

Using Event Response Cards to Improve Your Local Events

Surveys help you see a broad overview of the needs and desires of your meetup or local community group. Anonymous feedback forms, or event response cards, help you see how you're doing on an event-by-event basis.

The 2012 event response card asks five closed-ended questions, plus two open-ended questions, to help discover three things: how well your event was received, if the attendees consider themselves to be members of the group, and how engaged they are (assumedly with the purpose of your group). Depending on your goals, you can use this data to determine whether the event was liked, whether you reached more new people or existing members, whether your attendees are passionate about their work, whether members and non-members or more- or less-engaged attendees responded differently to the event, and to track these variables across event types and over time.

To help you see results as quickly as possible, we've provided printable PDFs for you to hand out, and an automated Google Spreadsheet and Google Form to help you tally the responses.

Quick Start

Print out the "Event Response Card (One-Sided)" PDF at 100% scale. Print out or photocopy as many as you think you'll need, plus some extras. Each page gives you two forms. Cut or neatly tear the pages in half. Get some pens.

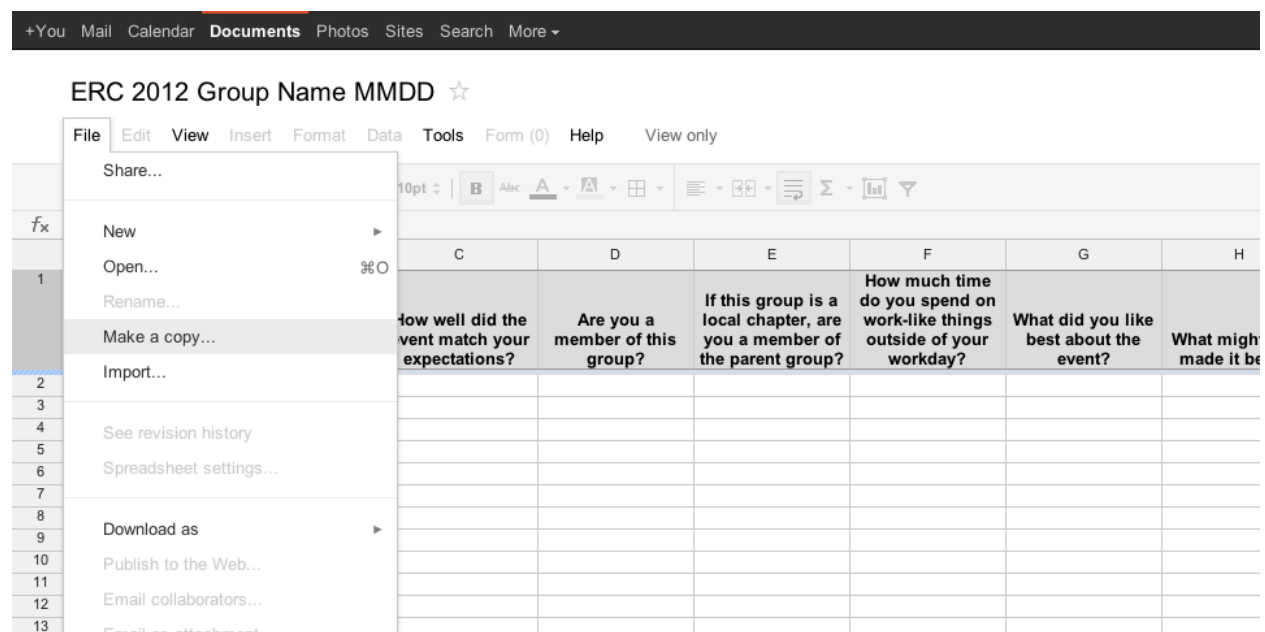
Hand the forms out *at the beginning of your meeting*, preferably to each person as they walk in. Tell each person you'd like them to fill it out and return it when they leave. Tell them it's anonymous. Give them a pen or ask them to share.

Halfway through the meeting, take an accurate headcount.

