



**ARF Online Research Quality Council**

**Request for Proposal  
(RFP)**

**Data Hosting and Processing**

**Date Issued: *June 10, 2008***

**Project Lead/RFP Contacts:**

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## 1. Introduction

### ***Statement of Purpose***

The Online Research Quality Council of the Advertising Research Foundation (ARF) seeks bids from companies interested in participating in the Council's research-on-research efforts. Specifically, the Council invites proposals for the data hosting and processing portion of the project, as specified below.

### ***Background Information***

The key goals of the proposed US industry-wide research on research are to:

- Measure the degree to which duplication occurs in samples when multiple sample sources are used in both a national sample and for a smaller geographic area
- Compare survey results across online sample providers and across modes for consistency
- Compare the wave-over-wave consistency of survey results for independent samples from the same provider
- Measure self-reported multi-panel membership
- Measure respondent motivations and attentiveness
- Conduct statistical analyses to identify:
  - a. Respondent segments/types and correlations with data quality: Can we predict the types of respondents most likely to be fraudulent? Inattentive? Does this vary by mode?
  - b. Effects of self-reported multi-panel membership on data quality: Do those with multiple panel memberships produces results that differ from others? Is there a threshold number of self reported memberships after which data quality is affected? Can potential biases be corrected via weighting or avoided with appropriate balancing of the outgoing sample? Does the percentage with multiple panel memberships vary by mode?
  - c. Effects of survey design on data quality: How is survey length connected to measures of respondent attentiveness and data quality?
  - d. How does data quality vary by mode? By type of sample source?

### ***Scope of Work***

The online portions of the proposed study will rely on sample provided by online sample providers who agree to participate. Results from the study will be blinded. Vendors must be willing to enter into appropriate mutual non-disclosure legal arrangements to ensure the utmost confidentiality and security of the data.

### ***Data Hosting and Processing Specifications***

The data hosting and processing (DHP) partner is expected to serve as the project's central metrics monitor and repository. The DHP will interface with both fieldwork and analysis providers, playing a core role in the project. The successful bidder will be able to:

1. Provide online survey infrastructure for deployment by participating panel partners. The DHP partner will act as the "back-end" systems for comparing survey results from multiple online panels. As such, the DHP partner must be able to not only **provide online survey hosting (and participant URLs)**, but also **mirror the look and feel** to

which each panelist is accustomed. That is, the DHP partner must be able to serve online surveys tailored to multiple visual, navigational, or other styles, as requested, while still maintaining data record compatibility across all such styles. **Tracking respondent source** is part of this requirement.

2. Integrate external data into the survey database. Integration might take the form of **record-level appending** of information from third-party sources, and/or **inclusion of new respondent records** from separately fielded CATI, mail and CLT instruments.
3. **Support a variety of incentive mechanisms**, specified on a per-respondent basis, in consultation with sample providers.
4. **Insure 360-degree data privacy** by scrubbing all respondent PII before releasing files for analysis, and by removing all company-identifying information for online sample providers before releasing data for analysis. Note that **original records, with scrubbed information intact, must be maintained** for archival purposes for the duration of the project. Prospective DHP providers should submit reasonable documentation outlining their data privacy and integrity processes.
5. **Measure survey-related incidental variables**, such as measure elapsed time, respondent errors (as defined by the Selection Committee), browser and machine configuration, etc., for each respondent.
6. **Integrate technology-based solutions**, such as cookies or other machine identifiers, to identify duplicate machines within a survey system.
7. Apply specified pattern recognition algorithms to data as requested.
8. Suggest to the Selection Committee new solutions for identifying duplicates or respondent errors.
9. Enter into multiple, legally binding mutual non-disclosure agreements.
10. Maintain the highest professional integrity and objectivity throughout the project.

### ***Deliverables***

Deliverables will include:

- Online survey and data warehouse hosting for the duration of the project, as specified;
- Initial and ongoing data hygiene as directed by the Council's analytical partner(s);
- Export of full or partial data sets with documentation, as requested and specified by the Council's analytical partner(s);
- Detailed project progress/status reports, as requested; and,
- Delivery of all recorded data in fully labeled (i.e., variable and value labels intact) SPSS-format files on DC-ROM or DVD-ROM media.

### ***Contractual Terms and Conditions***

Attached is the ARF non-disclosure agreement (NDA). This must be signed and returned to the ARF on or before the Final Proposal Due Date.

