched appropriately
- LEX over-filters (e.g. a job that requires a Bachelor's degree will not let a person with masters apply)
- Certain skillsets and licensures not available to add to profile (e.g. LMFT, coding languages)

One of the most cited difficulties with matching is the inability to view jobs because the matching process has screened a person out. Job seekers then adjust their profiles to be able to view jobs – but state this would be unnecessary if they had ability to enter ALL their information and/or the system more intuitively translated skills and experience in the screening process. As a result of their frustrations, some job seekers said they prefer other online job boards to search as they feel it is a better use of their time and provides more productive results.

While most comments reflected on areas needing improvement, there were some positive comments. Most often these comments related to the assistance users had received from DWS workers attempting to help them solve the difficulties listed.

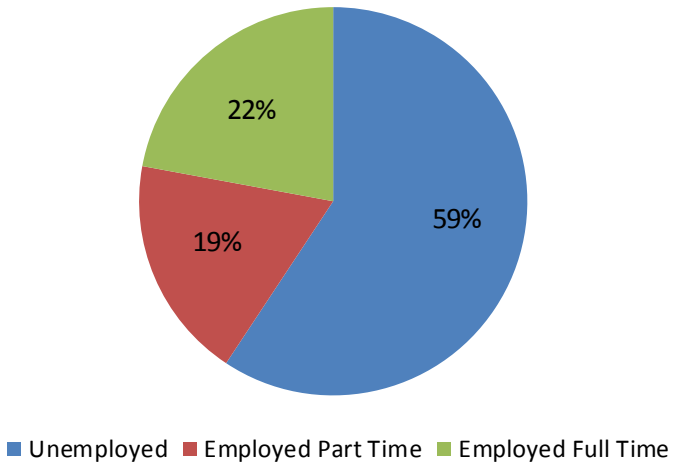
Job Seeker Satisfaction Results – Montana: Baseline job seeker satisfaction data was collected between August 6, 2013 and February 3, 2014. In Montana there were 2321 job seekers who started the survey with 1942 completing at least 70% of the questions on the satisfaction scale. As reported in Figure 22, the satisfaction of the Montana job seekers was similar to the Utah users (numerically, it was just below 'Agree' on average). The weekly average varied more, likely due to the lower sample size. The mean score for the entire time period was .91 with a standard deviation of .61. Surprisingly, the mean score for Montana was equal to the Utah score at two decimal places, and the variation was within 1/100 of a point. Average weekly scores varied between .33 and 1.10. (See Attachment 4: Baseline results of individual satisfaction questions.)

Figure 22: Montana Job Seeker Satisfaction by Week (Unadjusted)



Additional Job Seeker Qualitative Data - Montana: As with the Utah Job Seekers, additional demographic information (education level and employment status), objectives in using the website, access points, and a place to add general comments regarding the website and sponsoring agency was gathered. While the online system used in both Utah and Montana is very similar, it is important to remember that the populations served by each are different. Montana Job Service is focused specifically on those seeking employment and Unemployment Insurance benefits. Utah's DWS provides these services but also administers all the state's public benefits (cash assistance, SNAP, Medicaid, child care assistance, etc.). These differences certainly could account for some difference found between the groups using the online systems.

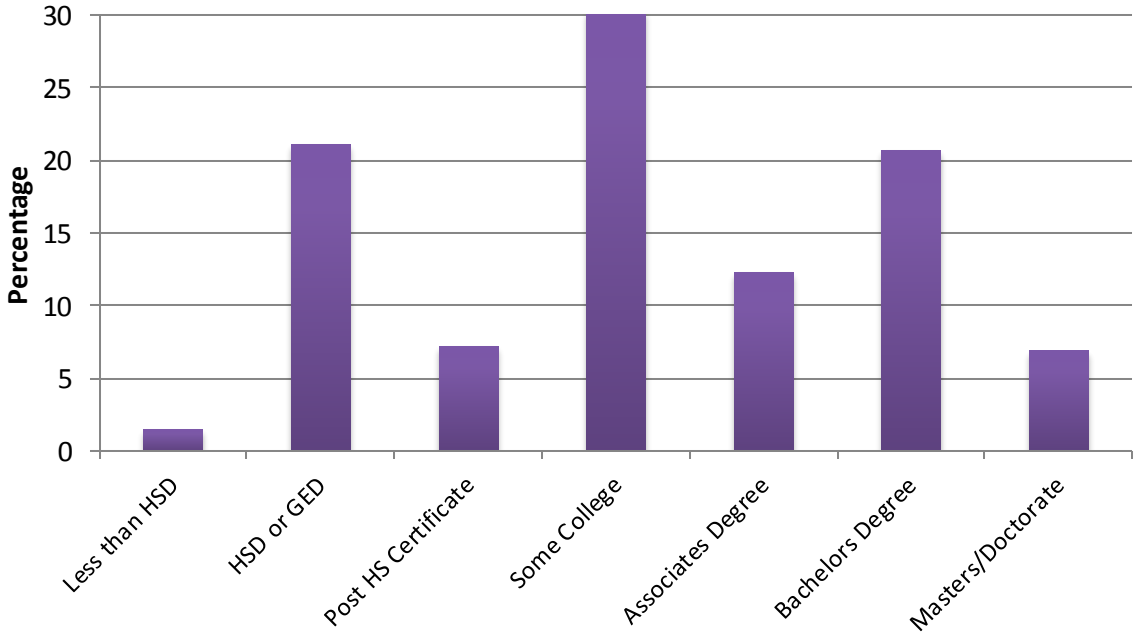
Figure 23: Employment Status - Montana



As shown in Figure 23, 41% of all job seekers were employed at the time they participated in the online survey. This is more than double the percentage employed in Utah.

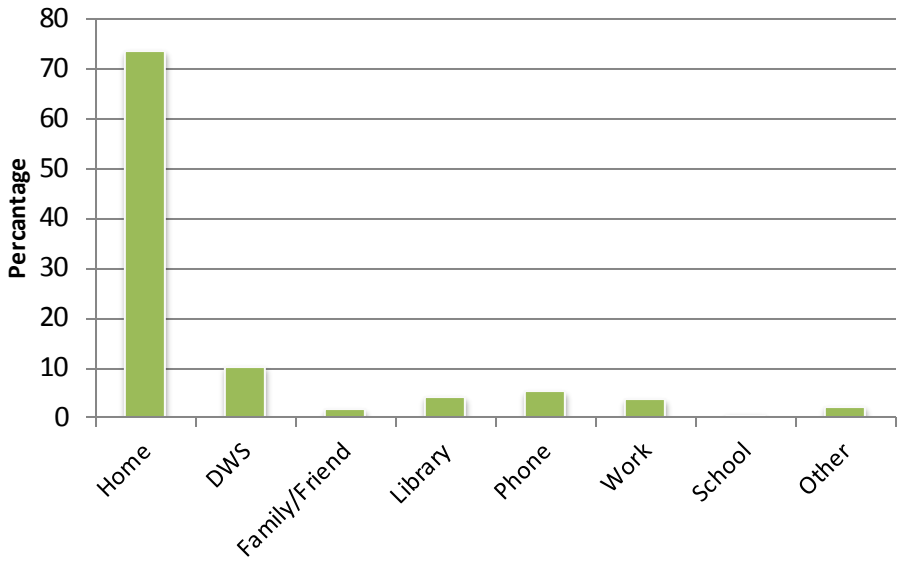
Data regarding education levels (See Figure 24) show that a majority of job seekers have at least some college education and one-quarter have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Less than 2% reported having less than a high school diploma.

Figure 24: : Job Seeker Education Levels - Montana



Montana respondents were asked where they most frequently access the website. Figure 25 shows that, as in Utah, most Montana job seekers primarily access the website from their home. Again, those with lower education levels were more likely to report their primary point of computer access to be DWS. However, there were no differences in satisfaction scale scores relative to primary point of computer access.

Figure 25: Web Site Access Point - Montana



As noted previously, Montana's Job Service is focused on employment services and unemployment benefits, thus the scope of activities likely to be completed on the website is narrower. As shown in Table 6, job search is by far the most frequently reported activity on the site, however, registration updating and gathering information for job seeking are also common activities. As with Utah, one of the most common "other" activities included creating or updating resumes.

Table 6: Uses of Jobs.mt.gov

Search for jobs	88.9%
Update registration information	39.9%
Register for unemployment benefits	22.9%
Submit Weekly job claim log	15.7%
Look for information (e.g. LMI, job fairs, etc.)	39.4%
Other	7.0%

Montana job seekers were most likely to have first learned about the website from someone in the Job Services Office, either a job service employee (33.2%) or what they identified as the Unemployment Office (10.6%). Again, many job seekers (21.8%) found the website through an internet search such as Google or Bing, or through family and friends (16.7%). Even though public benefits are located in another state agency, some of the "other" respondents indicated they had learned about and registered on the site as a requirement for receiving some public benefits.

Comments: Montana job seeker respondents provided many additional comments and suggestions for improving features on jobs.mt.gov. Because Utah and Montana use the same online system it is not surprising that the comments received from job seekers are very similar.

Montana job seeker comments focused primarily on site functionality. Additional comments related to job postings and the quality and quantity of data available, challenges related to applying for jobs, and the services provided by job services both online and in the offices.

Many aspects related to general functionality of jobs.mt.gov were mentioned by respondents. Job seekers mentioned issues such as:

- System log-outs after navigating to different sites or after a short period of user inactivity
- Overall aesthetics lacking regarding page design features such as the font size (too small), colors (too light), and excessive number of links and tabs
- Lack of ability to save and maintain a list of jobs of interest (applied for, viewed, etc.)
- Limitations on number of skills which can be entered
- No option for appropriate following up with employer after applying
- Search options limited with no way to eliminate terms or use AND or NOT as qualifiers
- Problems with particular browsers but no indication of which one is best to use
- Limitations on number of jobs which show per page to 10

Again, job seekers discussed multiple frustrations with job postings, the quality of information, the formatting and the general appearance. Areas of concern included:

- Closed jobs remaining on the site long after being filled
- Lack of desired information regarding jobs such as salary, location, company name
- Disorganization of job postings; no option to sort by employment field such as "health Care" or for example "opt out" of jobs from temp agencies
- Symbols appearing in job posting text – making reading difficult
- "False advertising" with real wages not matching those advertised

Completing the application process can be daunting as each posting potentially has a different process, some of which are more compatible with the online site than others. Challenges include:

- Limited options for uploading, editing, saving multiple versions of a custom resume
- Uncertainty as to whether or not an employer ever received the submitted resume and/or application; could an auto-generated "your resume was sent and delivered" be produced?
- After hitting "how to apply," user is returned to the start of the search process not back to where one started
- Limited skills list do not allow experience to be matched appropriately

As with Utah, one of the most cited frustrations was the lack of ability to view jobs because the matching process screened a person out. Job seekers understand they can adjust their profiles to view jobs, however, this is experienced as yet another unnecessary hoop and an overreach of government authority in determining who qualifies and who does not.

While most respondents understand that online systems are becoming the norm in terms of job matching, some expressed appreciation for the value of human interaction whether directly through visits to the job service office or online through mediums such as a chat line. Experiences

with other state websites led several respondents to comment that this is one of the best state run job search websites. Additional reflection on the open-ended comments will be added in the presentation of Montana focus group findings.

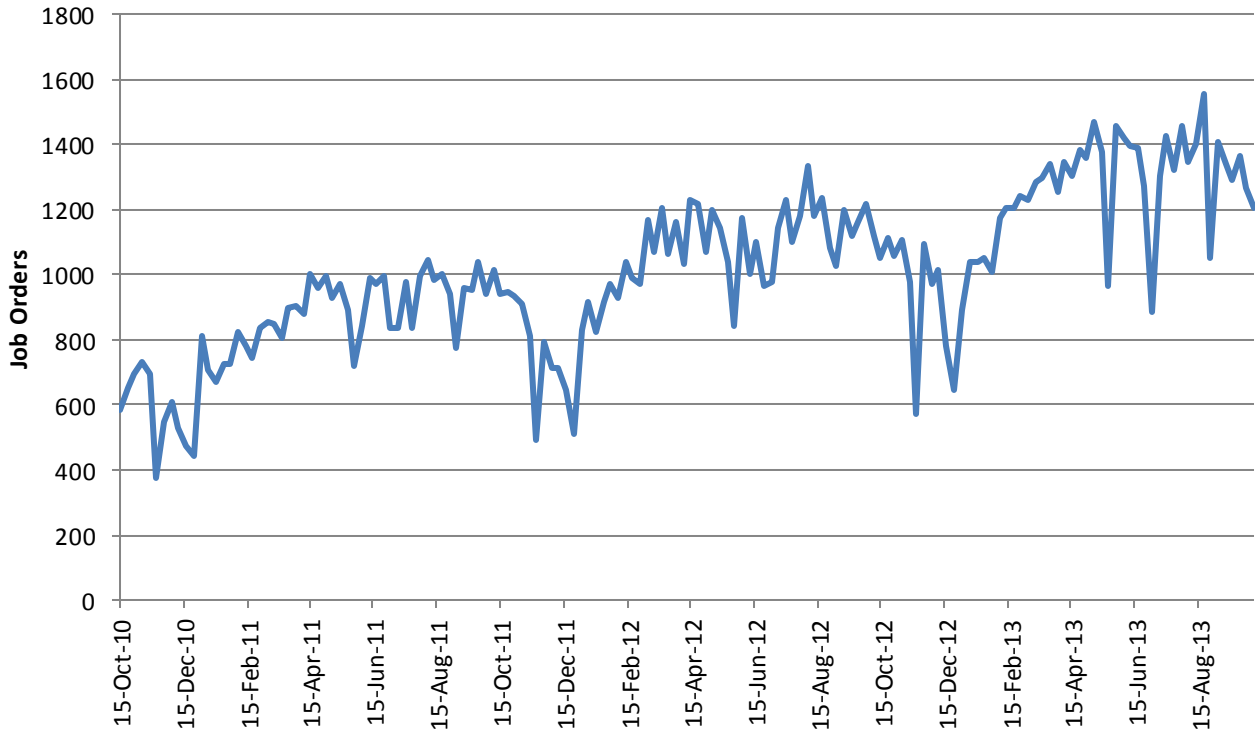
EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

Research Question 2 focuses on the experiences of Utah employers relative to the GenLEX initiative. The outcome measures related to employer outcomes included the number of non-mediated job orders and the weekly count of employers using the LEX. Again, Research Question 4 relates to user satisfaction, in this case, the satisfaction level of employers in both Utah and Montana.

Non-Mediated Job Orders

Again using DWS' historical job data, non-mediated job orders were queried from the UWORKS database going back to the year 2010. Prior to this date, the system did not record the job orders in the same way so the data could not be used. The counts of new job orders were aggregated by weeks of the year (one through 52, with the left over day at the end of the year being added to the 52nd week). The data were examined with both linear and seasonal components.

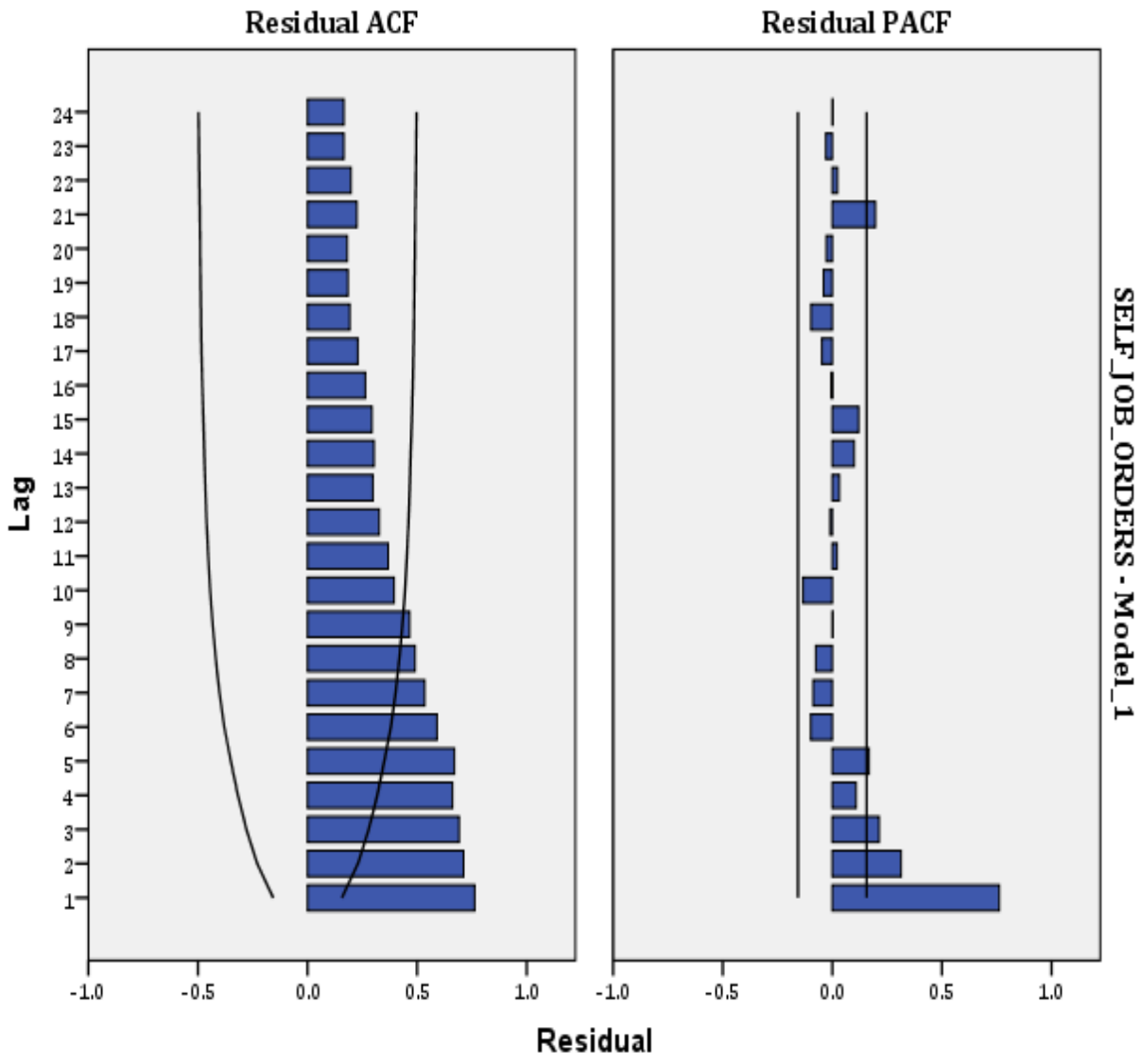
Figure 26: Non-Mediated Job Orders



The Auto-correlation Function (ACF) and Partial Auto-correlation Function (PACF) were first reported with no ARIMA adjustment (See Figure 26) and just a constant or mean. The residual ACF and the PACF for this modeled fell outside of the acceptable bounds. The Ljung-Box Q was

statistically significant (Q=722, df=18,p<.05) indicating that the process was not effectively modeled.

Figure 27: Non-Mediated Job Order ACF, PACF, No ARIMA Adjustment



After examining the ACF and PACF, a simple moving average model with a seasonal difference term was used (ARIMA (0,0,1)(0,1,0)) (See Figure 27). This model brought the ACF and PACF within the acceptable limits. The Ljung-Box Q for this model was not significant (Q=10.8, df=17,p>.05), indicating that the process had been adequately modeled.

Figure 28: Non-Mediated Job Order ACF, PACF ARIMA (0,0,1)(0,1,0)

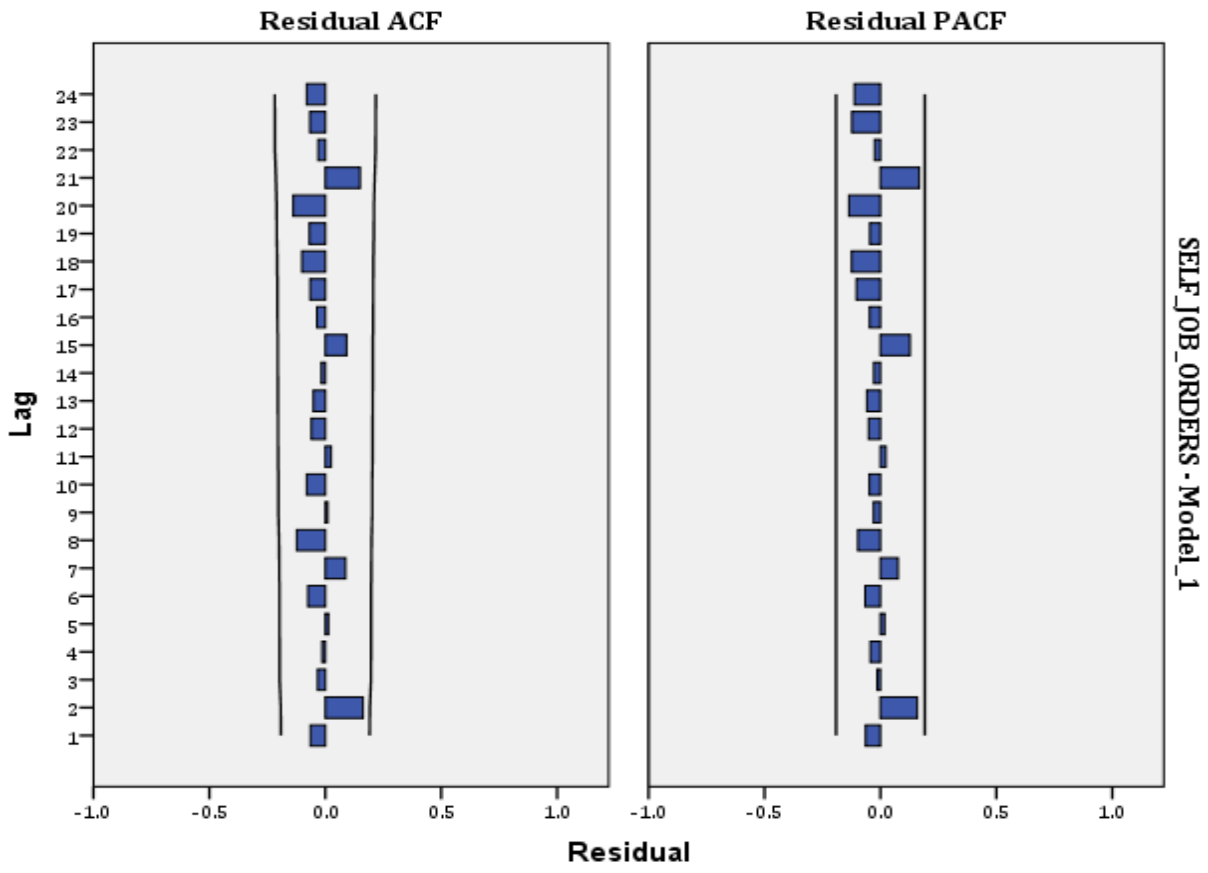
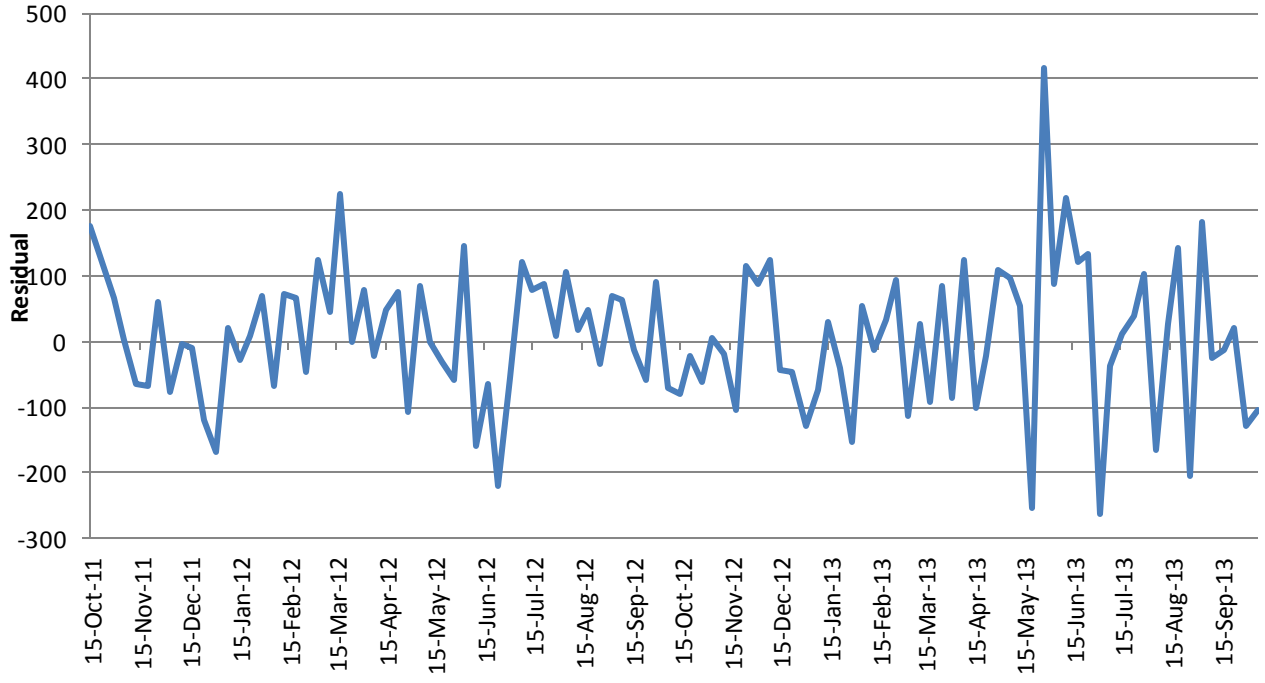


Figure 29: Non-Mediated Job Order Residuals- ARIMA (0,0,1) (0,1,0)



Weekly Count of Employer System Usage

Weekly count of employer system usage is the second outcome measure used to answer Research Question 2. This outcome measure is defined as the count of unique employers using the UWORKS system on a given calendar day. Each login only counts once per day, but a given user can count multiple times in a week long period. The data was queried from UWORKS by calendar day and then aggregated by week of the year for analysis. The data were examined with both linear and seasonal components.

