# Findings From The Pre-Wave Of The 2004-05 Taxpayer Communications Tracking Study

#### **Prepared For:**



**January 17, 2005** 

Publication 4451 (01/05)
Catalog 39734N

**Prepared By:** 



#### **Background & Purpose**

- From 1997 to 2003, the IRS conducted both a Taxpayer *e-file* Ad Tracking Study and a Taxpayer Attitudinal Tracking Study. In 2003-04, these two surveys were folded into a single Taxpayer Communications Tracking Study consisting of two waves
  - A <u>Pre-Wave</u> conducted prior to the start of each new communications program.
  - And a <u>Post-Wave</u> conducted after the end of each campaign to measure communications impact.
- The pre-post design of 2003-04 was repeated this year. It allows assessment of the impact of each new e-file communications program on Taxpayer awareness of and disposition toward e-file, while still identifying key segments and examining communications impact among them. The segments being analyzed this year are:
  - The <u>e-file Usage Segments</u> e-file Users, Non-Triers, Lapsed Users, and Quitters
  - The <u>Filing Behavior Segments</u> ASAPs, Get Around To It, etc.
  - V-Coders
  - And the <u>Return Types</u> both the 4group model of the past (Self-Simple, Self-Complex, Paid-Simple, and Paid-Complex) and the new 6-group model (Self-Simple, Self-Intermediate, Self-Complex, Paid-Simple, Paid-Intermediate, and Paid-Complex). Note: with more detailed questions required for the 6-group Return Type segmentation, we found that half of the surveyed respondents could not be classified still, we show results here so that we can begin thinking about how it can be improved to better classify Taxpayers.



#### Method, Scope & Timing

- The 2004-05 study is being conducted as follows:
  - The <u>Pre-Wave</u> is used primarily to capture baseline awareness and other key measures for the campaign, in total and among the segments.
  - The <u>Post-Wave</u> is then used to track the campaign's impact again, both in total and among the segments.
  - Note: the other large-scale *e-file* Taxpayer study (the Customer Satisfaction Study) is also analyzed by the segments identified in this study.
- Both waves of the study are conducted by telephone from Russell Research's national call center in Wayne, NJ. Interviewing for the Pre-Wave of this study occurred during the period of December 1-12, 2004. Interviewing for the Post-Wave will occur immediately after the 2005 filing season.
- The sample for each wave consists a Random Sample of 750 Total Taxpayers per wave.
  - The Random Sample is secured using Random Digit Dialing telephone lists.
  - To qualify for the study, all respondents have to be ages 18-74, employed, and filing taxes in the previous tax filing season (2004 in the case of the Pre-Wave; 2005 in the case of the Post-Wave).
    - Note that the 18-74 age range represents a change from the past, when the top age limit was 64.





#### **Overview**

- Summarizing key findings from the communications tracking measures, we found that prior to the new campaign:
  - About 8 in 10 Taxpayers had <u>Unaided Awareness</u> of at least one of the *e-file* products (statistically the same vs. a year ago), with virtually universal <u>Total Awareness</u>. The *e-file* method with highest awareness was again Practitioner *e-file*, followed by On-Line Filing (using Software, an On-Line Company, or FreeFile), and then TeleFile. Communication awareness measures were generally stable.
  - However, we found clear increases in claimed <u>Trial</u>, <u>Usage</u>, <u>Recommendation</u>, <u>and Consideration</u> increases which do not appear to be due to any differences from year to year in sample composition, including the increased age range mentioned before.
  - Image ratings showed Taxpayer perceptions of *e-file* have generally improved over time, especially in terms of its *speed in filing* and being a better way to file your income taxes. Personality ratings for *e-file* were largely unchanged; however there were declines in the personality ratings of IRS over the past year and we'll monitor these closely in the Post-Wave.
- The segmentation work focused on different behavior structures, and yielded the following high-opportunity segments:
  - In terms of <u>e-file Usage</u>, the opportunities are <u>again the Non-Triers</u> (now 32% of all Taxpayers) <u>and Lapsed Users</u> (12%). These groups share <u>a clear need for the Preparer to offer them e-file</u>. Both are far behind the e-file Users in this regard.
  - For Return Type, with IRS moving from a 4-group to a 6-group model, we classified Taxpayers into both and found that the 4-group structure still works in terms of clean classification, while the new 6-group model does not (because of high Taxpayer non-response to its more detailed questions). FCB, Russell, and IRS will calibrate the questions in the 6-group structure prior to the Post-Wave.
    - Looking at the <u>4-group results</u>, we again found that <u>all 4 segments offer opportunity for IRS</u> mainly because they have similar awareness and disposition toward *e-file* and none stands out in terms of current usage. Still, two groups seem to be more immediate opportunities because of the fit of their Return Type with *e-file* Self-Simples and Paid-Simples.
  - In terms of the four <u>Filing Behavior</u> segments, in 2004, we thought that the greatest gain would come from the three later filing segments. This year, the opportunity appears to be more in the two earlier-filing groups (ASAPs and When Get To It), which account for 79% of all Taxpayers yet still have substantial proportions (25-36%) who have not tried *e-file*. Here, too, we found that the Preparer offering *e-file* is an important factor in conversion of the Non-Triers in these two segments.
  - Finally, in tracking <u>V-Coders</u>, we found that they are <u>still 28% of all Taxpayers</u> and that they are <u>still heavily dependent upon Preparers</u> (76% use one) though only 44% of those using Preparers say they are offered *e-file* as an filing option. <u>So the key to this group remains the Preparer</u> and it is a group ripe with opportunity, since only 8% have rejected *e-file* (with the rest being Non-Triers or Lapsed Users and consideration of use in this group is high 69%).





