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Transition to Online **Tests: Strategies** and Results





Baltimore - June 23, 2003





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Symposium chair : François Chiocchio, PhD.

Presenters

- Suzanne Lalonde, Personnel Psychology Centre
- Reid Klion, PhD, Performance Assessment Network, Inc.
- Bastian Kruideneir, PhD, Personnel Psychology Centre
- François Chiocchio, PhD, Personnel Psychology Centre





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The symposium's programme

- 1. Challenges to Online Test Implementation
- 2. Enabling Internet-Based Selection Testing
- 3. Transition from Paper-and-Pencil to Online Formats: Equivalence Studies and New
 - **Development Initiatives**
- 4. The Impact of Online Tests on the Testing Process, HR Consultants and Candidates



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1. Challenges to Online Test Implementation

Suzanne Lalonde, Director, Information and Business Technology Nathalie Gagnon, Technical Advisor, Online Tests Diane Thibault, Chief of Operations, Test Services





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Outline

Challenges
Resistance
Pitfalls
Solutions
Lessons learned





Challenges

Support and funding

- Complex and lengthy RFP and contract negotiations
- Data security
- Government of Canada, not a single entity
- Various high stakes testing scenarios
- Canada has two official languages





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Support and funding

- IT specialists
- Senior management
- Operating budgets insufficient to cover this type of initiative





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Complex and lengthy RFP and contract negotiations

- RFP requires clearly defined and detailed specifications
- NAFTA
- RFPs are posted only when they are deemed challenge-proof







Industrial Security Policy
 Personnel security clearances
 Facilities security clearances
 Data security
 US Department of Defense reciprocal agreement - different standards





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Government of Canada, not a single entity (from the point of view of testing)

- Approximately 140 departments and agencies
- Large territory
- 200,000 + employees in and outside Canada
- 2000 HR officers
- 500 HR managers and senior managers
- Different organisational cultures
- Different staffing processes

- Different legislative contexts
- Not all stakeholders need to interact with the Personnel Psychology Centre for their testing needs
 - legal reasons
 - cost-recovery context
 - depends on the test they need





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Various high stakes testing scenarios... somewhat outside of our control

- Large groups / Small groups / One at a time
- T&D labs in government facilities
- Computer labs outside government facilities (e.g. universities)
- Embassies, missions and micro-missions
- High speed / Modem connections
- Desk top / Lap top computers





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Two official languages

In addition to having bilingual psychometrically sound parallel versions of tests, this implies that all screens in the candidate's and administrator's environments be available in French and English.

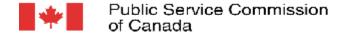




Resistance

External
 SWOT analysis
 Internal
 Phases of preoccupation





SWOT analysis Strengths Excellent proven system Government-on-line initiatives Departmental pressure for faster turnaround Weaknesses Not technically inclined Not clear what they are buying Opportunities Highly-decentralized departments Departments with large volumes Threats Lack of web-enabled proctored environments





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Phases of change...

and how to avoid resistance

Preoccupation

Goal of phase

Phase 1. No preoccupation

- Phase 2. Preoccupied with job security
- Phase 3. Preoccupied with seriousness of change
- Phase 4. Preoccupied with the nature of change
- Phase 5. Preoccupied with required support for change
- Phase 6. Preoccupied with collaboration with others
- Phase 7. Preoccupied with effective continuous change

- Destabilise
- Reassure
- Clarify choices
- Inform
- Reassure and support
- Share

Value

What we did to reach goal

- Provide information and arouse curiosity and interest
- Provide details on transition period / Discuss new work
- Explain why change is essential
- Involve in mapping of old and new processes
- Coaching and training
- Multi-disciplinary team
- Recognise super-users / experts





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Pitfalls

Inertia

no progress because too many new processes, new processes are too complex or too many stakeholders are involved

Resistance

- no progress because people don't agree on how to progress
- Misspecification
 - the system works... but not for what it is supposed to do

Misuse

incorrect use by users

Nonuse

system stays idle...