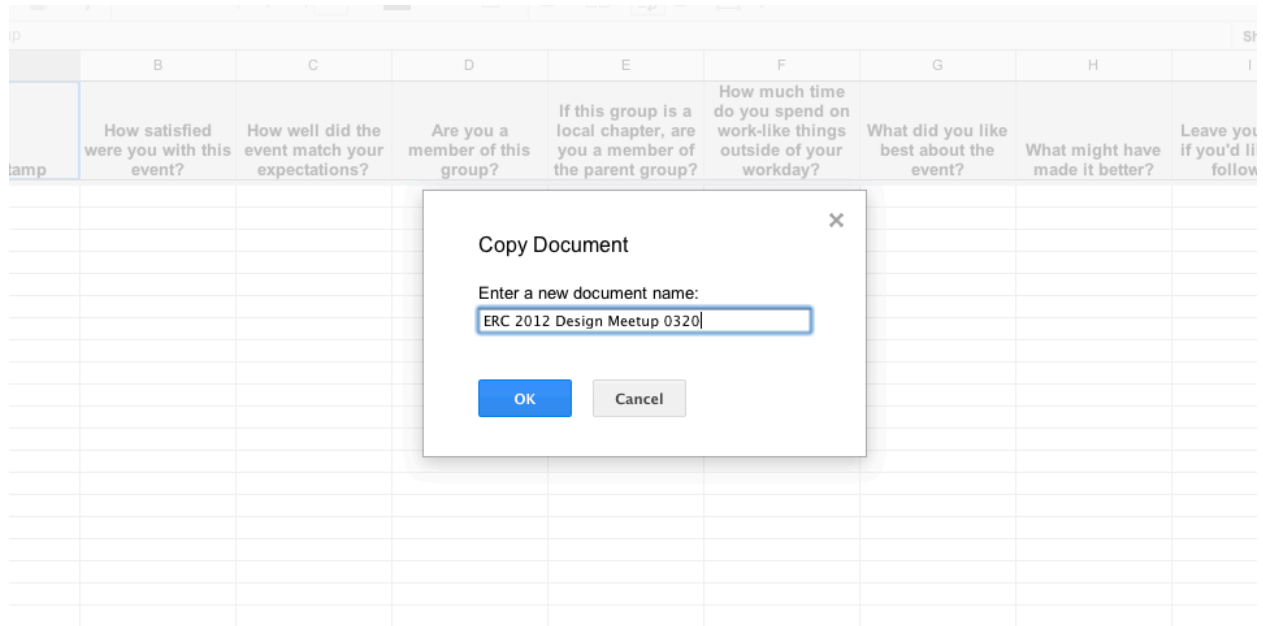
Collect the forms at the end of the meeting, or as people leave.

Open this Google Spreadsheet: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Aqp_zliwlin7dHBVQzRJd0pHbWNOcEc5Q2owdFZVaHc. You have “View only” permissions, so you can bookmark it and use it fresh for every event by making a copy.

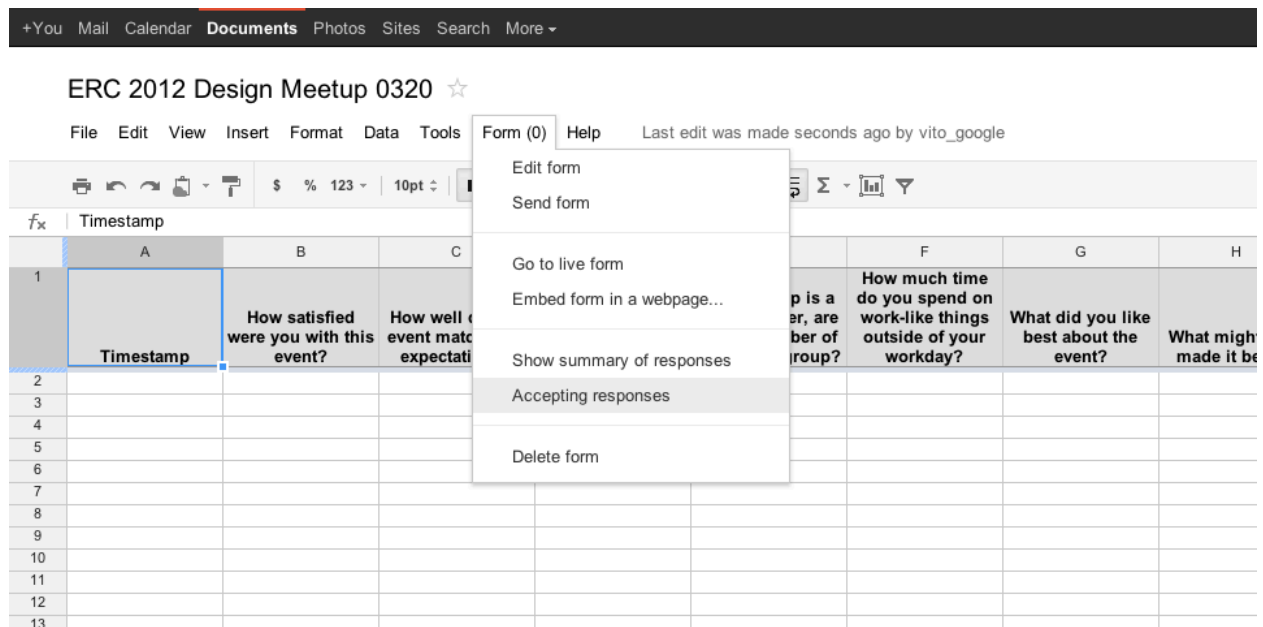
Click “File”, “Make a Copy...” (you may have to click “Sign in” in the upper right to enable that menu option):



