



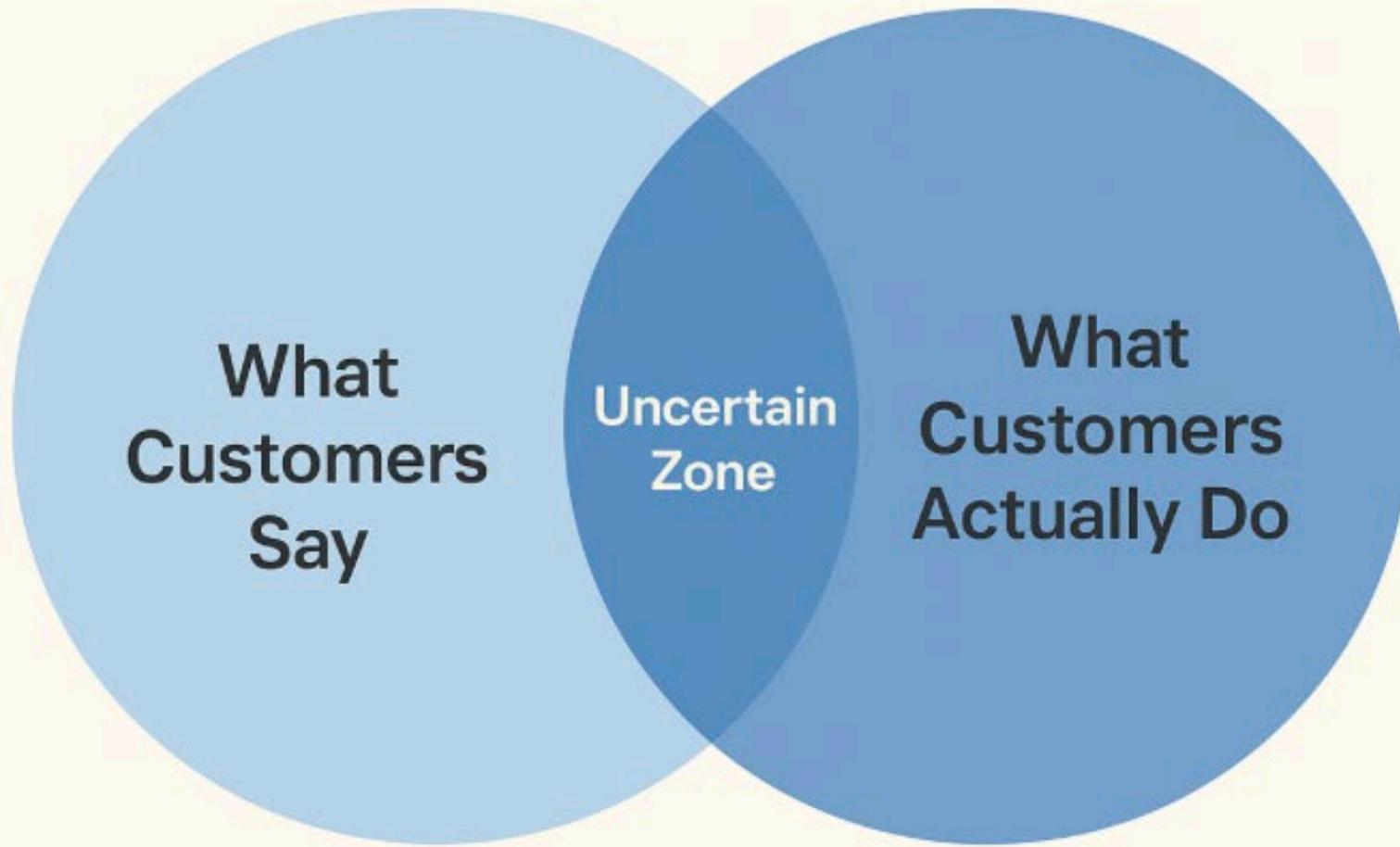
Another Dose of Customer Truth Serum: Measuring Self-Reported Free Ridership Rates Across Multiple Years

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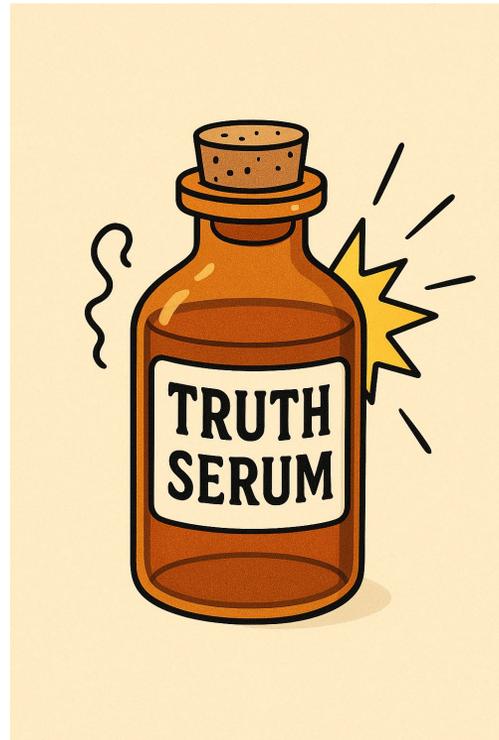
What is one of the most challenging issues facing evaluators?

Estimating Free Ridership!

- Trying to measure what “*people might have done.*”
 - Relies on memories and influenced by “the halo effect.”
 - Critical to establish appropriate estimates for utilities.



