U.S. Department of Transportation

Research and
Special Programs
Administration

Customer Satisfaction with the FHWA Peer-to-Peer Program: A Qualitative Assessment

Prepared by

Jane Lappin, EG&G Services
David Rutyna, EG&G Services
Allan J. DeBlasio, Economic Analysis Division
Volpe National Transportation Systems Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

March 2000

Prepared for

U.S. Department of Transportation
Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office
Washington, D.C

TABLE OF CONTENT

I. Introduction
II. Background: How the P2P program works
A. How peers become Peers
B. Matching peers to customers
III. Peer-to-Peer management interviews
IV. Peer provider interviews
V. Customer interviews
A. Regarding outreach
VI. Conclusions and recommendations

Appendix A: Peer providers interviewed
Appendix B: Peer provider interview guide
Appendix C: Customers interviewed
Appendix D: Customer interview guide
Appendix E: Proposed P2P Customer Satisfaction survey

I. Introduction

The John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center was contacted by the USDOT ITS Joint Program Office Assistant Travel Management Coordinator to evaluate customer satisfaction with the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) program.

The primary objective of the evaluation is to learn how to serve Peer-to-Peer (P2P) customers better, and secondarily, how to market the program to provide services to a larger number of eligible transportation professionals. One outcome of this evaluation is a recommended customer satisfaction survey for all subsequent P2P customers. To this end, Volpe staff interviewed selected P2P staff, peers, and customers peers to identify and prioritize opportunities to improve the quality of service.

This has been a qualitative evaluation, done entirely with personal interviews, to develop a detailed understanding of the P2P service and which features of the service matter most to its customers. Interviews focused on those procedures that worked well and those that created obstacles to good service. As expected, common themes emerged among the program staff, peers, and customers that highlight customer satisfaction factors.

To ensure a diversity of customer perspectives and experiences, customers were selected to represent a range of types of assistance requested (e.g., review of an RFP versus facilitating a deployment workshop), geographic region, urban and rural locations, transportation mode, and complexity of the request. Seven peer providers and twenty-four customers were interviewed. All had initiated a request between the dates of 5/15/98 and 5/14/99. Peer interviews were conducted between 9/30/99 and 10/27/99. Customer interviews were conducted between 12/16/99 and 2/14/00.

All interviews were conducted by telephone, using an interview guide developed by the Volpe Center and approved by the sponsor. Most of the interview questions reflect issues that relate to customer satisfaction, such as ease of customer access to the program, P2P staff responsiveness, quality of the peer match, benefits from the engagement, and opportunities to provide post-engagement feedback. Other interview questions addressing outreach were designed to identify popular venues for marketing the P2P program.

II. Background: How the P2P program works

The P2P program comprises two essential functions: recruiting and maintaining a diverse database of skilled ITS professionals, and matching customers' ITS project needs with appropriately experienced peers. This section briefly describes how these processes work.

How peers become Peers

Peer candidates are nominated to the program and are then asked to provide a brief biography, and complete a skills survey. The application is reviewed at USDOT and the candidate certified (or not) for the P2P program. Preference is for public sector peers who have had experience solving ITS deployment challenges in their own region and will understand the circumstances faced by less experienced colleagues. However, private sector peers are also certified when justified by their expertise.

Matching peers to customers

The P2P staff described the process of matching a peer provider to a customer. Typically, a customer phones or emails P2P with an issue. The issue can be specific, such as a request for an expert review of a proposed design-build-operate RFP, or more general, such as a request to learn more about ITS applications for transit operations.

P2P staff discusses the problem with the customer, and then – in a later call – provide the customer with the name and contact information of a peer provider. In the meantime, P2P staff searches the peer database, locate an appropriate candidate (with preference for a peer who is geographically close, so as to minimize travel time and expense), and make contact with him or her, describing the engagement and time constraints, and ascertaining peer interest and availability. Assuming the peer is available and interested, the peer is referred to the customer, and the P2P staff coordinates the delivery of the peer to the customer. P2P provides the peer with logistical support, travel expenses, and if the peer is a private consultant, labor costs. Following the engagement, the peer is asked to provide P2P with a summary report describing the activity.