(McAfee, 2003)





Solutions

 Choice of the right supplier
 Reengineered business model
 Internal and External Communication Strategy

Start small - go slow





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The right supplier for us

• We chose a supplier that:

- based its technology on knowledge and expertise of psychometric principles, personnel assessment, testing, etc.
- understood our professional concerns and values
- offered a private label







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Reengineering

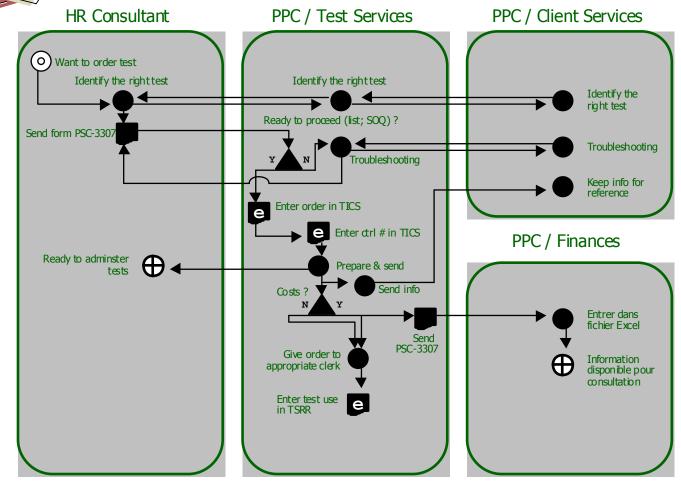
- Work flow, such as ordering, administering, scoring and communicating results, were reengineered, as opposed to simply replicated from the paper and pencil process.
- Mapping out paper & pencil and online processes revealed
 - that new actors were now involved and
 - "old" actors needed new information and training
 - e.g. Test consultants still filter requests, but differently



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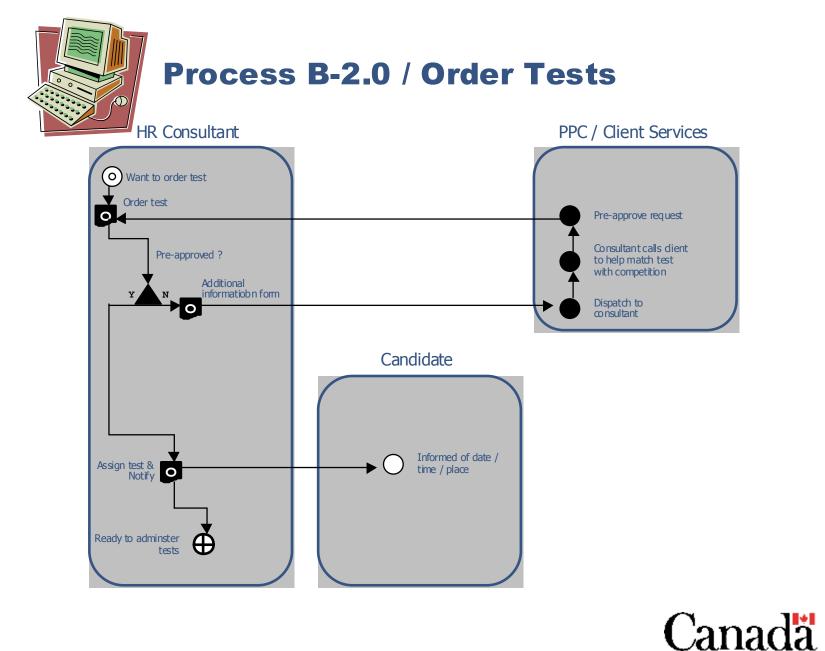
Process A-2.0 / Order Tests







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Communication strategy during implementation

- Messages (4)

 Better, Faster, Cheaper, Safer

 Target audiences (3)

 Users, Decision makers, Candidates

 Strategic objectives (4)

 Build awareness of online tests
 Foster comprehension of its benefits
 Convince people to use online tests
 - Foster repeat usage





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Start small - go slow

- Start with limited number of instruments
- Strategically choose a limited number of organizations and users
- Gain knowledge as you go (listen to users)
- Build user friendly information bank as you go (inform new users)
- Build on word of mouth and attraction rather than only on promotion)





Lessons learned

Deal with roadblocks one at a time
Biggest roadblocks are internal
Do not get discouraged - there is a solution to every problem
Dare to dream and remember: it can

happen...it will happen





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2. Enabling Internet-Based Selection Testing

Reid E. Klion

Performance Assessment Network, Inc.