Employer system usage was first modeled with just a mean and no ARIMA adjustment (See Figure 30). The residual PACF and ACF fell outside of the acceptable bounds for this model. The Ljung Box Q was statistically significant ($Q=466, df=18, p<.05$), indicating that the intercept-only model did not adequately describe the data.

Figure 30: Non-Mediated Employer Usage Measured by Employer Logins

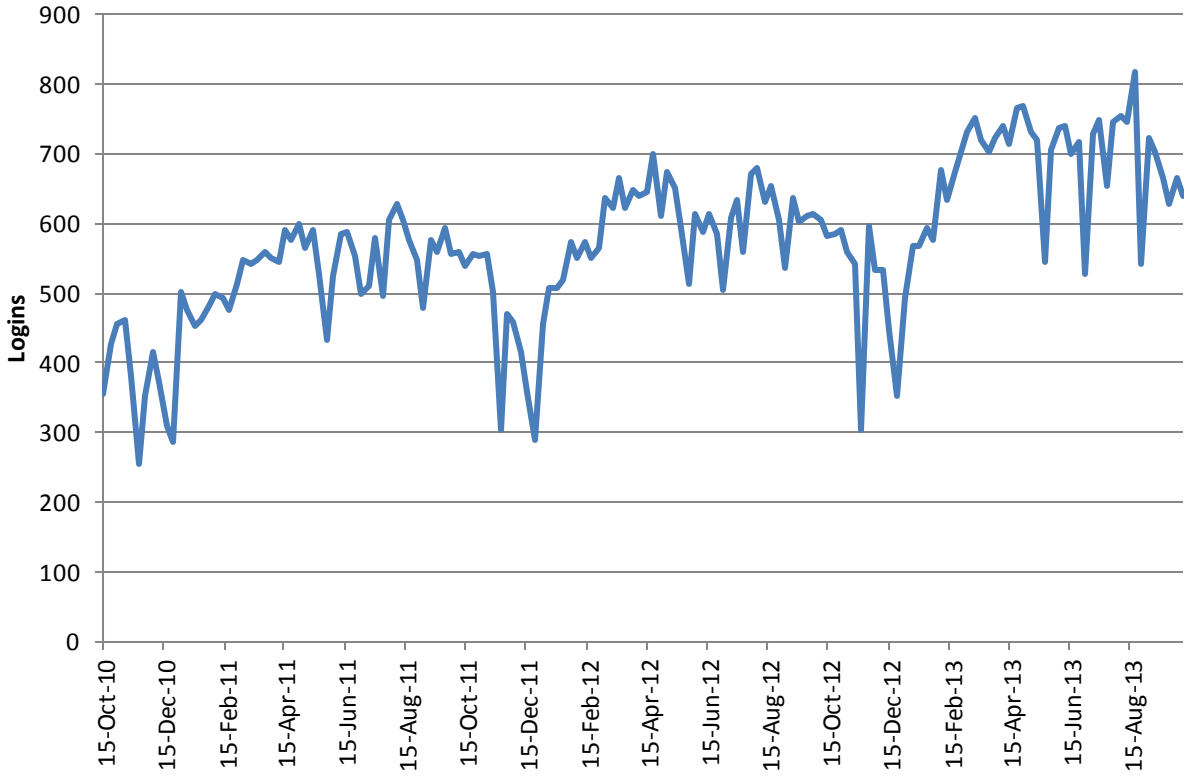


Figure 31: Non-Mediated Employer Usage, Residual ACF, PACF: Intercept only, No ARIMA adjustment

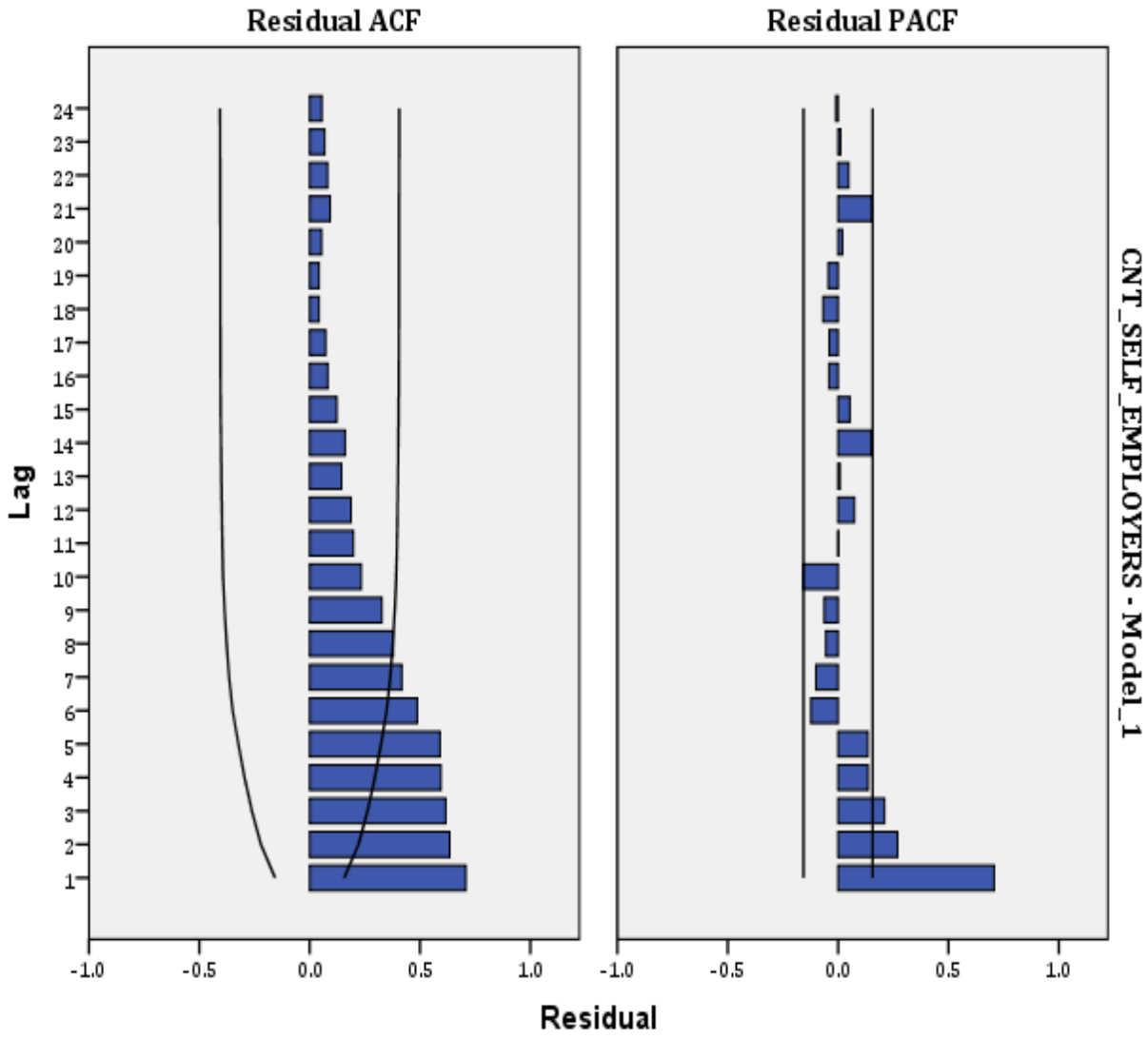
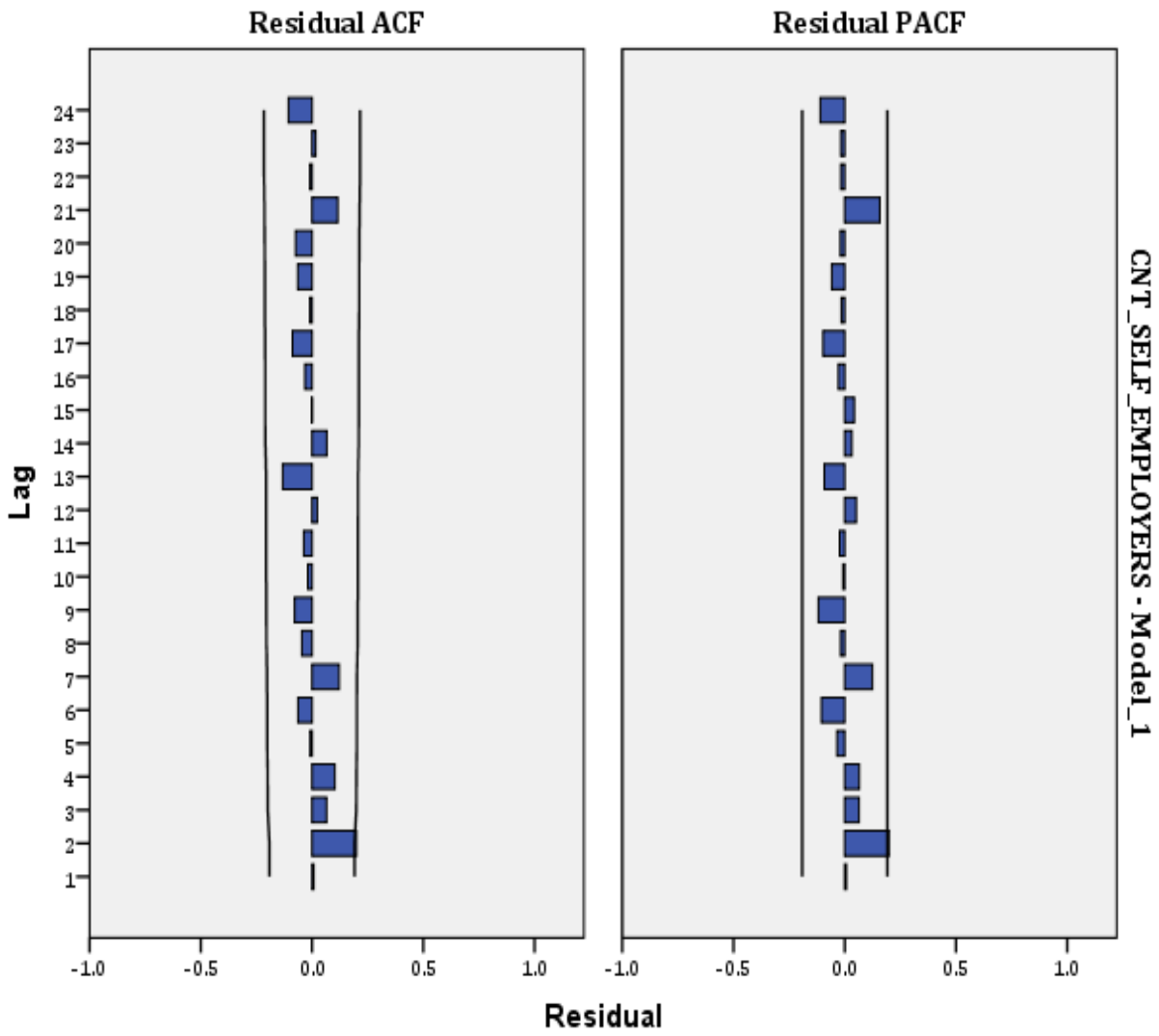
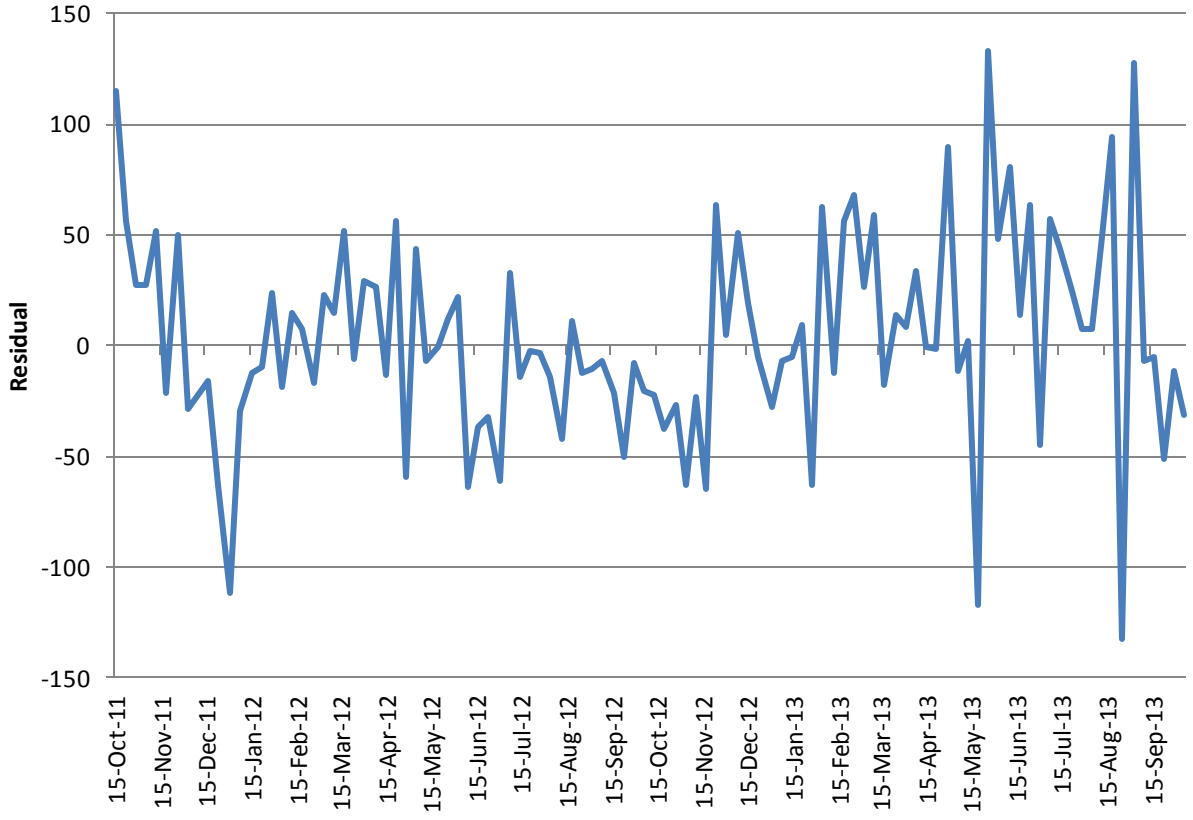


Figure 32: Non-Mediated Employer Usage, Residual ACF, PACF: ARIMA (0,0,1)(0,1,0)



The next model was an ARIMA (0,0,1)(0,1,0) or a moving average model with a seasonal difference term. This model moved the ACF and the PACF within the acceptable range. The Ljung-Box Q was not statistically significant (Q=13.1,df=17,p>.05) indicating that this model adequately described the data.

Figure 33: Employer Usage Residuals - ARIMA (0,0,1)(0,1,0)



Employer Satisfaction Measures

Two methods of data collection were used to provide baseline data responding to final employer outcome (Research Question 4). The first method of data collection regarding employer satisfaction was the same as implemented with job seekers. Employers in both Utah and Montana who access the state LEX were asked to participate in a satisfaction survey. Not all employers in either Utah or Montana access the LEX directly. In Utah in 2012, approximately 28% of employers had their job orders flat filed and another 28% received mediated services, indicting the job orders were entered by DWS workers. The remaining 44% of employers accessed the LEX directly. These self-service employers in both states were the focus of the online survey.

Starting in July for Utah employers and in August for Montana employers, a random sample (set at 0.10) of employers were invited to participate in the online satisfaction survey.[5] Similar to the job seekers, employers were asked to participate at a random time during their session. The invitation to participate was followed by an IRB approved informed consent (See Attachment 3) document. Data collection proceeded in the same manor it was with job seekers.

The satisfaction scale statements evaluated by employers included:

[5] The Evaluation Design Report indicated a population sample would be used to evaluate employer satisfaction. This did not happen during the baseline period. Since February 19, 2014 all employers have been invited to participate in the study. If a user agrees to participate they are not offered the survey again for at least three months. If they decline, the survey is offered again after, at minimum, 1 month.

- I am comfortable using the internet to complete tasks on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- It is difficult to navigate jobs.utah/mt.gov
- I can do everything I want to do on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- I would recommend jobs.utah/mt.gov to other employers
- I often have trouble "signing-in" to post a job
- Posting a job is easy on jobs.utah/mt.gov
- Jobs.utah/mt.gov provides us with enough job applicants from our job postings
- When posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov I have the flexibility to use my own screening criteria to find applicants
- Jobs.utah/mt.gov provides us with qualified applicants who have the skills we are seeking
- I would recommend jobs.utah/mt.gov to other employers for posting jobs
- Overall, I am satisfied with the ease of posting jobs on jobs.utah/mt.gov

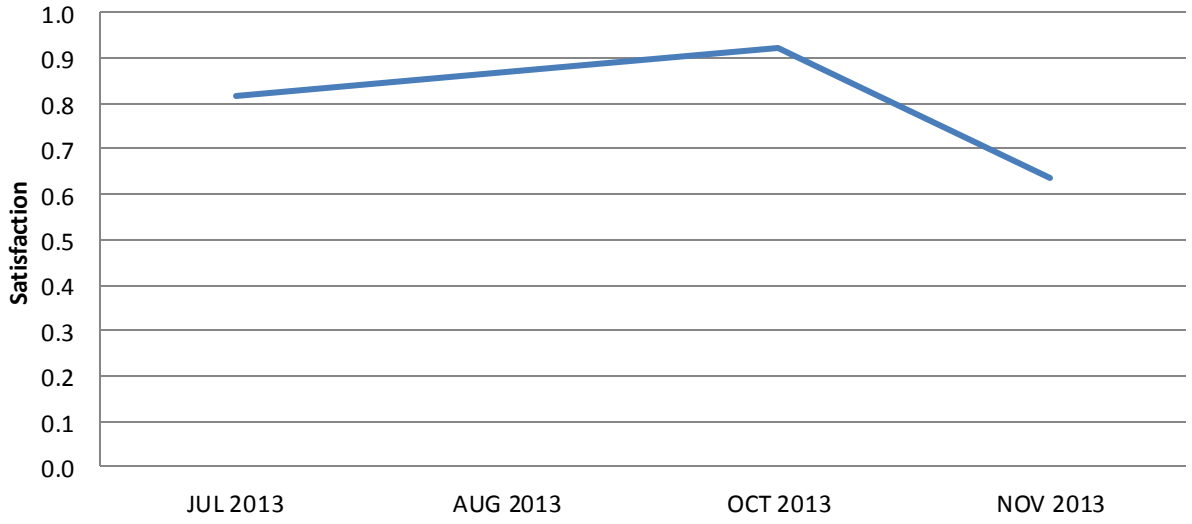
Item scoring within the scale and overall satisfaction score calculation was completed in the same way as it was for job seekers. The employer satisfaction scores were reported by month because the sample sizes were much smaller than the job seeker samples. For the baseline data, scores were not yet adjusted for non-response bias (in later years all data will be adjusted).

The primary quantitative data regarding employer satisfaction will be reported here. Additional qualitative feedback from the online surveys and gathered in focus group sessions will be summarized in the Focus Group Results section of this report.

Employer Satisfaction Results - Utah

In the 105 employer surveys that were started, 82 users completed at least 70% of the questions on the satisfaction scale. The mean score for the satisfaction score was .81 for the baseline period, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction with the system. The standard deviation for the sample was .48. Only 4% of all scores were below zero, indicating that very few people had a general dissatisfaction with the system. Because of a technical error on the DWS system, employers were not being referred to the satisfaction survey from 8/28/13 thru 10/16/13.

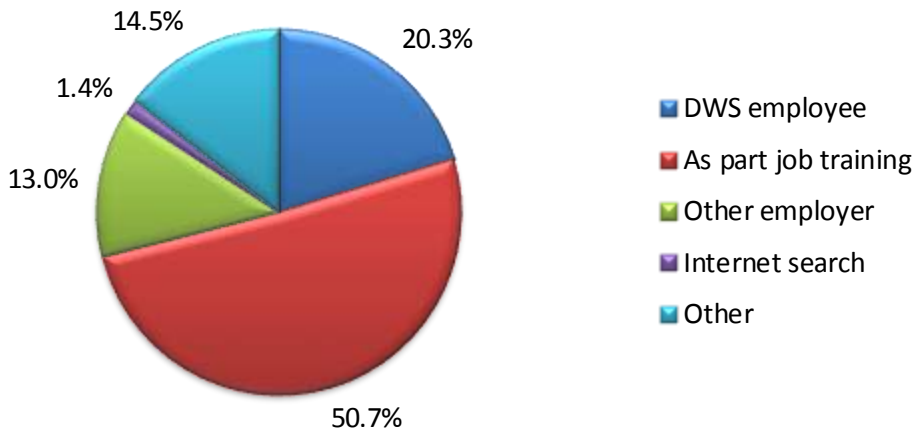
Figure 34: Employer Satisfaction (Baseline) - (Unadjusted)



Qualitative Data: As with job seekers, a small number of additional questions (both listed response and open-ended) were added to the survey. Because not all employers use the system, it was determined that the additional questions should remain very limited to: 1) how each employer learned about the website and 2) a place to add comments regarding the website and the sponsoring agency.