It is also common for a customer to phone P2P with a specific peer in mind for project assistance. P2P staff provides support for such requests when it is understood that the peer engagement will help ITS deployment.

III. Peer-to-Peer Management Interviews

Two representatives of the P2P program, the program manager and a staff person, were interviewed to gain their perspective on how to improve customer satisfaction.

Overall, P2P staff felt that the program was successfully assessing customers' needs and matching those needs with skilled ITS peers, fulfilling its mission to promote ITS deployment. However, they did identify problems that they felt interfered with their ability to provide consistent service and service to more customers. Active FHWA and FTA field staff cooperation was identified as a critical success factor. Indeed, many of the customer referrals came through USDOT field and central office staff. They suggested that the more that the FHWA field staff (both Resource Centers and Divisions) knows about how to use P2P, the better utilized the service would be.

Funding has been unstable at several points during the P2P contract, and staff felt that this undermined their ability to provide timely responses to customers requests. The time period chosen for selection of the customers for interview included one such break in funding, and customers commented unfavorably on the lag time between their request and P2P response. Uncertain funding also limited program outreach to develop new peers. As a result, the original inventory of 106 certified peers has not been updated in two years, since the program's inception. Program staff believes that some of the peers' skills have been outdated by continued development in ITS technologies and newer deployment practices.

There has not been any formal program marketing by the USDOT, and that was identified as a weakness, as it limited the amount of service that the program was able to provide. P2P staff expressed hope that the USDOT will market P2P as part of its ITS outreach activities.

Finally, when asked what they would do differently if they were to begin anew, P2P staff said that they would invest more resources in a relational database to manage the interrelated peer, customer, and engagement files more effectively.

IV. Peer Provider Interviews

The peer providers can speak to the quality of the match and program support from a different perspective. Seven peer providers were interviewed (Appendix A). They were selected for diversity of expertise and engagement, and were drawn from both public and private sector. The seven peers assisted customers with the following types of project:

- Regional architecture
- Data availability and usage
- Data analysis
- Highway performance measures
- Organizing ITS activities structure
- Contract management
- Developing an agency's ITS vision

Interviews with the peers covered the quality of the match of their skills with the project, the nature of the project itself, the skills they provided to the customers, the efficiency of the P2P procedures, follow-up assistance with the customer, and P2P reporting procedures. The peer interview guide is included as Appendix B.

The peers became involved in P2P engagements in the following ways:

- They were assigned to an engagement by P2P staff, discussed details with the customer and accepted the assignment.
- They were consulted on ITS issues by potential customers, who then brought the engagement to P2P staff for authorization (and funding).
- Customers made a request to P2P staff for assistance from a specific expert. That person then had to go through the peer nomination and approval process if he/she hadn't already done so.

The peers who had to be nominated and approved for participation in the program found the process to be slow and cumbersome, although the process was expedited for some. Those who were already established as certified peers did not remark on the process.

The peer-to-peer matching process worked in two ways: The P2P staff person identified the peer and made the introduction, or just as frequently, the customer phoned with a specific peer provider in mind for the task. Following the introduction, the peer and customer discussed the project and decided whether the peer was suited for the task. The peers who were interviewed felt that there was ample opportunity during this phase to discuss issues surrounding the proposed engagement and to discover if a match was inappropriate.

When asked whether they felt that they had been able to provide good service, nearly all peers felt that their customer found the interaction to be very helpful. Their comments included:

- "The customer was impressed. We shell-shocked them." (This peer advised an agency as to how its traffic control center could be run more efficiently. The engagement involved a site visit, analysis, and face-to-face discussions).
- "They were delighted." (This peer moderated a one-day conference on regional architecture).
- "The customer was extremely satisfied with the services provided." (This peer provided a one-day workshop on highway performance measure data).

