

QUICK TAKES: TACKLING RESIDENTIAL SURVEY AND DATA COLLECTION CHALLENGES

Moderators: Ingo Bensch, Evergreen Economics, and Ellen Steiner, EMI Consulting

PAPERS *(in order of appearance)*:

Alternate Endings – A Tale of Two Surveys and Priming, Order Effect, and Other Biases

Gomathi Sadhasivan, DNV GL

Richard Barnes, DNV GL

How Abraham Lincoln Can Improve Your Survey: The Costs and Implications of Offering an Incentive and Mixed-Mode Survey

Alyssa Na'im, NMR Group, Inc.

Pamela Rathbun, Tetra Tech

Lisa Wilson-Wright, NMR Group, Inc.

Conducting Evaluation in an Era of Declining Telephone Survey Response Rates

Tami Buhr, Opinion Dynamics

Hannah Arnold, Opinion Dynamics

Vincent Greco, Opinion Dynamics

Want Better Response Rates? Go Mobile! Best Practices for the Mobile Era

Kaitlin Andryauskas, Opinion Dynamics

Emma DeCotis, Opinion Dynamics

Survey “Selfies” – Does My Home’s Energy Picture Really Look that Good?

Carley Murray, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

Pamela Rathbun, Tetra Tech

Observing Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Integrating Mystery Shopping and Ride-Alongs into Process Evaluations

Doré Mangan, Research Into Action

Zachary Hathaway, Research Into Action

Jun Suzuki, Research Into Action

Joe Van Clock, Research Into Action

Erika Kociolek, Energy Trust of Oregon

SESSION SUMMARY:

Collecting information from representative samples of households is getting more challenging. The traditional telephone survey is capturing smaller shares of the population. This session explores innovations in energy-related data collection that evaluators and researchers are applying and testing to keep up with societal and technological trends.

Sadhasivan et al. discuss assorted response biases that are issues in survey design and need to be considered when creating and interpreting survey results. They focus on order effects and priming in presenting results from a survey of consumer awareness and interest in home automation systems. Comparisons of two surveys provide real world examples of where question order and priming do and don't affect survey responses.

Na'im et al. present a survey experiment from Massachusetts in which a household survey on lighting awareness and perceptions was fielded using a split sample to measure how different incentives and survey modes affect response rates, survey costs, and actual responses (i.e., answers to the survey

questions). Specifically, they tested prepaid incentives and mixed-mode surveys against more traditional post-response incentives and telephone-only implementation.

Buhr et al. present a second survey experiment from Massachusetts in which a brand awareness survey for the state's energy efficiency brand was fielded using a split sample to measure response rates, respondent characteristics, and survey costs. They also tested prepaid incentives and mixed-mode surveys. Both Na'im and Buhr provide insights for those who specify, conduct, and interpret results from population and participant surveys.

Andryauskas et al. discusses the increasingly popular mode of mobile web surveys. This paper provides answers to two important questions when designing a web survey: (1) how to encourage customers to open an email survey invitation and complete the survey, and (2) how to adapt surveys for mobile devices so that they are easy to take and do not create additional burden for respondents.

Murray et al. presents findings from a recently completed New York Residential Baseline Study that included 2,882 telephone and Web surveys and 700 on-site inspections. This paper provides insight into the types of questions that homeowners may report accurately and possibly even provide better or more relevant data than on-site inspectors conducting visual observations. It also distinguishes those instances where on-site inspectors can provide more accurate and detailed data. This information can help those designing future studies to employ the most accurate approaches for collecting the data they require.

Mangan et al. discusses the role mystery shopping and ride-alongs can play in more fully capturing the consumer experience on the sales floor, including interactions with retail sales staff. This paper discusses experiences integrating these methods as a part of process evaluations, drawing on experiences with energy efficient retail product programs.