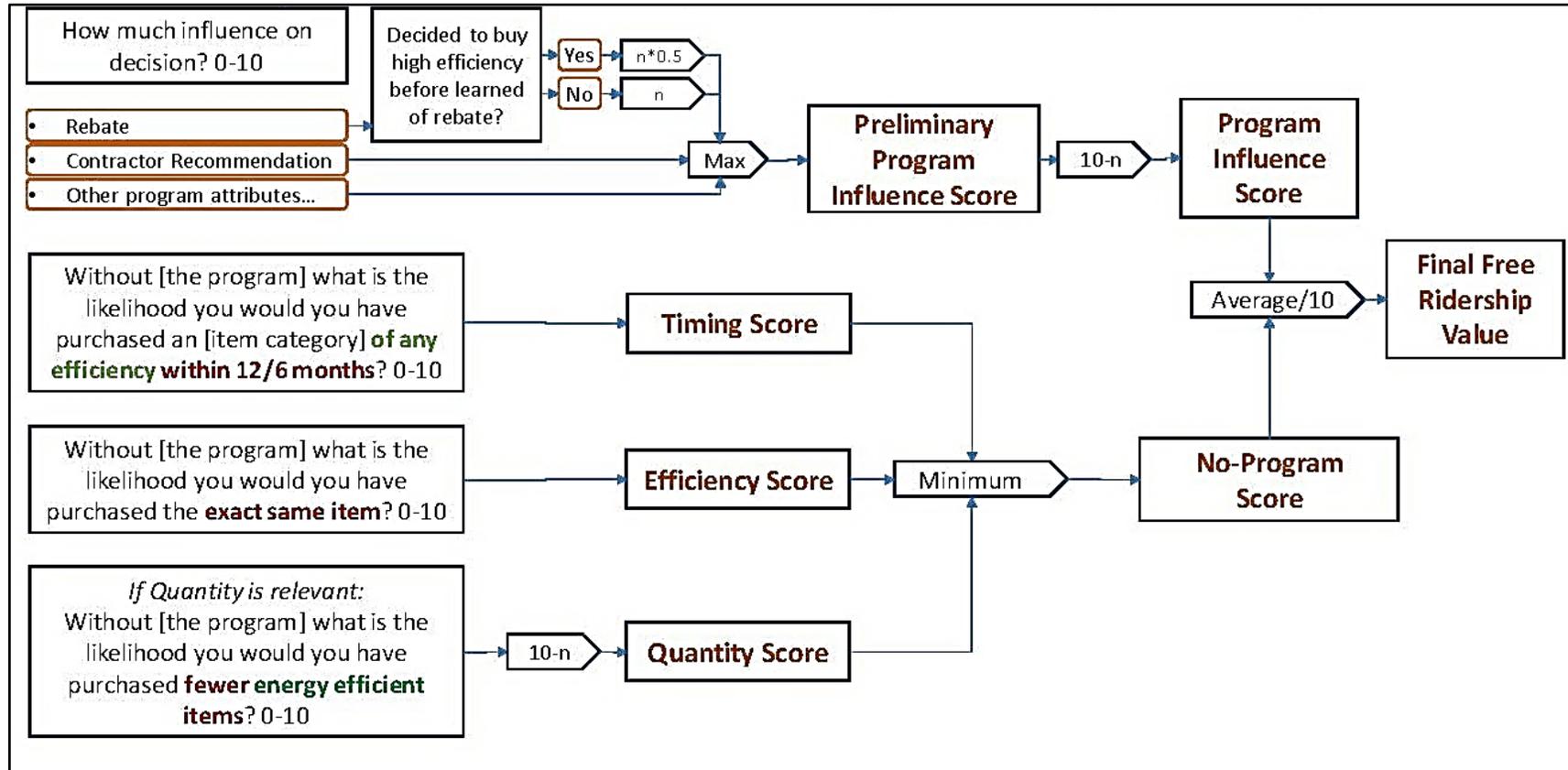
This multi-year evaluation provided another solution.



Evaluation Issue: Estimating Free Ridership across multi-year evaluations



Methodology



Findings: Free Ridership Estimate Didn't Match Planning Estimates

Traditional Approach	2017	2020	2024
Survey Responses- Unadjusted- Rebate Influence Question Only	44%	45%	64%

Proposed Another Data Source

Estimating Free Ridership

Traditional Approach

6-12 months later

- Customer Survey
- Contractor Interviews

Proposed Approach

At Application

- Customer Application
- Customer Survey
- Contractor Interviews

Free Ridership Rates from Rebate Application Responses	2017	2020	2024
Did the rebate influence your decision?	29%	15%	28%

Comparison of Results- One Example

Source		Influence of Rebate (Score = 10)		
Spire Participant Survey	Did Rebate Influence Purchase Decision?	2017 (n=28)	2020 (n=33)	2024 (n=42)
	Yes	7	1	6
	No	0	0	2
	Blank	4	0	2
Spire Rebate Application Database		Influence of Rebate (Score =1)		
	Yes	3	8	16
	No	6	5	11
	Blank	6	3	0
Contradictory Findings		3	8	16
% of Contradictory Responses		11%	24%	38%

Final Results Across Three Program Evaluations

Question	2017 Free Ridership Estimate	2020 Free Ridership Estimate	2024 Free Ridership Estimate
No Rebate Influence by purchased exact same measure- Rating "8-10" – no and blanks	44%	14%	29%
No Rebate Influence by Influence in Database- "1-3" Rating for No and Blanks-	29%	15%	32%
No Rebate Influence by Yes Decided to Purchase	44%	15%	15%
Revised Free Ridership Estimates from All Sources	36%	28%	35%

Why it Matters

- Determining free ridership is a complex task
 - Program participant responses are not always reliable.
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- It is essential to monitor free ridership rates throughout the program cycle by including identical questions on the initial rebate application and the follow-up customer surveys.
 - Provides another source to inform Free Ridership from two points in time— a form of Truth Serum

