

Helpful Tips for Developing, Conducting, and Analyzing Web Surveys

Deciding to Conduct a Web Survey

What method works best for your population?

<u>PROS</u>	<u>CONS</u>
More dynamic interaction with respondents	Differing operational systems cause images, text, etc. to become distorted
Skip patterns/branching for certain questions	Some surveys require more technological sophistication than respondents possess
Pop up instructions for difficult questions	Not all households have computers, internet service, and/or email addresses
Drop down boxes for long lists of answer choices	Coverage issues
Shape & Color variety	Multiple email addresses in 1 home or for 1 person
Pictures, videos, animation, audio capabilities	No email address directories
Flexibility of response for respondents (time, place)	Emails are not standardized
Immediate up to date results	Not appropriate to access random samples of definitive populations (i.e. households, or individuals)
Downloadable into analysis programs	

Developing Web Surveys

Designing the Survey

1. Observe design principles and other considerations.
2. Dillman's Design Principles for Designing Web Surveys (Handout)
 - a. Dillman, D. (2007) Mail and internet surveys: The tailored design method. Wiley: New Jersey
 - b. Dillman DA, Tortora RD, Bowker D. (1999). Principles for constructing web surveys. 1998. Available at: <http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/dillman/papers/websurveyppr.pdf>. Accessed 8/23/2007.

Free Web Survey Sites

Site Address	# of Responses	#of Questions	Length of Trial	Price Details
www.surveymonkey.com	100	10	NA	\$19.99/month \$200.00annual subscription
www.freesurveyonline.com	NA	NA	15 days	\$14.99/month
www.surveyconsole.com	100	2 surveys		
www.surveyshare.com	100	2 surveys		Varies
www.questionpro.com	100	2 surveys	1 month	Varies
www.zoomerang.com	100	30	10 days	Varies

Conducting Web Surveys

Improving Response Rates <http://www.esurveyspro.com/article-increase-surveys-response-rate.aspx>

1. Target your audience.

Consider a variety of sources for possible respondents. In addition to email mailing lists, for example, consider posting your survey to newsgroups and web communities.

2. Personalize your email invitations

Emails with a personal salutation result in increased response rates of at least five percent, and sometimes much higher. Send your email to "Dear Mr. Wright" rather than "Dear Valued Alumni."

3. Keep your email invitation short

Please keep your email invitation short and simple, with just one link - the one to the survey.

Please be sure to explain the following: -

- a. Who you are and the purpose of your study
- b. The survey's benefit to the individual as well as to your
- c. Length of survey - if it is short, emphasize that. But be truthful about times - people are more likely to stick with longer surveys if they know about how much time they will take.
- d. Privacy statement, if required by your organization.

4. Make your first survey page simple - let people take the survey!

Once people have decided to take your survey, they will want to get started. Studies show most people don't read extensive instructions.

5. Be clear about privacy protections

The first page of the survey is the place to include information about how you will be using people's responses. People are more comfortable sharing information on the Internet if they know how it will be used. Are they anonymous? Confidential? Shared with others? A university human subjects statement, if needed, would go here.

6. Send reminder emails

Some people will take your survey right away. You will get increased responses, however, if you send follow-up email reminders with the survey link included. It is best not to send more than two reminder emails. Be sure to filter out email addresses of people who do not wish to be contacted again.

7. Consider offering incentives - gifts, prizes, etc.

Studies show that incentives need not be large to increase response rates. A small token, gift certificate, etc., can increase responses considerably.

8. Some people just want to share their opinion!

A large number of people will complete a survey to share their information rather than to receive an incentive. Consider making your incentive optional - you must choose to be included in a raffle or donating to a relevant cause for example.

9. Use graphics and Internet features strategically.

Surveys generally don't need fancy graphics, and sometimes graphics can distract from the content of the survey, or influence answers. But there are a few ways to use graphics to improve your

survey responses. These include providing an image and web link for a prize or incentive, using a multimedia embedded content survey.

10. Publish your results online to survey participants.

People who respond will want to see results, and getting these results will encourage them to complete the survey.

Analyzing Data from Web Surveys

1. Downloadable data in Excel or SPSS format
2. Cautions: Know your web survey interface and how the data will be sent to you.

Conducting Web Surveys

Improving Response Rates <http://www.esurveyspro.com/article-increase-surveys-response-rate.aspx>

1. Target your audience.
2. Personalize your email invitations
3. Keep your email invitation short
4. Make your first survey page simple - let people take the survey!
5. Be clear about privacy protections
6. Send reminder emails
7. Consider offering incentives - gifts, prizes, etc.
8. Some people just want to share their opinion!
9. Use graphics and Internet features strategically.
10. Publish your results online to survey participants.