The interview also explored post-engagement follow-up with customer. When the project addressed a complex, or multi-stage project, some sort of follow-up with customer - whether by P2P staff or the peer directly - seemed warranted. One peer did follow up with a customer at a later date, on his own, to see how they were progressing. Another peer committed to be available to the customer when they were ready to address the next phase in their project, but the customer hadn't yet made contact.

The P2P asks peers to provide a final report summarizing the engagement. A standard reporting outline is provided for that purpose. However, submission of final reports by peers to the P2P program has been inconsistent. Several of the peers said they did not know that there were any post-engagement reporting requirements. A few peers recall forwarding final reports both to P2P and to the customer.

Of the peers who did complete the final report, one said that he modified the reporting outline to adapt it to address planning issues. Another peer also modified the form so that it was applicable to his engagement. Several peers recommended creation of an electronic template for the reporting outline to make reporting faster and easier.

Private sector peers were less satisfied with the P2P fee-for-service arrangements than the public sector peers, whose agencies paid for their time with the customer. A couple of the private sector peers reported working more hours than they were paid for. One peer reported working "twice as many hours" as he was paid. They reported that there is no format for payment of time spent on follow-up correspondence, and that travel-time is not usually covered.

One peer reported that he was being called upon too often, and was concerned that his experience in the system he installed several years ago was becoming outdated. This echoes P2P management concerns about the need to recruit new peers to bring up-to-date expertise into the service. Current ITS knowledge can soon become technologically outdated.

V. Customer Interviews

Customer satisfaction is a function of several factors including customer expectations, immediacy of need, peer availability, and suitability of match. Customers were selected for interviews to achieve diversity of region, discipline, mode, and complexity of problem. Twenty-four customers were interviewed between December, 1999, and February, 2000. Questions for customers explored:

- How they learned about the P2P program
- Their experience making contact with P2P staff
- The quality of the P2P assessment of customer situation
- The speed with which a match was made
- The effectiveness of the match
- Support from the P2P program in assembling supporting material
- Support from the P2P program following the peer match

Customers requested P2P assistance for both broad issues and specific problems; they ranged from integrating ITS transit technology to improve existing operations, to developing an ITS plan for a small urbanized area, to information on installing a weather instrument on bridge and subsequent data retrieval concerns. A large number of customers requested peers for participation in a local conference or workshop.

Customers described becoming aware of the P2P program in a number of different ways, most all of them through a personal contact, and a couple by brochure. Some learned about the program through conference presentations given by Robert Kaiser, the P2P manager. Others became aware of P2P through staff at FHWA and FTA headquarters and division offices. One customer became aware of the program through a casual conversation with a colleague at a conference. One customer was already seeking help from someone who was a certified peer provider. The peer told the customer that the P2P program might fund the engagement, and so they did.

Most of the customers initiated contact with the P2P program by phone, although e-mail was also used. Typically, they left a message and a return phone number. Several customers reported a delay of up to two weeks between the date they made their initial request, and receiving an acknowledgement of the call from the P2P staff. Most of the delays were caused by program funding issues. The delays caused customer dissatisfaction, and a couple of customers found other solutions to their problem while waiting for a response from P2P.

Most customers felt that the P2P staff understood the nature of their problem or issue, and made a very good peer match for the project. Quite a few customers contacted P2P with a specific peer in mind, and applied to the program to fund the engagement. Overall, customers of the P2P program were very satisfied with the quality of service they received from the program. They said that the P2P program provided an outside expert (free of parochial interests) who took a fresh look at a local problem or issue and provided an objective solution.

