



ESOMAR 37

37 Questions to Help Buyers of Probability Samples



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Company Profile

AmeriSpeak

Q1

What experience does your company have in providing online samples for market research? How long have you been providing this service? Do you also provide similar services for other uses such as direct marketing? If so, what proportion of your work is for market research?

AmeriSpeak conducts surveys for clients who can't afford to be wrong. We built AmeriSpeak with the belief that quality research requires quality sample. Without a representative sample, your survey findings are at risk of not being reliable or defensible.

That's why we built AmeriSpeak to have the highest AAPOR response rate among commercially available panels in the U.S. Only AmeriSpeak uses face-to-face interviewing in our outreach to recruit households. Every AmeriSpeak Panel household was selected by random chance – AmeriSpeak is not an opt-in, online convenience panel with self-selected respondents trying to make money off surveys. AmeriSpeak customers do not need to worry about bots, professional respondents, cross-panel membership... and worse.

Since its inception in 2015, hundreds of organizations have chosen AmeriSpeak to provide data they can trust. AmeriSpeak has been engaged to conduct over 1,800 projects for NORC clients.

- **Government agencies and academic researchers** rely on high quality, probability sample from AmeriSpeak to produce findings that can steer policy decisions and win acceptance by peer-reviewed journals.
- **Media organizations** trust AmeriSpeak to get their reporting right. AmeriSpeak is the primary survey partner of the nation's preeminent news service, The Associated Press.
- **Commercial clients** rely on data from AmeriSpeak to make major decisions on business strategy. Our sampling captures a true picture of America, providing better representation than other panels for hard-to-reach populations, including low-income households, less educated persons, young adults, rural households, persons who are less interested in the news, and social and political conservatives.

Q2

Do you have staff with responsibility for developing and monitoring the performance of the sampling algorithms and related automated functions who also have knowledge and experience in this area? What sort of training in sampling techniques do you provide to your frontline staff?

For over 80 years, NORC has enjoyed a distinguished reputation for forging best practices and innovations in social science research, evaluation, and practice. In recent years, with the development of NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel, NORC offers the most scientifically rigorous panel solution available in the United States.

NORC brings experience and expertise across the organization in creating AmeriSpeak and conducting surveys using the AmeriSpeak Panel. NORC's Statistics and Data Science department leads study design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination across project life cycles. Staff are leaders in designing and implementing rigorous, efficient sampling methods and weighting resultant survey data. The Methodology and Quantitative Social Sciences (MQSS) department provides expertise in using existing and emerging data sources; harnessing novel data sources and technologies to improve data gathering; assessing and improving data quality; understanding the cognitive processes informing the user experience for survey respondents; designing instruments for multiple modes; and developing and testing novel techniques to enhance recruitment and retention of study participants.

NORC has over 100 statisticians, data scientists, survey methodologists and quantitative social scientists who advance NORC's methods capabilities through engaging in cross-functional collaboration, efficient statistical operations, and fit-for-purpose research and development. In addition, J. Michael Dennis and David Dutwin bring their leadership and expertise to AmeriSpeak projects. Staff bios for AmeriSpeak's leadership may be accessed [here](#).

NORC's new Center for Panel Survey Sciences demonstrates our strong capabilities in panel survey research. David Dutwin is the Director of the Center, which positions NORC as the undisputed leader of panel survey research. The Center aims to promote NORC's methodological expertise and research in the science of panel survey research with a cutting-edge agenda and highly effective communication apparatus to promote our work via newsletters, white papers, presentations, and other communication strategies on crucial topics related to panel research. The work of the Center may be accessed [here](#).

Q3

What other services do you offer? Do you cover sample-only, or do you offer a broad range of data collection and analysis services?

NORC's AmeriSpeak unit provides full-service survey-based solutions to its clients, or alternatively sample-only projects if specified.

Our full-service research solutions include but are not limited to questionnaire design and usability testing, cognitive interviews, questionnaire programming and hosting of surveys, data collection, statistical weighting and estimation, and reports.

We have created specific product lines to meet the needs of the most common uses of statistical surveys:

| AmeriSpeak Products | Description |
|----------------------------------|--|
| AmeriSpeak® | A probability-based sample of U.S. residents with the highest AAPOR response rate among commercially available panels |
| AmeriSpeak Omnibus | Cost-effective, quick turnaround polling service of U.S. adult general population |
| AmeriSpeak Federal | Highest response rate probability panel offering in the U.S. |
| AmeriSpeak Teen | Rigorous statistical surveys of U.S. teenagers (age 13-17) |
| Amplify AAPISM | The first-ever research panel designed to scientifically represent Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities |
| TrueNorth® | A cost-effective extension of AmeriSpeak, using opt-in sample with AI-calibrated statistical weighting to reduce bias |
| Foresight 50+® | Rigorous statistical surveys of the age 50+ population |
| Foresight 50+ Omnibus | Cost-effective, quick turnaround polling service of U.S. age 50+ population |

For more information, please visit our websites specific to each AmeriSpeak Product (the links are in the above table) and email our Business Development team at AmeriSpeak-BD@norc.org.