#### **Statistical Notation Used In Detailed Findings**

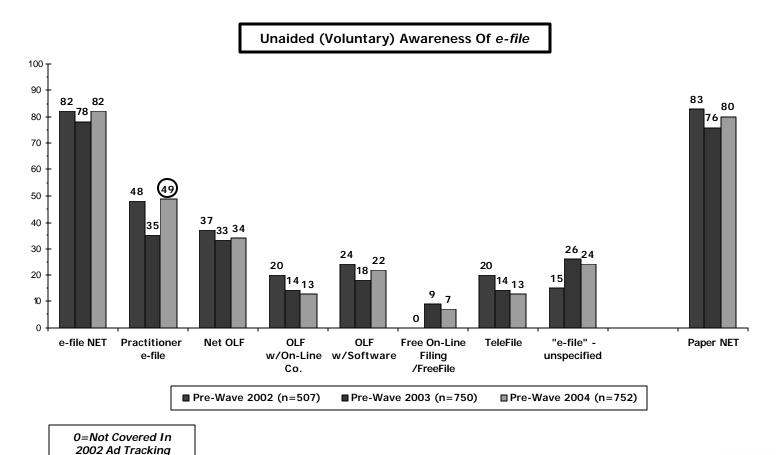
- O Indicates current wave is significantly higher than the previous wave at a 95% confidence level. Or, when subgroups are being compared, the circle is used to indicate a significant difference between one group and the balance of the sample.
- Indicates current wave is significantly lower than the previous wave at a 95% confidence level. Or, when subgroups are compared, the circle indicates a significant difference between one group and the balance of the sample.



# Results Of Key Measures Among All Taxpayers

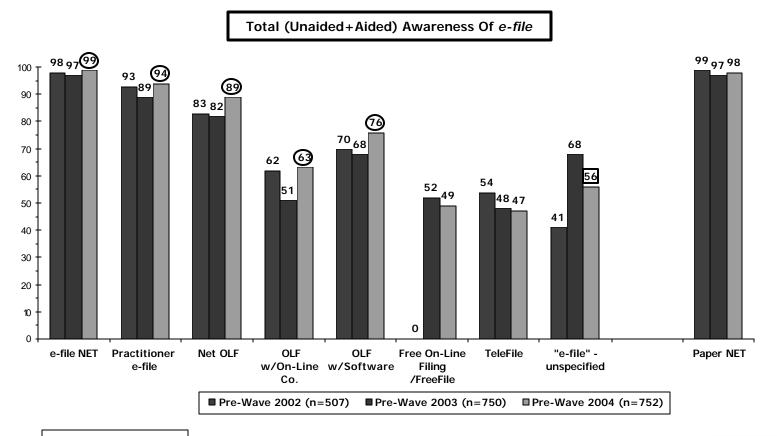
#### **Unaided Brand Awareness**

 While unaided awareness of e-file (in net) and specific e-file methods was largely unchanged in this Pre-Wave vs. the previous two Pre-Waves, there was a notable increase in voluntary mentions of Practitioner e-file (which includes any mention of e-filing through a Tax Professional).



#### **Total Brand Awareness**

• In <u>total</u> (<u>unaided</u> plus <u>aided</u> mentions), virtually all Taxpayers were aware of *e-file* in net, just as they were in the previous two Pre-Waves. For the specific products, we saw increases for Practitioner *e-file* and the On-Line Filing methods, stable mentions of FreeFile and TeleFile, and a decrease in the level of mentions of "*e-file* unspecified".

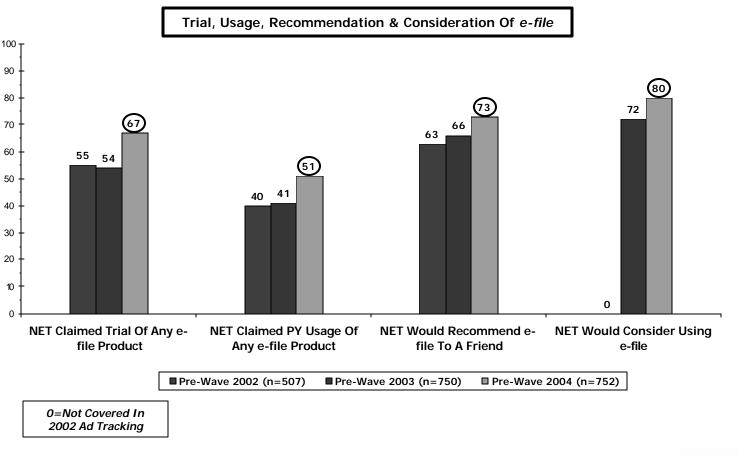


0=Not Covered In 2002 Ad Tracking



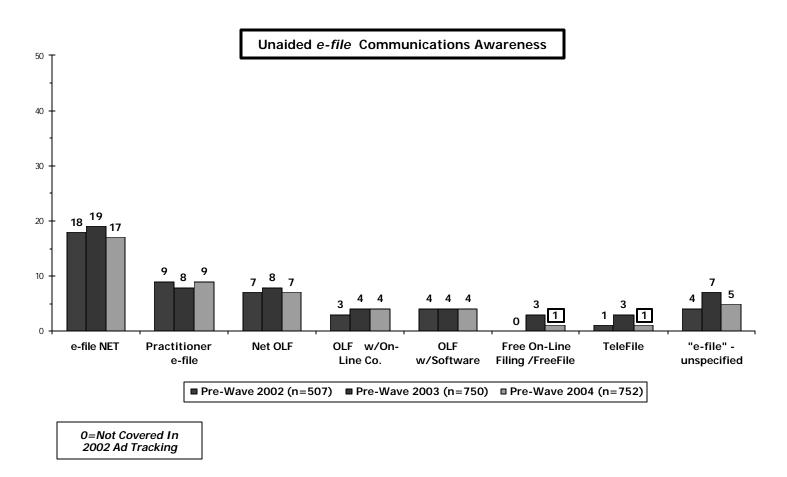
#### Trial, Usage, Recommendation & Consideration Of e-file

 We did find significant increases over the past Pre-Wave in claimed trial, usage, recommendation, and consideration of e-file. (See later investigation of these increases.)