Most of the customers interviewed felt they benefited through their P2P engagement. Peer providers facilitated the preparation of ITS strategic plans, RFPs, and planning documents. Peer providers helped customers establish regional ITS visions. P2P engagements expanded staff capacity to address ITS issues. Several customers said that calling the P2P program took the "leg work" and uncertainty out of searching for experts on specific issues. Peers provided added value by confirming or disputing solutions and directions that paid consultants have recommended. Customers reported that their agencies or regions felt more confident in developing and deploying ITS after a peer engagement, and were more likely to consider future ITS applications. Had they not had access to P2P support, many customers said that they would not have attempted the project; travel and labor costs would have prohibited the use of expert consultants.

As might be expected, a couple of the matches did not turn out well. When asked whether P2P program staff had phoned after the peer's introduction, to check on the status of the engagement, most customers said "no." The customers themselves did not contact the program to report the problem.

Peers may provide post-engagement feedback and follow-up with customers by arrangement. Informal correspondence may continue between peers and customers, however communication usually ends at the conclusion of the formal engagement. In a few cases, peers have continued to advise customers well after the primary engagement has ended. In a few cases, customers received a copy of the final P2P report from the peer after the engagement.

Most customers said they would use the program again, and would recommend the program to another agency.

Regarding Outreach

In recognition that there had not been a formal outreach program undertaken to promote awareness of the Peer-to-Peer program, the USDOT sponsor asked that the customer satisfaction interviews solicit information to address this need by including questions about where customers look for ITS information. The answers to these questions provide venues for future outreach activities.

The interview asked customers how they heard about the P2P program (reported in the earlier section), and most of them had learned about the program by word-of-mouth from a colleague, or from Bob Kaiser, when he was making a presentation about P2P at a conference. The interviewers asked customers who they call for ITS technical assistance, which web sites they consult, which periodicals they read most regularly, and which meetings they attend most frequently. These are the venues that should be used for future P2P outreach.

Customers report that they call the following sources (in order of frequency) when seeking ITS assistance:

- ITS and technical specialists within their own agency.
- Contacts and colleagues from similar agencies within and outside of their region.
- Consultants.
- FHWA Resource Centers.
- FHWA Headquarters.
- FTA Headquarters.
- Local or regional chapter meetings of their national professional association.
- State chapter or annual meetings of ITS America.
- ITE (regional or national meetings).
- State DOTs.
- Internet research.
- NTI courses.
- NHI courses.

Customer most frequently reported that they check the following web sites when seeking ITS information:

- FHWA.
- ITS-JPO.
- ITS America.

Other web sites mentioned included:

- Volpe Center.
- Bureau of Transportation Statistics.
- Princeton University.
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- ASCE.
- Transportation Research Board.
- Search engine sites for specific topics.
- Supplier/product sites.

Customers reported reading the following periodicals most frequently:

- ITS World.
- Traffic Technology.
- ITS America newsletter.
- ITE Journal.

Other periodicals mentioned by customers include:

- ITS International.
- ITS Council of ITE newsletter.
- ITS Quarterly.
- American Planning Association newsletter.
- National Association of County Officials newsletter.
- National Association of Regional Councils newsletter.
- Mass transit magazines.
- ITS America newsletter.

Customers reported attending state and local professional meetings much more frequently and regularly than national ones. Professional meetings commonly attended by P2P customers include:

- Regional ITS deployment meetings.
- State public transit associations.
- ITS America-State Chapters.
- State DOT sponsored meetings and workshops.
- State associations of MPOs.
- American Public Transportation Association meetings.
- ITS America.
- FTA regional seminars.
- FTA sponsored workshops.
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials conferences.
- Community Transit Association of America conferences.
- Local ITE chapters.
- Annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

- **The Peer-to-Peer program is providing a valued service to its customers**.

P2P staff are matching qualified peers to the ITS project needs of a diverse set of public sector customers, with very good results. Had they not had access to P2P support, many customers said that they would not have attempted the project; travel and labor costs would have prohibited the use of expert consultants. Nevertheless, interviews with P2P managers, peer providers, and customers highlight problems that should be addressed to ensure continued success.

- **A more complete, relational electronic database is needed for records of all types**.

