The in*Q*sit News

Generic Blind Study Authentication Method

Muncie, January 18th – Surveyors have generally had to choose between anonymous surveys and respondent tracking surveys; you couldn't have anonymity *AND* be able to correlate responses between surveys or preventing ballot-box stuffing. inQsit developers announced today a new authentication method that lets surveyors maintain anonymity while providing respondent tracking. Using innocuous questions which elicit consistent individual responses, inQsit creates a highly obfuscated personal identifier. This identifier can then be used to:

1. Correlate responses between multiple surveys
2. Restrict the number of times an individual may respond
3. Restrict subsequent survey respondents to the list generated by a previous survey

inQsit asks for following information: Initials, Birth City, Birth month and day (not year), Birth order (intended to help differentiate between twins, triplets, etc.), Sex, and Eye color. It then creates an encrypted identifier that defies correlation to the actual data. Although possible, it is very unlikely that two individuals' responses will encrypt to the same identifier.

The inQsit author, Dan Fortriede, says, "Don't confuse this authentication method with the BSU Blind Study" method. The latter is restricted to those with a current BSU account, while this new "Generic Blind Study" can be used with any population. Fortriede went on to say that this authentication method has been constructed in conjunction with the Ball State University IRB, and meets their general guidelines for anonymity in surveys with research subjects. *IRB approval for human subject research is still required*.

Spring 2008 Release

Version 11.10 is the latest version of the **I**ntegrated **N**etwork **Q**uizzing, **S**urveying, and **I**nteractive **T**esting software hits your local browsers this Spring. The updates include several new security features, a new question type, module definition additions, and the new "Prerequisite" option which implements self-paced study and surveying techniques.

Multi-part questions no longer limited to 26 sub-parts	High-Security update helps detect cheating
Originally developed to implement Likert table and Matching question types, multi-part questions were limited to 26 parts corresponding to the 26 letters in the alphabet. However, today multi-part questions are used	The High Security feature was introduced several versions ago that detects whenever a student is trying to close the test window and pops up a warning message telling him/her that if they continue their answers will not be recorded and they

in myriad ways and sometimes 26 sub-parts just aren't enough.

Version 11.10 has redefined the question number format to allow either one or two letters after the question number; for example: 22aa, 22ab, etc. You still need to start with the single letter "a", but now you can have multi-part question numbers from "a" to "zz": that's 702 sub-parts.

Module definition changes

There are several new features available in the Environment Options area.

New   Warning   Message
When a module is currently available to students a warning message will be displayed at the top of the page.

URLs   for   direct   access
Just before the environment section on both the Account Mgmt and Module Mgmt pages, the correct URL to the Module List, or Module Sign IN page (respectively) will be displayed. This is the correct link to use in any html links you place in Blackboard, or your personal web pages, etc.

Important   Info   Update
A new field has been added that lets you place information in the "Important Information Box" at the top of the displayed module.

Prerequisites

Self-paced study lets students work at their own speed.

The prereq option lets you set conditions that must be met prior to a student taking a specific test. For example you can require mastery of previous modules (prereq Quiz 1 >= 80) before moving onto Quiz 2.

Follow-up surveys require prior participation.

This option also lets you restrict access to a follow-up survey to only those that participated in the original survey.

More information is available on pages 17 and 18 of the manual.

may be prevented from taking the test in the future.

One trick used to get around that security feature is to open a test, look at it for a while then close without answering any questions. The student then claims that the "computer just froze" or "the browser closed without saving my answers" and will beg the professor for another chance. This update helps you detect when this happens.

Under 'View Results' the duration column already provides either:

A duration in the form of hh:mm:ss - meaning that the students answers have been recorded, or
'NR' indicating the student has not yet submitted his/her responses.

This update includes additional information in the duration field whenever the student tries to close the browser, or move to a different web page. In that case, and entry like:

Close attempt at
11/21/07 11:51:40AM

will be shown. You will be able to compare this field with the start time to determine just how long the student was able to review the page before closing the browser window.

Note: *The only way that the student can leave the test display without generating the third option above is to turn off the computer.*

How inQsit© records events
When a student asks for a test, inQsit verifies authentication and authorization, and then BEFORE presenting the test to the student, records the appropriate data. The test is not even sent back to the student until all the pertinent data is stored. Therefore is no way a student can see a test without it being recorded. That record will be shown in the "View Results" list until you delete it.

The student simply cannot claim that they took a test and for some reason you don't have a record in "View Results."

Version 11.10 adds new question type

We normally think of questions as having **one** correct answer: True or False; A or B? Multiple choice questions let you pick one correct answer out of a list, whereas, multiple response questions make you pick all of the correct answers.

The new "OR" question type lets you ask questions that

	have several correct answers. For example: Who wrote "Tom Sawyer"?
	Mark Twain Samuel Clemens Huck Finn
	Both A or B would be correct. To code the answer, enter: A|B