A blurred office scene showing people working at desks. In the foreground, a person's hands are visible, one pointing at a smartphone on a stand and the other near a keyboard. The background shows other office workers and desks.

Sample Sources & Recruitment

AmeriSpeak

What this section is about

Answers to the questions in this section will help you understand the types of samples available from different sample providers in the market and the sources they rely on. This will help you evaluate the quality of the sample being offered, whether it is suitable for measuring change over time, and whether there are any specific constraints you

need to consider when using it. It will also allow you to understand whether the sample provider is drawing the sample from its own sources or aggregating sources from other providers. We recommend that you first identify the sample types being offered and then ask the relevant questions for all sources.

Broadly speaking, there are two models of sample sources and recruitment:

Panels

These are databases of potential participants who declare that they will cooperate for future data collection if selected, generally in exchange for a reward/incentive. This includes traditional access panels, co-branded panels, or opt-in databases of individuals who agreed to complete research projects and undertake other nonmarket research activities (watch ads, download an app, complete marketing offers, etc, also known as loyalty programs, or rewards communities within GPT (Get paid to) sites.) Loyalty card and subscription databases are included here if there is a continuous relationship with members who understand the commitment asked of them.

Intercepts

This includes intercepts from offer walls, affiliate networks, social media, or other platforms to drive traffic to a survey. Intercept is an approach where potential participants are asked to take a survey for a reward while they are engaged in another activity such as playing an online game, reading news, or some other online activity. Intercepted participants may be previously unknown to the sample provider or may have been pre-identified and profiled through a prior survey experience.

Q4 Using the broad classifications above, from what sources of online sample do you derive participants?

AmeriSpeak is NORC's probability-based household panel for conducting statistical surveys of the U.S. population. AmeriSpeak is owned and operated by NORC. All AmeriSpeak panel members were recruited to join AmeriSpeak by NORC using procedures documented in the [Technical Overview of the AmeriSpeak Panel](#) and [A Guide for Seeking OMB Clearance in Studies Using AmeriSpeak](#).

The panel design has four distinguishing features. First, the primary sample frame for AmeriSpeak is the NORC National Frame, a large-scale multistage area probability sample with leading coverage of the U.S. population.

Second, to represent households underrepresented on other probability panels, AmeriSpeak is the only commercially available panel in the United States that uses in-person, face-to-face recruitment of panel households.

Third, AmeriSpeak recruits households as well as surveys its panel members in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean).

The construction of the AmeriSpeak panel started in 2014 with pilot samples. In 2015, about 7,000 households were recruited from a sample of around 60,000 addresses. In 2016, about 128,000 addresses were sampled to expand the panel to around 20,000 recruited households. About 51,000 addresses were selected for the 2017 recruitment, which led to the expansion of the regular AmeriSpeak panel to 23,000 recruited households. The AmeriSpeak Panel expanded to approximately 30,000 households in 2018 and 35,000 households in 2019 through further recruitment efforts. In succeeding years, panel recruitment has added a net increase of approximately 5,000 households per year. The current panel size (as of January 2024) is 66,000 panel members aged 13 and over residing in over 58,000 households.

Panel management and maintenance are crucial for panel health and efficiency. NORC maintains strict panel management rules to limit respondent burden, reduce panel attrition, and minimize the risk of panel fatigue. On average, AmeriSpeak panelists are invited to participate in client studies two to three times a month. AmeriSpeak works with NORC clients to create surveys that provide an appropriate user experience for AmeriSpeak panelists. AmeriSpeak will not field surveys that

in our professional judgment will result in a poor user experience for our panelists. AmeriSpeak also has a designated website and a telephone number for panelist communications.

Panel maintenance is a dynamic process because the AmeriSpeak Panel is supplemented and refreshed regularly over time to grow the panel, compensate for panel attrition, and improve panel representation for specific subpopulations. For example, the Latino Panel and Teen Panel are created to support studies of Hispanics and teenagers, respectively; the 2019 recruitment was primarily designed to improve sample representation at the state level. As panelists are added or removed from the panel, the panel refreshment process takes place to ensure that the refreshed panel fully represents the corresponding target population.

In 2023 with the launch of Amplify AAPI, NORC began providing researchers with largest, most representative public opinion panel of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities in the U.S.

For further reading on AmeriSpeak, visit these links: [AmeriSpeak website](#), [Technical Overview of the AmeriSpeak Panel](#), [AmeriSpeak Panel Demographic Report](#), and [White paper: "The Undercounted."](#) The sample frame for AmeriSpeak also includes the USPS CDSF for some geographies where the National Frame does not provide sample coverage.

Q5

Which of these sources are proprietary or exclusive and what is the percent share of each in the total sample provided to a buyer?

100% of the AmeriSpeak Panel is sourced from NORC's sample recruitment program as documented in the [Technical Overview of the AmeriSpeak Panel](#). AmeriSpeak Panel sample is not sourced from any other panels or from other organizations.

Q6

What recruitment channels are you using for each of the sources you have described? Is the recruitment process ‘open to all’ or by invitation only? Are you using probabilistic methods? Are you using affiliate networks and referral programs and in what proportions? How does your use of these channels vary by geography?