Most employers report learning about posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov as part of training for their current job. However, one-fifth of all employers learn about it from a DWS employee. Thus, this connection is vital to expanding the use of the state LEX among employers. Those who marked "other" reported learning about the site as a DWS employee or when doing their own job search.

Figure 35: Where Employers Learn About Posting Jobs on Jobs.utah.gov



Data from individual items in the satisfaction scale also present important baseline information for employers. It will be useful to determine if changes in the current system will change outcomes in these individual areas as well as overall satisfaction.

As shown in Table 7, nearly all employers are comfortable using the website to complete tasks on jobs.utah.gov, however, nearly one quarter still find it difficult to navigate the website.

Table 7: Overall Employer Experiences with jobs.utah.gov

General Website (N = 76)	Agree	Disagree
1. I am comfortable using the internet to complete tasks on jobs.utah.gov	75 (98.7%)	1 (1.3%)
2. It is difficult to navigate the jobs.utah.gov website	18 (24.0%)	57 (76.0%)
3. I can do everything I want to do on jobs.utah.gov	42 (59.2%)	29 (40.8%)
4. I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to another employer	66 (94.3%)	4 (5.7%)

Employers were asked several questions about the ease of using the online job posting system and their perceptions of results (applicants) they receive from the system. Data presented in Table 8

shows that, overall, employers find the site accessible and useful in posting jobs and finding appropriate job seekers. Given the positive responses, it is interesting that nearly 46% report that jobs.utah.gov is not as good as other job search sites. This could in part be related to the 32% who said it was not easy to find help on the website when they had a question and the nearly 14% who reported often having problems signing into the site.

Table 8: Employer Experience Posting Jobs - Utah

Job Posting (N = 76)	**Agree**	**Disagree**
5. I often have trouble "signing-in" to post a job	10 (13.7%)	63 (86.3%)
6. Posting a job is easy on jobs.utah.gov	63 (86.3%)	10 (13.7%)
7. Jobs.utah.gov provides us with *enough* job applicants from our job postings	51 (71.8%)	20 (28.2%)
8. When posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov I have the flexibility to use my own screening criteria to find applicants	49 (72.1%)	19 (27.9%)
9. Jobs.utah.gov provides us with *qualified* applicants who have the skills we are seeking	54 (77.1%)	16 (22.9%)
10. I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to other employers for posting jobs	65 (92.9%)	5 (7.1%)
11. Overall, I am satisfied with the ease of posting a job on jobs.utah.gov	64 (90.1%)	7 (9.9%)
12. Finding help is easy on jobs.utah.gov	36 (67.9%)	17 (32.1%)
13. Job.utah.gov is not as good as other websites for posting jobs (eg. KSL, Careerbuilder)	28 (45.9%)	33 (54.1%)

Overall, the majority of survey respondents state that the quality, appearance and site organization were good to excellent. The comments offered to describe the lower approval of these features included suggestions to make site more professional (referring to corporate websites as a template) and to give employers more control over the appearance of their online job postings.

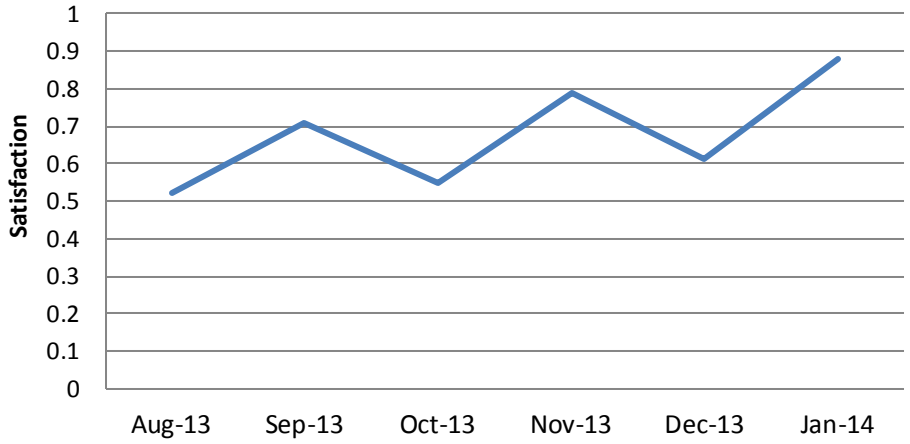
Table 9: Overall View of jobs.utah.gov

N = 70	**Excellent**	**Very Good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**
14. Quality of the information	6 (8.6%)	20 (28.6%)	39 (55.7%)	4 (5.7%)	1 (1.4%)
15. Overall appearance	8 (11.4%)	21 (30.0%)	30 (42.9%)	9 (12.9%)	2 (2.9%)
16. How well the site is organized	6 (8.6%)	16 (22.9%)	37 (52.9%)	9 (12.9%)	2 (2.9%)

Employer Satisfaction Results – Montana

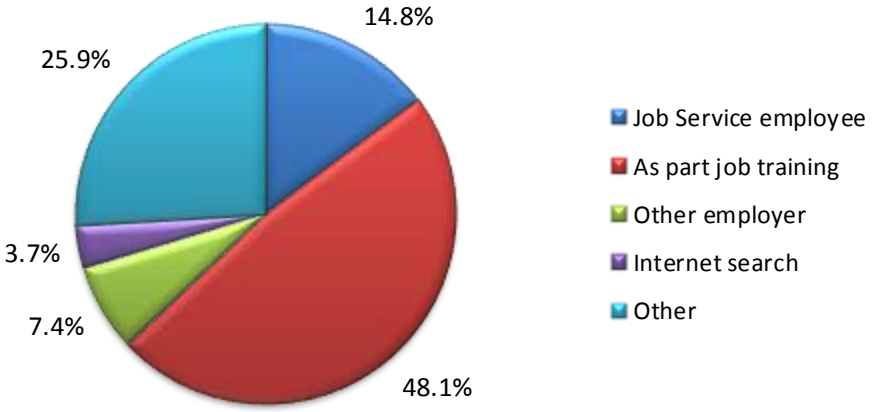
The Montana employer satisfaction survey had a relatively low sample size, thus these numbers are less reliable than the other survey numbers presented. Of the 43 users who started the survey, 28 completed at least 70% of the questions on the satisfaction scale in the baseline period. The mean score was .66, indicating somewhere between moderate satisfaction and a neutral response. The standard deviation for the sample was .44. The monthly scores should be interpreted carefully because some months had as few as 4 respondents.

Figure 36: Montana Employer Satisfaction by Month (Baseline - Unadjusted)



As in Utah, nearly half of the employers reported learning about posting jobs on jobs.mt.gov as part of training for their current job. Several of those who marked "other" reported learning about the site when doing their own job search or that they just "always knew" about this resource.

Figure 37: Where Employers Learn About Jobs.mt.gov



Outcomes related to the individual satisfaction scale items were very similar to those found in Utah. All employers reported ease with using the internet to post jobs however again, nearly one-third (32.3%) found it difficult to navigate the state site. Even though only 50% report being able to do everything they wanted to on the site, nearly everyone would recommend this site to other employers seeking to post a job in Montana

Table 10: Overall Employer Experiences with jobs.mt.gov

General Website (N = 32)	Agree	Disagree
1. I am comfortable using the internet to complete tasks on jobs.mt.gov	31(100%)	
2. It is difficult to navigate the jobs.mt.gov website	10 (32.3%)	21 (67.7%)
3. I can do everything I want to do on jobs.mt.gov	16 (50.0%)	16 (50.0%)
4. I would recommend jobs.mt.gov to another employer	28 (93.3%)	2 (6.7%)

Again, the satisfaction scale questions ask about various components of using the online system and perceptions of results (applicants) they received from the system. Data presented in Table 11 shows that, overall, employers found the site accessible and useful in posting jobs and finding appropriate job seekers. Only about one-third reported that jobs.mt.gov is not as good as other websites for posting jobs. Overall, Montana employers are a little less satisfied with the website than Utah employers. Again, this baseline employer data represents a small group. Generalizing findings to the broader employer population could be less reliable given the small sample size.

Table 11: Employer Experiences Posting Jobs - Montana

Job Posting (N = 32)	Agree	Disagree
5. I often have trouble "signing-in" to post a job	3 (10.3%)	26 (89.7%)
6. Posting a job is easy on jobs.mt.gov	21 (67.7%)	10 (32.3%)
7. Jobs.mt.gov provides us with *enough* job applicants from our job postings	18 (62.1%)	11 (37.9%)
8. When posting jobs on jobs.mt.gov I have the flexibility to use my own screening criteria to find applicants	19 (65.5%)	10 (34.5%)
9. Jobs.mt.gov provides us with *qualified* applicants who have the skills we are seeking	18 (62.1%)	11 (37.9%)
10. I would recommend jobs.mt.gov to other employers for posting jobs	27 (93.1%)	2 (6.9%)
11. Overall, I am satisfied with the ease of posting a job on jobs.mt.gov	25 (86.2%)	4 (13.8%)
12. Finding help is easy on jobs.mt.gov	7 (35.0%)	13 (65.2%)
13. Job.mt.gov is not as good as other websites for posting jobs (eg. Craigslist, Yahoo Jobs, montanahelpwanted.com)	8 (34.8%)	15 (65.2%)

As Table 12 shows, the majority of survey respondents state that the quality, appearance and site organization were good to excellent. Consistent with these satisfaction questions, there is a general two-thirds to one-third split in most other areas evaluated. This provides a baseline against which future input from employers can be measured.

Table 12: Overall View of jobs.mt.gov

N = 28	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
14. Quality of the information		8 (28.6%)	16 (57.1%)	4 (14.3%)	
15. Overall appearance	2 (7.4%)	5 (18.5%)	10 (37.0%)	8 (29.6%)	2 (7.4%)
16. How well the site is organized	3 (11.1%)	5 (18.5%)	10 (37.0%)	8 (29.6%)	1 (3.7%)

***Additional Qualitative Data*:** Employers completing the online satisfaction survey in both Utah and Montana were provided an opportunity to add any additional comments or suggestions regarding the LEX or the agency managing LEX. These comments will be analyzed in conjunction with the focus group results presented below.

Baseline Descriptive Data

In order to more fully understand and interpret the user satisfaction scale data and other outcome measures in both states, additional feedback regarding experiences with the LEX was gathered throughout the baseline period. These additional feedback sources served several purposes in the baseline period. Primarily, these open forms of data collection provided opportunities to better understand the broad scope of questions and concerns of users including employers, job seekers, and various front line agency staff.

Table 13: Additional Data Sources

Data Source	Sample	Collection Period	Collection Method
Utah			
Employers	52	June – August 2013	Focus groups (12)
Connection Team	100	October 2013	Online survey
Workforce Development Specialists	17	October 2013	Online survey
Montana			
Employers	24	July 2013	Focus groups (4)
Job Seekers	28	July 2013	Focus groups (4)
Job Service Workers	Approx. 30	July 2013	Focus groups (4)

Including these data sources reflects the sequential transformative mixed methods data collection strategy (Creswell, 2003) implemented for this project. This strategy involves alternating between quantitative and qualitative data to gather input from program users as the system develops and new components are added. In this section data from the various focus groups will be presented first, followed by input from the online surveys completed by DWS front line personnel.

Focus Group Structure and Process

As noted in Table 13, four different groups were engaged in focus group sessions during the baseline period: Montana job seekers, employers and Job Services staff and Utah Employers. These focus groups provided valuable opportunities to both discover a broad range of issues and concerns at baseline, and will continue to provide insights from personal experiences throughout program implementation.

For the first round of focus groups, participants (both job seekers and employers) were recruited with the help of DWS staff in Utah and Job Service workers in Montana. This assistance was critical as agency workers were able to use personal connections with potential participants to assure adequate involvement. No exclusion criteria existed for participation as the goal was to encourage involvement from a wide range of industries and different levels of experience using the LEX.

By nature of their invitation, it can be assumed that those who participated in focus groups had stronger relationships with agency workers than might be the case with the average job seeker or employer using the LEX. This is a potential limitation of the data gained in this round of focus groups as the increased connectivity may lead to different concerns or intensity of concerns in comparison to those less connected to the agencies. Agency personnel were encouraged to invite both individuals who were pleased with the system and those who have had negative experiences or past complaints. Future focus groups will be formed using the randomly distributed online satisfaction survey data which invites respondents to indicate whether or not they are willing to be contacted for possible participation in future focus groups.

During recruitment, participants were told that a focus group was being conducted to gather their feedback on the current LEX and suggestions for improvement. All participants signed IRB approved consent documents (See Attachment 5). While using agency staff to recruit participants worked well for employers in both states and job seekers in Montana, this method was not appropriate for recruiting job seekers in Utah due to the many different services DWS provides in the community. The research team also conducted brief focus group sessions with the Montana Job Service workers while on site around the state. Job seekers received monetary compensation ($15) for participation in the focus group. Employers were not compensated but offered light refreshments during their sessions.

Data Collection and Analysis*:* Focus groups are facilitated group discussions that often use an interview guide with scripted questions. The job seeker and employer interview guides for this study (See Attachment 6) were populated with questions developed through collaborative efforts between the SRI and each of the state partners (DWS and the Montana Department of Labor). The interview guides were tested with the initial groups and wording was adjusted as needed. During the sessions, probes were used to enhance reflection, the flow of group dialogue and to encourage participation from all members of the group. The focus group session, each lasting between 75 and 90 minutes, were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy and completeness. Content analysis was used by two individuals to analyze the focus group data. Comparisons were then made between the two analyses leading to discussion and final results.

One concern regarding the use of focus group data is whether the group is representative of the larger whole. For this study, potential differences were identified by using data collected when all employer and job seeker focus group participants were asked to complete a pencil and paper version of the online survey. Differences between the groups will be noted at the beginning of each section.

Montana Job Seeker Focus Groups Findings

In July 2013, four job seeker focus groups (28 total participants) were held in Montana. Locations for these groups (Kalispell, Polson, Glendive and Billings) were determined by SRI and Montana Department of Labor representatives and reflect the diverse population base, urban and rural mix, and vital industries present in the state.

The focus group participants generally had higher levels of education and were much more likely to be unemployed (71%) than those responding to the online survey (58%). Focus group participants were also significantly more likely to have learned about the system from a Job Service worker (68%) than those responding online (40%). That being said, comments from focus group participants reflected many of the experiences described in comments from the online satisfaction survey respondents in the areas of: site functionality, experience with Job Services Offices and personnel, and perceptions of job seekers using the site.

***LEX Functionality**:* As in the online survey responses, there was much conversation about the functionality of jobs.mt.gov. In all four groups, job seekers expressed frustration with the way they were able to present themselves to employers through the registration and resume creation process. Because the resume is generated from the registration job seekers did not know how to list volunteer work, community service, or the fact that they were currently enrolled in school. One participant noted, *"The more specialized your skills become the harder it is to fit into the job categories on the site."* Another person commented,

> *"Since it is one standard form – the main thing with resumes is you are supposed to be representing yourself and your skills. A machinist resume should look different than someone who is an executive administrator, etc. It doesn't give you the opportunity to represent your personal self. It is way too uniform. If they would let you upload your own you could represent yourself. It is good to have a basic one for those who aren't computer savvy – but I would like to do my own so it is personalized."*

One participant had been in the military for 15 years and felt there was no way to translate military skills into civilian language. Such comments all pointed to a desire to upload one's own resume to send to employers. As one person noted,

> *"USAjobs.gov can hold up to 5 different resumes, download copies of certificates, licenses etc, and include a cover letter on submissions to employers, so on USAjobs.gov if I want to apply for a job I can submit an application packet that has all of the documents needed, including the cover sheet, to apply for a job. It is beautiful."*

Not being able to create one's own resume is also a challenge when a person is wanting or needing to change careers. The system sends jobs related to a past career, not what the person is looking for now. Similar problems occur with other sites such as LinkedIn. Once the system labels a person, it is difficult to change how one is viewed by the system, which creates many problems for matching.

As with the online respondents, focus group participants expressed great frustration at being told by the system they were not qualified to see particular jobs. For the more experienced users, it is more about knowing how to "game" the system by putting down exactly what is needed. Simply stated, *"When I pull up jobs I know I am qualified for but I am being barred from looking at it the Job Service employees helps me pull up my qualifications and adjust them so it expands my qualifications and I can get in. I was excluding myself by the parameters I had put into the registration."* For those changing careers based on transferable skills translating from one type of work to another, there seemed to be no other option.

Matching was not identified as a significant problem in the most rural areas. As would be expected, participants from rural areas were more likely to talk about personal connections and "it's who you know" as the most effective method of finding jobs. Seekers noted that many times local jobs are *not* listed on the site as employers really don't want everyone to know what is available, they prefer to hand choose who they want to hire. Interestingly, several participants in different group agreed that, *"If I am using a computer that does not have the site bookmarked I have trouble finding the site. If you google Montana Job Service it doesn't always pop up to the top. If you go to the state site there is not a link for the Montana Job Service."*

Additional features job seekers appreciate include: notices of job fairs, training modules, opportunities for skills testing. Others wished Job Service could offer more practical job search supports such as help with gas vouchers, child care, interviewing clothes, and toiletries.

Another aspect of site functionality involves how and by whom data entered into the system are used. Some express concern that employers are able to view an unknown amount of the job seeker's information. As one participant noted, *"It feels out of balance; like employers can see lots but job seekers can't. My information seems to go to illegitimate firms that send email scams. How did they get it from the state site? I dislike getting spammed due to being registered on Job Service."*

While job seekers do not want to be hassled by scams, they very much want more feedback from employers. The whole process can feel like a *"black hole"* as there is no response after submitting applications. Job seekers expressed general discouragement in not knowing if anyone had even received what was sent. Examples of comments related to this idea included:

> *"A change that I have noticed since I entered the workforce is that when I was young an employer would send a notice that they had received your application and the status of the process, or sorry we aren't considering you. Today, you don't know. Did your application make it or not? Are they considering you? Did they fill the job?" We are just asking for some kind of an auto response when an employer looks at your information."*
>
> *"You wonder where your information goes on the website. I applied for a job last summer and I never heard anything. I filled out the application and everything and where did it go? I never*

heard anything. What do they do with it? Why didn't I get a notification that the job was filled, they received my application – something! You get nothing! No feedback whatsoever from employers."

The experience of finding jobs that are already closed or filled on the website for long periods of time does not help this frustration.

***Montana Job Service Office and Personnel**:* Most participants spoke very highly of the Montana Job Services offices and personnel. This was especially true for participants who struggle with computer skills or are trying to make a career change. *"Having people available to help is critical – not needed all the time but good to know it is there. Some do need it all the time."*

Beyond help with computer skills, the atmosphere in the office can be influenced by basic customer service skills. As one participant said,

"I think Job Service in different cities varies in terms of customer service. This one is hospitable and helpful. In some places you hate to ask for help. I think the size of the community and the number of people using the service impacts that. There may be some difference in the quality of the employees. When there is good service it makes you want to come back, work on your resume and spend time in the office getting help. Here it feels like more of a community resource and they are here to help me. In one office it felt like I was a nuisance when I asked for help."

Other comments went beyond personnel and included practical details such as the limited number of computers available, the small size of the desks for taller people, a lack of general privacy and mixed messages when it comes to social media.

Focus group participants were asked to discuss their views on the use of social media in job searching. Interestingly, several participants who regularly job search in the Job Services office spoke of being discouraged from using social media.

"There are people who can abuse the use of computers in the Job Service office and we are often told we cannot be checking our email or looking at Facebook while on the computers at Job Service. Staff need to realize that Facebook is also used for business because a lot of employers post messages about jobs on their pages. Sometimes they don't have email accounts, but you can send them a message through their Facebook page and they will respond. "

"The Job Service employees make assumptions that if you are viewing anything non-job board related that it is not work. That is not the case but they are inflexible in their approach."

However, other participants do not view social media (generally equated with Facebook) as an appropriate venue for job searching:

"I am on Facebook to connect to my grandkids and all that. It is not 'job finding' me it is 'grandpa me.'"

"I intentionally keep my social media very anonymous. You can't search for me on Facebook and find me. Social is social and professional is professional. I don't want the two crossed. That

is my media for family and friends. If I am on there for that I don't want to get hit by 50 billion posts on other things."

***Job Seeker Profiles*:** When asked about "outside perceptions" of job seekers registered on jobs.mt.gov participants linked their answers to practical realities. One person had noticed the types of questions and options on the site and said, "There are only blue collar checkboxes on the site – so it seems tailored towards those types of workers." Others noted that negative perceptions of people receiving unemployment insurance can affect everyone registered on the site. It was noted that, *"In order for people to keep their benefits they have to be registered on the site and looking for a job. It is irritating when you require people to register and put them into the mix with people who are truly trying to seek employment."*

As is often the case, perceptions can be changed by personal experience, especially when an individual becomes personally involved.

> *"People think of Job Service and correlate to people who are on the low end – poverty level who can't find jobs, people who are too lazy to go out there and do it themselves and go to these different companies and websites and stuff to find a job. They come here because they want to put in little effort. However, I came in here and got feedback on my resume. They talked to me about job options, helped me get my military terms into a civilian world. If I hadn't walked in here and taken the chance to say, 'What can they do for me? What can they help me with? What guidance can they give me?' It was just really hard for me to take that first step to coming here because I had that stereotype in my mind of the poverty people, the welfare food stamp people and that is not a bad thing. But some people are down on their luck and need help. Getting past that image was really hard for me."*

***Overall Job Seeker Focus Group Summary*:** The comments of job seekers in the focus groups reflect both the strengths and challenges of involvement with the LEX and Job Services as a whole. The comments support the overall positive attitudes expressed in the online satisfaction surveys and add some details to the areas where future improvements might be focused.

Utah and Montana Employer Focus Group Findings

As noted In Table 14, there were a total of 16 focus groups (4 in Montana and 12 in Utah) held between June and August of 2013. In Utah and Montana groups were held in multiple cities (See Table 14) chosen to reflect variances in population densities, employment rates and available industries. There were two sessions held in Salt Lake City due to the large population of the city in relation to other parts of the state, and difficulty in recruiting employers in the Salt Lake area. As shown in Table 14, 54 Utah employers (34 women and 20 men) and 24 Montana employers (20 women and 4 men) participated in the focus groups.