### ***Proposal Requirements***

The following Proposal requirements are included in the WORD file attached hereto;

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1. Description of current capabilities for hosting and maintaining customized online surveys and data warehouses, including any standards certifications
2. Timeline with milestones for programming and hosting of surveys, initial data cleaning, and data exports, based on “typical” projects conducted over the past year
3. Current number of clients/users, to include at least three references
4. Commercial pricing: typical price of services to a client
5. Pricing detail for services rendered to support this research study and factors influencing the price. It is the express wish of the ARF that Vendor will provide their services on this research-on-research project on a pro bono basis. That may not be possible, in which case please provide an explanation.
6. Name, title, and contact information for the Chief Privacy Officer, or individual charged with respondent privacy issues in your company, and policies/mechanisms in place to assure privacy
7. Corporate overview, and name, title, contact info and brief biography for Vendor’s key workers on project
8. Because the measurement of duplicate respondents across sample source is a key goal of this design, please specifically discuss your system’s capabilities to ensure that once a case record is opened no other cases can be inadvertently opened under that same URL (e.g., by a respondent who accidentally double clicks on the URL or by a respondent who experiences technical problems during the course of a survey).
9. Because overall elapsed time and elapsed time for sections of the questionnaire may be important, please comment specifically on your system’s capabilities and measurement accuracy including accuracy for respondents with multiple sessions or for respondents who experience technical problems during the course of a survey).

### ***Companion Documents***

Please note that this RFP is accompanied by a companion document entitled “Research on Research Description Summary.” This document will provide a better understanding of the scope and goals of this project and the applicant’s attention to it will ensure that the proposal is as complete and directed as possible.

## **2. Evaluation and Award Process**

The evaluation committee will award the project to the vendor(s) considered most qualified to implement the deduping process on this study, adhere to the protection of PII and sample provider identity, and act in accordance with the points articulated under the “Evaluation Criteria” section of part 5 ARF Review Process. The ARF’s decisions are final and binding in all respects.

### ***RFP Schedule***

ARF anticipates the RFP process to follow the tentative schedule shown below; however, ARF retains the right to add days and/or events to the schedule. Any and all changes to the schedule are at the sole discretion of the ARF. In the event that ARF changes the schedule, all Vendors will be notified. Notwithstanding the foregoing, ARF will give Vendors the minimum

amount of time to meet Vendor deliverables as indicated in this schedule. Requests for extensions of the Response Due Date will NOT be granted. Vendors should add sufficient mail time to ensure timely delivery of any applicable Vendor deliverables.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>RFP Issued Date</b>	<b>6/10/08</b>
<b>Vendor Intent to Participate Acknowledgement</b>	<b>6/17/08</b>
<b>Questions are allowed to be asked through this date</b>	<b>6/23/08</b>
<b>Final Proposals Due Date</b>	<b>7/08/08</b>
<b>Business Award Date</b>	<b>8/05/08</b>

### ***Sample Providers***

The exact number is unknown at this time, but the resulting set will most likely consist of the major full-service research companies with online panels, third party sample suppliers, "river" sample suppliers, and database companies. It will also include a set of offline samples (mail, phone, and central location).

### ***Geography***

United States

## **3. Proposal Submission Guidelines**

Vendor, by submitting a response, represents that they possess the capabilities, equipment, and resources necessary to provide the services detailed in their response to this RFP.

The response will also represent that:

- 1) The materials provided by Vendor conform to the specifications and are error free;
- 2) Vendor has the right to submit the RFP and enter into a contract;
- 3) Vendor has all rights and licenses necessary to provide methodology, technology, and services to ARF;
- 4) ARF will not be obligated to pay license fees to Vendor or any third party based upon use of the methodology, etc.;
- 5) Vendor will comply with applicable Federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations; and,
- 6) The services will be performed in a professional and workmanlike manner.

### ***Non-Disclosure Agreement & Confidentiality***

The attached ARF Non-Disclosure Agreement signed by Vendors will be deemed to cover this RFP. Vendors are obligated to treat all information concerning this RFP and the services as confidential. The information in this RFP may only be used to fulfill the purposes of the RFP.

Should Vendors elect to engage the services of any third party (“Subcontractor”) to respond to the requirements of this RFP, a representative of the Subcontractor must sign and return two originals of the provided Non-Disclosure Agreement for ARF’s signature before the Subcontractor may review any documentation associated with this RFP. All Subcontractors will be obligated to hold all information concerning this RFP in confidence.

### ***Vendor Data***

All Vendor data provided in your Proposal will be provided the same protection of its sensitivity by ARF as ARF accords its own information. This protection will include the care given by team members and third party consultants retained by ARF to assist in the Proposal evaluation. Data included in Proposals such as process, financial, or management information that is not to be disclosed to the public for any purposes other than evaluation of the Proposal should be marked “Confidential”. All data delivered as part of this RFP becomes the property of ARF and will not be returned.