AmeriSpeak is a nationally representative probability panel. As such, panelists can join by invitation only. AmeriSpeak does not use any affiliate networks or referral programs.

Q7

What form of validation do you use in recruitment to ensure that participants are real, unique, and are who they say they are?

AmeriSpeak is a probability-based panel in which U.S. households are randomly selected with a known, non-zero probability from an address-based sample (ABS) frame. Probability-based panels have precise control over who is invited and allowed to join a probability-based panel, which then mitigates survey fraud and data quality concerns generally observed among nonprobability panelists. Accordingly, professional as well as fraudulent panelists are not likely to be present in a probability-based panels given that, unlike participants in a nonprobability-based panels, they cannot opt-in. AmeriSpeak sample recruitment efforts are focused on locating and recruiting only the specific individuals selected from a statistically valid sample frame of U.S. household addresses. AmeriSpeak uses various traditional and well-established methods to invite individuals into the panel, including contacting the sample members by mail, telephone, and by field interviewers in person.

AmeriSpeak also has rigorous standard data quality monitoring protocols that flags cases that are potential speeders or straight-line respondents. We contact panel members that we suspect are providing inattentive responses or are guessing. AmeriSpeak’s policy is to remove panel members from AmeriSpeak whose response behavior does not improve after contacting them.

Q8

What brand (domain) and/or app are you using with proprietary sources?

All AmeriSpeak panel members are recruited through the AmeriSpeak brand, which relies on probability-based selection of U.S. households.

AmeriSpeak panel members access their surveys by clicking on the survey URL in AmeriSpeak survey invitations sent by email or SMS text. Panel members may also log into the AmeriSpeak Member Portal or Member App to access surveys. Finally, panel members may also call toll-free into the AmeriSpeak call center to participate in surveys through phone surveys.

Q9

Which model(s) do you offer to deliver sample? Managed service, self-serve, or API integration?

This question does not apply to AmeriSpeak. AmeriSpeak does not deliver sample. AmeriSpeak conducts surveys for NORC's clients and for NORC-based researchers.

Q10

If offering intercepts, or providing access to more than one source, what level of transparency do you offer over the composition of your sample (sample sources, sample providers included in the blend). Do you let buyers control which sources of sample to include in their projects, and if so how? Do you have any integration mechanisms with third-party sources offered?

AmeriSpeak does not offer intercept survey services.

Q11 **Of the sample sources you have available, how would you describe the suitability of each for different research applications? For example, is there sample suitable for product testing or other recruit/recall situations where the buyer may need to go back again to the same sample? Is the sample suitable for shorter or longer questionnaires? For mobile-only or desktop- only questionnaires? Is it suitable to recruit for communities? For online focus groups?**

There is only one sample source for the AmeriSpeak Panel – AmeriSpeak.

AmeriSpeak is the appropriate platform for supporting all the research purposes noted in ESOMAR’S question.

A background image showing a person's hands holding several colorful sticky notes (pink, yellow, orange) against a blurred background of a bookshelf. The text 'Sampling & Project Management' is overlaid in white on the left side.

Sampling & Project Management

AmeriSpeak

What this section is about

Answers to the questions in this section will help you understand the processes and procedures that are undertaken to provide you with a sample of participants for your survey.

You should understand what biases may be inherent in, or because of, the approaches taken and the likely severity of those biases.

Q12 Briefly describe your overall process from invitation to survey completion. What steps do you take to achieve a sample that “looks like” the target population? What demographic quota controls, if any, do you recommend?

When conducting surveys using AmeriSpeak, NORC implements two crucial steps to achieve a sample that “looks like” (or is representative of) the target population.

The first step is judicious sample stratification and sample allocation, and the second step is calibration weighting.

In drawing AmeriSpeak samples for specific client surveys, AmeriSpeak samples are typically stratified into 48 strata defined by the cross-classification of four variables: age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education. The total study sample is allocated to the strata such that, on an unweighted basis, the set of survey completes has a similar distribution (at the marginal level) by age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education to the target population distribution.

Following the design-based approach, we calculate a final weight for each survey complete to support approximately unbiased estimation. These weights correct for potential estimation bias due to unequal selection probabilities, differential nonresponse between subpopulations, and frame errors. Through raking ratio adjustments, the final weights are calibrated to match the target population distributions. AmeriSpeak’s raking ratio adjustments are typically carried out along the following dimensions:

- i. Age:** 18-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-64, and 65+
- ii. Gender:** Male and Female
- iii. Census Division:** New England, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, West North Central, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific
- iv. Race/Ethnicity:** Non-Hispanic White, Non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, and Non-Hispanic Other
- v. Education:** Less than High School, High School/GED, Some College, and BA and Above

- vi. **Age x Gender:** 18-34 Male, 18-34 Female, 35-49 Male, 35-49 Female, 50-64 Male, 50-64 Female, 65+ Male, and 65+ Female
- vii. **Age x Race/Ethnicity:** 18-34 Non-Hispanic White, 18-34 All Other, 35-49 Non-Hispanic White, 35-49 All Other, 50-64 All Other, 50-64 All Other, 65+ Non-Hispanic White, and 65+ All Other
- viii. **Race/Ethnicity x Gender:** Non-Hispanic White Male, Non-Hispanic White Female, All Other Male, and All Other Female