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Creating Web-Based Assessment Tools



Content







Process Goals

 Robust Operation Across Multiple Sites, Platforms, and Hardware Configurations

 Deliver Bilingual *Timed* Test Content Reliably and *Securely*





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Cross-Site Functionality

 Differing Operating Systems Differing Browser Versions Hardware Implementation Can Vary Greatly From Site to Site Connectivity Issues



Goal: Assume Conservative "Standard" Common Platform





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Timed Content Delivery Challenges

- Timing is Complex Due to Intermittent Connectivity
- Speed of Connectivity Varies Both Within and Across Sites
 - Web server speed
 - ISP issues
 - Local network issues





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PC-Based (CD-ROM) Approach

Content is Local
 Bandwidth Less Important
 but

Each Machine Must Be Installed
Multiple Site Set-up Difficult
Complex if Many Instruments Used
Updating and Errata Difficult to Manage





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Active Server Page

Pages Refreshed Ability to Time Page Presentation Latency Between Screens Cannot Time Entire Test Session Difficulty Managing Testing Sessions Fine (or Better) for Many Non-Timed Assessments





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Java Applet

Program Downloaded via SSL-encrypted Internet Connection to Local PC Administered Locally on PC Answers Saved Temporarily on Local PC Accurate and Automatic Timing Internet Data Upload with Immediate Scoring Need to Have Java "Plug-in" Firewall/Security Coordination





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Common Concerns

Timing Accuracy Limited by PC/Windows Control of Entire Testing Session



Response Collection Accuracy No hanging "chads" Response enforcement (if desired)







Simplicity Create French Test Interface Replace Bubble Sheets with Radio Button Technology

Standard Mouse Point/Click Functionality

ОА. ОВ. ОС. ⊙Д ОЕ.

Instruct... but Not to Excess





Content



- Gradual Move Toward Tests Developed and Normed Specifically for Internet Delivery
- Tests Comprised of Text and Mathematics
 Usually Straightforward
 - Usually Straightforward
- Speeded and "Modality-Specific" Tests More Problematic





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Re-Versioning Original

Standard Questions Typically Straightforward

Example X.	Add		
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	13	B	16
	12	С	25
		D	59
		N	none of thes





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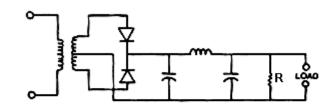
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ОВ.	16
● C.	25
O D.	59
О N.	none of these





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48. In the circuit shown below, the main function of the R component is to



- C A. filter output voltage and current.
- O B. discharge the capacitors when turned off.
- O c. balance the load.
- O D. reduce the load on the rectifier.





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Full Screen View

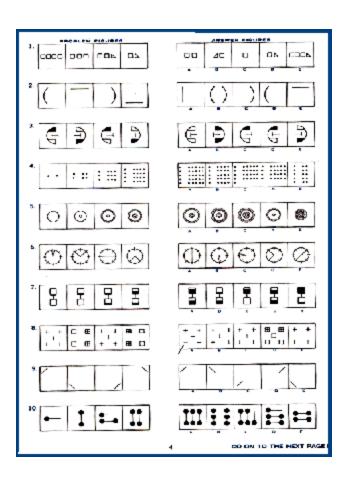
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^{1.} Choissez la paire de mots qui fait le plus directement référence à un concept commun plus général.	
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C 3. GARAGE - MECHANIC	
C 4. MÉCANICIEN - AVOCAT	
© 5. AUTOMOBILE - GARAGE	
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A Contrast....