Table 14: Distribution of Employer Focus Group Participants

Utah - Service Area/City		Montana – City	
Bear River		Kalispell	6 (25%)
Brigham City	2 (3.7%)		
Logan	3 (5.6%)		
Wasatch Front South		Polson	5 (25%)
Salt Lake City (2)	9 (16.7%)		
Wasatch Front North		Billings	4 (16.7%)
Clearfield	4 (7.4%)		
Ogden	5 (9.3%)		
Eastern Utah		Glendive	8 (33.3%)
Moab	5 (9.3%)		
Price	5 (9.3%)		
Vernal	4 (7.4%)		
Mountainland			
Provo	5 (9.3%)		
Central			
Richfield	3 (5.6%)		
South West			
St. George/Cedar City	7 (13.0%)		
Total	**54**	**Total**	**24**

Employer focus group participants represented a wide range of industries. Among the 24 Montana employers, the most frequently represented industries included staffing/temp agencies (n=4), government workers (n=4) and companies that employ production or service workers (food production, energy, security, etc. - n=5). In Utah, among the 54 participating employers, the most represented industries across the state included staffing/temp agencies (n=8) and companies that employ production workers for various types of products (food, medical devices, industrial, etc.) (n=9). The other industries represented included medical services, higher education, financial/ banking, collections, community service agencies, tourism/ hospitality, construction, call centers, skilled labor/trades, technology and retail. The employers represented companies with varying numbers of employees ranging from 2 to 1,100 in Utah and 5 to 500 in Montana.

Employers in both Utah and Montana provided extensive feedback on the strengths and challenges of using the LEX and their interactions with the respective state agencies. Because the LEX systems are built with the same functionality, it is understandable that many of the comments in Montana and Utah were similar. The findings reported below are based on the focus group sessions and the feedback provided to the open-ended questions of the online satisfaction survey. When appropriate, results unique to either Utah or Montana will be noted. All other comments can be assumed to be true for both states. The findings presented below will first focus on general

comments regarding the LEX then provide specific information regarding: 1) employer perceptions of job seeker registered on the LEX and the information received regarding these job seekers; 2) job posting; 3) job matching; 4) comparisons between the states' LEX and other online job boards 5) social media, and 6) suggestions for improving the LEX in the future.

The Current LEX

The results of the satisfaction surveys presented above show that, overall, employers are very happy with the current LEX. When asked, "what do you like the best" most Utah employers mentioned the option to clone and repost a job. This feature saves time as employers can repost positions without recreating the job posting. (One employer was excited to learn about this feature at the focus group saying, *"I didn't know I could just repost a job. I've been rewriting them every time."*) Employers also like being able to direct job seekers to a company website for completing the application process. In addition, the 24/7 access job seekers have to the job search site from any internet connected location is an asset.

While Montana employers mentioned cloning as a useful tool, the majority of employers in Montana do not post their own positions. Focus group participants identified that having Job Service post for them is an asset, although sometimes the posting is changed inappropriately by the Job Service worker. As in Utah, the ability to direct the method job seekers use to submit applications (i.e. at Job Service, through email, or the personal company websites) is appreciated.

Employers appreciated having access to labor based information on the website. Information such as wage data and state economic numbers have been useful in their hiring process and planning for the future of their businesses. There was limited awareness of other services available on each of the state LEX websites. Those who had visited the website for reasons other than job posting used it for reporting new hires, locating information such as UI numbers or wage data, and to keep abreast of new HR laws or policies (e.g. Affordable Care Act), access publications (e.g. Trendlines) and training/job fair announcements. These online services (or other offerings like the Bridge Program in Utah) were identified as their gateway to using the LEX.

The employers involved with the focus groups were very clear that DWS and Job Service workers are critical components of the process. Not only do they see the agency workers as an inside contact to address their technology questions, job posting and program questions; they also see these workers acting as a type of "personal assistant." Whether or not the worker is computer savvy, employers like connecting with a specific person for answers to their questions and concerns.

Employer Views of LEX Job Seekers

Employer perceptions of the pool of candidates available on the state LEX, impact decisions related to posting positions on the site. Throughout the focus groups themes emerged regarding commonly held perceptions and stereotypes of job seekers using jobs.utah.gov and jobs.mt.gov. These perceptions regarding job seekers impacted employer's decisions regarding which jobs are posted and ideas about whether candidates for their positions are hirable. In both states, most employers believe the LEX has a variety of job seekers and an adequate number of potential applicants at least

for some positions. Employers expressed views regarding job seeker characteristics and the information they receive on which to evaluate job candidates.

***Job Seeker Characteristics*:** Employers were asked to describe the characteristics of the "typical" job seeker registered on the state's LEX. Employers in both states had a variety of experiences in finding qualified applicants with a variety of skill levels to fill positions. Many seemed feel that different websites tend to attract different types of job seekers. It was noted:

> *"General labor positions is where I think Workforce Services has the most value for us. We also work on higher level positions such as machinists/welders and I would agree we have had mixed results on getting qualified people. For those higher end (positions) we like to go to Careerbuilder, we have an account with them."*

Other employers named higher level positions which they had been able to fill by posting on the state site. There was no consistent trend regarding the availability of qualified applicants; it came down to each individual's personal experiences. However, this was not the case when discussing job seekers and Unemployment Insurance (UI).

In each of the 16 focus groups employers shared a belief that many, if not most, of the state's database of job seekers were receiving UI. One employer noted, *"I feel like the community perspective is that it is the UI office. That is where unemployed people go to find work."* While employers acknowledged that qualified workers can be receiving UI due to layoffs and the economic downturn, there is a widely held belief that people receiving UI are less employable or unemployable due to personal deficits; meaning that if they were worth employing they wouldn't have been the one who was laid off. (The one exception to this belief is when a large corporation announces layoffs with STEM based or highly trained workers (e.g. Boeing or Kennecott). These events are viewed more as opportunities to recruit highly qualified workers using DWS or Job Service as a resource.)

The structure of the UI program works against job seekers in the minds of many employers who believe the requirements of programs create a culture of application without intention for employment. As one employer said:

> *"For people collecting UI it is a requirement that they apply for four jobs a week, so they randomly pick different places. If I contact them they have no intentions of coming to work for us or they won't return our calls….It is not always necessarily someone who is looking for a job. I think they are doing what they are supposed to be doing."*

Employers described experiences with job seekers that promoted perceptions that they were not really looking for work, such as times they have offered employment and been declined with the job applicant directly say they were not looking for work. Being disinterested in work was sometimes termed 'lazy,' but it was noted that job seekers were likely to turn down offered positions because wages do not equal or exceed UI benefits. As one employer said bluntly, *"I would say it (UI) lends itself to (the employer) not using DWS."*

Beyond the issue of UI, each state had some unique employer perspectives. In Montana, employers acknowledged that due to the small population and other unique characteristics of their state (e.g. rural setting, difficulty recruiting out of state job seekers) may be responsible for a lack of applicant abundance. There is a sense that in rural areas all job seekers are using Job Service as it is viewed as the location to post and search for jobs. However, rural employers still struggle to find workers, especially for positions that require specific education or training (e.g. engineers, accountants, management).

Utah employers acknowledged the difficulty of housing employment services at one-stops and stated that individuals coming into DWS are often *"a cross section of SES and desperation"* and are *"going through major life changes."* Thus, citizens utilizing DWS are a more at risk population who, if they had the skills they needed to find and maintain employment, would not be using DWS to look for work.

Interestingly, of the 54 Utah employer focus group participants, only three mentioned any connection between people being on government assistance programs and being registered on jobs.utah.gov. When employers made the connection between public benefit recipients and DWS it was generally thought that these individuals were coming to DWS to access other services.

***Job Seeker Information*:** The quality of job seeker information available, resumes and presentation of skills is described as poor. It is the poor quality and presentation of information that has added to employer's reluctance to search pro-actively for job seekers on the LEX. The components that are seen as poor include the site generated resumes, skill listings, and the contact information.

The majority of employers who participated in focus groups did not know that the job seeker resumes they view are auto-generated from information that the job seeker inputs during registration. There was an assumption that the resumes are created by the job seeker and the grammatical errors, blank fields, lack of references, etc. are due to the job seeker being uninterested or incapable of completing that information.

Employers described experiences of accessing resumes that were outdated (as old as 2005-2006). They are confused by this as they are unsure if it means the job seeker is no longer looking for work (the resume should be inactive and isn't), the job seeker has huge unexplained gaps in their employment history or they are already employed, therefore not currently looking for work.

The resume is often used as a screening tool to assess a job seeker's soft skills, such as their ability to communicate effectively, pay attention to detail and present professionally. The perceptions being formed about job seekers because of these resumes, damage the job seekers image and thus their potential for finding work with the employer. In turn, this experience increases damaging perceptions in the community regarding the quality of the workforce available through the LEX.

Employers were also critical of the skills lists and how they presented on the resumes. Not only is a list of skills overwhelming to view, it has little value. It was concerning that the skills are often poorly matched to the experience portion of the resume. The terminology is vague and can hold a different meaning for the employer and job seeker. For example, if an employer asks for experience

in finance they may be requesting advanced knowledge in accounting principles or banking, however a job seeker may click finance because they have managed a cash register as part of a job. A lexicon that could be used to ensure that language is being used in a similar manner was recommended to alleviate the frustration of this issue.

Overall, employers believed there is a lack of professionalism among job seekers. This opinion stemmed from their experiences with job seekers being underdressed for interviews (e.g. t-shirts and jeans, sweats), having visible piercings and tattoos that would be inappropriate for positions being applied for, poorly created resumes (disorganized, poor spelling and grammar, missing information) and a lack of soft skills (communication, organization, people skills). Employers noted:

- "If you come in with lip rings all over and it's so crazy, I put that application to the bottom because I have no tolerance for unprofessional look. It's hard. There are no jobs for people like that."
- "I've never had an applicant come from Workforce Services dressed in anything nicer than jeans and a t-shirt when they come for an interview."
- "If you can't put together a resume, odds are you don't have the other soft skills that are necessary."

Several employers noted that it is not just job seekers from the state websites that lack these skills. Job seekers in general seem to lack professionalism, yet expect higher wages and benefits that come with higher level positions that one works up to over the years.

Overall, employers investing their time in pursuing job seekers were frustrated when contact information was dated, disconnected or absent. Whether the information is out of date for many job seekers or just a few, when employers run into these problems the thought of "wasting more time" on what might be dead ends discourages them from trying again. Whatever can be done to ensure the resumes, skills and contact information provided to employers is accurate and up to date will go far in encouraging them to continue using the state's LEX.

Posting Jobs

Posting jobs, with the intention of securing employees, was one of the primary functions of the LEX evaluated for employers. In Utah, most employers reported self-posting their positions to the state website: jobs.utah.gov. However, there were still some employers who relied on DWS staff to submit and manage their job postings. In Montana, it was the opposite, as most employers reported not posting or managing their jobs. In the most rural area of Montana, only one employer in a focus group self-posted while the others relied on Montana Job Service. Several employers were unaware that self-posting was possible. Ultimately, in the larger cities of both states the employer groups had more representation from employers who self-post jobs.

Choosing an O*net code (or what employers often referred to as "categories") was described as the most difficult part of the job posting process, some employers stated that they spend the majority of their time attempting to find the best category to file their job under. After struggling with selecting a code an employer said, *"After posting my job I was doing sample searches to see what would happen and even when I was searching for job categories that my job should never have come up under, the*

job was popping up in the job search results." This was very frustrating and perceived as a great waste of time.

Many employers believe the categories are outdated and not representative of the type of jobs they are posting. This was especially true among jobs in the STEM fields, with technology driven companies feeling the most excluded in terms of job categories. In addition, O*Net codes are sometimes seen as an issue in identifying the appropriate candidates as more differentiated branches of professions (such as engineers) are often lumped together with disjointed categories (architects). Such clustering makes the categories feel like a poor fit. While in other situations, the categories are so technical they only encompass part of a job, and while it may be the qualification the job seeker "HAS" to have, it is often not the largest part of their job.

Some employers indicated that their industry is not represented anywhere in the current list of O*Net codes. This creates great difficulty in using DWS as the employer is unlikely to find applicants who want to work or have the licenses/training that are required for their positions (e.g. disaster clean-up, web design, specific licensures).

Like job seekers, employers want to present their company and openings in the best possible light and are extremely aware of the image they portray through any medium. They expressed frustration with their lack of ability to present themselves more professionally through formatting features and design such as having the ability to bold, underline and create paragraphs to organize their information. In particular, employers are frustrated with their lack of ability to have the characters/space needed to present a fully formed job post. They view control over presentation as a method of adequately describing their job to the public and screening in individuals who are qualified for their jobs. As one employer noted, *"The more we put in that is very specific, the less likely we are to get the wrong people applying."*

Matching

Only a small number of employers who were part of the focus groups had heard of the matching feature or had attempted to use it. Many learned about this resource for the first time in the focus groups.

Overall, employers who were aware of the matching feature found it cumbersome and ineffective. Common complaints included:

- the website does not allow you to sort or determine any viewing order for matches (i.e. ranking order, veteran status, etc.);
- many matches are with job seekers who are already working or not seeking employment; the matching feature does not appropriately match candidates so employer must sort through a large quantity of resumes from generally unqualified job seekers to find even a small pool of candidates with the skills, education or experience required for the job; this was not as much of a problem for highly skilled positions as the applicant pool decreases as the specificity of education, experience and skills required increases, creating a more manageable pool of candidates to review.

- O*net codes are suspected as being a main culprit to the lack of quality matching as these are often confusing, limited and missing for some industries;

There was also a great deal of confusion regarding what factors are considered in creating the matches. Most employers assumed that it is somehow related to work experience, education and the skills list. However, matches based on these factors are only as good as the matching system. There is a belief that part of the problem in getting appropriate matches is due to forced categories and poor matching of O*net codes. The LEX is described as being too 'literal' with its filtering. Meaning, when you tell the system to only provide people with a minimal level of experience (i.e. a RN with a Bachelor's degree) it will also filter out any candidate qualified beyond the filter (i.e. RN with Master's degree). *"Sometimes you throw the baby out with the bathwater – if the applicant hasn't keyed their qualifications in exactly right they don't get through the screen."*

Employers expressed a variety of views about the most important characteristics that should be used for matching. As on person noted, *"Experience is what I want, specificity of qualifications. I prefer experience, but you take education if the experience isn't there and hope you can train them, longevity and tenure in positions can tell you a lot as well – it gives you an idea about the employee."*

Skills check lists that job seekers use are described by employers as 'vague' and there exists a general belief that job seekers do not use them correctly. Screening creates frustration for employers when candidates are identified as matches due to checking off skills on the LEX profile, but do not have experiences listed on their resume to support those skills. Employer comments included:

- *"The matching doesn't work well because the job seeker is saying that they have skills, but their resume does not reflect this. These applications are useless to me."*
- *"I poked into this (matching) a couple of times and I didn't see a lot that got me really excited. I think it goes back to the buckets – the categories are either too broad or too narrow. Either I get 50 and the first 10 are irrelevant and I just gave up or there would be none."*
- "Sometimes education and/or experience does not make the best candidate – we still want the ability to make choices for ourselves. They may have qualifications on paper, but that doesn't mean they can do the job."

Technology and internet-based companies commented that the programming languages and skills currently used in their businesses are not represented anywhere on the list. This means searching for job seekers using the matching feature, especially with an inability to search uploaded resumes, will not identify candidates in industries requiring specific skills not listed on the check list.

Beyond the listing of experience, education and skills, employers were most interested in finding job seekers who *"want to work!"* As one employer said, *"Matching is helpful – but I still want someone who wants to work here. I still want them to seek us out a bit."* This means a job seeker seeing the job posting, following through on application instructions and making contact with the employer. This is all part of the screening process for employers. This attitude was particularly strong when attempting to fill lower pay positions requiring less skill. For these positions, even employers who know about the matching feature do not actively use it. Nor are employers spending

time filtering through auto-generated resumes or emails to notify them of potential matches. For these positions it was commonly stated that it is the job seeker who should be contacting them when interested in being considered for a position. Employers expect these job seekers to submit an application and resume, and following through with the application directions. Other employers agreed when one person said, *"I don't use the matching on DWS – it is a waste of time. I will post it and if people come to me and are interested that is when I will look at their qualifications."*

Comparing LEX to Other Online Job Boards

In addition to posting on the state LEX, nearly all employers continue to use a wide range of other methods to locate potential employees. These methods included: career fairs, online job boards, colleges, LinkedIn, networking (word of mouth), Veteran's programs, Vocational Rehabilitation, Facebook/Social Media, temp/staffing agencies, radio, flyers, community events, newspapers, industry specific announcements (e.g. Chronicle of Higher Ed) and E-mail blasts. The most often mentioned non-LEX recruitment method was online job boards. Interestingly, most employers in Montana who utilize Job Service workers to post positions on jobs.mt.gov, self-post job announcements on multiple other online job boards.

Employer focus group participants described a variety of thought processes that they go through when deciding the best venue or venues for posting jobs. One of the primary factors considered by employers when deciding where to post particular jobs relates to the skill level required for each position. Typically, as the skill level/experience needed for a position increases, the less likely employers are to post on the state's LEX and the more likely they are to post on a fee based website. This is especially true when trying to cast the net beyond the state. Generally, employers believed that applicants needed to fill high level, specialized positions are not found on a state LEX thus they must use different, and sometimes more expensive, methods. For higher skilled positions employers generally invest more time in actively recruiting and are willing to pay fees to utilize other methods. As one participant noted, *"Higher level positions we are required to post on DWS so Veterans and diversity hires have access to them. That is the only reason I use DWS when posting higher levels positions."* Another person said, *"After six months of using the system daily I know what categories to post my jobs in now if I want a lot of applicants, but if they are specialized (positions I am trying to fill) I don't even dare do it (post on DWS) because I won't get anything and it is just a waste of my time."*

As with many facets of business, cost is always a concern. One employer noted, *"I use Job Service exclusively for the first two weeks of a job posting (due to expense) but I notice a lot of search engines will pick up the Job Service jobs (Indeed, SimplyHired) so I don't need to post elsewhere. I have a hard time spending money when I don't have to."* Time can also be a consideration, *"When I'm desperate, if I have a class and we have a short time frame, I will throw it out on DWS for the mass (amount of) resumes we will receive, but we are pretty picky."*

Rural employers have had more difficulty finding qualified applicants for a wide variety of positions. This was attributed to geography and having a limited pool of applicants with certain skill sets in rural areas. One participant noted, *"We post professional jobs on Careerbuilder etc.*

because those accounts will access other parts of the country and bring the people we need to us. We are losing a lot of talent in our area - they are going to college and not returning to our city."

Rural employers cast a wide net when attempting to access applicants across their state and in different states. They also use more traditional search methods such as newspapers and internship programs, to draw qualified applicants to their geographic area. As one employer said, *"We do a lot of hiring for labor positions in rural areas – those positions are not looking at Careerbuilder so you hit the local newspaper and go locally to Job Service in those areas. Higher end positions, Careerbuilder or Indeed is probably going to reach more of those people with that."*

In addition to online postings, rural employers emphasized the importance of networking or *'word of mouth'* referrals for hiring. They felt this was essential to hiring qualified applicants and despite any other method of connection used, was highly reliable in ensuring they hired the 'right' candidate. In Montana, Job Service was often identified as the most effective method in recruiting job seekers because they *"know what is going on"* with people and employers and can match people up in our own geographic area.

As noted above, 36% of Montana employers and 46% of Utah employers completing the online survey did not feel the state LEX was as good as other online job boards. Findings were similar among employer focus group participants. Employer experiences with other online job boards provided important insights into how each state LEX can be supported and improved to encourage greater use. The strengths and limitations of the state LEX sites relative to other online job boards are described below. (See Table 15)

Strengths

1) Receiving emails about potential matches was appreciated. However, some employers who receive a high volume of potential matches or applicants feel overwhelmed when emails arrive for each individual candidate. It was suggested that this feature would be better if the information arrived as a daily (weekly?) digest.

2) The LEX is specific to Utah/Montana and therefore employers know they are searching for applicants close to home. As online job boards reach a national audience it can be more difficult to access local candidates only, or have only local candidates apply.

3) The state LEX is free! As previously mentioned, employers are willing to pay the cost associated with using other online job boards to search for hard to find job seekers. However, especially with smaller companies or government based employers, having a no-cost option is important to their bottom line.

4) While it is described as both a blessing and a curse, having a high volume of applicants in response to job postings is a benefit of the LEX. While quality is sometimes questioned, volume is not something that always occurs when using other online job boards. *"I receive a higher volume of applicants from the LEX, but not necessarily higher quality."*

5) The LEX does not require or force employers to fill out each field in the job posting, making it easier to post some types of positions as one can use a general description to get the job posted.

Table 15: State LEX Websites Compared to Other Online Job Boards

Strengths of LEX as compared to other job search websites
• Email notifications • The site is state specific • Free to the public • High volume of applications • Flexibility for employers in how much information is provided in a job posting
Limitations of LEX as compared to other job search websites
• Limited formatting options/design options • Limited space for specificity in job postings • Difficulty with O*net codes • High volume of applications does not equate to high quality applications • Filtering/Screening/Matching are poor • Functionality of reviewing matches; scrolling is tedious • Other sites will push job postings to other sites; increasing the impact without increasing employer's efforts • Poor contact information for job seekers • Outdated and/or poorly written resumes • Perceptions of job seekers: UI, entry level, less willing to move for work

Limitations

1) Employers want more high quality design and formatting options. This includes the ability to create paragraphs, italicize, underline, create bolding, personalize with logos, provide links to information and be unlimited in the length of their post. Essentially, to allow their job descriptions to have the proper detail and appearance it requires. The ability to do this on other websites is correlated with those websites having a more overall professional appearance. When the design is poor, the job posting does not adequately represent the company or the type of job seeker they are hoping to find.

2) The LEX limits employers in listing specific skills needed. The ability to use unlimited keyword searches and have it produce relevant results is more effective on other sites. Careerbuilder search options were praised for their ability to reverse search, search by specific skills and search uploaded resumes created by the job seeker. "*If you are looking for a CNC machinist that has a G code and a lot of skills – there is only so much space to describe that. You are limited.*"

3) Choosing an O*Net is described as the most difficult aspect of the posting process on the LEX. Being limited to one category which is not defined or described on the site, one has to do a 'best guess' as to which category to list the job. On other online job sites the job title is allowed to speak for itself, eliminating the need for employers to face this frustration.

4) Filtering through applicants is easier on other online job boards. On the LEX a lot of information is required (registration) to access job seeker information.

5) On the LEX, employers expressed a dislike of how the scrolling feature works when looking at applicants. You have to click through each applicant, scroll through the page and then scroll to the top of the page to move to the next seeker. *"Literally I was dizzy after 10 minutes of looking at them."*

6) Other websites, such as RockyMountainJobs.com, allow you to post the job once and it is pushed out to multiple other sites. It is seen as a good investment on employer's time because they cast a wide net without the extra time it takes to post the job individually on each site.

7) Other job boards are described as more intuitive – meaning that the website guides the employer (and job seeker) through the process of posting and searching.

8) Other websites have useful data portals that allow employers to see what other employers offer in terms of salary, how many other similar job openings are currently listed on the sites, etc. They receive real time information on their job postings in relation to other similar posts.

9) Other sites, such as Careerbuilder, have a renewal button on job postings. This allows jobs to be thrust back to the top of the list, without an employer closing and re-opening a position due to a concern that it is not visible to job seekers.