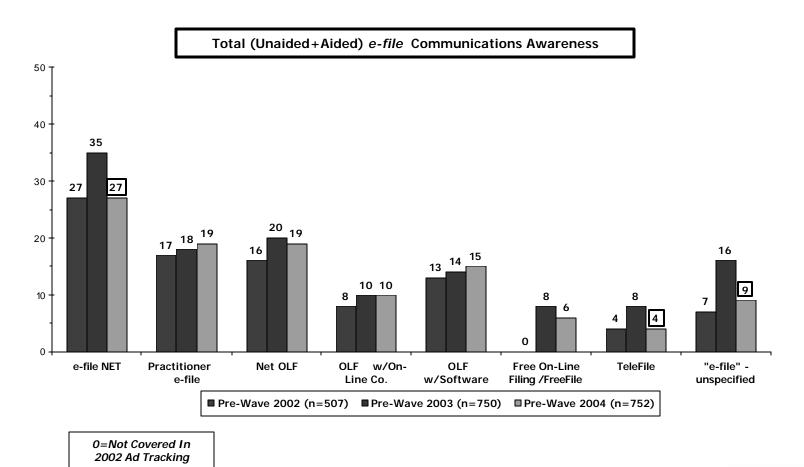
#### **Unaided Communications Awareness**

• This year's unaided awareness of *e-file* communications was very similar to what we found in the 2003 Pre-Wave, with the exception of decreases in mentions of FreeFile and TeleFile.



#### **Total Communications Awareness**

Total mentions of awareness of e-file communications were significantly lower this year, but this was
due to lower mentions of TeleFile and e-file Unspecified – awareness of communications for
Practitioner e-file, Online Filing, and even FreeFile were stable.



#### What Explains The Higher Claimed Usage Data?

• Seeing increases in some key *e-file* measures, especially Trial, Usage, Recommendation and Consideration, we compared the demographics of this Pre-Wave sample vs. last year to see if the higher age ceiling (74 vs. 64 in previous Pre-Waves) might be affecting results (though higher age, if anything, should suppress *e-file* measures). This comparison showed a better educated, higher income sample (consistent with increased age), but no pattern of differences that would explain the increases, leaving the possibility that there have been sustained increases in *e-file* Trial, Usage, etc.

Total Intervi	ews	Dec 2003 <u>Pre-Wave</u> (750) 100%	Dec 2004 <u>Pre-Wave</u> (752) 100%
Gender:	Male	49	49
	Female	51	51
Age:	18-24	7	4
	25-34	18	17
	35-44	27	26
	45-54	28	30
	55-64	19	18
	65-74	Χ	6
	Avg. Age	43	45)
% 1st Time Filers		2	3
% Mainly Sp	anish-Speaking	8	5
Avg. HH Size		2.85	2.82
% With Child		41	44
% Married		62	62
% With Som	e College Education	59	67
Avg. HH Inco	ome	\$57	\$64
IRS Region	1	12	11
G	2	16	17
	3	16	16
	4	18	18
	5	16	17
	6	10	10
	7	12	10

Total Intervi	ews	Dec 2003 <u>Pre-Wave</u> (750) 100%	Dec 2004 <u>Pre-Wave</u> (752) 100%
Return Type:	Self-Simple Self-Complex Paid-Simple Paid-Complex Unclassified	20 21 27 33 0	18 22 24 28 8
	e Using A Preparer: naller Sub-Bases)		
	% Use CPA	70	68
	% Offered <i>e-file</i>	61	66
% Who Wer		17	20
% Who Got		73	73
	Who Paid Electronically	5	9
	Received Electronically	45	46
% Received		25	<u>30</u>
% Received		31	34
% w/Access	To Fed-State <i>e-file</i>	23	24



#### Other Communications Diagnostic Measures

- The Pre-Wave survey also included several communications diagnostic measures, specifically:
  - Advertising Recall -- main message and total recall from communications.
  - Source Attribution where Taxpayers saw the advertising.
  - Sponsor Attribution whether Taxpayers attribute communications to the IRS or other sources.
  - And Impressions Of The Communications whether the communications were "memorable", "compelling", etc. (with this measure covered separately for advertising communications vs. other types of communications).
- However, analysis of these measures is appropriate only after the new communications have run and we will address them in the Post-Wave report, where we will look at them on a before vs. after basis – i.e., before the communications program started vs. after it was completed.



#### Perceptions Of e-file & Tax Filing

- We looked at perceptions of *e-file* as we found them here in the Pre-Wave (December 2004) vs. the previous Pre-Wave (December 2003) and vs. the 2003 Attitudinal Tracking Study (February 2003).
- Overall, results of these ratings show significantly stronger perceptions of e-file now (vs. the past) on two attributes -- e-file is a faster way to get your Federal tax refund and e-file is a better way to file your Federal income taxes. There has also been slight improvement over time in attributes which talk about the accuracy, speed in refund, cost, ease, and proof of receipt features of e-file. Meanwhile, there was a weakening this year of just one attribute - e-file changes the way you look at the IRS.