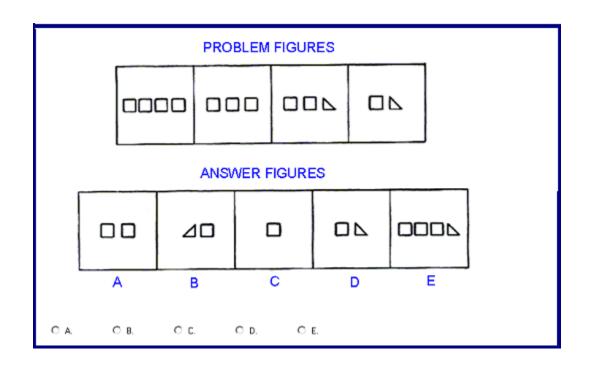






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Web-Based Version







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Scoring and Reporting

Security Primary Concern

 Protected Test Content
 Proprietary Scoring Key
 Confidentiality of Individual Results

 Offline Scoring Server
 Password-Protected Results Only Available to Test Administrator





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Security: Technical Issues

Applet Download Encrypted
Temporary Answer File Encrypted
Uploaded Data Encrypted
Offline Scoring Server
Password Access to Results
Data Transferred *via* htps





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Security: Behavioral Issues

 Consider What is Different From and Similar to Paper/Pencil Approaches

Look to Behavior First, Not Technology

Proctored Testing is Still Proctored Testing





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Consider Systemic Context

Stand-Alone Assessment

Data Integration

Assessment System Development



Web-Services as Multi-Step/Multi-Vendor **Process Integrator**





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Stand-Alone Assessment

Traditional Model
Not Automatically Integrated
"Report-in-the-folder"
Useful For:

Small Scale Projects
Development Tools and Programs
360° Feedback Instruments





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Automatically Export Data to Other Systems

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS/HRMS)
Learning Management Systems
Legacy Systems

Major Driver is .xml
Huge Savings Due to Synergy and Lack of Duplicated Effort





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Assessment System Development

 Develop Custom System to Meet Client Business Requirements

- Assess Needs
- Maintain Awareness of "Real World" Constraints

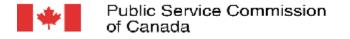




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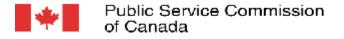




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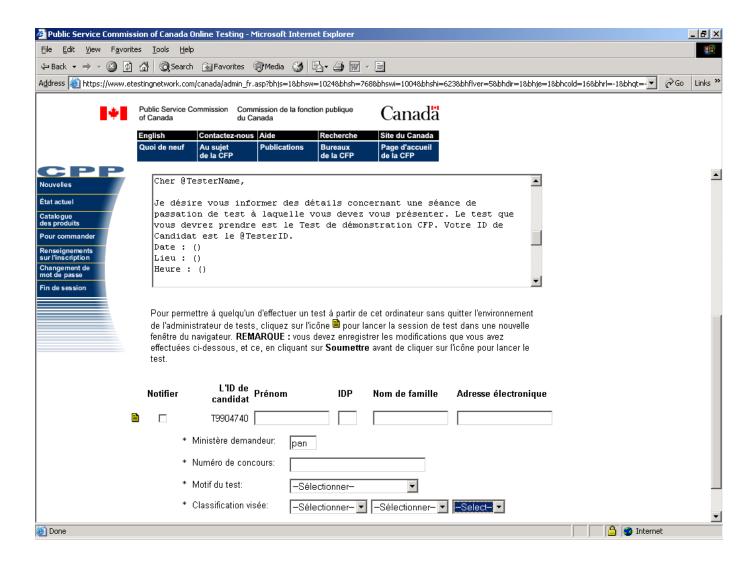