Population benchmarks are usually derived from the Current Population Survey (CPS) or the American Community Survey (ACS). Both are high-quality data sources with comparable coverage and can be used for weighting benchmarks. The CPS has been AmeriSpeak's preferred data source because of its timelier data release. Therefore, using the CPS typically means using the more recent data. In addition, because of its detailed questionnaire and its experienced interviewing staff, the CPS is a better data source for poverty and some other socioeconomic characteristics, including income, health insurance coverage, school enrollment, marital status, and family structure. For example, the income questions in the ACS cover the major income sources, while the CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplements questions are much more detailed and provide more comprehensive coverage of all potential income sources.

Q13 **What profiling information do you hold on at least 80% of your panel members plus any intercepts known to you through prior contact? How does this differ by the sources you offer? How often is each of those data points updated? Can you supply these data points as appends to the data set? Do you collect this profiling information directly or is it supplied by a third party?**

AmeriSpeak maintains a profile database of 25 demographic-type variables for active panelists. These data are collected directly by AmeriSpeak through a demographic profile survey and are updated by panelists every two years. These profile variables are appended to every client data file on a standard basis and at no additional cost.

In addition to the standard profile variables, AmeriSpeak also collects supplemental profile variables coverings topics such as media-related behavior, health conditions and health care, personal finance, online behavior, and a more extensive battery of socio-economic, geographic, and household-level characteristics.

The key details we need to provide pricing for a study are:

- i. Number of interview completions in total and for any relevant subgroups
- ii. Target population definition and incidence rate

Q14 **What information do you need about a project in order to provide an estimate of feasibility? What, if anything, do you do to give upper or lower boundaries around these estimates?**

- iii. Length of interview (median survey length in minutes)
- iv. Survey questionnaire complexity (any specific requirements)
 - v. Topic(s) for the survey questionnaire
- vi. Approximate field dates
- vii. Languages (English only or English plus Spanish, Asian languages for Amplify AAPI)
- viii. Survey modes (online only, or online plus phone)
- ix. Number of open-ended questions and coding needs
 - x. Funder/Sponsor name
- xi. Deliverables needed

With new clients, we prefer to schedule a meeting to discuss the project. We believe that we can best meet a client's needs if we understand the study objectives and discuss solutions.

Please view the [AmeriSpeak Panel Book](#) for documentation on the AmeriSpeak profile data.

Q15 **What do you do if the project proves impossible for you to complete in field? Do you inform the sample buyer as to who you would use to complete the project? In such circumstances, how do you maintain and certify third party sources/sub-contractors?**

This scenario occurs very rarely for AmeriSpeak. Because we have well-documented prior survey participation history, AmeriSpeak can judge sample feasibility accurately.

When there is any uncertainty, we are upfront with clients as to the possibility of falling short of quota and structure our contract as best efforts.

If the sample plan requires the combination of AmeriSpeak and non-probability opt-in sample (e.g., using [TrueNorth](#)), AmeriSpeak staff are transparent with the client on the proposed methodology and will obtain the agreement of the client prior to using any non-probability, opt-in sample.

Q16 Do you employ a survey router or any yield management techniques? If yes, please describe how you go about allocating participants to surveys. How are potential participants asked to participate in a study? Please specify how this is done for each of the sources you offer.

As a probability panel, AmeriSpeak does not use routers—panelists are randomly selected from all U.S. households and invited to join AmeriSpeak.

As described above, in drawing samples for specific AmeriSpeak surveys, we assign each panelist to one of 48 strata based on their unique combination of age, gender, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment. Participants are randomly selected to participate in surveys in proportion to the U.S. Census size of the population of their given strata.

Participants invited to a survey are notified either by e-mail, SMS text, or by telephone based on the expressed preferred mode of contact by the panelists. Panelists are also notified on their app and on the AmeriSpeak Panel web portal.

Q17 Do you set limits on the amount of time a participant can be in the router before they qualify for a survey?

As a probability panel, AmeriSpeak does not use routers—panelists are randomly selected from all U.S. households and invited to join AmeriSpeak.

Q18 What information about a project is given to potential participants before they choose whether to take the survey or not? How does this differ by the sources you offer?

AmeriSpeak survey invitations describe in general terms the topic of the survey and state the monetary incentive for participation.

Q19 Do you allow participants to choose a survey from a selection of available surveys? If so, what are they told about each survey that helps them to make that choice?

AmeriSpeak takes steps to prevent respondents from “cherry picking” surveys.

Respondents receiving survey invitations by email and SMS are typically informed of the available monetary incentive, the survey link, and no other information.

Respondents accessing a survey through the Member App, Member Portal, or by calling the toll-free Member telephone number are not provided an opportunity to select from a set of options. Only one survey is made available at a time. Respondents are informed of the length of the survey questionnaire (in terms of minutes) prior to entering the survey.

