

Sampling Support and Design

Procedures to ensure close representation of offline or online populations

Harris Poll OnlineSM is a voluntary research panel which anyone can join, so by its very nature it is not representative of any specific population. However, using panel member profile demographic data, Harris Interactive has the ability to design, implement and manage sample plans to ensure data distributions closely represent online or offline populations. There are several actions taken before, during and after data is collected to assure representativeness, including:

- We stratify the sample plan by age, gender and region, and oversample specific cells to account for differential response rates.
- A pretest is conducted to test the response rates and subsequent email invitations are sent based on the cells that need more completes. A quota system is used to control the distribution of incoming “completers.”
- Demographic weighting can be implemented to yield a more precise distribution and propensity weighting, a proprietary model, can be used to account for behavioral or attitudinal differences in online and offline respondents.

Pre Data Collection

- **Stratified Sampling** – The sample plan is typically balanced based on age, gender and region. Other variables such as income, education and race can also be integrated into the sampling plan.
- **Differential Response Rates**– Based on years of online data collection and parallel telephone

research, we have learned how response rates differ by age, gender and even income. We use this information to develop our sampling plan. For example, we know that males 18-24 respond seven percentage points below the average and therefore oversample this cell.

Data Collection

- **Slow Start and Staggered Invitations** – Due to the nature of online research, it is difficult to gauge how many and how quickly respondents will respond. Therefore, we are careful to send invitations to only 10 percent of the overall sample outgo on the first day. The remainder of the invitations are sent over the course of about four days, allowing ample time to adjust the demographic composition of the sample outgo.

Post Data Collection

- **Demographic Weighting** – Although it is not usually necessary, demographic weighting can be implemented to balance the data distributions more precisely to either the online or offline population. The center has 50 CATI stations and includes a team of interviewers who specialize in IT and high level business-to-business interviews.
- **Propensity Weighting** – In some instances the researcher may want to understand what, if any, behavioral/attitudinal differences exist.

Panel Composition Harris Poll Online Demographics in the US (18)+

Demographic characteristics of panelists are comparable to the US population

Region	Harris Poll Online SM	US General	US Online	Gender	Harris Poll Online SM	US General	US Online
Northeast	18	21	20	Male	43	49	50
Midwest	23	22	22	Female	57	51	50
South	38	34	33	Income			
West	21	23	24	\$24,999 or less	19	18	16
Age				\$25,000 - \$34,999	13	10	11
18-29	30	22	25	\$35,000 - \$49,999	17	14	14
30-39	19	18	21	\$50,000 - \$74,999	21	19	22
40-49	19	19	22	\$75,000 - \$99,999	14	14	18
50+	32	41	32	\$100,000+	16	25	19

AHEAD OF WHAT'S NEXT.