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		Graduate Recru	uitment-Written	Communicatio	on Proficiency Battery	0	7	0	14	13	
		PSC Demonstr	ation Test			0	5	0	1	2	
	316A1E	Graduate Recru	uitment Test			0	4	0	7	11	
	316A1F	Examen de rec	rutement de dip	lômés		0	5	0	1	2	
	323A1E	Foreign Service	e Situational Jud	lgement Test		0	7	0	13	12	
	323A1F	Examen de jug	ement situation	nel pour le ser	vice extérieur	0	2	0	1	4	
	351B1E	Written Comm	unication Profici	ency Test		0	1	0	7	14	
	353A1F	Examen de cor	mpétence en co	mmunication	écrite	0	6	0	2	4	
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	650D1E	Évaluation de la	angue seconde:	Expression é	crite (anglais)	0	5	0	0	7	
	650D1F	Second Langua	age Evaluation: '	Writing (Frenc	h)	0	1	0	1	3	
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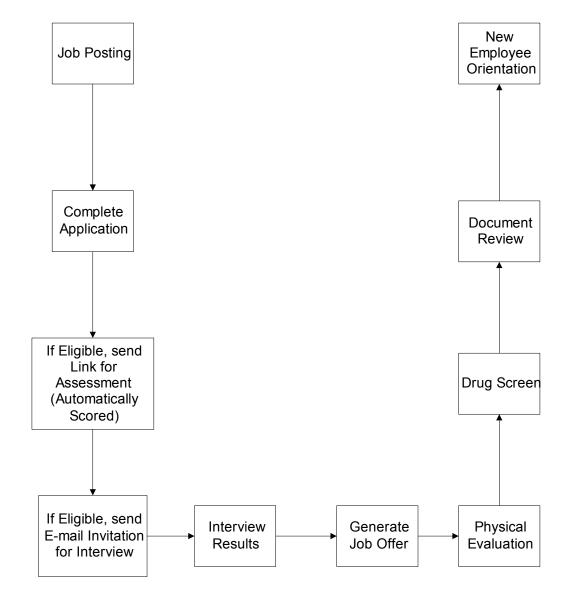
Online System as Integrator

Web Services Model
Integrate Across Content Providers
Provide "Back Office" For Multiple Vendors
Integrate Data
Provide Continual Monitoring of Process





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3. Transition from Paper-and-Pencil to Online Formats: Equivalence Studies and New Development Initiatives Patrick McCoy, Penny Faulkner, Bastian Kruidenier Research and Development, Personnel Psychology Centre Douglas Pelchat, Consultant





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Equivalence Studies

Background

- Generally, findings of equivalence for paper-andpencil and computer-based versions of multiplechoice tests
- Greater degree of equivalence for power than for speeded tests
- Some findings that reading long passages can take more time in computer administration





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Four Tests

Multiple-choice:

- Cognitive Ability: verbal, numerical, reasoning
- Written Communication Proficiency: recognizing errors, determining best word or summary for short reading passages
- Second Language Reading: read & answer questions about short passages
- Second Language Writing (SLW): recognize errors, determine best word, translation





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Design

Between-subjects

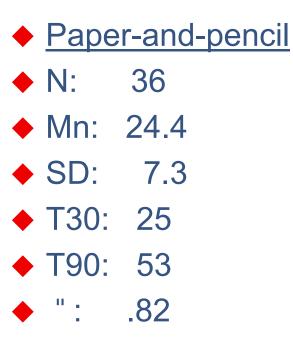
- Random assignment to groups (paper vs computer administration)
- Variables considered:
 - Mean scores
 - Timing (time taken to work through tests)
 - Internal consistency reliabilities
- Candidate perceptions





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Results: Cognitive Ability (55 items, 90 minutes)



Computer-based
N: 32
Mn: 24.9
SD: 6.9
T30: 24
T90: 54
": .82





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Results: Written Communication (50 items, 100 minutes)

Paper-and-pencil
N: 36
Mn: 29.6
SD: 7.2
T30: 20
T100: 50
": .83

- Computer-based
 N: 32
 Mn: 29.9
 SD: 8.6
 T30: 21
- ◆ T100: 50
- ": .86





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Results: Second Language Reading (65 items, 90 minutes)

◆ <u>EN</u>	IGLISH	♦ <u>F</u> F	<u>RENCH</u>
Paper	Computer	Paper	Computer
♦ N: 50	52	♦ 68	51
♦ Mn: 50.9	48.9	♦ 45.6	47.8
♦ SD: 9.6	12.4	♦ 9.8	11.1
♦ T30: 29	28	♦ 28	28
♦ T90: 63	64	♦ 63	64
♦ ": .92	.90	• .87	.92





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Results: Second Language Writing (55 items, 60 minutes)