Q20 **What ability do you have to increase (or decrease) incentives being offered to potential participants (or sub-groups of participants) during a survey? If so, can this be flagged at the participant level in the dataset?**

AmeriSpeak has rarely experienced a need to change the respondent incentive after the survey is launched. We can alter the respondent incentive once the survey is in the field at the participant level and document the paid monetary incentive at the participant level in the dataset.

Q21 **Do you measure participant satisfaction at the individual project level? If so, can you provide normative data for similar projects (by length, by type, by subject, by target group)?**

AmeriSpeak measures panelist satisfaction at the conclusion of each survey using a seven-point Likert Scale question and an open-ended question about their experience taking the survey.

If requested, AmeriSpeak can provide our clients a report that compares the panelists satisfaction results for their project compared to other AmeriSpeak projects of comparable survey length.

The AmeriSpeak project management staff review the answers to the panel satisfaction questions during and after the field period. AmeriSpeak uses the data to provide feedback to our clients to inform future improvements. AmeriSpeak shares the panel satisfaction survey data with our clients upon request.

AmeriSpeak staff respond back to panelists, when necessary, as part of panel engagement and maintenance.

Q22 **Do you provide a debrief report about a project after it has completed? If yes, can you provide an example?**

We provide a detailed Project Methods and Transparency Report for every project.

The AmeriSpeak Project Methods and Transparency Report details the following:

- i. Methods used to build the AmeriSpeak Panel**
- ii. Sampling and weighting protocol for the project**

iii. Survey fielding

1. Respondent contact methods and dates
2. Median survey length
3. Incentives provided

iv. Key performance indicators

1. Invited and completed interview sample sizes
2. Incidence/eligibility rate of screened respondents
3. Cumulative response rate calculations (including panel recruitment, panel retention, and screener and survey completion rates)
4. Sampling margin of error and design effect
5. Sample representativeness analysis (comparison of the interviewed sample to population benchmarks)

The Project Report is designed to help our clients comply with the guidelines of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative.

Data Quality & Validation



What this section is about

This section focuses on the quality of the in-survey data. In-survey data quality includes project level data validity and representativeness,

survey-taking behaviors, sample blends, participant characteristics, and project level data health and audit practices..

Q23 How often can the same individual participate in a survey? How does this vary across your sample sources?

What is the mean and maximum amount of time a person may have already been taking surveys before they entered this survey? How do you manage this?

AmeriSpeak is deliberate about not “over-surveying” panelists. To minimize panelist burden, we use a version of Permanent Random Number (PRN) sampling to control the assignment of surveys so that, within a given demographic subgroup, survey assignments are distributed as equally as possible across panelists. Additionally, when panelists are selected for an AmeriSpeak survey, the selection process within each sampling stratum favors those who were not selected in the most recent previous AmeriSpeak survey. This selection process is designed to minimize the number of surveys any one panelist is exposed to and maximize the rotation of all panelists across AmeriSpeak surveys. Most importantly, AmeriSpeak recruitment has always been designed to be “ahead of the curve,” meaning we have aspired to never get into the situation where we need to “over invite” panelists to meet our business needs. Rather, we have recruited robust sample sizes to ensure that panelists receive at best only a modest number of invitations. Typically, panelists are assigned to no more than four surveys a month, and they complete an average of approximately two surveys per month.

Q24 What data do you maintain on individual participants such as recent participation history, date(s) of entry, source/channel, etc? Are you able to supply buyers with a project analysis of such individual level data? Are you able to append such data points to your participant records?

AmeriSpeak maintains complete paradata on individual panel members. We often provide paradata to our clients on metrics such as number of prior surveys taken, panel recruitment date, method used for recruitment, mode preference, etc.

Q25 Please describe your procedures for confirmation of participant identity at the project level. Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at the point of entry to a survey or router.

To join AmeriSpeak, the research subject must complete a registration process online or with NORC interviewers via phone or in-person visits.

To assure that respondents reside in households randomly sampled by AmeriSpeak, the research subject must provide a USPS address that matches the sampled address. By this means, AmeriSpeak assures that the registering panelist is in fact residing in the sampled household.

As a probability panel, AmeriSpeak randomly recruits panelists from a list of nearly all U.S. households; there is not a router. When they join, participants provide an email and telephone number as well as their name and other relevant information. Panel members set a password to enter the AmeriSpeak Portal. They can only take surveys by logging into the panel on the portal or through the AmeriSpeak app. As such we do not have issues regarding participant falsification.

Q26 How do you manage source consistency and blend at the project level? With regard to trackers, how do you ensure that the nature and composition of sample sources remain the same over time? Do you have reports on blends and sources that can be provided to buyers? Can source be appended to the participant data records?

As a probability panel, this question is not pertinent. We recruit panelists via random selection into the panel. We do not “blend” samples.

Q27 Please describe your participant/member quality tracking, along with any health metrics you maintain on members/participants, and how those metrics are used to invite, track, quarantine, and block people from entering the platform, router, or a survey. What processes do you have in place to compare profiled and known data to in-survey responses?

This question does not apply to AmeriSpeak. The only households eligible to join AmeriSpeak are households that are sampled by AmeriSpeak.

Q28 Please describe your participant/member quality tracking, along with any health metrics you maintain on members/participants, and how those metrics are used to invite, track, quarantine, and block people from entering the platform, router, or a survey. What processes do you have in place to compare profiled and known data to in-survey responses?