ŧ	Feb 2003 Taxpayer	Dec 2003 Pre-Wave	Dec 2004 Pre-Wave
BASE:	Attitudinal Study 1000	Taxpayer Trkg Study 750	Taxpayer Trkg Study
DASE.	%	/30 %	752 %
	70	70	,,
Filing taxes is something nobody likes, but everybody has to do	92	90	93
e-file is a faster way to get your Federal income tax return to the IRS	73	76	82
e-file is an accurate way to file your Federal income taxes	67	71	74
e-file is a private and secure way to file Federal income taxes	60	62	61
e-file is a faster way to get your Federal tax refund [money]	66	72	74
e-file is a better way to file your Federal income taxes	56	58	63
e-file is an inexpensive way to file your Federal income taxes	58	63	64
The IRS is becoming a friendlier, more helpful government organization	60	62	60
e-file is easy to use with little hassle	53	56	60
e-file provides proof of receipt	52	56	57
e-file changes the way you look at the IRS	32	40	35
Mailing in your Federal tax return is still safer, more reliable	50	53	51
I'm used to doing my taxes on paper and see no reason to change	41	43	43

<sup>%</sup> Agree Completely or Agree Somewhat With Each Statement



#### Brand Personality Of e-file vs. The IRS Overall

We also looked at long-term changes in the brand personalities of e-file and IRS. There has been little change over time in the e-file ratings. However, we found slippage this year vs. last year in the IRS ratings, with lower ratings of its positive personality points of being modern, helpful, and trustworthy and higher ratings of its negative points of needing to be wary of it, its being difficult, and being old-fashioned.

	<u>D</u> (	JOHN CO CT	IIIC	므	COCHDCO II	13
	Pre-	Pre-	Pre-	Pre-	Pre-	Pre-
	Wave	Wave	Wave	Wave	Wave	Wave
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
BASE:	(251)	(377)	(380)	(256)	(373)	(372)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES						
Up-To-Date/Modern	90	83	87	63	69	60
Dependable	79	67	73	66	70	66
Helpful	78	73	74	59	68	57
Someone You Can Trust	69	62	<u>6</u> 4	48	53	45
Interesting	66	<b>57</b>	64)	41	41	37
Creative	65	59	62	48	47	42
Confident & Outgoing	64	60	61	54	58	54
A Leader	56	59	55	48	51	47
A Friend	47	45	47	25	27	22
Easy-Going & Laid Back	47	43	41	13	16	13
, ,						
NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES						
High-Strung & Uptight	26	27	26	62	55	62
Someone You Need To Be Wary Of	36	36	37	63	58	(67)
Boring	32	37	34	53	56	67 52 66 24 48
Difficult	29	31	33	66	58	(66)
A Follower	23	19	23	23	21	24
Old Fashioned	9	12	13	44	39	(48)
Shy & Introverted	9	11	10	10	11	7
· <b>,</b> · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	•	•	-	-		•
NEUTRAL ATTRIBUTES (AVG. NOT APPROPRIATE)						
Masculine	37	35	41	60	56	57
Feminine	16	16	16	11	9	9
						•

<sup>%</sup> Saying This Characteristic Describes e -file/IRS



# Results Of Key Measures Among Segments

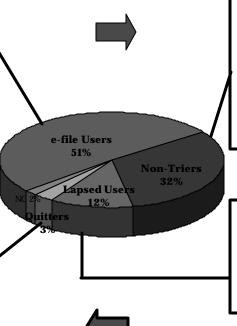
#### The e-file Usage Segments: Size & Composition

• In thinking of segmented opportunities this year, we looked first at the various breakouts in *e-file* usage – <u>Users</u> vs. various shades of Non-Users – <u>Non-Triers</u>, <u>Lapsed Users</u>, and <u>Quitters</u> (who are very small-based and analyzed only broadly). The high-opportunity segment here has to be the <u>Non-Triers</u> (now 32% of all Taxpayers) and, to a lesser extent, the <u>Lapsed Users</u> (12% of Taxpayers). Following are the outstanding characteristics of each segment.

2004-05 *e-file* Usage Segments

e-file Users (past-year) remain generally younger (avg. age = 43), lower in HH income, somewhat less likely to be married, but more likely to have children. Filing-wise, they're earlier filers. With more children and lower incomes, they are also far more likely than other segments to claim EITC and CTC, and in two key differentiators vs. other groups, 91% say their Preparer offers them the e-file option and 79% say they get a refund.

*e-file* **Quitters** have used *e-file* in the past but say they would <u>not</u> consider using it again – they're only 3% of all Taxpayers (just 24 people). Looking at them broadly, we see that their only notable demo difference is that they appear to be older. Filing-wise, they are high in Bal-Dues and low in receipt of tax credits.



Non-Triers of *e-file* are a relatively older segment (avg. age = 49), who are far less likely to have children. They are average in other demographic respects. Filing-wise, they tend to file later than other groups. While they are higher than average in Bal Dues, they are still mainly Refund types (66%). As with Users, the hallmark of this group is that those who use Paid Preparers are far less likely to say their Preparer offers them *e-file* (only 33% vs. 91% among Users).



**Lapsed** *e-file* **Users** have used *e-file* before (but not last tax season) and <u>would</u> consider using again. This segment differs demographically from others mainly in that they are more married and higher income. Filingwise, these are heavily V-Coders, though 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in receipt of EITC and CTC and highest in receipt of the Education Tax Credit.



