






Federal Audit Clearinghouse

# Sprint 6 report out | **research w/ auditors**

June 2022

# Findings summary

-  Removal of browser-based data entry fields in the SF-SAC **was not a major concern to auditors.**
-  **Many auditors are still not familiar with the UEI** when they first come to the FAC website.
-  The option to continue the audit submission process without a valid UEI **was viewed very favorably.**
-  **Users aren't always clear** on which homepage link to click when they want to start a new audit.
-  **Users expected to see submitted audits** on the my audit submission page.

# Recommendations

- Move forward with **removal of direct SF-SAC data entry** in MVP.
- **Create an awareness campaign** around UEI for auditors ahead of launch, as well as **adding UEI messaging to the homepage**.
- **Update the auditee information page** to streamline the UEI validation process.
- Introduce a way to **convey an audit submission has been finalized** and is ready for certification.

# 1/ What we did

## Overview

# What we tested

Research participants walked through high-fidelity design mockups under a given scenario, which allowed us to...

- Observe interaction issues with the layout
- Test workflow hypotheses, particularly around invalid UEs and lack of manual data-entry fields

Study limitation...

- Clickable-prototype, so is limited only to sighted users who can visually interact with the prototype.

### Find the entity you're submitting an audit for

Search by [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#) for your entity name in the SAM.gov database.

Don't know your UEI? You can find your UEI or register for a new UEI by visiting [SAM.gov](#).

### The unique entity identifier used by the FAC has changed.

On April 4, 2022, the unique entity identifier used across the federal government changed from the DUNS Number to the Unique Entity ID (generated by SAM.gov).

- The Unique Entity ID is a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov.
- Entity registration and data entry in the FAC now require use of the new Unique Entity ID.

Award findings

Findings text

CAP text

Additional EINs

Additional UEIs

Secondary auditors

Finalize

### Federal awards

Enter federal awards

1

#### Download worksheet

Download the provided worksheet below (Excel format)

Download worksheet

2

#### Complete worksheet

Open the worksheet using a program such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets and enter your federal awards.

3


#### Upload completed worksheet

Upload your completed worksheet.

Select worksheet XLS file

Selected file

Replace?

 My File 01.xls

## Overview

# Research questions

- Does the new audit creation process meet the needs of auditors?
- Do the refinements we've made address issues we found in sprint 1 testing?
  - Homepage - clarity around where to go to submit a new audit
  - My audits - clarifying the relationship between a user and the audits that will appear there; defining UEI the first place it appears in user's flow
  - SF-SAC - Navigating among form sections
- Is the proposed language around UEI understandable to auditors unfamiliar with the number?
- How will UEI impact the auditors' workflow, particularly if it isn't known?
- How much impact will there be on the auditors' process after removing features from the current state of the FAC?
- Do auditors understand what happens when the submission is finalized?

## Overview

# Hypotheses

- We believe that not including data entry via a web form as part of the MVP will not bar people from submitting FY22 single audits.
- We believe that auditors who do not understand the UEI number and where to find that information can be served by UX copy delivered early in the audit creation process.

Overview

# Participants

9 auditor administrators

1 audit resolution official



## 2/ What we learned

People were not concerned about not having an option for manual data entry via web forms. **Data entry via worksheets alone was not an issue.**

# Insight #1: Manual data-entry fields

**Insight highlight:** We observed little friction with the lack of manual data-entry fields in the site itself. Limiting data entry to a spreadsheet upload was not an issue for users, though they did note their own workflow may have to change slightly. Users who mentioned having entered data manually in the past noted it was useful for 5 or fewer rows of data.

*“I am okay with downloading worksheets. I was expecting to see an option to enter it here. It's easy to change on a worksheet as opposed to entering directly.” — (Jaguar)*

## Insight #2: Auditors not familiar with UEI

**Insight highlight:** UEI is still unknown to many auditors, and there is a perception this will slow them down when it comes time to process audits. They don't expect UEI is something they will have on-hand while starting a new audit, unless the client has supplied it. With some audit firms who can have many audits to process in a condensed time frame, this can result in delayed submissions.

*“What is [UEI]...a unique id, unique entity identification number? Is this a former DUNs number, EIN number...is that what this is?” — (Puma)*

*“Before I go much further I want to make sure I can get my hands on the right [UEI] ... I’m probably leaning toward going back and validating [the UEI] before I go any further.” — (Tiger)*

## Insight #3: Progress with invalid UEI is welcome

**Insight highlight:** Despite users being concerned about not understanding the UEI or worried they won't have it at the time of creating a new audit, the ability to continue without it was looked upon positively. A couple of users said they would likely not proceed, but the majority said they would and felt comfortable that the site would have an easy way to add it later. This would mitigate delayed submissions.

*“But in all reality I would hit the continue and figure it out later...My staff would probably do that too. If I delegate it to someone else, they can continue without the number.” — (Lion)*

## Insight #4: Homepage links unclear

**Insight highlight:** The homepage has two possible interactions for users to log in to submit an audit. Users weren't sure if these would direct them to two different locations or to the same page.

*“Sign in to access my audit submissions”, unsure if that takes me to the same as the [header] link.” — (Cougar)*

*“...not sure if those are the same, the ‘Log in to submit an audit’ vs the button in the corner.” — (Puma)*

## Insight #5: Auditors still need to see submitted audits.

**Insight highlight:** A few auditors expected to see their submitted audits from their **submission access** page. It can be helpful to them to still see those as sometimes a submitted audit can still require a revision. We have yet to design a way for auditors to submit a new version of a submitted audit, which is how we'd planned to handle revisions for the MVP.

*“...with covid and the backlog with the [COVID-19] PPE reports were getting finalized way past the deadline. We had to show proof that it was submitted at a certain time, so we had to go back and use dates of submission. There was some kerfuffle since all the reports were so late, so maybe that's something to think about..” — (Wild Cat)*

## Additional insights

**Users preferred auditee name** as how they reference their auditees.

**Few users were familiar with Login.gov.**

**Copy and paste formatting** from Excel cells, Word documents, and PDFs in textarea inputs can be a challenge as they lose their expected formatting.

The **OMB A-133 reference** to a question on the audit criteria page was seen as out-of-date to many users.



## Additional insights

Some users indicated that there are **too many legal disclaimers** and felt that could get tedious after working on many audits.

Some spoken frustrations of working **with & around locked audits**.

There was a desire for the **downloadable Federal Awards worksheet** to have pre-populated fields based on previous FAC entries.

Auditors were confused by the **version number proposal**.

# Thanks!

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