Our probability-based sampling design prevents the inclusion of self-selected panelists and professional respondents in AmeriSpeak Panel surveys. As a result, AmeriSpeak experiences fewer undesired survey behaviors than non-probability based panels, with less than 1% of respondents exhibiting undesirable behaviors. Nevertheless, as part of our panel hygiene program, we routinely examine survey responses to identify panelists that demonstrate unacceptable response behavior (e.g., speeding, skipping questions, straight-lining). We also regularly compare recruitment and profile data with client survey responses to identify inconsistent responding.

The level of data cleaning depends on the client request and budget. For instance, per request, NORC has removed from the analysis data file interviews from panelists who skipped/refused at least 1/3 of the questionnaire. If the questionnaires have long blocks of questions susceptible to straight-lining, the NORC data cleaning staff looks to see if there are any straight-lining panelists. Our staff then review the data for those straight-liners to see if there are tell-tale characteristics such as skips/refusals, speeding, or straight-lining elsewhere in the survey.

A blurred background image of a business meeting. In the foreground, a person's hand is pointing towards a laptop screen. In the background, another person is holding a blue pen over a document. The overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting an office environment.

Policy & Compliance

AmeriSpeak

What this section is about

Sample providers, buyers, and their clients are subject to data protection and related information security requirements imposed by data protection laws and regulations. In addition, they may be subject to laws and regulations that may impact incentives paid to participants.

These laws and regulations vary by jurisdiction with different laws and regulations applying in different countries or states within countries and are generally interpreted based on where the participant resides.

Applicable data protection laws and regulations include, but are not limited to: the Act on the Protection of Personal Information or APPI (Japan); the Australian Privacy Act (Australia); the California Consumer Protection Act or CCPA (state of California in the United States); the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act or COPPA (United States); the Data Protection Act (United Kingdom); amendments regarding data

localization requirements to the Data Protection Act (Russian Federation); the General Data Protection Law (Brazil); the EU General Data Protection Regulation or EU-GDPR (EU/EEA); the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or HIPAA (United States); the Graham-Leach Bliley Act or GLBA (United States); and PIPEDA (Canada). AB 2257 (the state of California in the United States) is an example of law and regulation related to employment which may impact incentives paid to participants.

Information security frameworks and standards include, but are not limited to COBIT, HITRUST, ISO 27001, the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and SOC 2. Answers to the questions in this section can help you understand the data protection, information security and compliance policies, procedures and practices that a sample provider has implemented.

Q29 Please provide the link to your participant privacy notice (sometimes referred to as a privacy policy) as well as a summary of the key concepts it addresses. (Note: If your company uses different privacy notices for different products or services, please provide an example relevant to the products or services covered in your response to this question).

Please review our full Privacy Statement.

NORC respects the privacy of every AmeriSpeak Panel member and utilizes a high standard of privacy protection measures in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Privacy Statement outlines the information NORC collects and how we use that information.

The Privacy Statement explains how panel members can verify the accuracy of their personally identifiable information (PII) submitted to NORC and how to request that we delete or update your PII.

We've developed our privacy policy from industry guidelines and standards, and local, national, and international laws and requirements. All privacy practices and methods described in this policy apply only insofar as permitted by the applicable standards, laws and requirements. Our privacy policy has been reviewed and approved by the NORC's Institutional Review Board.

Q30 Please provide the link to your participant privacy notice (sometimes referred to as a privacy policy) as well as a summary of the key concepts it addresses. (Note: If your company uses different privacy notices for different products or services, please provide an example relevant to the products or services covered in your response to this question).

NORC's Contracts and Grants office has reviewed and maintains on-going review of AmeriSpeak's compliance with all U.S. federal and state law with respect to consenting human subjects, monetary incentive fulfillment, data storage and transfer of respondents' personal identifying information, etc.

NORC's Data Governance Board enforces and supervises NORC's researchers with respect to disclosure risk evaluations and establishing Data Use Agreements with NORC's clients to assure appropriate handling, storage, and destruction of respondent information.

NORC's Chief Privacy Officer is responsible for the development and compliance with NORC's Privacy Policy.

NORC's Chief Information Officer is responsible for the development and compliance with NORC's information security program, including procedures and policies designed to protect enterprise communications, systems, and assets from both internal and external threats.

Q31 **How can participants provide, manage and revise consent for the processing of their personal data? What support channels do you provide for participants?**

AmeriSpeak Panel Members have several options for requesting to view the personal information we have collected on them or request to have their personal information destroyed by NORC.

AmeriSpeak Panel Members have these options:

- i. Log into their membership account at amerispeak.org and follow the instructions.
- ii. Call the NORC AmeriSpeak Panel Support Team toll-free at (888) 326-9424.
- iii. Send a letter by U.S. mail to NORC as set forth below in the AmeriSpeak Privacy Statement.

Q32 **How do you track and comply with other applicable laws and regulations, such as those that might impact the incentives paid to participants?**

NORC's Contracts and Grants office has reviewed and maintains on-going review of AmeriSpeak's compliance with all U.S. federal and state law with respect to monetary incentive fulfillment and all systems related to data collection, storage, and retention.