#### The e-file Usage Segments: e-file Awareness & Disposition

- It is clear from the awareness data below that there are multiple factors preventing <u>Non-Triers</u> from using *e-file* including lack of awareness, lack of a positive disposition toward *e-file* and, among those using Preparers, an extremely low rate of being offered *e-file* as an option (only 33% vs. 91% among *e-file* Users).
- Among <u>Lapsed Users</u>, there does not appear to be an awareness or disposition problem. And (as we see in the profile data in the Appendix), while they're high in income, they're also high in receipt of tax credits. So why have they lapsed? To some extent, because of lack of stimulus from the Preparer. While 58% use a Preparer, only 54% of these say the Preparer offers *e-file* (vs. 91% among Users). Higher income (and complex returns) in this group might also be another factor.

Total Interviews	<u>Users</u> (381) 100%	Non-Triers (244) 100%	Lapsed Users (90) 100%	<b>Quitters*</b> (24)* 100%
Brand Awareness & Disposition				
Unaided Awareness Of e-file (Net)	90	67	89)	79
Total Awareness Of e-file (Net)	100	97	100	100
Unaided Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net)	20	11	20	4
Total Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net)	31)	23	32	8
Would Recommend <i>e-file</i> To A Friend	93	39	83	46
Would Consider Using <i>e-file</i>	92	62	100	

#### The 4-Group Return Type Segments: Size & Composition

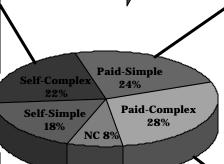
- The old Attitudinal study was also used to classify Taxpayers into one of four return types, based on responses to questions about use of a Preparer and complexity of return. As a result, this has always been only a rough approximation of the four return types as found in IRS Taxpayer data.
- The size and characteristics of these segments as found in the Pre-Wave of the new Taxpayer Tracking Study are summarized below. As we'll see on the next slide, all four groups present opportunities for expanding usage of e-file.

#### 2004 Return Type Segments

**Self-Complex** – 22% here vs. 18% in the filing data. This is an older (avg. age = 47), more heavily-married segment, with higher incomes (\$77K) and more education. Filingwise, these are among the latest filers in tax season – probably because they include comparatively more Bal-Dues (25%), though most (70%) still get a Refund.



**Self-Simple** – 18% here vs. 22% in the filing data. This is a Female-skewed (54%), younger segment (avg age = 41), with relatively lower income (\$49K) and with only 44% married. Filing-wise, they're high in Refunds (83%) and they include more Non-Triers of *e-file* than any other segment.



**Paid-Simple** – 24% here vs. 21% in the filing data. Again (as last year) it's a Female-skewed group (56%) that is relatively younger (43), less likely to be married (only 52%), but highest in presence of children (52%). This is also the least-educated group (only 49% with some college) and they have comparatively low HHI (\$49K/year). Filing-wise, 74% were offered *e-file* by their Preparers, 79% received a Refund, and they are the group most likely to receive tax credits – yet, they are not notably higher in use of *e-file* and are second in level of V-Coding (31%).



**Paid-Complex** – 28% here vs. 39% in the filing data. This segment is the oldest (48) and most likely to be married (73%), average in education but high income (\$76K HHI/year). Filing-wise, only 59% were offered *e-file* by their Preparer, possibly because theyre the highest Bal-Due group. While not as late filers as Self-Complex, they are far higher in V-Coding (42%).

#### The 4-Group Return Types: e-file Awareness & Disposition

All of the four Return Types are opportunity segments, because they all have similar awareness and
disposition toward e-file and none stands out in terms of current usage (though Self-Simples include
more Non-Triers). The groups being relatively equal, two would seem to be more immediate
opportunities because of the fit of their Return Type with e-file – the Self-Simples and Paid-Simples.

Total Interviews
Brand Awareness & Disposition
Unaided Awareness Of e-file (Net)
Total Awareness Of e-file (Net)
Unaided Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> Communications (Net)
Total Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> Communications (Net)
Would Recommend <i>e-file</i> To A Friend
Would Consider Using <i>e-file</i>
Current Usage Of e-file  Current e-file Users  Current e-file Non-Triers  Lapsed e-file Users
e-file Quitters

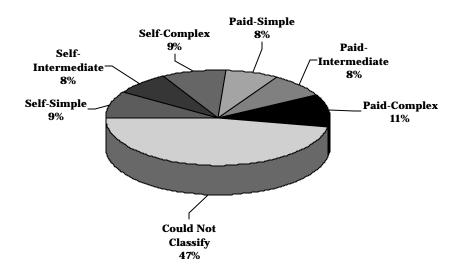
<u>Self-Simple</u> (133) 100%	<b>Self-Complex</b> (163) 100%	<b>Paid-Simple</b> (183) 100%	<b>Paid-Complex</b> (213) 100%
87	89	70	83
97	100	99	100
17	23	16	12
27	33	27	24
77	74	74	71
83	83	79	78
46	53	54	46
40	30	28	35
11	13	10	15
2	2	4	4



#### Moving To A 6-Group Return Type Segmentation

- With the IRS moving from the 4-group to a new 6-group Return Type classification, we attempted to classify Taxpayers into the 6-group model by asking a series of detailed questions of the 2004-05 Pre-Wave respondents. Many respondents could not answer one or more of the questions, leaving 47% unclassified (with the rest split generally evenly across the 6 segments).
- Demographic and other data for each of these groups is shown in the Appendix. We'll use that data as
  a starting point for determining how the 6-group model can be improved and used in future Taxpayer
  surveys.

#### 2004 Return Type Segments





#### The Filing Behavior Segments: Size & Composition

• We asked Taxpayers to tell us when they file their Federal income tax return – is it "as soon as you get your W-2 forms", "when you get around to it during tax season", "as late as possible but not at the last minute", or "at the last possible minute"? We segmented Taxpayers according to their answers. Following are the size and characteristics of the 2004-05 Filing Behavior segments.