This will ask you for a new document name. Replace “Group Name” and “MMDD” as appropriate:



There's an included Google Form to help you enter responses quickly and easily. Click "Form (0)", "Accepting responses" to turn it on:



Then, go to the live form to start entering responses. Click "Form (0)", "Go to live form":

Event response card

How satisfied were you with this event?

12345

very dissatisfied
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
very satisfied

How well did the event match your expectations?

12345

not at all
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
very well

Are you a member of this group?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If this group is a local chapter, are you a member of the parent group?

☐ Yes
☐ No

This form matches the structure and layout of the printed form: you can just go question by question and enter their responses, type in any free response answers, and click “Submit”. After you’ve entered a form, click “Submit another response” to enter in the next event response card:

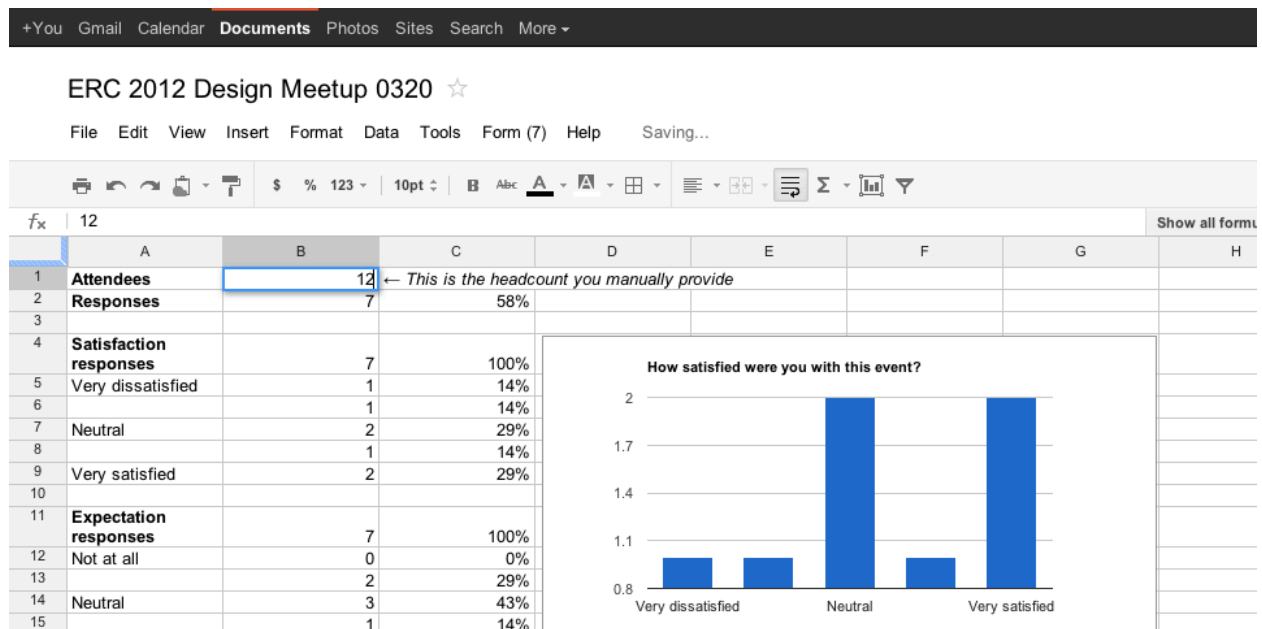
Event response card

Your response has been recorded.