Q33 **What is your approach to collecting and processing the personal data of children and young people? Do you adhere to standards and guidelines provided by ESOMAR or GRBN member associations? How do you comply with applicable data protection laws and regulations?**

The AmeriSpeak Teen Panel collects data from minors (defined as persons aged 13-17) following consent from parents or legal guardians. This panel complies with Section 7.1 of the ESOMAR Guideline for Online Research. Our policy regarding data collection from minors is deliberately more restrictive than our overall privacy policy to provide additional protection for minors.

We adhere to all applicable laws and codes pertaining to the protection of minors' privacy including, without limitation, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 in the United States (as amended). We carefully consider both privacy issues and parental concerns in connection with all surveys involving individuals under the age of 18.

There are two different types of consent for the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel. The initial consent and assent process is for teens to join the panel and includes both the parent's consent and the teen's assent. As part of our Parental Consent Survey, an adult AmeriSpeak panelist is asked if they are the parent or legal guardian of any eligible teens living in their household. If they say "yes," they are provided with information about the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel and asked to provide consent for their teen or teens to participate in the panel.

A teen for whom consent is obtained from a parent will then be invited to the complete the Teen Recruitment Survey, where invited teens have the opportunity to learn about their rights as a potential member of the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel and are asked to provide their assent to participate in the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel.

The second type of consent is for client surveys. For surveys with sensitive topics, a full Institutional Review Board (IRB) is required, and a relevant Certificate of Confidentiality is obtained. Once we receive parental consent, we ask for the teen's consent, walking them through assent language covering survey topics, the risks of participation, and their rights as a research subject.

For surveys without sensitive topics, if the IRB agrees that the survey contains no sensitive items, no further parental consent and teen assent questions are asked. Teens have the option to decline participation in any survey and still remain part of the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel. For surveys with or without sensitive topics, parents or legal guardians will be notified that their teen has received an invitation to participate. They will be able to view the survey questions but will not be able to see their teen's answers. For more information on child and young adult surveys, see the [AmeriSpeak Privacy Policy](#).

Q34 Do you implement “data protection by design” (sometimes referred to as “privacy by design”) in your systems and processes? If so, please describe how.

AmeriSpeak uses NORC's data protection procedures, which follow NORC's federal agency sponsors of research. We have many government projects that require similar regulatory compliance (e.g., IRS Publication 4812) and recent audits have certified that our systems meet or exceed the applicable requirements.

Q35 What are the key elements of your information security compliance program? Please specify the framework(s) or auditing procedure(s) you comply with or certify to.

Does your program include an asset-based risk assessment and internal audit process?

NORC's systems are routinely audited internally and by U.S. federal agency sponsors of selected surveys conducted by NORC. With specific federal government agencies, NORC provides monthly security risk assessments of all NORC's information technology systems.

Q36 Do you certify to or comply with a quality framework such as ISO 2025?

The NORC infrastructure framework is compliant with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) to ensure that all data, operations, and assets are protected from security threats. As such, we follow the standards and guidelines set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication 800-53 rev 4 (Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations) at the moderate level and the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS). In keeping with our high standards, the policies established in the OMB Circular A-130 regarding Management of Federal Resources Appendix III, are strictly followed. All personnel maintaining the systems are trained according to the policies set by each project to comply with the data security requirements and manage the usage of data, including personally identifiable information (PII).

Additionally, we maintain project quality by following strict guidelines for sample selection, survey programming, quality control review, data management, monitoring, and reporting, as well as post data collection adjustment techniques and weighting. We also strongly encourage clients to permit NORC to pretest survey instruments to allow for additional review of the questionnaire and data prior to launching the main study.

A group of people are gathered around a wooden table in a meeting. On the table are two laptops, one displaying a line graph, several documents with charts, a mouse, a smartphone, and various office supplies like pens and highlighters. The scene is dimly lit, with a dark overlay on the right side.

Metrics

AmeriSpeak

What this section is about

This section lists common sample and data health metrics. Reviewing metrics periodically can serve as the basis for a conversation with sample providers about consistency and reliability, as well as whether the sample is appropriate for the population and business question being examined. Unexpected or

unexplained shifts in metrics may also indicate the potential for bias or error. While not all these metrics are required and there are no benchmarks on the “right answers,” providing transparency over time will create a meaningful dialogue about quality and utility.

Q37 What are you able to provide to buyers, in aggregate and by country and source?

- a. Average qualifying or completion rate
- b. Percent of paid completes from 0-3 months tenure, trended by month
- c. Average number of dispositions (survey attempts and completes) per member, trended by month
- d. Average number of paid completes per member, trended by month
- e. Active unique participants in the last 30 days
- f. Active unique 18-24 male participants in the last 30 days

Appendix



References

AmeriSpeak Panel Book

“The Undercounted” White Paper

**Technical Overview of the AmeriSpeak® Panel –
NORC’s Probability-Based Household Panel**

Glossary

Loyalty program an arrangement in which customers of a company (or group of companies) are rewarded for purchases made with these companies. Rewards are normally given in a currency that can be spent at those companies (or their chosen partners).