◆ <u>EN</u>	GLISH	♦ <u>F</u> F	<u>RENCH</u>
Paper	Computer	Paper	Computer
♦ N: 50	52	♦ 68	51
♦ Mn: 42.7	41.1	♦ 35.6	34.4
♦ SD: 8.7	10.5	♦ 11.0	12.3
◆ T20: 40	42	♦ 36	35
♦ T60: 55	55	♦ 55	55
♦ ": .90	.94	• .93	.94





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Results: Perceptions of Paper and Computer Versions

- Clarity of instructions
- Adequacy of time limit
- Face validity

→ Similar ratings across paper and computer versions





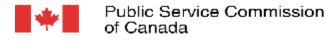
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Results: Perceptions of Quality of Computer Versions

- Clarity of screen
- Ease of navigation
- Ease of returning to previously completed items

➡ All three qualities rated positively





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Conclusions

 Similar candidate performance across Paper and Computer versions of tests

Similar perceptions of test adequacy





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Field Study Survey: Perceptions of computer testing experience

- Sample: 107 employees applying to positions in 5 federal organizations
 - 53% were women
 - Average age: 36 years (22 to 58)
- Survey administered right after test and before results known





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Field Study: Results

Computer and testing environment
Clarity of instructions
Clarity of screen
Ease of navigation
Ease of returning to previously-completed items

→Mean ratings all positive





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Field Study: Results

Impact of computer testing experience

- 50% of participants had no experience
- No differences in perceptions, no impact on test scores
- Age and computer-testing experience
 - Older candidates had less experience
 - No impact on test scores
- Impact of level of computer skills
 - No differences in perceptions, no impact on test scores





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Field Study: Results

Perceptions of men and women Women more positive about layout and appearance of questions on screen Perceived fairness toward designated groups Visible minorities: 72% very positive Persons with disabilities: 43% very positive Aboriginal peoples: 63% very positive Women: 74% very positive





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Plans for Equivalence Studies								
medium: paper to e-test								
♦ sample	18	18						
means	45.8	47.7						
◆ <u>SLE retes</u>	SLE retest norms paper to paper							
♦ sample	7070	7070						
♦ means	44.21	48.24						
 Incans 44.21 40.24 (obtaining 12 retest paper to e-cases/mnth. Plan for equivalence paper Dec. 2003 with adequate sample. Will compare % change controlling for time interval). 								





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New Developments

Already in the works:

- Generic 360 ° Feedback Questionnaire
 - 5 levels of management, 2 languages
- Rating system for Assessment Center simulation exercises
- Soon-to-be:
 - Situational judgement test
 - Multiple-choice in-basket
 - New tests developed for on-line administration





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4. The Impact of Online Tests on the Testing Process, HR Consultants and Candidates

François Chiocchio, Project Leader, Online Tests en ligneSuzanne Lalonde, Director, Information and Business TechnologyDiane Thibault, Chief of Operations, Test Services





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Time to hire

Public Service Commission recent surveys* reveal that

- Average time to hire is 21 weeks
- Managers complain that the staffing process is too long and protracted and too "rules bound" resulting in: increased workload for managers and a potential <u>loss of good candidates</u> who become discouraged
- 2000/2001 IPMA/NASPE Benchmarking Report** reveal that
 - 56.07% of managers report that it takes between 1 and 7 calandar days to begin the testing process, the rest reports it takes from 8 to over 60 calandar days
 - 58.63% of managers report that it takes between 1 and 7 calandar days to complete the testing process, the rest reports it takes from 8 to over 60 calandar days