10) As previously discussed, on the LEX filtering does not work adequately. *"A lot of times on Workforce I will say 'they need three years of welding', they have three months and they still appear in my search. Careerbuilder has a lot more effective filter and I get a lot more of what I am looking for."*

Social Media

Most employers recognized that technology and social media do, whether they like it or not, impact recruiting and hiring practices in the 21st century. Focus group participants talked about their views on this growing component of employee recruitment. The responses ranged from an awareness of how powerful the internet and social media can be as an effect tool, *"I think that it gets the word out a lot faster that we are looking for someone – we can post a job and have someone coming to apply within a half hour"* to feeling overwhelmed, *"I want the candidates to be found in one centralized location. I don't what to have to go to several sites to find them."*

Currently, many employers are aware of and are using some forms of social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.), but there is wide variation in the type and frequency of use. Information does travel quickly via social media and both company accounts and personal networks can be used to announce jobs or provide company information to job seekers. (As noted earlier, employers

would like to be able to link company websites and social media sites to job postings.) However, social media was primarily viewed as a method of advertising, networking or socializing, not necessarily as an active recruitment method. There were basically two lines of discussion regarding the use social media, one focused on the initial recruitment of job seekers and the second focused on the "vetting" of job seekers identified as potential hires.

***Recruiting Job Applicants Using Social Media*:** Accessing social media as a recruitment tool is a new concept to most employers. In general, there was concern that using social media will create a high volume of applicants and cause hiring personnel to be overwhelmed. Some organizations and types of employers (such as government and universities) have policies regarding when a job seeker becomes a potential applicant and therefore when their tracking process begins. This creates more work for human resource personnel and leads to concerns regarding legal ramifications of using social media to recruit.

Of those who do access social media, LinkedIn is viewed as the most effective and professional social media service for recruitment. However, employers identify LinkedIn as catering to more professional or educated job seekers and would not be a site one would use to fill production or labor positions.

Employers who represented national corporations expressed concern that social media may be an ineffective method for them to use, as they are often recruiting for positions that would only be filled via the local job pool. Therefore, posting positions on their national sites would not reach their intended audience.

In both Utah and Montana, employers suggested that their states in general lag behind others in the use of technology. Social media was described as a 'metropolitan' tool that may not work as well in rural areas. In particular, employers in rural Montana suggested the infrastructure required to use social media is absent as it is perceived that many people still rely on Job Service or public libraries to access the internet.

A few employers recognized that NOT using social media may limit access to younger workers and are concerned about a cultural divide due to technology. They are acquainted with descriptions of the *"millennial generation"* and believe these younger job seekers are technology savvy and looking for work via multiple web based/social media methods. Some employers have concerns that this impacts the younger job seeker's ability to use the traditional 'resume/application' process to search for jobs, as well as the employer's ability to access these applicants using traditional searching and matching methods.

Some employers seeking to expand their pool of resumes from younger job seekers are using alternate methods such as universities, internships, LinkedIn and other social media. One employer stated he was currently invested in a heavy social media campaign to recruit younger workers because he believes that is where they are looking for jobs. *"They are on their phone – they go straight to their phone. If we had the technology it would be nice if they got a text that said, 'Hey, new job, go to this website'."*

***Vetting Potential Hires**:* Some employers eagerly shared how they have used social media to view potential employees to see if their personal appearance or online presence is a good match with their company's purpose or population. However, it was more common for employers to express concerns about the legal ramifications of using social media to preview a potential job applicant. Some companies have strict policies against it and others are hesitant to use social media for fear of being accused of discriminatory hiring practices because of potential visibility of protected class information such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, etc. Any system which "required" the employer to access social media to view a job seeker would not be used.

Overall, it appears that social media, while widely recognized as a growing tool – and one that is not going away - is still in its infancy in terms of employee recruitment among Utah and Montana employers. While professional sites, like LinkedIn, are generally seen as employment focused, they are not widely used by employers to recruit or hire job seekers. When asked if DWS or Job Service should invest time into cultivating these tools for employers and job seekers, it was suggested that teaching employers and job seekers how to use these sites would be the most effective integration of these technologies into the current services offered by these agencies.

Improving the LEX

While employers reported overall satisfaction with the website, they also had suggestions for ways to improve the current LEX. These ideas are meant to increase both the frequency and the effectiveness of site visits. Many of the issues have already been identified by DWS and Montana Job Services, however, this information is useful to highlight the impact of the problems on users. The six general categories of concerns are explained here with specific examples of listed in Table 16.

1) Online Access to Information: Employers would like to access information online that benefits their employees. This online information could include: access to job seeker reports regarding their training and assessment results, lists of classes (such as typing, etc.) that could be downloaded to display and even an online calendar of events. As one employer noted, *"As an example, they held a free training that all my employees needed at the local DWS, but I didn't know about it and sent my employees to a different state and paid $110 each for 25 people to get trained. They only had three people show up in the office for the training. I had no idea, if I had been aware of it I would have filled the class."*

The market information and economic data needs to be presented differently. This information should be area driven, so that it represents the economies in different parts of the states. For example, the wage information for similar positions may be different in Glendive and Billings.

There were a few suggestions for information that would be valuable to employers, but is not currently on the website. These suggestions included: bonding information for felons, announcements of special job fairs (e.g. STEM company layoffs), information that employers could provide to workers who are being terminated or struggling with issues that impact their work (e.g. SNAP, SSI, Voc Rehab, child care, etc.), community calendar of events and program information (e.g. Bridges, WIA).

Employers understand there is no perfect form of communicating this information and there is a fine line between over and under communicating. Most, however, agreed that either an email notification and/or an easy way to quickly view the information online would allow them to stay up to date on information and not be bogged down with multiple pages of reading. Employers also suggested a Twitter feed or blog would be a resource they would access to receive up to date information.

2) Simplify Registration: Employers are concerned that the registration process, for both employers and job seekers, is too labor intensive and dissuades job seekers from accessing the system. They are also concerned that the amount of information collected is unnecessary. For example, an employer for the federal government was surprised that a job seeker's entire SSN was required for registration – as the federal government only requires the last four numbers and birthdate for identity verification. Utah Futures was used as an example of a simplified system – they require very little information for a person to browse the website.

3) Improved Search Function: As previously mentioned, employers would like for the LEX to be easier to search. Multiple times the Google search engine (keyword searching with relevance ranking) was referenced as the desired type of search mechanism. Employers also mentioned other agencies (LDS Employment Services) that has a keyword search that allows employers to search resumes. For employers, having a usable search engine to search an applicant's resume is viewed as a tool that will decrease the time they need to spend searching for candidates on the LEX.

4) Resume Builder: Employers want job seekers to have the ability to create and personalize targeted resumes for their advertised positions. The current resume builder was described as "generic" and the resumes that are received from the site were critiqued as being poorly written (grammar, spelling) and incomplete. Few employers were aware that the auto-generated resumes from the LEX were not being created by job seekers for their specific job postings.

5) Usability: Usability covers a wide range of desired features that all center on making the website more functional. Most of the usability functions were basic and are listed in Table 16. It is believed that adding these features would increase the job seeker pool and would drive job seeker and employer traffic to the site. The problems encountered with usability tend to be small yet irritating enough to dissuade employers from returning. For example:

- *"I logged in, but it wouldn't give me the option to go in and post a job. I had posted about 50 jobs before, but I couldn't get in that day.*
- *"What does it mean when I turn screening on?*
- *"I have to relearn when I go in. There is not a lot of information or drop downs that give you directions."*
- *"They need to make the website more user friendly to search resumes and applicants."*

Table 16: Suggested LEX Features or Changes

Online Access to Information	1) Lists of classes and trainings 2) Ability to download announcements in pdf 3) Results of assessments and trainings 4) Online workshops 5) Training on how to write a good job post (specifically Montana)
Simplification	1) Job seeker registration 2) Employer registration 3) Eliminate use of full SSN
Search Function	1) Google like search – search resumes for keywords 2) Relevance ranking on searches
Resumes	1) Allow individuals to upload personal resumes 2) Include spell/grammar check functions 3) Allow warehousing of resumes, references, etc. for job seekers
Usability	1) Spell check 2) Employer view job posting online/final format 3) Cloning available on open orders 4) Copy and paste into job order 5) Generate email responses to job seekers inside the LEX so employers can send mass emails and/or communicate inside the online system 6) Allow the LEX to warehouse job seeker information so inactive seekers can still receive notifications of jobs they may like 7) Job orders pushed to external websites (even with a small fee) 8) Scrape job orders to jobs.utah.gov and jobs.mt.gov 9) Provide the date resumes were created by job seeker 10) DWS or Job Service staff available to answer LEX questions 11) Renewal button to refresh job postings to the top of the list 12) Lexicon and hover text that would make sure employers and job seekers are using terminology the same way 13) Map of the state – on the website – so job seekers could search by clicking on the city/region they are searching 14) Ability for employers to post positions in multiple cities 15) Links to colleges and Vocational Rehabilitation – for posting purposes 16) Link to local Chamber of Commerce or city website to provide information for out of city/state job seekers 17) Ability to link social media accounts inside job postings
Matching	1) Employer controlled sorting of job seeker matches 2) Employer controlled ranking by job order such as ability to self-rank skills, education and experience in a desired order for each position 3) Eliminate O*net codes 4) Improve screening / filtering tools

In Montana is was suggested that as the state moves to a more 'self-serve' culture for employers many who are newly acquainting themselves with the system will produce an initial uptick of questions and frustrations. Posting on an online job board will not be new to them as these employers are already posting in multiple places, but they may have difficulties or frustration while learning a new system and with adding one more job board to their list of posting duties.

Proper training to use the website was also important to employers. While there is variance in the time they are willing to invest in learning how to use the website, employers state if they had a better understanding on how to use jobs.utah.gov / jobs.mt.gov as a recruitment tool they would use it more and with less trepidation. It was acknowledged that various learning styles would emphasize a need for both online self-directed trainings and in-person trainings conducted by agency employees.

6) *Matching*: See discussion in section above.

Employer Feedback – Conclusion

The results presented here show that employers are both generally satisfied with the state LEX sites and that they have many suggestions from which decisions regarding future changes to the LEX in Utah and Montana can be made. While the content of the changes is being decided it will also be important that attention be given to the process of implementing these changes. Beyond all the *"fine tuning"* employers requested, there was also a clear theme regarding the need for better employer education about the site (including the upgraded features) and attention to marketing and image management of the site and the agencies in general.

Employer Education: The level of employer knowledge of services available on the state LEX varies widely. In one 10 person focus group in Utah, participants were asked about using the matching feature that would pull up qualified applicants immediately. Not one of the ten employers knew that they could access matches online. They didn't know how screening features worked to limit who could view their job postings and eagerly asked questions regarding how the system worked. Every person pulled out a pen and took notes so they could research it after the focus group. This was an extreme, but in every group across both states there were employers who were unaware of these features, some because they use flat file or mediated services, as well as many who did not have any experience using the LEX other than going through the process of posting a job.

On the other hand, there are employers who are willing to do the work but do not find their investments of time and energy posting on the state LEX productive. Some are now leery about investing too much time using the matching feature and then sifting and reviewing inappropriate referrals. These employers did not experience an adequate return on their time investment. Such past experiences have created distrust that the online job board will provide the types of job seekers they are looking for, with the right types of experience. For those who have used these features and have been dissatisfied with the results, it is unknown whether they had adequate information on how to use the tools to create their desired outcomes. The multiple concerns and negative experiences with matching tools may be due to the tools being poorly designed; however there is also an element of education that seems to be missing for employers as to how they can successfully use the tools that are already available.

Moving forward, it is imperative that DWS and Montana Job Service invest heavily in trainings and tools to bring employers up-to-date on features newly introduced to the system as well as provide basic information regarding current functionality and services available on the website. For employers who are unaware of what is available on the current system, any exposure to the tools may increase satisfaction and the likelihood that the employer will give the system another chance.

Managing the Image: In both Utah and Montana, employers indicated that one of the biggest challenges for DWS and Montana Job Service is managing their image. Employers who use the system expressed frustration with the stigma attached to the LEX. Historically, in both states, DWS and Job Service have been linked and interacted with UI in different roles. While their current role with UI is to provide a forum for unemployed job seekers to look for work, the frustrations and stigma attached to UI continues to plague their image in the community.

To counteract the negative image, employers expressed a desire to have a DWS and Job Service employee more involved in the employer community. This was seen as both a resource to employers and as a way of *"marketing"* the services available through employer focused networking and community organizations (e.g. Lyons, Kiwanis, BEAR, Chamber of Commerce, JSEC). The employers who were present for this round of focus groups are already engaged with DWS or Job Service on some level and therefore have some connection to these agencies that prompts future engagement with services. Their perspective is that DWS and Job Service have difficulty with their reputations among other employers due to their low visibility in the community. Although DWS and Job Service have policies prohibiting them from competing with private industry, they could still engage more with the community, providing education about available services. This in turn could lead to employers finding more highly qualified job seekers in the state LEX.

While employers have had experiences with job seekers that support the perceptions or stereotypes they hold, they also strongly believe there is an image issue that prohibits other employers from using the site AND discourages job seekers from looking on the site. Repeatedly, employers expressed that DWS and Job Service need to do outreach, promotion and marketing to shift the misperceptions about their agencies so that the volume of employers and job seekers increase – which benefits all industries using DWS or Montana Job Service as a recruitment tool.

Montana Front Line Staff Focus Groups

The original evaluation design did not include focus groups with front line staff in Montana; however, once the employer and job seeker focus groups concluded at each of the four Montana sites, Job Service staff were anxious to infuse their perspectives into the process. As with the other focus groups, these sessions provided unique insights into the experiences of those tasked with assisting employers and job seekers in coming together on the Montana Job Service LEX.

Overall, the input provided by the Montana Job Service workers was similar to what has been learned from other sources. Common frustrations with the LEX include:

- Lack of functionality and options around job seeker registration and resume information collection, formatting and sharing
- Usability issues for both employers and job seekers; providing helps just so that people can access and use the system
- Community perceptions that they are still "the UI office" only serving blue collar low-wage workers with entry level jobs
- Few employers who know about, let alone use the matching system
- Frustration with O*net codes and all the issues associated with use of this system

There were some unique issues and suggestions that came from these sessions. While not representative of all workers, these comments often link to other ideas lending more evidence to support broader areas for change.

Job Service workers were especially concerned that job seekers are not fully aware of how they are being presented to employers. As one person said, *"The resume that is generated it is the opposite of what we encourage people to do. It is not a good looking resume."* Job seekers are unaware that this is what employers see. However, as one worker said, *"It [the system] doesn't tell them what the benefit is of entering information completely. They don't know the repercussions of doing it poorly. In UI you get more information on why you do things – that may be helpful to job seekers to know why they are being asked. They need to know what the end result is with their effort."* This and other comments suggested that job seekers (and employers) would benefit from additional help text, to give definitions of terms and the purpose as well as use of questions and answers. It could be hidden, only appearing if needed, but it would help people better understand the process and how it works.

In two of the offices, workers spoke of encouraging job seekers to use Indeed as a more user friendly site for job searching. As one worker noted, *"Pointing them towards other online sites is an option – their search engines sometimes are easier. If I am with someone on the phone and they are struggling and the directions for the site are difficult I will sometimes tell them to go to Indeed because our openings are on Indeed."* Another worker from a different office said, *"When I click on a job on Indeed I get to see the whole thing; there is no matching or filtering going on. They don't tell me what I lack in order to apply. There are limitations around that. As a job seeker I think that is where they get frustrated; being suppressed or being told I cannot apply."*

Some Job Service workers expressed concern regarding employers taking more responsibility for posting their own jobs. One concern focused on employers producing low quality or potentially illegal job postings due to a lack of understanding of how it looks to job seekers. One person suggested, *"Is there a possibility for the employer, when uploading a job order, to click on a preview of what the job seeker will see when they look at the job order. That would be a good method of them checking what they have entered and editing as needed."* Another worker asked, *"Montana has unique employment laws. Is there some way to build in those laws to the self-service system?"*

Workers were aware that they have more functionality than employers when posting a job. This functionality is viewed as critical to creating successful matches. Examples of comments reflecting this idea include:

"I explain to new employers that if they enter the job order on their own they can pull their matches and contact potential employees. If I do it on my own I am going to send an email to any job seeker that fits the category. So employers want me to do it. I think employers need both options; the email to the right candidates and their ability to pull resume matches themselves."

"On Job Service side we have the option of checking a box and sending a notification out to a potential job seeker. For an employer they have bare bones – they post the job and hope for the best. There is not an easy way for them to reach out to applicants."

These questions and concerns were not focused on keeping job posting activities within the role of the job service worker, but with helping employers who do it themselves to be successful.

Clearly, a portion of the concern regarding employer self-posting was workers losing a part of their own job identity as a Job Service worker. In this and other ways, it seems that perhaps some Job Service workers are unsure of their job duties and what "counts" as approved activities within their scope of work. One worker captured the concern well in saying:

"I am happy with what we have done to provide information to employers but I am not happy with our lack of marketing. The only option we have our Chamber meetings and downtown meetings and I get bombarded with lots of questions about labor market issues. That type of networking is valuable and we should encourage that type of networking and we should be able to account for that time as Job Service employers. There has to be time to account for the time we spent nurturing relationships and building relationships with employers. Sometimes you are interacting with them several times per week answering questions, but we don't get to account for that time."

This lack of clarity in job roles or willingness to accept new job roles has the potential to undermine several aspects of the LEX project.

Job Service frontline workers are significant implementers of many aspects of the GenLEX project. Their ownership of and belief in the components being implemented are important to the overall success of the project. Involving these workers in the process (i.e. helping them understand the benefits of the LEX over sending job seekers to Indeed.com) will improve overall usage of the system, benefiting job seekers, employers and hopefully increasing the job satisfaction of Montana Job Service employees.

DWS Frontline Worker Online Surveys

DWS Workforce Development Specialist Input

Introduction: All DWS Workforce Development Specialists (WDS) were invited to participate in a short, online survey to gather their opinions about the functioning of the jobs.utah.gov website and the effectiveness of the website in serving the employer customers of DWS. The survey was available to all participants over a 2 ½ week period in October 2013.

Of 18 WDS workers who were invited to participate, 17 individuals responded. All service areas were represented in the results. While respondents averaged nearly 13 years of employment with DWS (range: less than one year to 21 years), they only averaged a little over 3 years (range: 1 month to 13 years) as a WDS worker.

Findings: The 17 WDS participants provided a wide range of ideas and perspectives in their responses. Quantitative results of this survey are presented in Table 17. All responses to the open-ended questions are summarized here while specific responses are found at the end of this report.

Respondents were first asked whether or not employers find it easy to post jobs on jobs.utah.gov. A majority (52.9%) reported that employers do not find this process easy. When asked what makes posting difficult, the most common responses were not surprising: cumbersome registration, problems with log-in, and the proper selection of O'NET codes. In general, it is easier for employers who post on a regular basis as they learn the steps. Because the process is not very intuitive it is more difficult for those who do not post regularly and must try to remember over time. While these challenges are common to many, some issues are greater for specific types of employers.

Employers who are part of a larger corporation sometimes struggle to know the Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) and Utah Identification Number (UI ID) they must use to register on the site. There is a process for getting a pass phrase but it is a mediated service that employers often don't know exists. The WDS cannot assist the employer when they are not in the office. This slows down the employer if they have to wait. There are also issues for employers when multiple people access the website or when attempting to register as an employer but is already in the system as a job seeker as the system will not allow them to use the same email.

WDS workers are being asked to train employers, whenever possible and appropriate, to enter their own job orders, reducing the number of mediated job orders. It was noted that any effort to move toward encouraging employers to self-post should include readily available "helps" on the specific web pages used for posting jobs. Only about one-third of the workers felt they could always help an employer solve a problem regarding the website, even with Statewide Employment Services team (SET) assistance. This means that sometimes employers just have to *"live with the problem."* Suggestions for ways to improve the employer experience include:

- Have the SET teams' phone number clearly listed so an employer can call with questions.
- Design a way for the WDS worker to see what the employer sees so as to walk them through more easily when the employer calls the WDS worker for help.

Table 17: WDS Input on Experience With Employers

	N = 17
Do most employers you work with find it easy to post jobs on jobs.utah.gov?	
Yes	8 (47.1%)
No	9 (52.9%)
Are employers influenced, either for or against a job seeker, by the resumes they access online as generated from job seeker information inputted on jobs.utah.gov?	
Yes	13 (76.5%)
No	1 (5.9%)
Don't know	3 (17.6%)
Do most employers experience jobs.utah.gov as better, the same, or worse than other sites for posting jobs?	
Better than	2 (11.8%)
The same as	7 (41.2%)
Worse than	7 (41.2%)
Do most (or many) employers who post jobs on jobs.utah.gov (not flat file jobs) use the job matching feature to identify qualified job seekers? Yes	3 (17.6%)
No	11 (64.7%)
Don't know	3 (17.6%)
When an employer calls you with a problem such as sign-in issues, website confusion, etc. how often are you able to help the employer solve the problem (either yourself or using resources for example from the SET team) Always	6 (35.3%)
Usually	8 (47.1%)
Sometimes	3 (17.6%)
Rarely	-0-
Never	-0-
In general, how do you think most employers perceive job seekers registered on jobs.utah.gov? (Mark all that apply)	
A pool of candidates appropriate for a wide range of positions	5 (29.4%)
People on unemployment	16 (94.1%)
Welfare recipients	11 (64.7%)
Lower skilled workers	14 (82.4%)
Individuals new to the work force	4 (23.5%)
Other	3 (17.6%)
Do most employers believe they can access job seekers with a wide range of skills and abilities on jobs.utah.gov Yes	2 (11.8%)
No	12 (70.6%)
Don't Know	3 (17.6%)
What methods do you use to engage with employers and educate them about jobs.utah.gov? Email blasts	8 (47.1%)
Community events (job fairs, etc.)	17 (100%)
Attend community business events (Chamber meetings, etc.)	16 (94.1%)
Call/Walk-In	16 (94.1%)
Other	5 (29.4%)

- Provide a video link on the employer page that gives a step-by-step tutorial on how to register, log-in, post jobs, search job seekers, find matches and close a position. Employers think it is harder than it is; this will help reduce their fears.
- Enhance features for spell and grammar check for both employers and job seekers, both sides need help with this.
- Send the appropriate WDS worker a task when a new employer posts a job so a site visit can be done and DWS services offered. DWS can be more pro-active in offering assistance.

Respondents were asked why they felt employers choose not to post on the state LEX. Comments were divided into two primary themes, 1) problems with the posting process and website in general and 2) a negative view of the applicant pool available on the state LEX. The issues noted above regarding problems posting jobs were certainly key, however, there are also employers who have never tried and are intimidated by the online process in general. Employers know that there are many options available for posting jobs and most WDS workers (82.4%) believe employers experience the DWS site as "the same as" or "worse than" other job posting websites.

WDS workers also felt that employer perceptions of the applicant pool on jobs.utah.gov contribute to low usage rates of the site. WDS workers summarized the general employer perception of DWS job seekers as people on unemployment (94.1%), doing the minimum to keep their benefit. There is also a perception that the DWS pool is limited to low-skilled workers (82.4%). WDS workers do not feel the system does a good job of making the job order available to only qualified candidates and employers must sort through too many to find the right person. However, less than 20% of WDS workers believe that employers use the job matching feature of the system. From their experiences, most employers believe that *"job seekers should come to me to seek the job I have posted; it tells me they have initiative and really want the job."* With that mindset, matching is clearly not a concern.