#### 2004 Filing Behavior Segments

When Get To It

Late Not Last

ast-Minute 8%

As Soon As I Get My W-2 Forms – These are the Jan-Feb filers who want to "get it over with" or expect a refund. This segment is the youngest (43), lowest-income (\$56K HHI/year), and least educated group (only 62% with college experience) – with a slight Female gender skew. Filing-wise, they're the most likely to use a Preparer (62%) and most likely to be offered *e-file* by their Preparer (76%), probably because theyre so high in Refunds (83%). This group is lowest in V-Coding at only 21% and highest in Simple returns (at 51%).

At The Last Possible Minute – Virtually all file April 1 or later, waiting mainly because they owe money or are last-minute types. This is the oldest segment (50), most married, more educated and highest in HHI (\$83K). Only 53% say their Preparer offers them *e-file* (though this is up over the 32% last year), probably because theyre highest in Bal-Dues (51%) and relatively high in Complex returns (66%). So, they have the lowest *e-file* use (only 32%) and the highest V-Coding (43%).

When I Get Around To It – These are the Feb-March filers, with no clear reason for filing then – it's just "whenever I get around to it". Demographically, this group tends toward the average, with no strong skews. Filing-wise, they include more Refund recipients (75%) and are 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in use of a Preparer (59%) – though only 59% of those Preparers offer them *e-file*. This group is 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in V-Coding (at 33%) and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in Simple returns (at 44%).



Late As Possible But Not Last -Minute – They file mainly in the first 2 weeks of April, with about ¼ filing in March – these are the procrastinators. Theyre skewed Male (54%) and older (49), and are the most educated (79% some college) and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in HHI (\$80K). Only 47% use a Preparer and only 52% of their Preparers offer them *e-file* – probably because theyre 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in Bal-Dues (40%) and tax credits (53%), and highest in presence of Complex returns (81%). 33% of them V-Code.



#### The Filing Behavior Segments: e-file Awareness & Disposition

• Two of the Filing Behavior segments offer the greatest opportunity for e-file – the ASAPs and When Get To Its. 79% of all Taxpayers fall into one of these two groups and there are still substantial numbers of Non-Triers (25-36%) in each one. These two segments also had the highest use of a Preparer, though only one of them (ASAPs) reported that their Preparer generally offered them e-file – and this turned out to be the segment with the highest use of e-file, all of which underscores the importance of the Preparer in driving up usage in both high-opp segments.

Total Interviews
Brand Awareness & Disposition
Unaided Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> (Net)
Total Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> (Net)
Unaided Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> Communications (Net)
Total Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> Communications (Net)
Would Recommend <i>e-file</i> To A Friend
Would Consider Using <i>e-file</i>
Usage Of e-file
Current e-file Users
Current e-file Non-Triers
Lapsed <i>e-file</i> Users
e-file Quitters

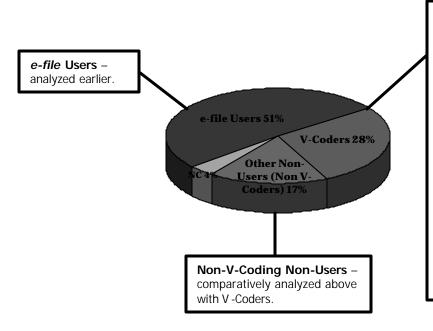
		1	
ASAPs	When Get To It	Late Not Last	
(357) 100%	(240) 100%	(57) 100%	(76) 100%
82	80	81	88
100	98	98	99
17	13	25	17
26	25	42	28
76	73	74	61
81	80	82	78
59	45	46	32
25	36	40	53
11	14	14	11
4	3	0	4
		J	



#### V-Coders: Size & Composition

For several years now, we've identified V-Coders in the Taxpayer research samples and tracked their size and composition. In the Pre-Wave here, 28% of all Taxpayers were <u>V-Coders</u>, which is the same as we found last year. Following is a summary of who's in this segment and how they compare to <u>Other Non-V-Coding Non-Users</u> of *e-file* as well as to <u>e-file Users</u>.

#### 2004 V-Coder Segment



V-Coders differ most from Other Non-Users in their use of a Paid Preparer – 76% of V-Coders use one compared to only 28% among Other Non-Users.

The V-Coders' 76% use of a Preparer is also significantly higher than we found among Users (58%). However, only 44% of V-Coders say that their Preparers offer them *e-file* – compared to that 91% we saw earlier among Users.

So, as we've underscored in the past, **the key here is the Preparer**. And, the IRS's current emphasis on communicating with Preparers should help.

It is also interesting to note that V-Coders are not rejectors of *e-file*. While most V-Coders (61%) have never tried *e-file*, 31% have and would consider using again (with only 8% having given up on it).



#### V-Coders: *e-file* Awareness & Disposition

- While neither the V-Coders nor Other Non-Users have awareness or consideration of *e-file* that approaches that of the *e-file* Users, about half of both groups say they would recommend *e-file* to a friend and over two-thirds (68-69%) say they would consider using it.
- With 68-69% of non-user groups indicating interest, the potential for conversion is high especially among the V-Coders, who unlike Other Non-Users are very reachable through the Preparer.