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* PSC, fall 2001

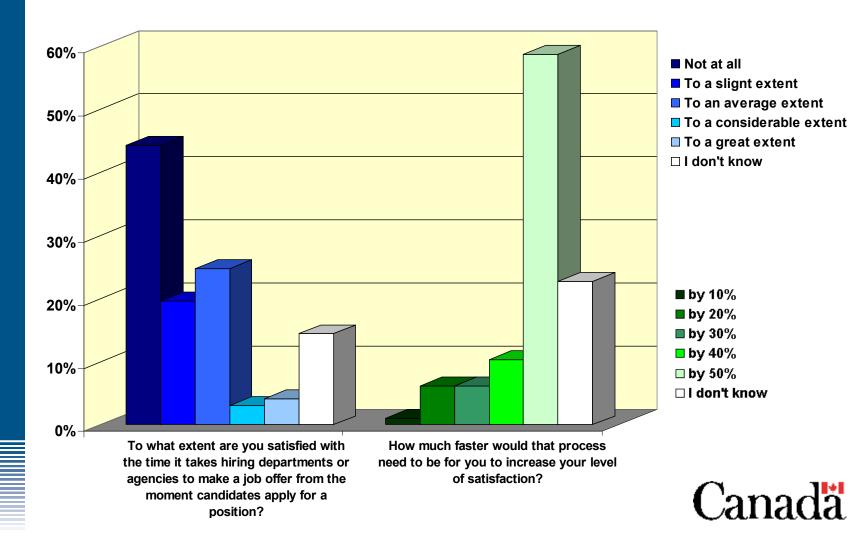
** Recruitment Strategies, Series 1, 2001



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Our own survey shows....

Fig 6. - Satisfaction with cycle time

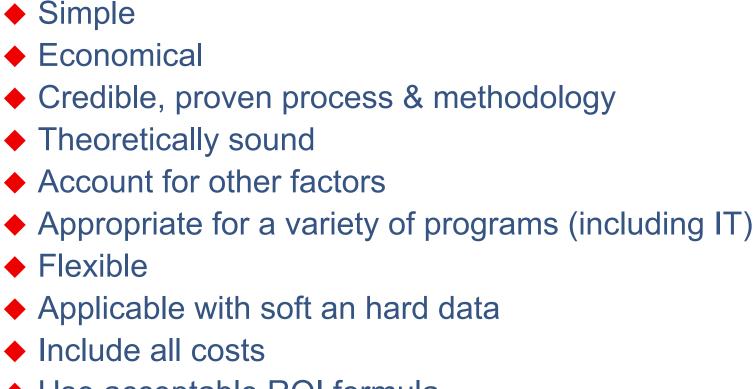




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Requirements of ROI studies

(Phillips & Pulliam Phillips, 2002)



Use acceptable ROI formula





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5 levels

Level 1: Reaction - Satisfaction
Level 2: Learning
Level 3: Behaviors - Application and implementation
Level 4: Results - Business impact
Level 5: ROI

ROI (%) = (Savings - Costs) / Costs) x 100





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The study

Questionnaire to Candidates (N=107)
Questionnaire to Test Administrators (N=14)
Internal and External process mapping





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Level 1: Candidates' Satisfaction

Satisfied with Instructions

 Computer instructions, Test instructions, Sample questions

Satisfied with Layout

- Questions, Legibility, Font size, Screen size
- Satisfied with Features
 - Navigation, Revision



Level 1: Test Administrators' Satisfaction

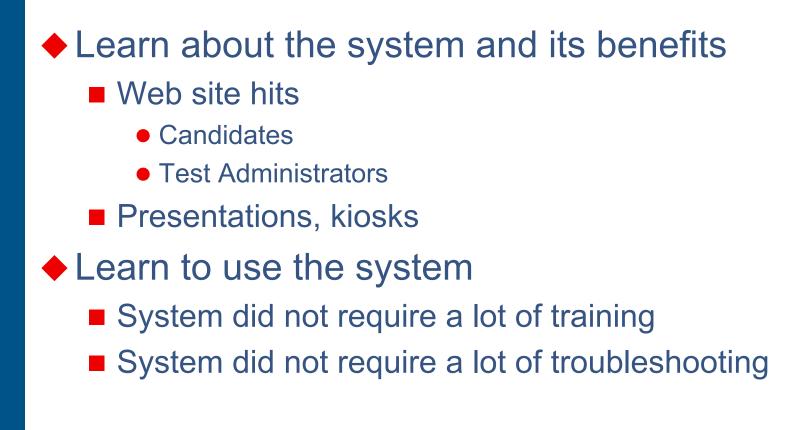
- Overwhelming satisfaction with support
 Information on the Web, Training, Customer support
- Overwhelming satisfaction with Test Administrator Environment
 - Order tests, Assign tests, Notify candidates, Manage results, Reliability of the environment
- Overwhelming satisfaction with Candidate Environment
 - Prepare computers, Instructions to candidates, Downloading of tests, Timer, Result delivery, Reliability of the environment





