

Sampling Support and Design

Procedures to ensure close representation of offline or online populations



Harris Poll OnlineSM (HPOL) 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, HISB 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 completers. 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.
- **Quota Management System (QMS)** – Allows us to preprogram quotas into the survey to ensure that demographic frequencies are distributed according to current national census statistics or online statistics (depending on the objective of the research).

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.



Contact Us

To find out more about HISB and how we can work together to advance your research business, please contact us at:

877.635.4468
 info@hisbonline.com
 www.hisbonline.com

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.
- **Propensity Weighting** – In some instances the researcher may want to understand what, if any, behavioral/attitudinal differences exist.

HPOL Representation: Panel Demographics

Gender	HPOL Panel	US General	US Online
	%	%	%
Male	46	48	49
Female	54	52	51

Age	HPOL Panel	US General	US Online
	%	%	%
18-29	37	22	26
30-39	20	22	23
40-49	20	21	22
50+	23	35	29

Income	HPOL Panel	US General	US Online
	%	%	%
\$24,999 or less	20	22	16
\$25,000-34,999	14	11	13
\$35,000-49,999	18	16	13
\$50,000-74,999	22	20	26
\$75,000-99,999	13	13	17
\$100,000+	13	18	15



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