Brand Awareness & Disposition	<u>e-file Users</u> (381) 100%	<u>V-Coders</u> (213) 100%	<u>Other Non-Users</u> (128) 100%
Unaided Awareness Of <i>e-file</i> (Net)	90	76	73
Total Awareness Of e-file (Net)	100	99	97
Unaided Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net)	20	14	13
Total Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net)	31)	24	23
Would Recommend <i>e-file</i> To A Friend	93	55	46
Would Consider Using e-file	92	69	68





# Questionnaire Used In Study (Attached Electronically)

# Demographics Of The Key Segments Analyzed In The Report

# **Usage Segments: Demographic Summary**

Total Interviews	<u>Users</u> (381) 100%	<b>Non-Triers</b> (244) 100%	<u><b>Lapsed Users</b></u> (90) 100%	<b>Quitters*</b> (24)* 100%
Gender Male Female	49 51	47 53	52 48	50 50
Marital Status Married Single Separated, Divorced or Widowed	61	60	7 <u>2</u> )	71
	23	20	13	8
	14	18	13	13
Mean Age: Mean HH Size: Have Children College Mean Income	43	49	45	51
	3	3	3	3
	53	31	46	29
	67	67	69	67
	62k	66k	69k	60k
Used Preparer	58	57	58	71
Preparer is CPA	65	73	63	88
Preparer Offered <i>e-file</i> option	91	33	54	65
Balance Due vs. Refund Balance Due Refund	16	<u>26</u>	19	29
	79	66	73	67
Received Tax Credit EITC CTC Education Tax Credit	63	38	<u>58</u>	33
	36	21	30	17
	43	23	31	17
	13	8	17	8



# **Usage Segments: Cross-Segmentation**

Total Interviews	<u>Users</u> (381) 100%	<b>Non-Triers</b> (244) 100%	<u><b>Lapsed Users</b></u> (90) 100%	<b>Quitters*</b> (24)* 100%
Cross-Relationship With Other Segments				
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Complex	16 23 26 25	22 20 21 30	16 24 21 34	13 17 29 33
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Intermediate Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Intermediate Return Type = Paid-Complex	7 9 9 8 9	6 8 7 5	8 11 9 9 13 14	8 4 8 4 8 17
Filing Behavior = As Soon As Possible (ASAP) Filing Behavior = When Get Around To It Filing Behavior = Late But Not Last Filing Behavior = Last Possible Minute	55) 28 7 6	36 35 9	42 38 9 9	63 25 0 13
V-Coder	0	53	73	71



# **4-Group Return Type Segments: Demographic Summary**

Total Interviews	<u>Self-Simple</u> (133) 100%	<u>Self-Complex</u> (163) 100%	Paid-Simple (183) 100%	Paid-Complex (213) 100%
Gender Male Female	46 54	50 50	44 56	54 46
Marital Status Married Single Separated, Divorced or Widowed	44 (33) (21)	70 13 14	52 29 16	73) 12 13
Mean Age: Mean HH Size: Have Children College Mean Income	41 2 32 70 49k	3 48 83 778	43 3 52 49 49k	48 3 42 67 769
Used Preparer Preparer is CPA Preparer Offered <i>e-file</i> option	0 0 0	0 0 0	100 61 74	100 74 59
Balance Due vs. Refund Balance Due Refund	14	25 70	13 79	<u>27</u> 67
Received Tax Credit EITC CTC Education Tax Credit	47 25 21 11	<u>52</u> 20 37 15	60 44 41 10	<u>53</u> 31 34 12



# **4-Group Return Type Segments: Cross-Segmentation**

Total Interviews	<b>Self-Simple</b> (133) 100%	<b>Self-Complex</b> (163) 100%	<b>Paid-Simple</b> (183) 100%	<b>Paid-Complex</b> (213) 100%
Cross-Relationship With Other Segments Current e-file Users Current e-file Non-Triers Lapsed e-file Users e-file Quitters	46 40 11 2	53 30 13 2	54 28 10 4	46 35 15 4
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Intermediate Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Intermediate Return Type = Paid-Complex Unclassified	(51) 0 0 0 0 0	0 37 40 0 0 0 0 23	0 0 0 31 0 0	0 0 0 0 29 38 33
Filing Behavior = As Soon As Possible (ASAP) Filing Behavior = When Get Around To It Filing Behavior = Late But Not Last Filing Behavior = Last Possible Minute	52 36 5 7	36 29 15 17	62 31 1 3	43 33 10 11
V-Coder	17	17	31	42



# 6-Group Return Type Segments: Demographic Summary

Total Interviews	<b>Self</b> - <b>Simple</b> (68) 100%	Self- Intermediate (60) 100%	<b>Self</b> - <b>Complex</b> (66) 100%	<b>Paid</b> - <b>Simple</b> (57) 100%	Paid- Intermediate (61) 100%	<b>Paid</b> - <b>Complex</b> (80) 100%	Un- Classified (360) 100%
Gender Male Female	47 53	47 53	59 41	53 47	56 44	58 43	44 56
Marital Status Married Single Separated, Divorced or Widowed	37	73	76)	56	72	80	57
	43	15	11	28	13	10	21
	21	12	12	11	11	9	(18)
Mean Age: Mean HH Size: Have Children College Mean Income	42	41	50	46	44	50	45
	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
	13	78	41	28	61	33	46
	66	85	86	53	66	78	61
	47k	72k	830	52k	66k	82k	60k
Used Preparer	0	0	0	100	100	100	67
Preparer is CPA	0	0	0	58	62	84	67
Preparer Offered <i>e-file</i> option	0	0	0	65	77	49	70
Balance Due vs. Refund Balance Due Refund	15 82	10 85	33 61	12 82	23 74	<u>30</u> 64	19 73
Received Tax Credit EITC CTC Education Tax Credit	7	83	38	9	77	<u>51</u>	63
	7	28	15	9	56	26	37
	0	63	27	0	56	28	40
	0	18	14	0	16	16	12



