



A Newsletter on the State of the Art in Marketing Research

A Note from our President

Once again, we have spent a portion of our time in this New Year reviewing articles from marketing and marketing research magazines so that we can help you stay abreast of some of the developments in marketing research methodology. For this edition, we have included summaries on topics that cover newer methodologies such as e-mail and web surveys, as well as summaries concerning more traditional methodologies.

This is the fourth edition of our state of the art newsletter, which is published every six months. If you did not receive past editions of this newsletter or if you would like to refer to some of the information, they are available on our web site at www.syndics.com. If you have business associates who you think would like to receive the newsletter, please e-mail their address to randy@syndics.com. Also, e-mail us if you would like to receive future newsletters electronically.

If you would like to discuss these issues or any project, contact us by telephone or e-mail David Cooper at coop@syndics.com or Paul Varner at pvar@syndics.com.

Joe Welch, Ph. D.
President, Syndics Research Corporation

In this issue . . .

- ***E-mail and Snail Mail Face Off in a Rematch***¹
A study evaluating the effectiveness of each methodology.
- ***Banner-Advertised Web Surveys***²
Attracting survey respondents using extrinsic or intrinsic appeal.
- ***The Measurement of Personal Values in Survey Research***³
A test of alternative rating procedures and differentiation.
- ***Random Selection in a National Telephone Survey***⁴
A comparison of the Kish, Next-Birthday, and Last-Birthday methods.
- ***Experiments with Incentives in Telephone Surveys***⁵
A study of the effect of various incentives on response, sample composition, bias, expectations, and costs.

- ***E-mail and Snail Mail Face Off in Rematch***¹

The authors discuss the results of a study that evaluated the effectiveness of e-mail surveys versus traditional mail surveys. Key findings of the study include the following:

- The response time is faster for e-mail versus mail surveys (mean of 4.3 days versus 18.3 days);



- The data collected from both methods are relatively similar;
- The response rate was higher for the mail survey (46% versus 19%);
- E-mail participants were more likely to respond to open-ended questions (29% versus 11%);
- E-mail respondents were more likely to write additional comments to closed-ended questions (45% versus 34%).

- **Banner-Advertised Web Surveys²**

The authors conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of banner ads as a means to attract survey respondents to a Web-based survey. Furthermore, the effectiveness of banner ads with extrinsic appeal (cues such as prizes, color, or sound) was compared to the effectiveness of banner ads with intrinsic appeal (cues through message content).

Overall, the use of banner ads to attract people to Web-based surveys is not highly effective, as the click-through rates were less than one percent for all four search engines tested.



Intrinsic appeals are more effective than extrinsic appeals in banner ads, as the banner ads with intrinsic appeals generated a significantly higher number of click-throughs than banner ads with extrinsic appeals.

- **The Measurement of Personal Values in Survey Research: A Test of Alternative Rating Procedures³**

A common problem resulting from the use of rating scales to capture information is the lack of differentiation among mean rating scores. The article reports findings from two experiments conducted via mail surveys to test alternative-rating methods designed to increase differentiation and reduce end-piling in the rating of personal values.



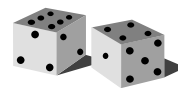
The procedure tested combines rating and ranking into a single technique. The first step involves respondents looking through an entire set of personal values and indicating the value that is most important.

Respondents are then asked to scan the value inventory a second time and indicate the value that is least important to them. After indicating their most and least important values, the respondents are instructed to rate each of the values on an importance scale.

The results indicate that, compared with a simple rating of values, the most-least procedure reduces the level of end-piling and increases the differentiation of value ratings, both in terms of dispersion and the number of different rating points used. This finding suggests that when survey respondents compare and contrast the values by selecting their most and least important values, the psychological distance respondents perceive among the values is increased. However, when the values are not contrasted and anchors are not encouraged, but simply rated on importance, respondents show less discrimination among the values.

The differences in end-piling and differentiation noted between the above rating methods have important implications on statistical analysis that use values-rating data such as regression or correlation analysis. Specifically, the experiment noted that the most-least method exhibited stronger correlations and greater predictive ability than the rate-only method. Thus, the findings suggest that the most-least differentiation technique may enhance the ability of researchers to detect relations between personal values and other variables of interest.

- **Random Selection in a National Telephone Survey: A Comparison of the Kish, Next-Birthday, and Last-Birthday Methods⁴**



A national random digit dialing sample design was used to compare the dropout rate in three respondent selection methods: Kish, next-birthday, and last-birthday. In addition, the magnitude of the dropout rate was assessed in each phase of the screening process.

