

ONLINE RESEARCH QUALITY COUNCIL MEETING

2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

The ARF

432 Park Avenue South, 6th Floor

New York, NY 10016

Marc Nightingale welcomed the Council and informed attendees that results from the Client Survey on Online Research Quality which the Define Quality Committee has fielded will be presented at the ARF Annual Conference on March 31st – April 2nd at the Marriott Marquis. Then he introduced Bob Tomei, Council Chair.

Bob Tomei announced that the Steering Committee will continue to hold monthly meetings, but the General Council Meetings will now occur quarterly. A joint Steering Committee and Client Advisory Board meeting will be held at least on a quarterly basis to correspond with the general Council meetings. Furthermore, Bob Tomei and Tom Evans of the Define Quality Committee are scheduled to present at the ARF Annual Conference two Industry Research-on-Research Studies and review the status of the Quality Accountability and Quality Metric Committees. Other goals of the ORQC are to identify Phase II issues to be addressed and plans to coordinate activities with CASRO, ESOMAR, IMRO, ISO, and other organizations. There may also be a change in the composition of ORQC Steering Committee and leadership.

The first presentation was given by Ron Gailey of WAMU. In “Understanding ‘Undesirable’ Survey Respondents,” Ron shared the results of research demonstrating how well online survey samples represent the general population. In the study, the same online survey was conducted using four different panels. The results showed a large variation between the different sample sources, leading WAMU to believe that the differences were due to varying respondent engagement.

To better understand the findings, traps were added to different surveys. As a result, an average 34% of respondents failed at least one of these five tests. For further investigation, a special section of questions was added at the end of the survey for those who missed one of the trap questions to ask them directly the reasons they missed the question. The results demonstrated that about half of the disengaged respondents, given their responses to follow-up questions, are otherwise good respondents. The WAMU team learned how to identify and remove otherwise “bad” respondents, making overall results more reflective of reality.

Renee Smith of Harris Interactive and Efrain Ribeiro of Ipsos, co-chairs of the Define Quality Committee, presented their committee updates. They suggested that the knowledge driven aspect of the council can be addressed by building on the existing work identified in a bibliography already assembled by Susan Frede of TNS. This bibliography is a result of a comprehensive literature review of online research on research conducted by research suppliers, academia, and online businesses. The ARF will add the bibliography to the ARF website.

Renee and Efrain presented the committee’s Client Feedback Survey, which is used in seeking client input and encouraging dialogue between clients and suppliers. This online survey was developed in January 2008 and sent to a small number of clients, including members of the ARF ORQC Client Advisory Board. The ARF will invite all of its membership to complete this survey.

The co-chairs proposed a research-on-research study to focus on key industry and client issues -- multi-panel membership and respondent engagement. Building on past research efforts, the study will create a database vital to providing necessary answers and direction. A study design to investigate respondent engagement was presented, and a second design is being

formulated by the committee. The co-chairs are seeking ARF endorsement for credibility and supplier participation.

Susan Frede of TNS and Joe Giacobbe of Ipsos presented a research on research study, “Heavier Responders in Online Survey Research.” Since frequent survey takers, also known as “heavy responders,” make up a portion of any sample, Ipsos, NPD and TNS formed a partnership to identify and better understand these heavier online survey participants and their potential impact on survey results. The methodology included several concept tests and a survey participation questionnaire which highlighted survey participation frequency and factors influencing decisions to participate.

It was learned that a group of heavier responders does exist in the national pool of survey takers, and that heaviest responders do produce lower concept scores. Overall, survey results could be impacted if a larger proportion of a sample is heavier responders. High-quality, rigorously applied panel management practices can reduce the number of heavy responders and the impact they have on data.

Kerri Miller of Harris Interactive presented “Multi-Panel Membership: A Summary of Findings,” a study conducted to understand what effect survey taking by those with multiple panel memberships has on data quality. Specifically, Harris wanted to determine whether those with multiple panel memberships respond differently than others, and whether they are more likely to be fraudulent and/or inattentive.

It was found that multi-panel membership by itself does not appear to yield differences in survey results, and that, in general, multi-panel members do not seem to be any more likely than others to be conditioned or inattentive or fraudulent. In fact, there was no evidence of a one-to-one correlation between multi-panel membership and differences in the results obtained. Harris

is continuing their investigation into the nexus of characteristics associated with respondents who provide low quality responses.

Jonathan Jephcott, Chair of the Quality Metrics committee, presented, “Metrics for Online Consumer Panels – Pinning Down a Meaning.” Jonathan reviewed the standards and guidelines for ‘best practice’ for online research and access panels of multiple industry bodies, including CASRO, ESOMAR, ISO, AMSRS, and IMRO. From that industry guidance, he identified 12 distinct concepts for metrics that are appropriate for assessing online research quality. While the concepts developed by the industry bodies were insightful, Jonathan feels that it is the job of the Quality Metrics committee to clarify their meaning so that they are more useful and applicable.

Bob Tomei ended the Council by thanking the co-chairs and committee members for an excellent agenda for producing online research quality improvement. The next Online Research Quality Council meeting will be June 17th.