According to the WDS workers, employer perceptions of applicants are influenced by the resumes produced by the system. There was general agreement that the resumes produced from the registration process are lacking. Part of it is due to the system but it is also because many job seekers do not understand the connection between the registration and the resume. Most WDS workers (87.5%) have also worked with job seekers. As one worker noted, *"It really comes down to job seekers understanding what the registration information they submit does and seeing the value in taking time the first time to make their resume look nice and complete."* When this fact is not known or attention paid then as another WDS worker said, "I have had some employers tell me they immediately throw them in the garbage because applicants don't have enough initiative to take the time to create a professional resume." This is clearly not the goal.

Overall: In general, employers are viewed as having a neutral to negative view of the site. Whether or not the view is positive or negative, it is often a very limited view of DWS offerings and job seeker base. There is a need to market the changes (that is "educate" employers) and encourage people to *"give us another chance."* Employers need to experience the value in taking time to post with us, this may include providing regular updates regarding the ACTIVE job seekers listed on the site, their skills, and education levels.

WDS workers, in general, want to be able to better serve employers and are seeking the tools to do so. Something as simple as more clearly identifying which WDS worker covers each geographic area of the state. With the proper tools, a good system and resources for educating employers about the benefits of the system, WDS workers would be better equipped to accomplish their goal of providing quality customer service to the employers whom they serve.

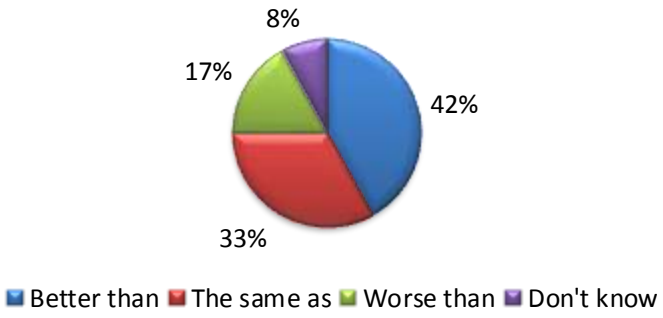
DWS Connection Team Survey

***Introduction*:** Connection Teams work directly with customers as they seek employment and navigate many parts of the jobs.utah.gov website. They have a wealth of experience that provides rich detail about the usability of the website and the frustrations they commonly address with job seekers. This group of workers (N = 150) were asked to provide feedback using an online survey regarding their perceptions of jobs.utah.gov, the problems job seekers encounter and suggestions they have for modifying/improving the website so it better serves the population of job seekers they interact with on a daily basis.

Before presenting feedback from the Connection Teams, it important to remember that these workers almost exclusively interact with job seekers who come to the Job Connection Room (JCR) in a DWS office. Currently, little is known about how job seekers in the JCR differ from job seekers accessing jobs.utah.gov outside DWS. However, data from the baseline period of the online satisfaction surveys shows that most job seekers using jobs.utah.gov indicate they are comfortable using computers to job search. It also indicated that approximately three-quarters of respondents find jobs.utah.gov easy to navigate. Interestingly, many workers emphasized that in their experience, most jobs seekers are not comfortable or knowledgeable in using the computer to job search. This is understandable as they are interacting with job seekers in the JCR; people who come to DWS specifically to job search. Since most job seeker respondents (77%) indicated they primarily access jobs.utah.gov from home, it is understandable that the perspective of Connection Team primarily reflects the needs of job seekers who access the website from the JCR. This is a small and unique portion of the job seeker population in Utah and most likely those most in need of assistance and resources for accessing and using jobs.utah.gov effectively. This is the context from which data from the Connection Teams will be analyzed.

Findings: The survey was conducted in late October 2013, nearly 5 months after the updates were made to the website. This provides an important perspective on how some of the new changes are working for customers. There were 100 Connection Team workers who responded to the survey, a 66% response rate. At least one person from each service area participated in the study. The median length of time employed by DWS was 7 years while the median length of time in their current position was 3 years.

Figure 38: DWS Website Relative to Other Job Search Sites



Connection Team members were asked to give their perspective on several different questions regarding the DWS website and job seekers using the site. As shown in Figure 38, most Connection

Team members view the DWS website as better than or at least the same as other job search website. Those who felt the site was "worse than" other sites were asked to identify features to could be improved or are missing from jobs.utah.gov. Ideas included:

- Job posting have better information (9) (e.g. Contact information, layout, wages, hours, etc.)
- Directions/help easier to find (4)
- Other sites do not require a profile/sign on (7)
- Searching/matching functions better on other sites (4)
- Job seekers get a better response from employers on other sites (2)
- Job seekers do not have enough room to input all of their information(1)

While the responses to this question spanned several themes – there was an overarching theme of jobs.utah.gov being more *cumbersome* than other websites. The time involved, from creating profiles to applying for jobs, is increased by a lack of directions and site usability. Other sites require less information and job seekers have an easier time locating what they are looking for with their searches.

The process of registering produced many questions directed towards the Connection Teams. Respondents were asked to identify the most frequently asked questions. The themes of these questions/complaints include:

- Usability questions (31) (e.g. Why do I have to sign in? Where do I find xx? Why can't I add this information (licensure, skill set) to my profile/resume? How to find links on the website – and navigate website registration process)
- Email/single sign-on (20) – difficulty remembering login password, difficulty creating emails to use the site, JCR computers blocking Gmail, Yahoo and Facebook (so job seekers cannot access to create a method to logon)
- Computer Literacy (14) – job seekers in the JCR struggle with basic computer skills that prevent them from registering with ease
- Cumbersome (15) – the registration process is time consuming and job seekers "give up" on filling out their profiles when it becomes time consuming

Connection Team respondents noted a lack of information available to job seekers, either in the JCR or on the computer, that explains the purpose of registration and how the information is used. While they have traditionally spent time with job seekers explaining these processes and the benefit of doing them well, they stated they have less time to engage with job seekers at this level of intensity and job seekers express increased frustration as a result.

When asked to identify problems (beyond registration) experienced by job seekers the majority centered on the site's usability (28). Usability issues include:

- Inability to find information (e.g. links, information)
- Using search (e.g. knowing how, using correct terms to provide results)
- Difficulty understanding site/navigation (e.g. not enough information or do not understand the directions)

- Log in information and UWORKS information being different – creating issues for user
- Having to use paperless format
- Site appearance (e.g. font size, appearance of buttons, colors, formatting)

Customers also struggle with a lack of computer skills/reading skills (10), knowing how to update their profile (5), resume issues (4) (e.g. want to create their own/adjust the auto-generated version), the job posting being information poor (3), difficulty with matching (2) (e.g. O*net codes do not produce the jobs they want) and difficulty completing online application (2) (e.g. benefits, work applications).

When asked whether job seekers had difficulty finding what they need on jobs.utah.gov, 40% did feel that job seekers in general find it difficult to locate what they needs on the website. Job seekers struggle to find:

- Appropriate matches – difficulty with o*net codes, profile exclusions
- Where and how to update their resume/profile
- Searching; ability to search for jobs by company name
- Registration
- Navigating the page to find information

The majority (80%) felt that job seekers using the system are able to find jobs that meet their skills and abilities. Connection Team workers reported the most common "missing" jobs were in construction, trucking and many areas of management. Respondents reinforced the same perception as employers and job seekers, that jobs.utah.gov houses mostly low-income, blue collar and entry level types of positions and that more skilled job seekers are probably looking elsewhere. The registration process and how it is linked to the resume has been another area of challenge. Nearly one-third (32%) of Connection Team respondents did not think that job seekers really know that the information they enter for the registration process is used to create the resume that employers view. When asked to explain this further, Connection Team respondents noted that job seekers are generally "ok" (29) with employers viewing their resumes online, but also noted that the resume builder needs more directions (10), improved editing capability (6) (e.g. grammar, spell check) and desire the ability to upload their own resume (4).

While this question asked about job seekers *feelings* about employers viewing their resume, the responses identified frustrations or suggestions for improving the current resume builder and processes connected to resume builder, such as registration. Connection Team respondents also reported that most job seekers want employers to view their resume suggesting that job seekers believe it will help them get in front of employers, improving their chances of connecting with any employer. However, worker comments also demonstrated some frustrations/stereotypes about job seekers in the JCR. *"The customers know when we tell them…and then when shown what it looks like, we stress professionalism. However, the majority of the customers don't really seem to care…it's just the registration." "Even when you explain the value of making it look resume worthy, may people are just doing it to fulfill the Unemployment requirements as quickly as possible. Some customers don't seem to care."*

Connection Team members were also asked if they felt there were common stereotypes or perceptions in the community of the "type" of job seekers who post their resumes on jobs.utah.gov. More than one-third (36%) felt there were common perceptions in the community, about one-third did not feel there were any stereotypes and another third felt they did not know. Those who felt there were community perceptions or stereotypes were asked to describe these perceptions. The descriptions were consistently negative and some extremely negative. One comment sums up the others very well:

> *"Employers, even under this poor economy, generally feel DWS 'customers' reflect the "bottom rung" on the job seekers ladder of quality for potential employees. Without programs, such as Back to Work, OJT, Internships, Step Up, etc. as incentives, employers are generally less enthused about a job seeker coming from DWS than those coming who have no relationship to DWS. The ones who feel this way, I believe, come to DWS because they are unable to do things for themselves, while those who go to them without contacting DWS first do so because they don't need anyone else help them find employment. Employers want to hire individuals who can do things on their own, who don't need their 'hand held' every step along the way."*

Summary: While the questions in the Connection Team Survey covered a variety of issues, the responses clustered around several themes.

- Usability issues
- Perceptions of job seekers: a lack of computer skills, disinterest in engagement
- Sign-on issues
- Registration Issues
- Job postings are information and design poor
- Lack of directions/information for job seekers to navigate the site

A list of more specific descriptions of these issues is listed in Table 18 below.

Table 18: Statewide Connection Team Feedback

Usability	• Lack of space for job seekers to enter all of their profile information • Searching/matching features are poor quality • Difficulty with O*net codes • Difficulty updating resume/profile • Inability to upload a personal resume • Grammar and spell check needed across entire site (e.g. profile, resume builder) • Difficult to locate/understand help features • Navigation issues (e.g. unable to locate links, difficult to find what they need: *"where do I click to fill out an application for food stamps?"*) • Lack of skills available on skills lists (e.g. certain licensures, skill sets, cannot individualize – add own) • Site appearance (e.g. font size, appearance of buttons, colors, formatting, scrolling)

Sign-On	• Requiring sign-on to job search • Remembering login/passwords • Difficulty creating email to sign-on (especially inside JCR due to computer blocks)
Registration	• Finding where to register on the site • Filling out the registration completely; time consuming/difficult • Understanding the purpose/link between registration and the online resume
Information/ Directions	• Cannot find information; no search feature to locate info on the website • Lack of directions in general (e.g. how to fill out registration, how to search, lexicon to describe terms, help features)
Job Postings	• Information poor (e.g. wage information, company name) • Design poor (e.g. block text, spelling/grammatical errors) • Industries that do not post jobs on the site
Lack of computer skills	• Keyboarding issues • Mouse issues • Difficulty following links • Difficulty filling out online applications • Difficulty creating an email – especially on JCR computers that sometimes block their access/ability to create emails

The general perception garnered from the Connection Teams suggests that the site is generally well functioning and easy to navigate for many people; however, it can be cumbersome and difficult for those with fewer computer skills. As mentioned above, Connection Team workers interact primarily with those walking into the JCR and thus their perspective is influenced by working with this sub-group of the larger job seeker population. Keeping this perspective in mind, Connection Team participants provided suggestions on how to improve the site for the job seekers they encounter. These suggestions included:

- Create a less complicated sign-on procedure (e.g. get rid of email, use SSN)
- Making links/information easier to find (e.g. create a a-z listing)
- Easier navigation (e.g. less clicks, terms people understand)
- Improve the visual design (e.g. colors, fonts, etc.)
- Simplify registration
- Simplify paperwork/reporting functions (e.g. in particular UI, mediated customers)
- Improve search functions – for both matching purposes and locating information on the site
- Add spell check across the site – workers state they correct spelling for job seekers on their resumes and so their searches produce results
- Improve employer job postings (e.g. design, information, remove when job is filled/post expires)
- Improve directions on the site (e.g. pop up boxes) and help features
- Subheadings (e.g. food stamps under temporary assistance) should be in a drop down menu from the links - hard to see the links due to color and scrolling

As noted above, this survey was conducted 5 months after the first set to changes had been made to the website. When asked what differences they have noticed in how well job seekers were able to navigate the jobs.utah.gov website now versus the website as it was before last May, the majority of Connection Team members stated that job seeker navigation is about the same (35). Some identified that it was worse (16) than before and a few identified it was better (7). Specifically, when they identified it as being *worse* the comments focused on layout issues (e.g. links hard to find, sign-in being an extra step to job search, difficulty to understand how to "edit" your profile) and design (e.g. less user friendly, wording being to light, too much white space). While few in number, other points shared by workers included: 1) a sense that after acculturating to the new "look" it functions the same 2) computer skills being the main issue and not the site itself and 3) the new layout of the site makes it easier when coaching, especially over the phone.

PROCESS EVALUATION (UTAH AND MONTANA)

Through the GenLEX initiative, Utah's DWS seeks to continue its role as an early implementer of promising ideas to better serve the needs of job seekers and employers. As noted in the DWS grant proposal, little is known about the experiences of self-service on-line services for job seekers and employers. Including a process evaluation in the overall evaluation plan provides a pathway for gathering the "lessons learned" from the GenLEX Utah and Montana partnership as well as making the findings available nationwide during and after the project's implementation. Changes in the original study design will be referenced and can be viewed in Attachment 7.

Research Questions 5 and 6 reflect two questions typically answered by process evaluations including: "Was the intervention implemented as intended to the targeted recipients?" and "What factors (external or internal) acted to support or frustrate efforts to implement the study components as intended to the targeted recipients?"

This first process evaluation focuses on the design and development stages of the GenLEX initiative. This period is critical for laying a strong foundation for successful implementation.

Data Collection: The first stage of the GenLEX process evaluation is based on a variety of data sources, including:

- the proposal logic model as a guide to key components of the program
- direct communication with key GenLEX initiative designers involved in the planning and implementation processes
- direct communication with key stakeholders and personnel involved with grant implementation including but not limited to implementation staff, job seekers, employers, agency partners
- evaluation and agency project managers field notes and recording of significant events in the life of the project.

Introduction: GenLEX Initiative in Context

The GenLEX initiative is primarily a technology project. The focus is the online LEX which is required to be continually functional, that is, it can't be taken down for long periods of time. Changes made in one part of the system can affect many parts of the organization. Determining the timing of planned changes, staff training requirements and agency capacity when implementing the changes are all factors that must be considered as the initiative is prepared to go live.

Utah and Montana are able to work as partners on this innovation grant because they use similar data bases to manage the LEX system and thus the technical nature of the GenLEX initiative is supported through this connection. While the partners are similar in their use of technology, they are very different in other ways significant to implementation of the grant.

One primary difference is the scope of services offered within each state agency. Montana Job Service staff work specifically with those seeking employment and employers looking to hire. Changes within the agency tend to only affect this group, however, the lack of connection to other agencies tends to limit access to relevant administrative data. DWS workers must sort through a variety of options to determine customer type in order to provide appropriate services. Leadership within the agency must consider the impact of decisions on many varied programs and services under the DWS umbrella. Making changes to one component of a large agency such as DWS will always be challenging and unpredictable as competing and sometimes higher priority needs must be addressed. The hierarchy of needs can be changed by agency leaders, state legislators or even federal mandates. Decision making in Montana generally requires fewer levels of approval simply due to its compact size.

While some components of the process evaluation overlap, the context for implementation is different enough that the findings from the two states will be presented separately. In this way, the uniqueness' of each context can be noted as other states consider implementation of similar initiatives.

GenLEX in Utah

DWS is a very large, complex, state agency. Co-locating several entities (job service, public benefits, Unemployment Insurance) in one department can facilitate data sharing, communication and cooperation. Designing and implementing a project as extensive as the GenLEX initiative requires a well-coordinated effort from many within an agency. Changes which occur at critical junctures of program development and implementation can have a significant effect on the progress of the overall project. DWS was affected by several substantial changes which occurred during the end of the application process and first year of the GenLEX initiative.

1) New DWS Executive Director and Deputy Directors: Shortly after DWS was awarded the DOL innovation grant the Executive Director left the agency for a position on the Governor's staff. While the new Executive Director and deputies came from within the agency, the challenges naturally associated with such a transition period stretched personnel and resources.

2) Key GenLEX personnel transitions: Some key personnel assigned to the project (including technical personnel) were transferred to other projects just as the GenLEX initiative was being integrated into the agency.

3) Reprioritizing of changes to DWS systems: The list of initial test components changed several times in the months leading up to the original implementation date as more and different agency personnel became aware of the GenLEX initiative goals. Projects outside the GenLEX initiative were also introduced at various points in time.

4) Introduction of additional trainings: Audit findings for the WIA program required training of DWS personnel working with customers receiving these services. There was significant overlap between this group of workers and those who would be impacted by the GenLEX initiative changes.

5) The Federal Government Shutdown: The nearly three week government shutdown occurred while the agency was in the final stages of preparing the first set of test components.

The impact of these changes over the first year of program design and implementation will be added to the broader discussion of factors, both external and internal, that acted to support or frustrate efforts to implement the study components as intended to the targeted recipients (Research questions 5 and 6).

Technology

As noted above, the GenLEX initiative is primarily a technology project. The programmers and developers were generally supportive of the project and visionary as they expanded their capacity to maintain two systems to support the RCT evaluation design. Yet, the process has not been without its challenges.

By its very nature, technology development is often non-linear. As one part of the process is implemented, adjustment must be made to other parts. Features outlined in the original design might not work in practice or create such unintended consequences that they must be changed. Functionality on a central server might not work the same way in a rural office with limited band width. (For example, web based staff training for GenLEX implementation had excellent content however system issues made it so that many staff were not able to experience the training as designed.) The rate at which technology changes challenges designers to consider future needs in today's designs. These are challenges often not well addressed by large public agencies and as the GenLEX initiative was moving from the design to implementation phase several additional factors presented challenges for this technology project.

As programmers began making changes new ideas surfaced. Others jumped on the bandwagon, suggesting additional changes that seemed small, yet tied up coding for making other changes. These individual projects (especially the web redesign) were prioritized ahead of the central project and created delays. Substantial changes were also made in the content of the year one intervention components leading to loss of time for development. These additional programming requests significantly compressed the timeline for designing the central GenLEX components.

Because of this, there was not time to do proper testing and the role out of the first test of components was delayed due to web browsers did not work with the new system. A second delay occurred when front line personnel were required to receive extensive additional training to address audit findings.

One suggestion for future iterations of the GenLEX initiative is to develop the agreed upon design first, then show it to agency decision makers and modify as requested. This process would give agency personnel a chance to see something tangible before dismissing the idea out of hand and gives developers time to do the major tasks timely. The experience of the first year shows that those who work with the technical side have made great progress in their tasks. For example, the core group focused on job matching worked very well together as all understood the system and the overall goal of the changes. With a project such as GenLEX there is clearly a need to have a person who can serve as a "translator" between agency leaders and the programmers. The DWS GenLEX project manager worked hard to fill this role however other challenges made this more difficult.

Outside technical support was helpful as state systems are also tied to federal systems through reporting requirements. Technical support helped DWS get through to O*net to answer critical questions. It was hoped that additional insight would be gained through the in-person grantee meeting which was to have been held in early October. The government shutdown slowed down the process as grantees and evaluators were not able to communicate with key personnel.

Maintaining The GenLEX Initiative Over Time

The goals, scope and vision of the GenLEX initiative were clearly outlined in the DWS proposal; however, the project must be carried out by current DWS leadership and those working on specific aspects of the project. The dynamic nature of larger public agencies and the social and political contexts in which they exist create challenges for multi stage initiatives such as GenLEX.

The Impact of Changing Key Personnel: As noted above, DWS top leadership changed shortly after the grant was awarded. There is clearly a significant impact when an agency makes a long term commitment to a large project and then new leadership (with potentially different goals or philosophy) takes over the helm. While the new leadership of DWS came from within and was aware of the GenLEX initiative, the leadership style sets a somewhat different tone.

A change in top leadership led to adjustments throughout the agency. Over the first year of the project, key people were assigned to other projects and changing job duties of some created a ripple effect for more changes. Changes in the technical support leadership were particularly challenging as this initiative is primarily a shift in technology. Knowledgeable leadership in this position is critical, not only within DWS but also in partner agencies where connections to IT personnel are critical but sometimes lacking. During this period there was also a renewed emphasis on "right sizing" state agencies and making due with fewer personnel. Shifts in funding sources also made a difference and led to staff realignments and changes in availability.

Shifts in personnel resulted in some new faces at the table. New project participants brought passion for the initiative ideas but sometimes did not have the background to be part of the

decision making or did not have support from their supervisor to engage fully in the process. With a project this complex, far reaching and at times very technical, even with education it was hard to bring everyone up to speed on the project. For example, the GenLEX steering committee was a helpful leadership group initially, however, there were too many individual included due to their position not due to their level of expertise on the project. This created many difficulties as confusion over the project grew and people stopped attending the meetings.

The GenLEX initiative effects many divisions at several levels within DWS. Determining the roles of each partner in the process was and continues to be a challenge. Decision making roles often fall into three areas including, 1) those who should be consulted on decisions, 2) those who are the ultimate deciders and 3) those who should be informed after the fact. As every decision cannot be made by everyone, these roles may shift depending on whether the decision involves general agency policy or a detail of programing. It is important to find the best match between the tasks being completed and people making major decisions. The significant changes in the initial stages of the GenLEX initiative made discerning the best people for each role more difficult.

Valuing and Implementing the Vision: Changes in agency personnel as well as the sheer scope of the project not only created gaps in knowledge, but also added new voices that saught to redefine the place of the GenLEX initiative in the long list of agency priorities. While the overall project stayed on course, there were several components of the intervention which were changed (either a little or a lot) midway through the design process. These shifts often reflected input from those who had little investment in the initial design yet were now in positions to influence and change the direction of the project. At times, designers and implementers who worked to create the initiative felt somewhat unsupported in their efforts. Like most businesses and agencies, there are power differentials between partners in the process. It is a challenge to create an environment where staff feel they can provide honest feedback to those in authority without risking undesired consequences.

The scope of the project means that many different areas of the agency are involved, making it difficult to track all the changes being suggested or simply implemented under the project umbrella. Leaders in individual service areas can and do regularly implement practices and processes unique to their area. These horizontal changes reflect the goals of a specific area but could impact the long term goals and outcomes of the initiative in unknown ways.

Another challenge to implementing the vision is keeping the vertical structure. Everyone from leadership to front line workers, invested in the long term goals of the initiative. There is a lot of positive excitement about the initiative and the staff, in general, are looking forward to the changes. There has been much cooperation from the Workforce Development Specialists and the Connection Team, two groups greatly affected the changes. Some staff were part of work groups used to help design the new models, although there have not been as many opportunities for broad input from front line people as was needed. Some input was solicited for the baseline and these teams will be accessed again in the future. Finding the right balance between gathering input and communicating principles and processes is challenging. The question is, how can a balance be struck between sharing information and bringing people along, creating by-in and ownership? There is no easy answer to this question however some attempts have been made.

