



Soarian® Assessment Forms: 8 Design and Build Basics

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Preparing for the upgrade to Soarian Assessment Forms is a simple but multi-step process, right? Review existing paper forms, computer screens, and processes with end-users to obtain specifications, and *Voila!* You're ready to start building forms. Not so fast.

Before you jump into building assessment forms, consider a few tips that will facilitate the build process, minimize rebuilds, and assure end-user satisfaction. In effect, these methods will further maximize the efficiency of the Soarian upgrade even before it is fully implemented.

Soarian user satisfaction spikes when order and assessment forms are consistently formatted and easily readable (i.e. scrolling is minimized, display names and fields are aligned, and screens/fields formats are uniform). Assessment forms contain much more data and tend to be larger than the easier-to-build order forms that sport fewer fields. Consequently, assessment forms require more design effort before build start. Below are eight fundamentals that should be considered when designing assessment forms:

- **Determine the form's size.**
 - Although contingent on computer screen resolution, standard size/layout dimensions of the form should be established. For chapter assessments, use a 630-pixel width. For standalone assessments, use 720-pixel width. Test the form to verify that horizontal scrolling has been rendered unnecessary.
- **Create a form template with several small columns.**
 - This allows for better alignment of fields and for labeling/displaying names. Out-of-box forms are delivered with a few, wide columns. Creating a template with more columns (30±) that have smaller widths (25± pixels) allows for proper alignment of fields and labels.
- **LEFT justify field labels/display names.**
 - This is Forms Design 101. Some out-of-box forms are delivered with right justified labels/display names. These should be changed to improve readability and form layout.
- **Set row heights to 22.**
 - Out-of-box forms are delivered with row heights of 25-pixels. Changing row heights to 22-pixels may not seem big, but it can mean the difference between

vertical scrolling or not. Besides, in Soarian 22-pixel row height looks better than 25. Try it!

- **Add a title to each assessment form.**
 - Using all capital letters works well.
- **Define font colors, font sizes, and field colors**
 - For form titles, sections, and label/display names.
- **Set tab sequences.**
 - Because Soarian permits users to tab between fields, include tabbing in training classes. Many users find tabbing the quickest way to navigate through an assessment.
- **Test the new template**
 - In the Soarian user interface to confirm proper appearance and navigability. If horizontal scrolling exists, review the form size again, and adjust accordingly.

In addition to keeping Soarian forms from looking like a second grade Scrabble game, these tips also assure user satisfaction and minimize rebuilds. Clarity, content, and consistency can be attained when form design-and-build planning is part of your Soarian upgrade project.

To learn more about Siemens Soarian solutions or other solutions provided by VCS, contact us at 610.444.1233, wcs@getvitalized.com, or visit www.getvitalized.com.