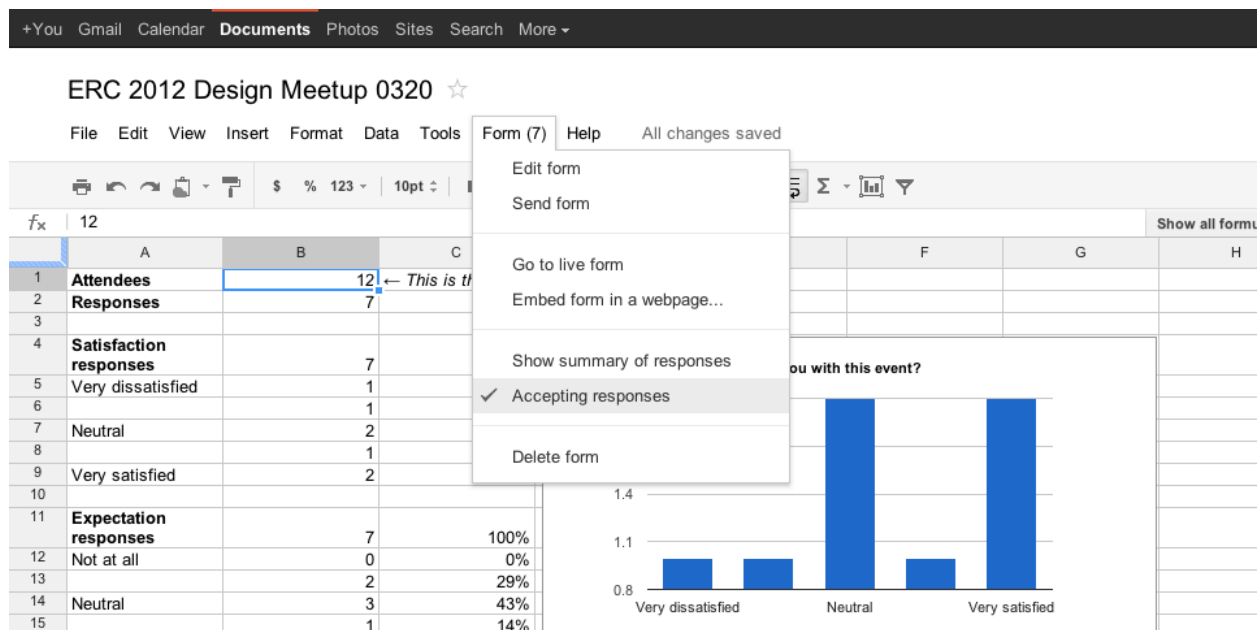
[Submit another response](#) | [Create your own form](#)

If you have other organizers who can help you split up the work, you can also give them the URL to the live form and they can enter in their portion of the response cards simultaneously.

When you've entered all of the responses, you can close the live form and go back to the spreadsheet, and click on "Sheet2" at the bottom. This is the summary sheet, which tells you the response rate (overall and for each question), and the breakdown of each type of response. Fill in the headcount from your meeting in cell B1:



The spreadsheet will automatically update with the response rate. Finally, turn off the live data entry form to ensure no-one can accidentally add extra responses. Click "Form (#)", "Accepting responses" to uncheck it:



The summary sheet is printable and should fit on one sheet of paper. You can use the data as-is, or you can copy and paste it into another spreadsheet organized by event to help you see trends over time. Be sure to record the type of event, the venue, some metadata about the content presented, etc.

Some people will have provided their email address for you to follow up. Email them! Even if you don't have specific questions about how they liked the event or your group, email them and say thanks for attending and filling out the feedback form.

Nicer write-ins and customization

You might notice that people have messy handwriting, and sometimes it's hard to tell what's an answer to a question and what's a general written comment. If you know how to make duplex (two-sided) prints or photocopies, you can use the "Event Response Card (Two-Sided)" PDF, which will give people a little more structure for their free responses.

These forms are written to be generic, but you can customize a few parts of them to tailor them to your group. To do so, open whichever form you use (One-sided or Two-sided) in whichever format your word processor accepts (Word .doc or Pages .pages).

First, you can customize question #3 by changing “this group” to your actual group name, e.g. “Are you a registered member of Design Meetup?”

Second, you can remove question #4 if your group is only a local meetup. If your group *is* a local chapter, you could make question #4 clearer by saying that, e.g. “Design Meetup is a local chapter. Are you a member of the national meetup?” Be careful not to mess up the formatting of the “yes” and “no” checkboxes.

Third, you can make question #5 clearer by changing “work-like activities” to the actual sort of work your group supports, e.g. “How much time do you spend on design outside of your workday?”

Don’t change question #1, #2, or otherwise change #5, or the free response questions! They’re written very specifically and you won’t be able to accurately compare your results across events or with other groups if you do!

Following up

Feel free to let us know what you think of the event response cards, of the automated Google Spreadsheet and Google Form for data entry and reporting, and of how using them has improved (or, I suppose, worsened?) your group. You can find my contact information through the Distance essay which these cards are a result of: <http://distance.cc/>.

I’ll update this document if any new tips, tricks, or ready analyses come about.

I’m Vitorio, it’s February 5, 2012. Thanks, and good luck with your local group.