The most structured effort to communicate the vision and changes coming as a result of the GenLEX initiative was a statewide training of all DWS personnel impacted in any way by the project. This training was conducted a few weeks prior to the planned implementation date of the first set of changes. Postponing the GenLEX changes by two months created the need to provide a refresher training which was conducted just ahead of the planned release of changes in mid-November.

Fidelity to the Process: In light of all the moving parts of this project, it is not surprising that maintaining fidelity to the GenLEX initiative process has been quite challenging. A GenLEX project oversight group was developed to oversee the process of the project. A core function of the group was to provide a venue to discuss intersecting issues that affect multiple divisions within DWS. Representatives from Utah Futures, training, web design, the GenLEX evaluation team as well as the DWS GenLEX leadership met, and continue to meet, regularly. Systems designers, data base experts etc. also attend periodically to address and provide input on specific issues as needed.

DWS leaders supported the vision of the GenLEX initiative, yet they also strive to be responsive to customer needs and ready to adjust processes to improve services. The practice of making frequent changes works against the nature of a randomized control trial (RCT) that requires fidelity to a set protocol over a period of time. It has been challenging for some in leadership to accept the protocols needed to conduct the RCT, especially when there is already the strong belief that the new system is "much better" than the current system. There are still ongoing concerns about some customers not receiving the test components for three years. While DWS leaders understand the value of an RCT, it is hard to deny benefits to people when it is so strongly believed that what is being tested is truly better. Attempts to evaluate the outcomes must acknowledge ways in which the program was not implemented as designed or other factors which were outside the program and will likely affect the measured outcomes.

Changes which have already occurred include implementation of the new web design months ahead of the initial GenLEX changes. When this occurred the limited programing resources were stretched beyond capacity resulting in reduced time available to program GenLEX changes. An outside vender working on a project that was not part of the initiative also overwhelmed resources, resulting in the delay of implementation of the year one GenLEX components. Another factor impacting the year one role out was training on Work Investment Act (WIA) policy which was required of workers at the same time. Understandably, there was concern that front line staff would be overwhelmed with all the new procedures and unable to be successful in any of the areas.

Implementation of the first set of test components occurred on November 12, 2013. While most of the new test components were implemented with only minor problems, it became clear within the first days and weeks that employers were very unhappy with the way matches were being displayed. The volume of the feedback made it clear that it would be very detrimental to the overall effort not to fix the problem immediately. On December 18, 2013 a change was made in the way matches were presented to employers. This change shifted the start of the first year of the controlled trial to December 19, 2013.

Another shift occurred in the role of Workforce Development Specialists (WDS) and their activities with employers. DWS has recognized that the relationship between the agency and employers

needs to be strengthened. Yet, there is also a need to move from doing ongoing mediation (primarily posting jobs) to one time mediation. That is, encouraging employers to do more on their own with the improved system. This evolving role has been changing throughout this year, however, changes will not be complete as the first round of test components go live. This evolving relationship is not part of the GenLEX initiative yet could impact the system in ways that will influence the outcome measures. Currently, some WDS workers also engage with job seekers by sending out thousands of emails to inform them of job openings, however, they are seldom using the matching feature to make appropriate referrals.

The GenLEX Project Manager and other members of the GenLEX team have worked hard to educate DWS personnel on the need to stay faithful to the process and make changes only at designated times. Moving forward, targeted support is being provided by Operational Program Specialists (OPS). This new team has received more intensive training up front and will be available in the offices to answer questions on site. It will take concerted efforts such as these to manage change within the agency so that it has as little effect as possible on the outcome measures of the GenLEX initiative.

GenLEX in Montana

The process surrounding implementation of GenLEX in Montana follows Utah's pathway in that the computer systems are the same and primarily programed by the same set of programmers in Utah. Many of the same components were implemented in Montana as in Utah. However, as noted above, there are also differences between the two states that affect the implementation process of GenLEX in Montana.

Montana's Workforce Services Division of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry manages the Job Service Offices throughout the state. These One Stop Centers "make up a state-wide system of workforce development partners that collaborate to provide customer focused employment and training opportunities that prepares, trains, and connects a highly skilled workforce to the business community striving to enhance and improve long term employment outcomes for job seekers and business." (Montana Job Service Directory) The focus of workers in these offices is specifically on employment from both the job seeker and employer perspectives. This is very different than the broader mission of Utah's DWS.

While Utah and Montana share some geographic similarities, Montana has a population approximately one-third that of Utah (i.e. 1 million vs. 3 million residents) yet is nearly double in size. The largest city in Montana, Billings, has a population just over 107,000. These realities affect many aspects of the employment market and cultural environment within the state and thus impact the implementation of GenLEX.

Unlike Utah, Montana is not participating in the randomized control trial for job seeker outcomes or the time series outcomes associated with employer outcomes. Input from the online satisfaction surveys and statewide focus groups will provide the data to measure changes over time. These measures have become the foundation of evaluating changes associated with the GenLEX initiative.

Yet, like Utah, these measures can be affected by outside forces which can influence the implementation of the intervention as designed. These factors include valuing and implementing the vision, changes in technology, and staff training and support.

Valuing and Implementing the Vision

As in any state agency, there is never just one thing happening. As in Utah, a project like GenLEX needs champions who are always thinking about the initiative and other realities within the agency that might impact the outcomes being measures or stretch resources which have been designated for the project. From the beginning, agency leaders were part of the decision making and have supported the goals of the GenLEX initiative and there was detailed discussion about the changes when the state agreed to participate in the grant.

The smaller size of the organization (both in personnel and scope of mission) in Montana presents fewer barriers to change, but it also means there are fewer individuals available to both focus on the vision of the project as well as carry out tasks associated with the grant. In the fall, changes involving consolidation of the IT department shifted the work load of the Montana GenLEX project manager (a systems analyst) who is on the grant part time. The other Montana staff person working part time on the grant also had new job duties, which impacted the time available to do training. These are the only two people in Montana who have time written into the grant. Keeping the GenLEX initiative in the minds of decision makers and implementers has fallen to this team. In general agency leaders have been supportive of this effort as everyone is aware that the GenLEX initiative addresses important issues related to the future of the Workforce Services Division.

Job Service in Montana has a reputation for being the "unemployment office." One of the main goals leaders in Montana sought to achieve through participation in the GenLEX initiative was to change the image of Job Service from being "a place to get a check" into "a place to find a job." One aspect of this was to simplify processes so more activities could be completed independently by job seekers and employers. This shift would allow Job Service staff to focus more time and energy on harder to place or discouraged workers. It would also allow them to do more outreach to the business community by providing information regarding Job Service resources and employer supports. This shift in mindset is something that changes slowly through many conversations both formal and informal.

Each Job Service Office has a great deal of autonomy. While they are directed by the Bureau Chief, how they implement services is impacted greatly by the population and the employment counselor philosophy in each of the offices. Growth processes and change (initially) can be hard. The GenLEX team has attempted to keep the new ideas alive by keeping the managers aware of what is coming by speaking about upcoming changes at manager meetings or other venues where it can be discussed. The team also spends time, when possible, going to the offices, talking one on one with staff, listening to concerns and communicating the principles behind the changes. Much has been done to try to move forward without losing people along the way.

Technology

One factor that has made the project work well in Montana has been the strong working relationship that was in place before implementation started. The two states are philosophically similar, both seeking research driven decision making thus there is a level of trust that we are all working toward a similar goal. If key personnel in the two states had differed significantly in their approaches, this project may not have worked. But in this case, the teams in each state were easily able to agree on paths of action.

Technically, a significant barrier to implementation has been the website hosting service itself. There are Java differences between Utah and Montana that have created a need for programmers to design new code and make adjustments so that changes will work in Montana. Montana does not have the technological infrastructure in place to handle such changes on its own. Most of the time it is not an issue, however, the stretching of resources in Utah has made it even more difficult to address needed changes in Utah and Montana.

The original goal was to implement the first set of test components on the same schedule as Utah, logistically they are tied to Utah's system and its parameters. However programing delays in Utah and challenges in completing the additional coding for Montana resulted in an approximately two month delay in rolling out the first set of test components in Montana. The push back of the roll out date was actually a relief for the Montana GenLEX team as the training schedule had been delayed as well, thus preparing workers for the changes would have been very difficult.

One issue still being addressed that was not part of the grant but will likely affect outcomes is flat filing. At this point, flat filing is not being used in Montana however they are currently in dialogue with larger employers to start using a flat filing system. This would increase their ability to file with larger employers and national chains, like Target, Walmart, etc., and would encourage larger institutions, such as universities and hospitals, to file with Job Services without needing to enter jobs. This is one difference between the job listings in Utah and Montana.

Another concern that was mentioned is how external sites, such as Monster.com and Careerbuilder.com, scrape the job listings site in Montana and post on their own external systems. This creates some difficulty with job matching as it reduces the control of the job listings. It is difficult to improve the image of the agency when others entities are using a primary asset, such as the job listings, for their own advantage.

A concern voiced early in the process but reaffirmed in the office visits and focus groups was that "technology aversion" may be a potential issue for job seekers, employers and potentially Job Service staff who rely on a "hands on" methods at this time. There is clearly a group of people who are not comfortable using computers and will find the ongoing shift to self-service on the computer more difficult. These individuals will continue to come into the Job Service Offices for help. Not all offices have the same computer to customer ratio and this can create some difficulties. As well, there are more rural areas that may have less internet access due to geography that may impact the applicability of the service. These issues are being monitored at this time and will need to continue being monitored as the web based system expands.

Staff Training and Support

While agency programmers, systems people and trainers talk about the GenLEX initiative and how it works in theory, the front line Job Services staff are most affected on a daily basis. As noted above, much has been done to try and educate and train staff about the purpose and process of the changes. This addresses the "nuts and bolts" of how processes will work differently, however, some still struggle to get on board with the new philosophy.

Job Services staff who have been around for a few years often carry strong ideas about their role and the services a Job Service Office should provide in a community. Some workers have, for many years, viewed their role as a sort of gate keeper between employers and job seekers, entering information into the LEX for both groups. It was a huge shift when customer volume in the offices went up with the recession. It was impossible for Job Service workers to do it all and they had to teach people to do it on their own. The side benefit was that Job Service workers learned more about the job seeker side of the site and thus were better able to provide in person and assistance over the phone.

At present, many Job Service workers view employers as their customers. This means their services have been geared towards increasing employer satisfaction through attempting to generate high quality referrals and ease of the process of posting jobs. There is often a fear that if *"we don't do it for them, they will do it wrong."* Montana does have some unique laws on what can be contained in a job posting. To reduce the need of workers to control the job orders, the system analyst on the GenLEX project has implemented an auto-report that scans job orders for illegal language and notifies a worker to adjust/change it.

Ultimately, some Job Service workers fear that if they do not post jobs for employers these jobs will not get posted on jobs.mt.gov. What is often not acknowledged by Job Service workers is that employers are already entering job orders on many other job posting sites, Job Services is but one of many places they are looking for job seekers. Changing the Job Service workers view of their role in the LEX is one of the greatest challenges to implementation of the GenLEX initiative.

Right now workers struggle to help employers do it on their own because they don't know what the worker side looks like. Workers enter the info from the internal MWORKS perspective, not the user perspective. Like the shift that occurred with job seekers, Job Service workers need ongoing training that assists them in feeling more comfortable in a new role with employers. At this time, one-third to one-half of the grant funds in Montana have been dedicated to staff training/retraining for these systems. However, just learning the new systems will not alleviate all concerns.

There is a sense among some workers that they will lose their relationships with employers if they are not managing the job orders. A next step is to help staff better understand that their involvement with employers should go far beyond entering job orders. Management believes that once workers are freed up from entering job orders they will have more time to do relationship building and help with more complex issues. Job Service workers will need help understanding and appreciating this new focus on the relationship.

Job Service as a whole wants to be more data driven, not just in outcomes for employers and job seekers but also with staff activities. Thus, part of the redesign also includes a redesign of how employment counselors spend their time. To measure changes in worker behaviors, Job Services has started to generate "report cards" that identify which "countable" productive activities are being completed by the Job Service workers in each office. These report cards identify the expectations of Job Service workers and what will be considered a countable activity, retraining employment counselors to understand their job responsibilities to include serving both employers and job seekers. This will encourage them to participate in activities that are focused on helping the job seeker obtain employment. It is important to note that many employment counselors spend a great deal of time reviewing job seekers data to create potential matches for employers, an activity that is not counted as productive. The tracking of report card data will be an important component for evaluating the impact of the GenLEX initiative components. An increase in the frequency of workers allowing the system to do computerized matches will reflect a shift in thinking and a freeing up of time for workers to engage in more productive activities.

DISCUSSION

This report presents a starting point, a baseline for the GenLEX initiative in Utah and Montana. While the preceding findings reflect only the time frame prior to implementation of their first set of GenLEX test components, the information is critical to understanding and interpreting the data gathered over the next stages of the initiative. The quantitative baseline data provides a historical context against which post intervention data will be compared and the qualitative and process evaluation data add a rich foundation for understanding the personnel dynamics, agency challenges, political influences and user experiences, initiating the long list of "lessons learned" to be disseminated to those attempting similar endeavors in the future.

Quantitative Baseline Data

The quantitative baseline data sets for context for the GenLEX initiative outcome measures. In general, the baseline data show that the 2008 recession had a dramatic, negative impact on the quality and likelihood of employment for job seekers using the online system in Utah. "New employment in the next quarter" decreased from 55% to 35% for job seekers using the system. Consecutive quarters with wages decreased from around 2.5 to around 2, on average. Median wages in the next quarter decreased from around $2,500 before the recession to $500 during the recession. All of the job seeker outcomes have been slowly improving for the last several years, but at a slow pace.

One surprising aspect of the baseline data is that, with the exception of the obvious effect of the recession, the users of the online system were relatively likely to find high quality, steady employment. Low-income users made up a much smaller percentage of the total system usage than was previously thought by many within the agency. Based on this data, if nothing dramatic changes in the job market, we expect to see the same steady improvement in outcomes for even the control group over the next several years. The major question will be whether or not the treatment group improve at a greater rate than the control group.

Because the employer data only extends to post-recession periods, it is hard to judge the impact that the recession had on these outcomes. However, it is clear that there is a steady increase in the number of non-mediated users on the online system as well as the number of jobs they are posting. A continued, steady increase in the number of users on the system and the number of job openings posted would be expected, even if no improvements were made to the system. In order to show a statistically significant increase in these outcomes, Utah will have to increase the rate of users above this baseline rate of improvement.

The baseline level of job seeker and employer satisfaction as measured by the satisfaction scale within the online survey, is relatively high in both Montana and Utah. It will be especially challenging to the state agencies to increase these levels significantly over the span of the study. These data will be used, in conjunction with the qualitative comments from users, to understand the distinct characteristics within the LEX of each state that led to these levels of satisfaction.

The outcome measures for the GenLEX initiative focus on elements that are very difficult to influence in ways that will produce statistically significant change. When test components are changed incrementally, not as designed but by those acting outside the parameters of the grant the likelihood of observing significant results is reduced even more. Efforts should continue to implement the study *as designed*, reducing the risk of influences from outside the research design.

Qualitative and Process Evaluation Based Lessons

In both Utah and Montana it is clear that frontline staff care about providing what they view as quality, appropriate services to job seekers and employers. This dedication works to support the GenLEX initiative and at times frustrates the effort. Front line staff have provided valuable feedback on what is and is not working on the LEX. Moving forward, staying connected to these workers will provide critical input. However, when workers are not well trained in using system components or do not agree with a particular protocol, some find ways to work around the system, even if this means not following the approved pathway. This can be an even greater problem in large states, where there are great distances between offices and workers often have a great deal of autonomy. Program designers need to stay very connected to the ground level, front line workers who implement components of the initiative on a daily basis.

The LEX users in both Montana and Utah can be divided into two groups, those who access the system exclusively on their own and those who (either periodically or regularly) require assistance from agency staff. Combining all data sources, it is clear that agency staff, the primary implementers of the GenLEX project, are heavily influenced by those who seek out and receive assistance. Differences in the responses gleaned from focus group participants (hand-picked by agency staff) and random participants in the online satisfaction surveys, show that the general user is more comfortable using the online system and more satisfied with the system overall. Because front line workers generally have their perceptions formed by approximately 10% – 20% of the user base, one of the greatest challenges in moving toward even the first step of implementation is helping the front line staff understand the purpose and scope of the initiative and how it could benefit users.

While staff focus on a narrow band of users, the agencies as a whole often speak of "employers" and "job seekers" as homogeneous groups. This is far from the case. One question which does not seem to have been asked (or at least answered) at this point is "who is our target employer, or job seeker?" It does not seem realistic that a state LEX will serve all the specific needs of a small family cafe and the state university. It was noted that the most frequently represented employers in the focus groups were staff agencies. Are these the target employers? A serious review of this question may help the agencies when strategic decisions need to be made regarding which components to add or remove from the system. This is especially true given the challenges surrounding implementing sophisticated technology changes in a system that is live and continuing to serve the community.

Utah and Montana also share the challenge of managing their image to the public at large. Both state LEXs' have been viewed as primarily a place for those receiving Unemployment Insurance to go for benefits, not necessarily employment. Whether or not this is really the case, educating employers and the public at large regarding the wide range of resources available could greatly enhance the image of each state's LEX. This enhancement alone has the potential to create much change in usage rates of the LEX.

A project such as the GenLEX initiative is an enormous undertaking for any state agency, a bold effort at innovation. If all aspects of the project were created and implemented as designed, it would still be a great challenge. However, state agencies must also exist in a society where political changes can lead to new agency leadership, where laws passed at the state and federal level can significantly change the agencies scope of work, user base, and regulations for providing service. At this initial phase of the GenLEX initiative, there are many factors which have influenced and changed, the original design of the project. (See Attachment 7 for a list of changes potentially affecting the GenLEX timeline.) Learning from experiences is a way of taking perceived "failures" and turning them into opportunities for improvement. The challenge for state administrators and the evaluation team is to pay close attention to these influential factors and make adjustments as needed in an effort to stay true to implementing the project as designed, and strive to obtain the best data possible for future users.

Moving Forward

The timeline for moving forward with the GenLEX initiative has yet to be finalized. DWS and Montana Job Services have some decisions to make in the near future. The two greatest decisions involve the specific content of the year two set of test components and the time line for introduction of these components. Feedback from frontline workers and other agency staff is being gathered to determine major concerns arising from the implementation of the year one components and additional issues that should be considered. Preliminary feedback from the qualitative portion of the job seeker and employer online satisfaction surveys will also be reviewed to identify any major areas of concern. While it is tempting to make changes to the system as each issue is identified, the agencies are committed to holding all future changes until the implementation of year two test components.

GenLEX Initiative Timeline

	2013				2014				2015				2016			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Study Preparation Activities																
Evaluators to MT to discuss project																
University of Utah IRB approval																
User interface components upgraded																
Basic computer course - UT																
Initiating Baseline																
Evaluate Randomization of Subjects - UT																
Randomization of job seekers - UT																
Conduct baseline period																
Collection of job seeker satisfac surveys																
Collection of employer satisfaction surveys																
Baseline focus grps/key informant interviews																
Process Evaluation																
Group 1: Job Matching																
Job matching method																
Paired down job seeker registration																
Evaluate Group 1 test components																
Focus Groups/Key informant interviews																
Annual Evaluation Report 1																
Intervention Activities																
Evaluation Activities																

Gen LEX Timeline Continued	2013				2014				2015				2016			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Group 2: Interactive User Experience																
On-line work ready evaluation																
Integrated social media																
Enhanced flexible search criteria																
Utah Futures Integration - UT																
Employer and job seeker dash boards*																
Evaluate Group 2 test components																
Focus Groups/Key informant int. May - June																
Annual Evaluation Report 2																
Group 3: Advanced Job Search Tools																
Online Networking																
Predictive analytics																
Push Technology																
Online Employment Counseling* - UT																
Mobile Apps*																
Evaluate Group 3 test components																
Focus Groups/Key informant interviews																
Annual Evaluation Report 3																
Final Report																
* - Inidcates activities outside of randomization																
Intervention Activities																
Evaluation Activities																

Works Cited

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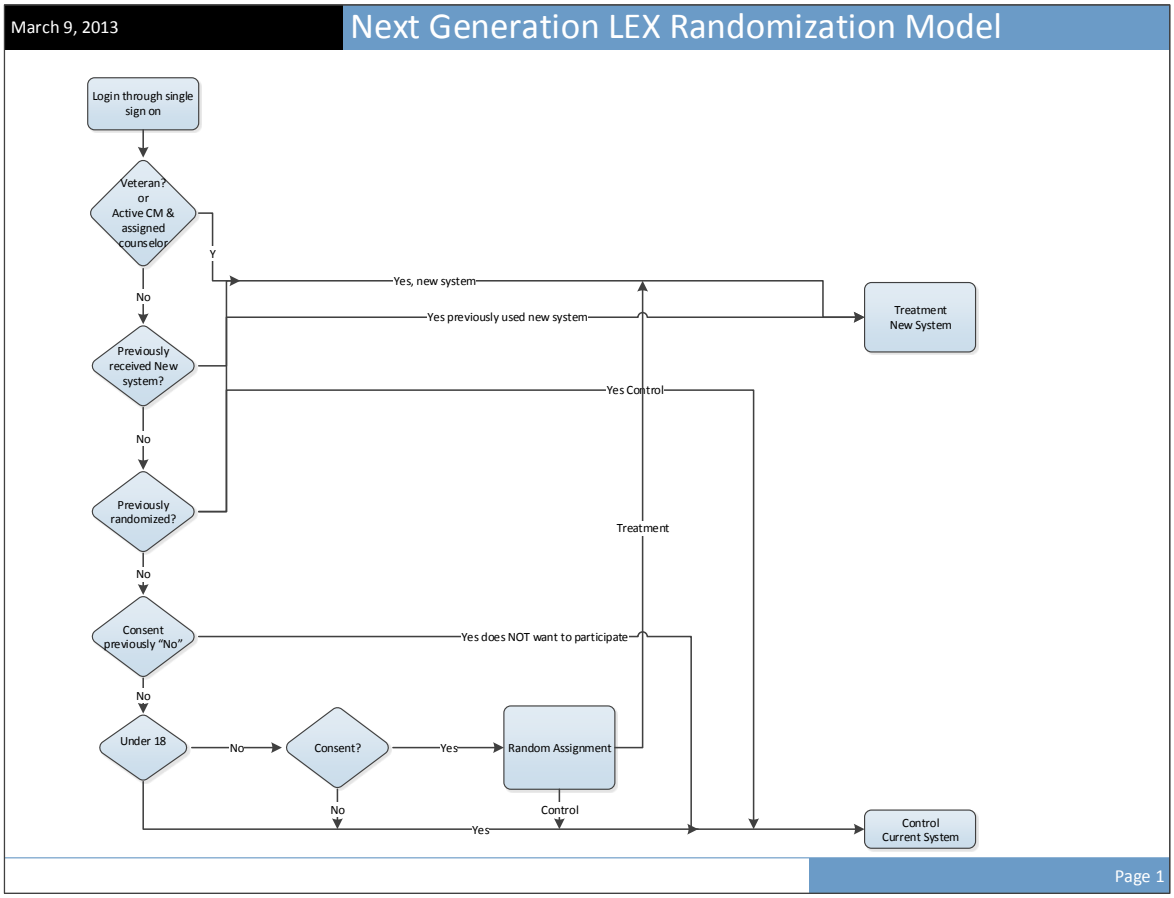
Attachment 1: Randomization Model

The following procedure is being used for randomizing individuals into groups.