### **6-Group Return Type: Cross-Segmentation & Awareness**

Total Interviews	<b>Self</b> - <b>Simple</b> (68) 100%	Self- Intermediate (60) 100%	<b>Self</b> - <b>Complex</b> (66) 100%	<b>Paid- Simple</b> (57) 100%	Paid- Intermediate (61) 100%	<b>Paid- Complex</b> (80) 100%	Un- Classified (360) 100%
Cross-Relationship With Other Segments Current e-file Users Current e-file Non-Triers Lapsed e-file Users e-file Quitters	41	58	55	51	54	36	53
	44	23	29	32	21	43	32
	10	17	12	14	20	16	9
	3	2	3	2	3	5	3
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Complex	100 0 0 0	0 100 0	0 100 0	0 0 100 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	10 35 20 18
Filing Behavior = As Soon As Possible (ASAP) Filing Behavior = When Get Around To It Filing Behavior = Late But Not Last Filing Behavior = Last Possible Minute	49	42	24	56	49	38	53
	38	28	30	39	33	29	31
	3	10	21	2	7	15	5
	9	17	18	2	8	15	8
V-Coder	18	15	20	32	34	54)	27
Brand Awareness & Disposition Unaided Awareness Of e-file (Net) Total Awareness Of e-file (Net) Unaided Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net) Total Awareness Of e-file Communications (Net) Would Recommend e-file To A Friend Would Consider Using e-file	88	90	92	65	84	84	79
	94	100	100	98	100	100	99
	12	22	32	14	7	15	17
	19	32	45	25	18	29	27
	74	73	77	74	77	74	70
	87	90	85	82	87	80	76



# Filing Behavior Segments: Demographic Summary

Total Interviews	<b>ASAPs</b> (357) 100%	When Get To It (240) 100%	<b>Late Not Last</b> (57) 100%	<u><b>Last-Minute</b></u> (76) 100%
Gender Male Female	47 53	48 52	54 46	51 49
Marital Status Married Single Separated, Divorced or Widowed	59	61	67	71
	21	23	23	8
	(18)	13	11	20
Mean Age: Mean HH Size: Have Children College Mean Income	43	46	49	50
	3	3	3	3
	50	38	35	38
	62	70	79	71
	56k	64k	800	838
Used Preparer	62	59	47	47
Preparer is CPA	67	67	74	72
Preparer Offered <i>e-file</i> option	(76)	59	52	53
Balance Due vs. Refund Balance Due Refund	12 83	18 75	49	<u>51</u> 38
Received Tax Credit EITC CTC Education Tax Credit	(2)	43	<u>53</u>	42
	(39)	24	21	18
	(39)	28	26	33
	(13)	10	14	7



# Filing Behavior Segments: Cross-Segmentation

Total Interviews	<u><b>ASAPs</b></u> (357) 100%	When Get To It (240) 100%	<u><b>Late Not Last</b></u> (57) 100%	<u>Last-Minute</u> (76) 100%
Cross-Relationship With Other Segments Current e-file Users Current e-file Non-Triers Lapsed e-file Users e-file Quitters	59	45	46	32
	25	36	40	53
	11	14	14	11
	4	3	0	4
Return Type = Self-Simple	19	20	11	12
Return Type = Self-Complex	16	20	(42)	(36)
Return Type = Paid-Simple	32	24	2	7
Return Type = Paid-Complex	26	30	39	30
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Intermediate Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Intermediate Return Type = Paid-Complex	9	11	4	8
	7	7	11	13
	4	8	25	(16)
	9	9	2	1
	8	8	7	7
	8	10	21	16
V-Coder	21	33	33	43)



# **V-Coders: Demographic Summary**

	<u>e-file Users</u>	<u>V-Coders</u>	<u>Other Non-Users</u>
	(381)	(213)	(128)
	100%	100%	100%
Gender Male Female	49 51	47 53	48 52
Marital Status Married Single Separated, Divorced or Widowed	61	69	55
	(23)	16	20
	14	13	23
Mean Age: Mean HH Size: Have Children College Mean Income	43	47	49
	3	3	2
	53	42	24
	67	70	65
	62k	68k	64k
Used Preparer	58	76)	28
Preparer is CPA	65	73	61
Preparer Offered <i>e-file</i> option	91	44	28
Balance Due vs. Refund Balance Due Refund	16	<u>27</u>	22
	79	65	73
Received Tax Credit EITC CTC Education Tax Credit	63	47	38
	36	27	20
	43	31	16
	13	13	7



# **V-Coders: Cross-Segmentation**

	<u>e-file Users</u>	<u>V-Coders</u>	Other Non -Users
	(381)	(213)	(128)
	100%	100%	100%
Cross-Relationship With Other Segments Current e-file Users Current e-file Non-Triers Lapsed e-file Users e-file Quitters	100 0 0 0	0 (6) (31) (8)	77) 18 5
Return Type = Self-Simple	16	10	34
Return Type = Self-Complex	23	13	37
Return Type = Paid-Simple	26	26	13
Return Type = Paid-Complex	25	42	13
Return Type = Self-Simple Return Type = Self-Intermediate Return Type = Self-Complex Return Type = Paid-Simple Return Type = Paid-Intermediate Return Type = Paid-Complex	7 9 9 8 9	6 4 6 8 10	20 13 13 6 4 4
Filing Behavior = As Soon As Possible (ASAP) Filing Behavior = When Get Around To It Filing Behavior = Late But Not Last Filing Behavior = Last Possible Minute	55	35	45
	28	38	31
	7	9	9
	6	15	13
V-Coder	0	100	0