Paid means interviews/surveys that are delivered and accepted by a client, are included in the final dataset, and for which the sample provider receives payment.

Panel member (or simply member) an individual recruited from a documented source who has provided profile data and appropriate information for validation of identity, given explicit consent to participate in research according to the terms and conditions of panel membership, and has not opted out.

Participant (sometimes call a participant or data subject) a person or organization from whom or about whom data is collected for research.

Personal data (sometimes referred to as personally identifiable information or PII) any information relating to a natural living person that can be used to identify an individual, for example by reference to direct identifiers (such as a name, specific geographic location, telephone number, picture, sound, or video recording) or indirectly by reference to an individual's physical, physiological, mental, economic, cultural or social characteristics.

Profiling information descriptive characteristics of a panel member.

Quarantined members individuals who have broken some set of quality assessment protocols that result in them being either temporarily or permanently suspended from participating in future research activities with the company that quarantines them.

Referral program a process whereby a panel offers its existing panelists the opportunity to gain rewards by referring family, friends and colleagues (or visitors of their site) to join the panel.

Representativeness the degree to which a sample reflects the target population being studied. A representative sample is one in which the distribution of important characteristics is approximately the same as in the target population.

Examples

¹ AAPOR RR3 and other response rate calculations can be found here: <https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Response-Rates-Overview-508.pdf>

² The AmeriSpeak panel weight existed prior to this study; the weighting procedures are described here for clarity and completeness.

³ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January-June 2022. National Center for Health Statistics. December 2022. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>

⁴ The Current Population Survey used is either the February CPS or the March Supplement, usually based on which is most recent.

⁵ Because we trim the weights to remove extreme weights and hold down weight variation, the final study weights may end up deviating from exact populations benchmarks by small but acceptable amounts. Even without trimming, there can be a limit in the ability to perfectly match benchmarks along all variables and categories included in the raking procedure. Our goal is to rake as close as possible before trimming.

⁶ For more information about TrueNorth, see <http://amerispeak.norc.org/our-capabilities/Pages/TrueNorth.aspx>

⁷ For more information about Foresight 50+, see <https://www.norc.org/Research/Capabilities/Pages/Foresight50.aspx>.

⁸ A sample of 5 segments was selected from each of the 28 non-urban NFAs. However, 2 sample segments were later subsampled out in Montana due to cost.

⁹ A small fraction of initially nonresponding housing units is not eligible for NRFU, including “hard refusals” and those with an appointment for a call back from NORC.

¹⁰ A young adult flagged household refers to a household where MSG or TargetSmart indicated there was an 18-24-year-old adult in the household. In 2016 and 2017, a slightly different definition was used, and a young adult flagged household was defined as having an 18-34-year-old adult in the household by MSG or 18-30-year-old adult by TargetSmart.

¹¹ A Hispanic flagged household refers to a household where MSG or TargetSmart indicated the presence of a Hispanic adult in the household.

¹² A non-Hispanic Black-flagged household refers to a household where MSG or TargetSmart indicated the presence of a non-Hispanic Black adult in the household.

¹³ As the 2021 NRFU is continuing to wind down, response rates noted here are estimated for 2021 sample cases.

¹⁴ See https://amerispeak.norc.org/content/dam/amerispeak/research/pdf/WhitePaper_ResponseRateCalculation_AmeriSpeak_2016.pdf

¹⁵ A properly calculated cumulative AAPOR response rate for panel-based research takes into account all sources of non-response at each stage of the panel recruitment, management, and survey administration process (see https://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf, page 48-9). A common misapplication of the term “response rate” in online panel surveys is to represent the survey-specific cooperation rate as the “cumulative survey response rate.” See “Response Rate Calculation Methodology for Recruitment of a Two-Phase Probability-Based Panel: The Case of AmeriSpeak” authored by Robert Montgomery, J. Michael Dennis, N. Ganesh. The paper is available at <https://amerispeak.norc.org/us/en/amerispeak/research.html>.

¹⁶ The non-internet households (HHs) are those that do not select “High-speed, broadband internet at home (such as cable or DSL)” or “Dial-up internet at home” response options when they are asked “What kind of internet access do you have? Please select all that apply” item in the recruitment survey. The non-internet HHs include those that only use internet on a cell connection or mobile phone.

¹⁷ For transparency purposes, unweighted percentages are presented in this section. Hence, these results do not take into account selection probabilities. The base weighted distributions that take into account selection probabilities can be provided upon request.

¹⁸ See “The Undercounted: Measuring the Impact of ‘Nonresponse Follow-up’ on Research Data and Outcome Measures” authored by Ipek Bilgen, J. Michael Dennis, N. Ganesh. The paper is available at <https://amerispeak.norc.org/us/en/amerispeak/research.html>.

¹⁹ See “Nonresponse Follow-up Impact on AmeriSpeak Panel Sample Composition and Representativeness” authored by Ipek Bilgen, J. Michael Dennis, N. Ganesh. The paper is available at <https://amerispeak.norc.org/us/en/amerispeak/research.html>.



The Industry Leading Breakthrough
Probability-Based Research Platform

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