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Level 2: Learning







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Level 3: Behaviors – Application and Implementation

- People who started to use the Online tests en ligne system did not want to go back to paper-and-pencil
 - Duration of Phase II: 23 weeks (aim was 8)
 - 404 tests events (aim was 200)
 - 9 organizations involved (aim was 5)
 - 50 Test Administrators trained (aim was 10)
 - Approximately 30 glitches,
 - All occurred at beginning of Phase II
 - 95% of them solved in less than 60 minutes





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Level 4: Results – Business Impact "External" Time

Table 1: Time and Cycle time of tasks*

Tasks	Paper- and- pencil (Survey)	Paper- and- pencil (SME)	Online (SME)
Order a test**		6.0 min	1.0 min
Receive a test from the PPC	3.7 days	3.7 days	0.0 min
Notify one candidate	2.9 min	2.9 min	1.0 min
Assign one test	6.9 min	0.5 min	0.5 min
Distribute one test booklet and answer sheet	3.2 min	0.5 min	5.0 min
Collect one test booklet and answer sheet	2.0 min	1.0 min	0.5 min
Verify and erase hand writing in one test booklet	8.5 min	8.5 min	0.0 min
Scan or hand correct one answer sheet***	4.2 min	4.2 min	0.0 min
Send one answer sheet for scoring	3.4 min	3.4 min	0.0 min
Get results back from PPC	3.4 days	3.4 days	2.0 min

Paper-and-pencil = 27 min

Online = 8 min

* The time of the testing session in not included because it is a constant

** Was omitted in the survey

*** Represents the average of both tasks



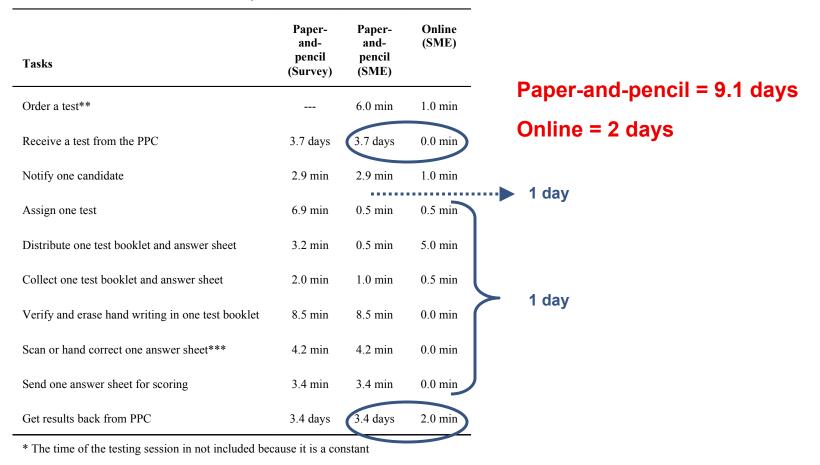


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Level 4: Results – Business Impact "External" Cycle-Time

Table 1: Time and Cycle time of tasks*



** Was omitted in the survey

*** Represents the average of both tasks



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"Internal" Time and Cost



6.2 minutes

Online0.5 minutes

"Internal" Cycle-Time

- Paper-and-pencil
 - 2.0 days

Online0.5 day





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Level 5: ROI

 Two conditions need to be met for the Online Tests en ligne system to show ROI

Online costs <= P&P costs</p>

- Internal
- External

Online time to hire < P&P time to hire</p>





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Conclusion: ROI ?

External

- Time (cost)
 - from 27 to 8 minutes
 approx. 138% ROI
- Cycle-time
 - from 9.1 to 2.0 days = approx. 255% ROI

- Internal
 - Time (cost)
 - from 6.2 to 0.5 minutes per test = approx. 1185% ROI
 - Cycle-time
 - from 2.0 to 0.5 days per test
 approx. 200% ROI





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To learn more...

www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/ppc/ppc-cpp.htm

...and follow the "Online Tests" links

