

A Newsletter on the State of the Art in Marketing Research

## A Note from our President

We are excited to say that this is the sixth edition of our state of the art newsletter. Every six months, we review articles from marketing and marketing research journals to help you stay abreast of some of the developments in marketing research methodology. This edition includes summaries on topics that cover the timing and amount of incentives for web-based surveys, software for qualitative data analysis, and wireless cell phone and IVR techniques of data collection, as well as the effects on group interaction from consumers anticipating a discussion topic.

If you would like to refer to some of the information in past editions of our newsletter, they are available on our web site at [www.syndics.com](http://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](mailto:randy@syndics.com). Also, e-mail us if you would like to receive future newsletters electronically.

Joe Welch, Ph. D.  
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If you would like to discuss these issues or any project, contact us by telephone or e-mail David Cooper at [coop@syndics.com](mailto:coop@syndics.com) or Paul Varner at [pvar@syndics.com](mailto:pvar@syndics.com).

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- ***Anticipating Discussion About a Product: Rehearsing What to Say Can Affect Your Judgments*<sup>4</sup>**  
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- ***Self-Administered Questions by Telephone: Evaluating Interactive Voice Response*<sup>5</sup>**  
Experiments involving interactive voice response (IVR) as a data collection method.

## *Use of Pre-Incentives in an Internet Survey*<sup>1</sup>

The authors conducted a 2 X 2 experiment to assess the impact of varied incentive amounts (\$15 versus \$25) and timing of payments (pre-payment versus post-payment) on the response rate and cost efficiency. *Note: respondents in all cells were pre-recruited by telephone to participate in the survey.*



Key findings of the research include the following:

- Prepayment of the \$15 incentive yields a higher response rate than the post-payment of the \$15 incentive (79% versus 69%).

- While the response rate is not impacted significantly when the incentive amounts are varied for pre-payments (\$15 - response rate of 79% and \$25 - response rate of 82%), the response rate is significantly impacted when incentive amounts are varied for post-payments (\$15 - response rate of 69% and \$25 - response rate of 80%).
- Incentive pre-payment offers a lower cost per interview on average.

### **Analyzing Qualitative Data: Computer Software and the Market Research Practitioner<sup>2</sup>**



The authors discuss the use of software programs to support data analysis and interpretation for qualitative research studies. While most qualitative software is marketed as assisting with

data analysis, the authors feel that assisting with data management is a better description of the function of this software.

Benefits of using qualitative software are as follows:

- Facilitate teamwork in analysis since the data sets can be analyzed and interpreted from different perspectives, each of which leaves an audit trail of thinking that can be traced by others working on the data.
- Help researchers become familiar with a large amount of data within a relatively short period of time. *Note: The authors feel that this software is most useful for projects that involve four or more groups.*
- Maximize the value of the information and allow researchers to re-think “bad groups,” as the software forces researchers to evaluate every piece of data.
- Provide an audit trail of the analysis to make the analysis process more explicit. This can be beneficial in communicating findings as well as training novice researchers in data analysis.
- Facilitate longitudinal analysis by creating an archive of old studies to make it easier to identify changes in thinking, attitudes, and behavior.

The disadvantages of qualitative software are as follows:

- Limited immediate feedback, since the software requires transcripts.

- Less emphasis on non-verbal information and more emphasis on specific words communicated.
- Encourages researchers to read the data closely which can cause researchers to be immersed in too much detail and miss the big picture.

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### **Calling All Customers<sup>3</sup>**

The authors discuss the use of wireless cell phones as a data collection technique. The survey can be implemented in a text-based format, voice-based format, or combination of text and voice-based formats.



The advantages of using cell phones to collect data are as follows:

- Flexibility to deliver messages/questions anytime and anywhere.
- Ability to collect data in a consumers’ natural shopping environment. This could provide more accurate information than alternative data collection approaches, since consumers could be required to complete the questionnaire at specific point in the purchase process.
- Mobility/portability – wireless phones are always with consumers versus other data collection formats (computer, wired telephone) which offer limited mobility.
- Facilitate longitudinal studies by tracking respondents on an individual basis.
- Dynamic questionnaire format that allows researchers to vary questions presented based on respondents answers to previous questions.
- Ability to track/locate phones on a real time basis to allow researchers to study location-sensitive issues or situational factors.

The limitations of this data collection format are as follows:

- Simple and short questions because of the limited display space on cell phones.
- Limited capacity to handle graphics.
- Respondents must have web-enabled cell phone.

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***Anticipating Discussion about a Product: Rehearsing What to Say Can Affect Your Judgments***<sup>4</sup>



The authors conducted three experiments to examine the extent to which consumers' attitudes are affected by the anticipation of group interaction.

Key findings of the article include the following:

- When attempting to explain an attitude or belief, consumers often think about less important attributes. The authors cite studies that indicate consumers have a tendency to focus on factors that are unique or different from other consumers or factors that are easy to articulate.
- The process of mentally rehearsing for group discussion makes salient attributes being rehearsed. Thus, factors that predominate in rehearsal will be heavily weighed in product attitudes formed in this setting, regardless of their relevance to the typical criteria for evaluating products.
- Anticipating group discussion can lead to attitudes that are more extreme or more moderate than those of people not anticipating group discussion.

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***Self-Administered Questions by Telephone: Evaluating Interactive Voice Response***<sup>5</sup>

The authors conducted four experiments involving interactive voice response (IVR) as a data collection method. In this study interactive voice response

consists of a computer playing a recording of questions to respondents over the telephone, and respondents answering the questions by pressing keys on the telephone handset.

The authors concluded that IVR yields more honest answers than interviewer assisted CATI interviewing. This conclusion results from several findings in the data:

- The average level of satisfaction was lower in IVR than CATI interviewing.
- The answers to the customer satisfaction questions showed less bunching at the high end of the scale in IVR than CATI interviewing.
- The satisfaction ratings obtained under IVR compared to CATI interviewing were more highly correlated with related questions on overall satisfaction and repeat business.

Another key finding from the article is that IVR yields higher non-response rates than interviewer assisted CATI interviewing. The authors feel that respondents are more likely to agree to participate in a study when they are speaking with a live interviewer versus a computer. In addition, the results indicate that respondents are less likely to terminate an interview during the middle of the process when they are being interviewed by a live person versus a computer.



The authors suggest using shorter interviews and incentives to reduce the non-response problems observed in IVR.

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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](http://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: Over 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.

### References in this volume:

- 1) Downes-Le Guin, Theo, Janowitz, Paul, Stone, Rob, and Shahrokh, Khorram, “Use of Pre-Incentives in an Internet Survey” Journal of Online Research, (January 2002).
- 2) Maclaran, Pauline, and Catterall, Miriam, “Analyzing Qualitative Data: Computer Software and the Market Research Practitioner” Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, Volume 5 (2002) 28-39.
- 3) Long, Ju, Whinston, Andrew B., Tomak, Kerem, “Calling All Customers” Marketing Research, Volume 14 (Fall 2002) 28-33.
- 4) Schlosser, Ann E., Shavitt, Sharon, “Anticipating Discussion About a Product: Rehearsing What to Say Can Affect Your Judgments” Journal of Consumer Research, Volume 29 (June 2002) 101-115.
- 5) Tourangeau, Roger, Steiger, Darby, Wilson, “Self-Administered Questions by Telephone: Evaluating Interactive Voice Response” Public Opinion Quarterly, Volume 66 (Summer 2002) 265-278.

## Syndics Synopsis

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