The next-birthday selection method is the most successful method in limiting the rate of dropouts and the Kish method is the least successful approach for limiting the rate of dropouts. The Kish method calls for interviewers to use a selection table (gender and age) to randomly choose a household member to interview.



Another key finding is the fact that interviewers seem to be a key factor in determining the dropout rate. The dropout rate after the introduction was higher for interviewers that were going to use the Kish and last-birthday conditions. While the interviewers were aware of the selection method they were going to use, respondents dropped out before they knew what types of questions would be used in the screening process. Thus, the difference in drop out rates is attributed to interviewer related factors.

There were no significant differences in the demographic characteristics in the samples that resulted from the three selection methods.

- Prepaid incentives do not reduce the likelihood that respondents will participate in a re-interview six months later, even if they are not offered an incentive again. Thus, the payment of incentives does not appear to create expectations for payment on subsequent interviews.
- Neither prepaid incentives, nor refusal conversion incentives, increase item non-response.
- Prepaid incentives do not impact sample composition.

● ***Experiments with Incentives in Telephone Surveys***⁵

The article discusses the results of a series of experiments conducted over a two-year period with a monthly telephone survey. The experiments included prepaid



incentives versus promised incentives, advance letters, advance letters with prepaid incentives, as well as the effects of incentives on response quality, sample composition, response bias, interviewer and respondent expectations, and costs.

Key findings of the experiments include the following:

- Neither promised incentives nor advance letters reliably increase response rates in RDD telephone surveys.
- Prepaid incentives enclosed with advance letters do reliably increase response rates by at least 10 percentage points. Specifically, prepaid incentives significantly reduced the number of calls required to close out a case as well as the number of interim refusals.

For more information, contact us at Syndics Research Corporation, 13612 Midway Road, Suite 605, Dallas, Texas, 75244. 972.385.0066. Visit our website for future archives of this newsletter. www.syndics.com.

OUR RESEARCH TEAM

Joe Welch Ph.D. - President: Over twenty years experience in the research industry. Joe has moderated over 1500 focus groups and has extensive experience in survey research, experimentation, and publishing. Graduate faculty at the University of North Texas.

Lydia Welch - CEO: Over fifteen years of marketing research experience in focus group moderating, data processing, analysis, and strategic planning. MBA Marketing Methods from the University of North Texas.

Gwen Fontenot Ph.D.- Senior Account Executive: Over fifteen years of experience in marketing research and consulting experience with expertise in customer satisfaction measurement, service quality, and Quality Function Deployment. Ph.D. in Marketing from the University of North Texas.

David Cooper - Senior Account Executive: Over ten years of marketing research experience in focus group moderating and survey research in healthcare, new product development, customer satisfaction, and high-tech industries. BBA Marketing & Statistics, AAS Design Technology, Graduate studies at UT Arlington.

Paul Varner - Senior Account Executive: Ten years of experience with marketing research suppliers with expertise in advanced research methods, price sensitivity & demand analysis, customer satisfaction, and on-line research. MS Marketing Research from UT Arlington and BBA Marketing & Finance from UT Austin.

Randy Timm – Director of Quality Assurance: Five years of experience in account management, analysis, and quality assurance. BBA and MBA in marketing from the University of North Texas.

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- 1) Bachmann, Duane P., Elfrink, John, and Vazzana, Gary, “E-mail and Snail Mail Face Off in Rematch,” Marketing Research: A Magazine of Management & Applications (Spring 2000), 11-15.
- 2) Tuten, Tracy L., Bosnjak, Michael, and Bandilla, Wolfgang, “Banner-Advertised Web Surveys,” Marketing Research: A Magazine of Management & Applications (Spring 2000), 17-20.
- 3) McCarty, John A., and Shrum, L.J., “The Measurement of Personal Values in Survey Research” Public Opinion Quarterly, Volume 64 (2000), 271-298.
- 4) Binson, Diane. Canchola, Jesse A., and Catania, Joseph A., “Random Selection in a National Telephone Survey: A Comparison of the Kish, Next-Birthday, and Last-Birthday Methods,” Journal of Official Statistics (January 2000), 53-59.
- 5) Singer, Eleanor, Van Hoewyk, John, and Maher, Mary P., “Experiments with Incentives in Telephone Surveys” Public Opinion Quarterly, Volume 64 (2000), 171-188.

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