Discussion-4 Closed-ended questions

Discussion Topic:

For this question, assume you are employed as a systems analyst at your organization. Your organization has a number of in-house developed software solutions that they are interested in enhancing for ease of use, efficiency, and added capabilities. These are a time keeping system, a billing system, and a customer mailing system that sends customers marketing materials.

Management has asked you to select one of these systems and gather user requirements for consideration to be incorporated in the next iteration of the software.

Identify which system you selected and write at least three closed-ended questions that you might use in an interview of the users for the solution you selected in order to develop ideas for the next version. Explain why you chose the questions you did and what type of information you are hoping to gain by asking them.

My Post:

Hello Class,

Assuming that I am a systems analyst at an organization that is developing in-house software solutions, enhancing ease of use, efficiency, and added capabilities. I selected the Customer Mailing System (CMS) to gather user requirements that will be considered for implementation in the next iteration of the software.

The CMS sends marketing materials to customers, and improving this system may lead to better customer outreach, marketing campaigns, and customer communications. For that purpose, I selected and wrote three closed-ended questions that you will use in an interview with the users.
Note that closed-ended questions can be defined as a type of survey question that provides predefined answers to choose from (Khandelwal, 2024). Therefore, closed-ended questions work best when the major answers to questions are well known (Valacich & George, 2020). They are used to gather information for which we cannot anticipate all possible responses or do not know the precise question to ask. They are also meant to encourage the person, the user, in this case, being interviewed, to talk about whatever interests him or her within the general bounds of the question.

The following are the questions that I selected:

1. Question: "How would you rate the process for creating customer lists for mailings? On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being 'Very Difficult' and 5 being 'Very Easy' "

   I chose to use a rating scale (1-5) to help gauge user experience. This will provide quantitative data on the ease of use and user experience for the customer creation list feature. This will help understand if the feature generally meets user expectations; therefore guiding decisions on whether redesign or refinement is necessary the feature.

2. Question: "Which of the following features in the Customer Mailing System do you use most frequently?"
a) Creating new customer mailing lists.
b) Modifying existing customer mailing lists.
c) Using templates for marketing materials.
d) Scheduling mailings for future dates/times.
e) Reviewing reports of past mailing campaigns.

   This question is designed with the goal of understanding which features are most important to the users' regular workflow. Knowing the most used features helps prioritize their improvements, and it also helps identify where even small efficiency gains could have the most impact.

3. Question: "If the Customer Mailing System could provide better support in one of the following areas, which would be the most beneficial for marketing campaigns?"

   a) Improve targeted customer segmentation options, for example, based on purchase history or customer engagement.
   b) Follow-up mailings should be automated.
   c) Viewing marketing emails across different devices should be more available and user-friendly.

   This question is designed to identify the feature enhancement or "added feature" that users value the most. Knowing the 'feature enhancement' or 'added feature' that users value most will help prioritize its development, which in turn will have the greatest impact on marketing campaigns and the overall user experience.

-Alex

References:

Khandelwal, M. (2024, July 1). *Close-ended questions: Get clear & actionable data*. SurveySensum. https://www.surveysensum.com/blog/closed-ended-questions

Valacich, J., & George, J. (2020). Modern Systems Analysis and Design (9th ed.). Pearson.