Systems currently in use appear to be out of date, and incorrect. For example, the phone log – which tracks all callers regardless of the purpose of the call - lists several peers as customers and inaccurately reports many requests. An updated database and software will support faster peer matches, consistent records keeping, and systematic follow-up with both customers and peers.

- **A standard for quickly acknowledging customers' requests for assistance should be established.**

Customers should know with their first call to the program when to expect a return call. This can be accomplished using voice mail with an outgoing message that says all calls will be answered within (say) two business days, and daily email checks to send messages to the same effect. If the staff has a backlog of callers, some accommodation should be devised so that no caller is without program contact within the established time limit.

- **Program staff should follow-up with customers soon after the peer introduction is first made to learn whether the engagement is proceeding satisfactorily.**

One customer related an experience of working with a peer who spent a few days gathering information from agency colleagues, never to be heard from again. Another customer found that the peers recommended to him for a workshop panel did not have the requisite expertise, and he turned to another source for referrals. Neither of the customers ever phoned back to the P2P staff. Consistent follow-up can prevent these problems, and learning how the problems occurred can help staff to improve the service.

- **Program staff should contact customers after the peer engagement has concluded to ensure that the project has worked out as planned, and to learn whether any further assistance is needed.**

A match that seemed good at first might not produce the desired outcome, and it would be useful for P2P to understand what did and did not work. Also, several customers' projects were one part of a much larger agency or regional undertaking. Under such circumstances, a P2P staff person could agree to call back at some date in the future to see whether a second peer would be of help with part two of the project.

- **The peer provider resource directory should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the peers who are on the list have current experience with more advanced ITS projects.**

The resource directory should be expanded to include peers with experience addressing the most technologically current and institutionally challenging ITS deployment issues.

- **The P2P program staff should provide private sector peers with a realistic estimate of how many non-billable hours the engagement will entail, so that the peer can make an informed choice about participating in the engagement.**

- **P2P administrative and reporting forms should be put on line to facilitate peer compliance.**

Most senior transportation professionals now have access to the web at their work place. The web offers a useful tool for reminding peers to submit their final reports, for posting the forms and other reporting requirements, and for peers to deliver the reports to P2P.

- **A marketing program should be established and funded.**

The program should include provisions for a P2P web page, conference presentations at select conferences, P2P outreach materials, and articles and advertising in periodicals. Program outreach need not be done by P2P staff only. FHWA and FTA staff can also include references to the P2P program in conference presentations at, for example, ITS America state chapter meetings. The P2P web site should be linked to the web sites of FHWA, FHWA-JPO, FTA, and ITS America.

If a P2P web site is created, two effective reminders for potential customers are a coffee mug or mouse pad printed with the URL. Both are good give-aways at conferences, and most tea and coffee drinkers place their mugs next to their computers. Other USDOT web site addresses could also be included.

- **State transit associations offer a useful venue to promote the program**.

A presentation about the P2P program to the membership of one such association generated several peer engagements. An interviewee suggested that these associations would most likely pass along P2P press releases in their newsletters and hand out brochures at their meetings, as well.

- **One customer suggested that a P2P representative should visit the four FHWA Resource Centers and present the program to Resource Center personnel.**

When asked who they call with ITS problems, P2P customers frequently mentioned FHWA and FTA headquarters and division offices. Outreach should focus on these intermediaries to ensure that they understand and support the P2P program.

Appendix A: Peer Providers Interviewed

				Interview
Bob Kaiser	**Michael Baker Jr. Inc.**	**Annapolis**	**MD**	**09/30/1999**
Rob Jaffe	**Jaffe Engineering and Development Industries**	**Shenorock**	**NY**	**10/14/1999**
Robert Winnick	**Transportation Planning Consultants**	**Rockville**	**MD**	**10/18/1999**
John Duve	**San Diego Area Council of Governments**	**San Diego**	**CA**	**10/20/1999**
Stephen Peterson	**Street Traffic Studies, Inc.**	**Gaithersburg**	**MD**	**10/21/1999**
Carol Schweiger	**Multisystems, Inc.**	**Cambridge**	**MA**	**10/25/1999**
Joe Stapleton	**Georgia Department of Transportation**	**Atlanta**	**GA**	**10/27/1999**

Appendix B: Peer Provider Interview Guide

What was the nature of the problem or question in which you were involved in the P2P program?