### ***Communications***

Vendor contact with ARF personnel pursuant to this RFP shall be restricted to the ARF Contact and in accordance with the terms described herein. **Only those communications that are in writing from the ARF Contacts may be considered as a duly authorized expression on behalf of ARF.**

### ***Company Overview & Bios***

Vendor is to provide a company overview, and the name, title, contact information, and brief biography for Vendor’s key workers on project. Suggested contents for company overview are:

- 1.) Brief history of firm
- 2.) Strengths/Accomplishments
- 3.) Size/Organization structure
- 4.) Policies and Positions of Company’s Stakeholders

### ***ARF Contact Information: Vendor Contacts for RFP Questions***

Name / Title	Contact Info
<b><i>Tom Evans, VP, Digital &amp; Cross Media Research, ESPN</i></b>	<a href="mailto:Thomas.C.Evans@ESPN.com">Thomas.C.Evans@ESPN.com</a>

<b>Efrain Ribeiro, COO, IPSOS Interactive</b>	Efrain.Ribeiro@ipsos-na.com
<b>Renee Smith, VP, Panel Quality, Harris Interactive</b>	RSmith@HarrisInteractive.com

#### ***Vendor Questions***

Vendors shall be given **one** opportunity prior to submitting their Proposal to ask questions related to the RFP. All questions should be clear and concise and must be consolidated into one submission per Vendor. **Questions submitted after the due date will not be accepted.** The text of select questions and answers of a substantive nature will be forwarded to all Vendors being solicited. Questions of a similar nature may be combined into a common question for a response based on ARF's discretion. **All communication with the ARF Contacts must be in writing only.**

#### ***Amendments, modifications and Cancellations of RFP***

Receipt of a Proposal and/or any and all discussions occurring during this RFP does not obligate ARF in any way. ARF reserves the right to accept or reject any and all Proposals. ARF reserves the right to revise, amend, cancel, and/or reissue this RFP at any time for any reason, in which event such action shall be communicated in writing and provided to all Vendors.

#### ***Use of Proposals***

ARF reserves the right to use any and all concepts contained in the Proposals submitted in response to this RFP. All materials and concepts included in the Proposals shall become the exclusive property of ARF. Selection or rejection of a Proposal shall not affect this right.

#### ***Gifts and Favors***

Vendors shall not offer any gifts or favors of any kind to any employee or representative of ARF, regardless of the value, during the RFP process through contract completion.

## **4. Proposal Preparation and Delivery**

#### ***Proposal Preparation and Response Format***

ARF's review of Proposals will be primarily focused on the information identified below. To allow an objective evaluation of all Proposals, Vendors must conform to the Response Formats and include all requested information. Failure to comply may result in rejection of the Proposal.

Please find an attached RFP response Microsoft WORD file – at minimum respond in this format. Feel free to include additional documentation (.ppt, .doc, etc.) for your proposal.

(see Deduplication RFP-Vendor NAME.doc.)

***Most Favorable Terms***

ARF reserves the right to make an award without further discussion or negotiation of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms the Vendor can propose. Vendor should be prepared to accept their response to this RFP for incorporation into a contract. Contract negotiations may incorporate part or the Vendor's entire proposal. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of an official file on this matter without obligation to ARF.

***Acceptance Period***

Proposals should remain open and firm as an offer to contract through **09/01/08**.

***Cost of Proposal Preparation and/or RFP Participation***

Any and all costs incurred by the Vendor associated with preparation of Responses and/or participation in this RFP are entirely the responsibility of the Vendor and shall not be chargeable in any manner to ARF, including without limitation any technical gap analysis activity required prior to award.

***Alternative Proposals***

In addition to proposing to the specified requirements, Vendors are encouraged to provide **additional** alternative proposals for services which Vendor considers more cost effective than the processes procedures described herein. Recommended alternatives are to be identified as such along with the applicable cost deferential and program impact for each alternative proposed.

***Delivery Instructions***

**Proposals shall be delivered no later than by the due date noted above, 5:00 PM Pacific Time via email to [bill@theARF.org](mailto:bill@theARF.org) .**

Late submissions will not be accepted unless otherwise agreed by ARF; and the ARF accepts no liability for incomplete submissions, errors in transmission, late and/or misdirected transmissions.

**5. ARF Review Process*****Evaluation Criteria***

ARF shall have the sole right and option to use whatever evaluation and selection criteria it deems appropriate in selecting a Vendor; however, the following criteria will be strongly considered during such evaluation and selection: Vendor's ability to meet ARF's primary business objectives

- Vendor's ability to meet the requirements and service levels
- Vendor's overall business qualifications and industry knowledge
- Vendor's pricing proposal

- Vendor's agreement to ARF's contract requirements

An evaluation scorecard with more detailed criteria and relative importance measures will be circulated during the Q&A phase of the RFP process.

***Bidder Presentations***

If deemed necessary by ARF, Vendors may be requested to clarify their Proposal and/or present their proposal orally to ARF. ARF will notify Vendors in the event such a presentation is necessary.