1. Due to the policy of "Veterans Priority of Service", veterans are excluded from the randomization process. Per conversations with WIF personnel, veterans will be directed into the test system as soon as it becomes available.
2. Mediated (as defined by DWS), and mixed online and mediated users will also be excluded from the study as it is unlikely that randomization would be unbiased without at least a minimal amount of training for all workers in the state.
3. Individuals under age 18 will be directed into the current system until they turn 18. The first time an individual logs into the system after turning 18, she or he will also enter the pool for possible randomization into one of the two conditions.
4. Once an individual is determined eligible for the study (non-veteran, non-mediated, 18 or older) the person will be presented with the consent document and asked to agree or disagree with being part of the study. Once a person has completed the consent document the system will not display the consent at future entry into the system.
5. If an individual logs into the system, is eligible for the study, has never been consented and then agrees to participate, he/she will be randomized into either the current or test group. Individuals declining study participation will receive the current system. Every subsequent time a user that is eligible, and has been randomized, enters the system that user will be directed to the LEX site matching their current or test group assignment.



Attachment 2: Randomized Controlled Study Consent (Job Seeker)

Consent Language

DWS is working hard to improve our services for helping job seekers like you find a job. In order to do this we are testing some new ways of matching job seekers and employers and other parts of the job search website. At this time we are conducting a research study to find out if these new features make a difference in employment outcomes. We are hoping to learn more about what works and what does not work to improve the job search services DWS provides to job seekers using the DWS system.

You are being asked at this time to be part of this study. If you agree to participate (click on "Accept" below) you will be assigned at random to either receive the job search services as they are delivered currently or you will receive services using the test features. If you do not want to participate (click on "Decline") and you will receive the job search services as they are delivered currently.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and will have no effect on your eligibility for any DWS services. Employers viewing your information will not be aware of whether or not you are participating in the study. No personal identifying information will be shared by DWS with anyone outside of the agency. All findings will be reported for all job seekers in the study and never tied directly to you as an individual.

Consent: By clicking on "Accept" I am consenting to participate in the research study described above.

Accept Decline

Attachment 3: Online Survey Consent

Online Survey Consent Job Seekers (IRB Approved)

DWS Website Improvement Project

This survey is part of a research study to help the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) improve their website for job seekers and employers. The purpose of this study is to better understand your experience with the website and to use this information to make improvements to the job search website in the future.

We would like to invite you to answer a few questions are about your experience with the job seeker website. It should only take **about 5 minutes** to complete the survey. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not wish to answer. Your choice whether or not to participate in the study will not affect the services you receive on the DWS website and your responses will not impact your relationship with DWS.

Your answers will be kept completely confidential. This survey will only be connected to your user id, and will not ask for any identifying information (unless you volunteer to be contacted by a researcher). Your individual answers will not be given to anyone and will not be made public.

If you have any questions complaints or if you feel you have been harmed by this research please contact Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson, Ph.D. from the Social Research Institute at the University of Utah - (801) 581-3071.

Contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also, contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The University of Utah IRB may be reached by phone at (801) 581-3655 or by e-mail at irb@hsc.utah.edu.

By clicking on the NEXT button below, you are giving your consent to participate in this study.
If you have decided not to participate in the study please click on the NO THANKS button.

Thank you for helping improve DWS' job seeker website. Your feedback is much appreciated!

Online Survey Consent Employers (IRB Approved)

DWS Website Improvement Project

This survey is part of a research study to help the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) improve their website for job seekers and employers. The purpose of this study is to better understand your experience with the DWS website and to use this information to make improvements to the website in the future.

We would like to invite you to answer a few questions are about your experience with the employer website. It should only take **about 5 minutes** to complete the survey. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not wish to answer. Your choice whether or not to participate in the study will not affect the services you receive on the DWS website and your responses will not impact your relationship with DWS.

Your answers will be kept completely confidential. This survey will only be connected to your user id, and will not ask for any identifying information (unless you volunteer to be contacted by a researcher). Your individual answers will not be given to anyone and will not be made public.

If you have any questions complaints or if you feel you have been harmed by this research please contact Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson, Ph.D. from the Social Research Institute at the University of Utah - (801) 581-3071.

Contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also, contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The University of Utah IRB may be reached by phone at (801) 581-3655 or by e-mail at irb@hsc.utah.edu.

By clicking on the NEXT button below, you are giving your consent to participate in this study.
If you have decided not to participate in the study please click on the NO THANKS button.

Thank you for helping improve DWS' employer website. Your feedback is much appreciated!

ATTACHMENT 4: Individual Job Seekers Satisfaction Scale Question Scores - Utah

General Website	Agree	Disagree
1. I am comfortable using the internet to complete tasks on jobs.utah.gov (n=4120)	3964 (96.2%)	156 (3.8%)
2. It is difficult to navigate the jobs.utah.gov website (n=4015)	1061 (26.4%)	2954 (73.6%)
3. I can do everything I want to do on jobs.utah.gov (n=3999)	3567 (89.2%)	432 (10.8%)
15. Finding help is easy on jobs.utah.gov (n=3109)	2245 (72.2%)	864 (27.8%)
16. It is easy to link to information about education and training on jobs.utah.gov (n=3055)	2344 (76.7%)	711 (23.3%)
17. Jobs.utah.gov is NOT as good as other job search websites (n=3164)	808 (25.5%)	2356 (74.5%)
18. The jobs posted on jobs.tuah.gov are NOT up-to-date (n=3023)	681 (22.5%)	2342 (77.5%)

Responses to this set were only used if participant DID job search on jobs.utah.gov

Using jobs.utah.gov N = 3989	Agree	Disagree
5. Creating my job search account on jobs.utah.gov was easy (n= 3799)	3405 (89.6%)	394 (10.4%)
6. Searching for jobs on jobs.utah.gov is hard (n=3791)	540 (14.2%)	3251 (85.8%)
7. I often have trouble "signing-in" to job search (n=3760)	579 (15.4%)	3181 (84.6%)
8. I can't find jobs that match my skills and abilities on jobs.utah.gov (n 3741)	1143 (30.6%)	2598 (69.4%)
9. jobs.utah.gov provides job matches that meet my search criteria (n=3741)	2946 (78.7%)	795 (21.3%)
10. Applying for jobs is easy using jobs.utah.gov (n=3725)	3149 (84.5%)	576 (15.5%)
11. I would return to jobs.utah.gov in the future to job search (n=3753)	3607 (96.1%)	146 (3.9%)
12. I would recommend jobs.utah.gov to other job seekers (n=3718)	3455 (92.9%)	263 (7.1%)
13. Overall, I am satisfied with my job search on jobs.utah.gov n=3713)	3272 (88.1%)	441 (11.9%)

General Website	Excellent	Vry Good	Good	Fair	Poor
19. Quality of the Information (n=3862)	680 (17.6%)	1287 (33.3%)	1516 (39.3%)	343 (8.9%)	36 (0.9%)
20. Overall Appearance (n=3851)	689 (17.9%)	1263 (32.8%)	1433 (37.2%)	396 (10.3%)	70 (1.8%)
21. How well the site is organized (n=3833)	676 (17.6%)	1185 (30.9%)	1343 (35.0%)	512 (13.4%)	117 (3.1%)

Individual Job Seekers Satisfaction Scale Question Scores - Montana

General Website	Agree	Disagree
1. I am comfortable using the internet to job search (n= 1849)	1815 (96.3%)	69 (3.7%)
2. It is hard to find what I need on jobs.mt.gov (n= 1849)	375 (20.3%)	1474 (79.7%)
3. Overall, jobs.mt.gov is easy to use. (n= 1849)	1672 (90.5%)	175 (9.5%)
4. Creating my job search account on jobs.mt.gov was easy (n= 1818)	1541 (84.8%)	277 (15.2%)
5. Searching for jobs on jobs.mt.gov is hard (n= 1802)	212 (11.8%)	1590 (88.2%)
6. I often have trouble "signing-in" to job search (n= 1797)	366 (20.4%)	1431 (79.6%)
7. I can't find jobs that match my skills and abilities on jobs.mt.gov (n = 1771)	595 (33.6%)	1176 (66.4%)
8. Jobs.mt.gov provides job matches that meet my search criteria (n= 1752)	1308 (74.7%)	444 (25.3%)
9. The jobs posted on jobs.mt.gov are not up-to-date (n = 1751)	411 (23.5%)	1340 (76.5%)
10. Applying for jobs is easy using jobs.mt.gov (n= 1732)	1334 (77.0%)	398 (23.0%)
11. I would return to jobs.mt.gov in the future to job search (n=1743)	1691 (97.0%)	52 (3.0%)
12. I would recommend jobs.mt.gov to other job seekers (n=1725)	1641 (95.1%)	84 (4.9%)
13. Overall, I am satisfied with my job search on jobs.mt.gov (n=1699)	1497 (88.1%)	202 (11.9%)
14. Finding help is easy on jobs.mt.gov (n= 1306)	955 (73.1%)	351 (26.9%)
15. Jobs.mt.gov is NOT as good as other job search websites (n= 1321)	264 (20.0%)	1057 (80.0%)

General Website	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
19. Quality of the Information (n=1706)	290 (17.0%)	646 (37.9%)	581 (34.1%)	175 (10.3%)	14 (0.8%)
20. Overall Appearance (n=1696)	300 (17.7%)	570 (33.6%)	594 (35.0%)	188 (11.1%)	44 (2.6%)
21. How well the site is organized (n=1687)	292 (17.3%)	548 (32.5%)	557 (33.0%)	226 (13.4%)	64 (3.8%)

Attachment 5: Focus Group Consent Documents

Social Research Institute
College of Social Work
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

JOB SEEKER FOCUS GROUP - CONSENT DOCUMENT

BACKGROUND
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you would like to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. We will go through this information together. As we go through this consent form if you have any questions, if anything is unclear or you would like more information please let me know. You can take your time to decide whether you want to volunteer to take part in this study.

The purpose of the study is to better understand how you and a few other job seekers who have accessed the online job board feel about the online system and your experiences using this online system. We would also like to know more about how you think the current service could be improved.

STUDY PROCEDURE
As part of this study you have been invited to take part in a focus group. The focus group will last about 1½ hours. Questions will be asked about your views of the DWS job seeker website and your experiences using this online service.

RISKS
The risks of this study are minimal. You may feel upset thinking about or talking about personal experiences related to using the online system. These risks are similar to those you experience when discussing personal information with others. If you feel upset from this experience, you can tell the researcher, and he/she will tell you about resources available to help.

BENEFITS
We cannot promise any direct benefit for taking part in this study. However, input from the focus groups will be used to make changes to the DWS job seeker website.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The focus group will be tape recorded using a small digital voice recorder so we can remember all that is said in the focus group. The recording will be stored on a password protected university computer which can only be accessed by the researcher and will be transcribed within one month of the focus group session. Once the transcription is done the recording will be immediately deleted. The recordings will not ever be used in any public setting. Any paper copies of data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researchers will have access to this information.

We will do everything possible to keep information you share while participating in the focus group from those not associated with the project. Thus, we ask you and the other participants to keep the focus group discussion confidential. Still, there is a chance that someone in the group might mention your comments or name to others who were not in the group. Because of this, we cannot guarantee that no one will share what you have said after they leave.

PERSON TO CONTACTS
If you have questions, complaints or concerns about this study, you can contact Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson at 801-581-3071.

Institutional Review Board: Contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) if you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Also, contact the IRB if you have questions, complaints or concerns which you do not feel you can discuss with the investigator. The University of Utah IRB may be reached by phone at (801) 581-3655 or by e-mail at irb@hsc.utah.edu.

Research Participant Advocate: You may also contact the Research Participant Advocate (RPA) by phone at (801) 581-3803 or by email at participant.advocate@hsc.utah.edu.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
It is completely up to you to decide if you want to take part in this study. If you do not want to be in the focus group or if you decide to leave early it will not affect your ability to access the DWS website or receive any appropriate services from DWS.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION TO PARTICIPANTS
There will be no cost to you for participating other than your time. In appreciation for your time and participation you will receive $20 at the end of the focus group.

CONSENT
By signing this consent form, I confirm I reviewed the information in this consent form with the researcher and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I will be given a signed copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

_____ _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Social Research Institute
College of Social Work
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

EMPLOYER FOCUS GROUP - CONSENT DOCUMENT

BACKGROUND
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you would like to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. We will go through this information together. As we go through this consent form if you have any questions, if anything is unclear or you would like more information please let me know. You can take your time to decide whether you want to volunteer to take part in this study.

The purpose of the study is to better understand how you and a few other employers who have accessed the online labor exchange job board feel about the online system and your experiences using this online system. We would also like to know more about how you think the current website could be improved.

STUDY PROCEDURE
As part of this study you have been invited to take part in a focus group. The focus group will last about 1½ hours. Questions will be asked about your views of the DWS employer website and your experiences using this online service.

RISKS
The risks of this study are minimal. You may feel upset thinking about or talking about personal experiences related to using the online system. These risks are similar to those you experience when discussing personal information with others. If you feel upset from this experience, you can tell the researcher, and he/she will tell you about resources available to help.

BENEFITS
We cannot promise any direct benefit for taking part in this study. However, input from the focus groups will be used to make changes to the DWS job seeker website.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The focus group will be tape recorded using a small digital voice recorder so we can remember all that is said in the focus group. The recording will be stored on a password protected university computer which can only be accessed by the researcher and will be transcribed within one month of the focus group session. Once the transcription is done the recording will be immediately deleted. The recordings will not ever be used in any public setting. Any paper copies of data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researchers will have access to this information.
We will do everything possible to keep information you share while participating in the focus group from those not associated with the project. Thus, we ask you and the other participants to keep the focus group discussion confidential. Still, there is a chance that someone in the group might mention your comments or name to others who were not in the group. Because of this, we cannot guarantee that no one will share what you have said after they leave.

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If you have questions, complaints or concerns about this study, you can contact Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson at 801-581-3071.

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Research Participant Advocate: You may also contact the Research Participant Advocate (RPA) by phone at (801) 581-3803 or by email at participant.advocate@hsc.utah.edu.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

It is completely up to you to decide if you want to take part in this study. If you do not want to be in the focus group or if you decide to leave early it will not affect your ability to access the DWS website or receive any appropriate services from DWS.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION TO PARTICIPANTS

There will be no cost to you for participating other than your time. In appreciation for your time refreshments will be served during the focus group session.

CONSENT

By signing this consent form, I confirm I reviewed the information in this consent form with the researcher and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I will be given a signed copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

_____ _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

ATTACHMENT 6: Focus Group Guides

JOB SEEKER GUIDE - Montana

- Introduce ourselves

1. Introduce yourself
    a. Type of job / industry you usually work
    b. If different, what type of work you look for on jobs.mt.gov
    c. How many years of work experience

2. Describe the various methods you use to job search
    a. Of all the methods you use, which do you believe is most effective in connecting you to work?
    b. Do you have any specific method for deciding which type of job searching to do?
    c. If you use other online job searching websites, how do they compare to jobs.mt.gov?
        i. What do you like?
        ii. What do you dislike?
    d. Are there any particular types of jobs you look for on jobs.mt.gov or DON'T look for on the website?
        i. What makes that so?

3. Please tell us about your "process" for looking for jobs on jobs.mt.gov.
    a. Sign-on, what they do with results, where you go from there

4. What are your general thoughts about job searching on jobs.mt.gov?
    a. Do you always sign into jobs.mt.gov when you job search on the website?
        i. If not, what happens that makes you decide to sign in?
    b. What type of search terms or filters do you use to search?
        i. What do you think of the quality and number of the jobs that result from your job searches?
    c. What types of jobs would you like to see more of on jobs.mt.gov?
    d. How often do you access jobs.mt.gov to job search?

5. What do you like best about jobs.mt.gov?

6. What problems or barriers do you have with the website?
        i. What do you think is the cause of the problem?
        ii. Do you have trouble using any of the features on the website?

7. If you could add any feature to job searching on jobs.mt.gov what would it be?
    a. What would adding this feature or service do for you?

8. Besides job searching – what other service do you know about that are offered on the website?
    a. Have you used any of these services?
        i. What do you like about these services?
        ii. Dislike?

9. What types of social media do you use?
    a. How does the use of social media get incorporated into your job search methods?
    b. What do you think about the effectiveness of social media to job search?
    c. What types of social media options do you think Job Service should provide to assist you with job searching?

10. What has been your experience with using the help features online?

11. If I asked you about the typical job seeker using jobs.utah.gov, how would you describe them?
    a. Are there specific types of jobs or occupations being searched for on the website?

12. What do you think are the perceptions of the community and employers regarding job seekers using jobs.mt.gov?
    a. What experiences have you had that have created this impression?

13. What types of employers do you believe are using the website to post jobs?
    a. Do you think any employers or industries are NOT using the site? Why/why not?

14. What other types of information would you like to receive from Job Service?
    a. What is the best method for Job Service to communicate this information to you?

15. Is there anything we haven't asked you that is important to understanding a job seeker's experience of Job Service and jobs.mt.gov?

16. If you had one minute to talk to the director of Job Service regarding jobs.mt.gov what would you say to him?

Extra job seeker questions that came up throughout the session:

Employer Focus Group Guide: Utah and Montana

- Introduce Ourselves
- Brief introduction to the purpose of the Focus Group and the GenLEX project

1) Introductions: Have each member of the Focus Group introduce themselves and respond to the following questions –

    a. What type of industry do you work in?
    b. Approximately how many employees do you have in your company?
        i. Is the person present here today an HR representative? Do they have a specified HR person where they are employed?

2) What trends do you see in changes in how employers are finding job applicants these days?
    a. How do you see changes in technology impacting hiring practices?
    b. In recruiting employees?
    c. In identifying qualified candidate?

3) Describe the various methods you use to identify or connect with potential employees?

    a. Who in your company posts the jobs to jobs.utah.gov? Is there more than one person at your company who posts jobs?
    b. Of the methods of job posting mentioned, how do you decide which method to use?
    c. For your company, which method do you think has been most effective in connecting you to qualified candidates for your positions? What makes this the most effective method?
    d. When might you use other methods for posting or announcing job openings?
    e. Are there any other general issues or hiring practices that are important to you?
    f. How does jobs.utah.gov compare to other online job sites?
        i. What are the features or qualities of the other systems that you prefer?
        ii. How does the quality of the applicants compare?

4) Are there any particular jobs or types of jobs that you do not post on jobs.utah.gov?

    a. What makes it so you don't find jobs.utah/mt.gov the best place to post particular jobs?
    b. Where do you post those types of jobs?

5) As an employer, how (if at all) are you using social media to find and hire qualified candidates for your jobs?

    a. Do you use social media to 'research' or 'vet' potential employees?
    b. If you aren't using social media, what are your objections, issues or barriers that have prohibited this method?
    c. What types of social media options would you like to see DWS provide to assist you with your hiring needs?

6) What do you like about jobs.utah.gov?

7) What is the biggest issue or barrier with using jobs.utah.gov or working with DWS?

    a. What causes the problem?
    b. What would your preferred solution be when you have issues?

8) If you could add any feature or service to jobs.utah.gov, what would it be?

    a. What would make you use jobs.utah.gov more?

9) Do you ever use the online help features or agency personnel to resolve issues online?
    a. Any issues with accessing help?

10) Thinking about the jobs.utah.gov employer portion of the website - training on the features and functionality of. Would you be interested in receiving training to learn more about the features of functionality of thejobs.utah.gov website?
    a. If yes, What would be the best format for receiving the training?
    b. In what specific areas would you like more training/education?

11) If I asked you to think about the typical job seeker using jobs.utah.gov what qualities or characteristics would you use to describe this person?

    a. What experiences have you had that have created this impression?

12) When you think about the jobs seekers who use the DWS website jobs.utah.gov to look for jobs, what kinds of jobs do you think the average person using jobs.utah.gov is looking for?

    a. What types of job skills do you perceive most of these job seekers have?

13) What types of job seeking skills do you observe from job seekers coming from jobs.utah.gov?

14) What are the strengths or most user friendly aspects of the website have you noticed when posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov?

15) What kinds of problems (if any) have you had with the job posting process – posting, accessing applicants, contacting applicants?

16) Which of the four sign-in methods do you use when signing on to post a job?
    a. Why do you use this particular method?
    b. Do you every have any difficulty with signing on? If so, what? How often?
    c. If yes, what have you done to resolve the issue and how did it go for you?

17) If/When you use jobs.utah.gov to post jobs and search for applicants, what are your perceptions about the number and quality of matches that you receive for open positions?

18) Besides posting jobs on jobs.utah.gov, what other services do you know about that are offered on the website?

19) What other types of information would you like to receive from DWS?

    a. What is the best method for DWS to share this information with you?

20) Is there anything we haven't asked that you think is important to understanding an employer's experience of DWS and jobs.utah.gov?

ATTACHMENT 7: Time Line of Significant Events

Date	Activities
2012	
October	SRI chosen as 3rd party evaluator
December	Job matching white paper first presented
2013	
January	Learning Express Library (LEL) contracted for Resume builder
February	Evaluation team received IRB approval from the U of U
May	- Significant changes (look and feel not functionality) were made to the DWS website and the LEX screens for both job seekers and employers; site navigation problems were addressed - From an evaluation perspective it was important that the baseline data collection did not start until after these changes were in place as simply getting to the site has been reported as one of the greatest barriers to using the LEX in Utah. - Online Customer Satisfaction surveys (Utah job seekers and employers) started - Randomization of job seekers into test and current conditions to evaluate randomization functionality - Focus groups with employers and one-on-one discussions with job seekers statewide – Utah
July	- Utah Online Job Seeker Satisfaction Survey Started (7/11) - Utah Online Employer Satisfaction Survey Started (7/12) - Utah Online Job Seeker Satisfaction Scale finalized and implemented (7/13) - Montana Focus Groups (Job Seeker, Employer, Staff) Conducted
August	- Basic Computer skills course made available on DWS website (Utah) - Resume Writer available in the JCRs only (Utah) - Montana Online Job Seeker Satisfaction Survey Started (8/6) - Montana Online Employer Satisfaction Survey Started (8/6) - Utah Employer Satisfaction Survey was not functioning (8/28 – 10/16) - Conflicts with other DWS priorities resulted in delay of implementation of first set of test components
November	- Utah First Set of Components (initially) Implemented (11/13) - Challenges implementing test components simultaneously in both states resulted in delay in implementation of first set of test components in Montana
December	- Significant negative feedback from employers resulted in Utah changing in the way jobs seeker matches are displayed; Implementation date for first set of test components in Utah reset to 12/19
2014	
January	- Online surveys were being sent too frequently - fixed 1/3 - Utah Online Employer Satisfaction Survey link broken - (1/1 – 2/19)

February	- Frequency of Online Satisfaction Survey delivery to Utah and Montana employers was changed from 10% to 100%; updated so survey only comes again after one month if individual declines and after 3 months if individual says yes (2/6) - Above fix corresponded with break in link to Montana Online Satisfaction Survey (2/6 – 3/2) - Montana first Set of test components implemented (2/8) - DWS employee added an additional link for employers to post jobs on their main website outside of the component release schedule (2/24)