What expertise were you able to share with the customer or initiator?

How would you describe the process that matched you to the customer or initiator?
How well do you think that the matching process works?

How much time elapsed between the P2P program's first contact and the eventual agreement?

What was your perspective on the quality of program support once the match was made?

In retrospect, do you think that the customer's needs were well met?

Did you file a follow-up report, for your own records, for P2P, or to send to the customer?

Do you have any recommendations to improve the quality of the program? Why?

What media or venue would you recommend for P2P outreach?

Appendix C: Customers Interviewed:

Transit	Cindy Johnson	Director	Sweetwater Co. Transit Auth.	Rock Springs	WY	12/16/1999
Transit	Mary Powers	Equipment & Engineering Department	MTA, Los Angeles	Los Angeles	CA	01/20/2000
Transit	Armando Greco	Exec. Director	LANTA	Allentown	PA	12/21/1999
Transit Assoc.	Martha Pierce	Director	PPTA	Harrisburg	PA	02/02/2000
Transit	William Nichols	General Manager	Williamsport Bureau of Transportation	Williamsport	PA	02/07/2000
State DOT	Steve Kim	Traffic Design Engr	WSDOT, Olympic Region	Tumwater	WA	12/16/1999
State DOT	Dale Peabody	Trans. Research Engr/ ITS Coordinator	Maine DOT	Augusta	ME	12/16/1999
State DOT	Robert Smeltz	Manager	PDOT-Bureau of Transportation, Public Transit Division	Harrisburg	PA	01/25/2000
Consultant	Jim Riley	Project Manager	HNTB	Cleveland	OH	02/14/2000
Consultant	Charles Fuhs	Senior Project Manager	PBQ&D	Austin	TX	12/23/1999
Academia	John Collura	Prof. of Engineering	VPI/ State University Dep't of Civil & Envir.Eng.	Blacksburg	VA	01/18/2000
MPO	Peter Keating	Transportation Planner	Chittenden County MPO	S. Burlington	VT	12/22/1999
MPO	Dean Pierce	Senior Regional Planner	Rutland RPC	Rutland	VT	12/20/1999
MPO	Ronald Welke	Transp. Coordinator Transp. Planning Div.	M-NCPPC	Silver Spring	MD	12/28/1999
MPO	Lee Dauterive	Special Project Manager	Regional Planning Commission	New Orleans	LA	12/20/1999
MPO	Ken Flack	Transportation Planner	Southwestern PA RPC	Pittsburgh	PA	01/25/2000
MPO	Tina Wu	Project Manager	Washoe County RTC	Reno	NV	01/28/2000
Redvlp. Auth.	Christopher Kern	Project Manager	Redevelop. Auth. Of Philadelphia	Philadelphia	PA	01/20/2000
Corr. Coaltn.	Noreen Hazleton	Contract Manager	I-95 Corridor Coalition	Boston	MA	12/22/1999
City DOT	Danielle Matland	Deputy Director	City of Annapolis Parking & Transp. Dep't	Annapolis	MD	12/16/1999
FHWA	David Unkefer	ITS Engineer	FHWA-FL	Tallahassee	FL	12/21/1999
FHWA	Bruce Baldwin	ITS Engineer	FHWA-KS	Topeka	KS	12/28/1999
FHWA	Paul Olson	Engineer	FHWA-Western Res. Ctr.	San Francisco	CA	01/19/2000
FHWA	Mac Lister	ITS Specialist	FHWA-MRC	Olympia Fields	IL	02/02/2000

Distribution by Organization Type :

MPO	6
Transit	5
FHWA	4
State DOT	3
Consultant	2
City DOT	1
Redvlp Auth.	1
Corr. Coaltn.	1
Academia	1
	24

Appendix D: Customer Interview Guide

Introduction: description of study

What was the nature of the problem or question that you brought to the P2P program?

How did you know to seek assistance from the P2P program?

Was it easy to get in touch with the program staff?

Were they able to understand the problem?

What happened during your first P2P phone conversation?

And then, how was follow-up handled? Did you initiate the follow-up? How long did it take for the follow-up to occur?

How long did it take for P2P make a Peer match?

What was the nature of the exchange with the Peer (e.g., by phone, in person, at a workshop)?

Did the Peer bring the right type of expertise?

Were there any briefing/review/feedback opportunities with either the Peer or the P2P program staff after the engagement?

What were the benefits to your work as a result of the Peer activities?

What might you have done if you hadn't had access to the P2P program?

Do you plan to use the P2P program again?

Would you recommend the P2P to another agency/counterpart in another city/county/state?

Regarding outreach

How did you first learn about the P2P program?

What web pages do you consult when you need information for your job?

Who do you normally call for technical assistance?

Which, if any, periodicals do you read regularly?

Which, if any, professional meetings do you attend (probe for regional associations)? Which meetings does your manager attend?

Appendix E: Proposed P2P Customer Satisfaction survey

Customer satisfaction surveys are quality improvement tools. In general, they are used to learn what you've done wrong and what you've done right. Survey questions should address areas of program performance that are considered critical to good customer service. Some customers will feel strongly enough about a good experience to respond to a customer satisfaction survey, but nearly all customers who have had a bad experience will respond to the survey. Nevertheless, staff should plan on following up once or twice to remind customers to complete the questionnaire. The survey should be reasonably short, no longer than two pages. While some of the questions can be pre-coded for convenience, some should be left open ended to allow the customer to describe the situation in his or her own words. The web provides an easy medium for posting a survey, but a paper version should also be available for those customers who do not have access to the Internet. Because this cannot be an anonymous survey, staff may need to follow up personally with a customer whose survey seems to be ambivalent but unexpressive. Respondents may be concerned about offending the peer or the program staff. Finally, as a complement to this customer survey, peers should be asked (in an open-ended question) to comment on the quality of their experience with the program when they are providing final reports to P2P.

1. How did you learn about the Peer-to-Peer program?
    - Pre-code by providing a check-list of possible events and publications, and a category "Other (please specify)." Ask them to check as many as apply.

2. Did you receive a return call from P2P staff within 2 work days of your first call to the program?
    - Pre-code "Yes," "No," and "If not, how many work days elapsed?"

3. Do you feel that the P2P staff person who handled your request understood your project needs?
    - Pre-code: "1) Yes, the P2P staff person understood my project needs," "2) The P2P staff person did not understand at first, but brought in another staff person who was able to help," "3) No, the P2P staff did not understand my project needs," "4) Other (please specify)."

4. If the staff did not understand your project needs, how was the problem addressed?
    - Leave this open-ended.

5. How many business days passed between your first discussion with P2P staff and the introduction to a Peer?
    - Open-ended.

6. Did the Peer understand your project needs?
    - Pre-code "1)Yes, the Peer understood the project needs better than I did," "2) The Peer understood the project needs very well," "3) The Peer understood the project needs well enough," "4) There were important aspects of the project that the Peer did not understand," "Other (please specify)."

7. Were you satisfied with the assistance provided by the Peer?
    - Pre-code with “1) Very satisfied, 2) Mostly satisfied, 3) Sufficiently satisfied, 4) Somewhat dissatisfied, and 5) Entirely dissatisfied”

8. If you were not satisfied, please describe the problem.
    - Open-ended.

9. Would you use the Peer-to-Peer program for assistance again?
    - Open-ended.

10. What would have done in this situation if you had not had access to the Peer-to-Peer program?

We welcome your comments and suggestions.