

# Exploring Modifications to Eligibility Screening Questions

**ssrs**  
research. *refined.*

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Jennifer Su  
Chintan Turakhia  
Jonathan Best

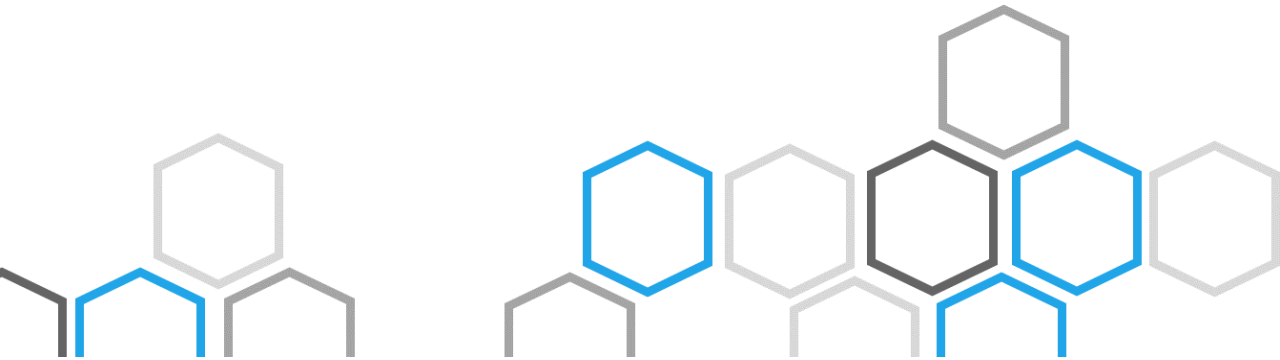
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# Presentation Overview

# Overview

**In this methodological brief, we will:**

- Examine the impact of using local caller ID on contact or cooperation rates
- Look at variations in introductory text and demographic and geographic eligibility screening questions and which work better at determining true eligibility of a contacted person on the telephone
- Contextualize how these approaches could be successful in more accurately estimating target population incidences





# Contact and Cooperation Rates

# Cell Contact Rates: Declining In Recent Times

- While landline contact rates have generally remained relatively high, cell contact rates have seen sharp declines over the past 12-24 months.
- Cooperation rates are relatively steady.

National	June 2017	April 2018	April 2019
LL Contact	60.1%	65.8%	73.9%
LL Cooperation	10.3%	13.7%	9.9%
LL RR	6.2%	9.0%	7.3%
Cell Contact	64.3%	56.3%	46.5%
Cell Cooperation	10.5%	9.6%	9.9%
Cell RR	6.8%	5.4%	4.6%

*\*Data are based on three independent RDD telephone polls.*

# Purging Inactive Cell Numbers

- Scrubbing cell sample of likely inactive telephone numbers before dialing has a remarkable impact on contact rates.
- Cooperation rates and Response rates are essentially unimpacted by scrubbing.

National	January 2019	April 2019
Cell Contact	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>46.5%</b>
Cell Cooperation	11.5%	9.9%
Cell RR	4.2%	4.6%

*\*Data are based on two independent RDD telephone polls, conducted in early 2019.*

# Contact Rates: Use of Local Caller ID

- For state and local studies, using a local caller ID may improve contact rates.
- Using a local area code is mainly aimed at bettering contact rates. Local CID has no discernible impact on cooperation and response rates.

State	Nov-Dec 2017 (No CID)	April-May 2018 (No CID)	Nov-Dec 2018 (CID)
LL Contact	<b>40.5%</b>	<b>45.3%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>
LL Cooperation	15.7%	11.8%	11.3%
LL RR	6.4%	5.3%	7.1%
Cell Contact	<b>31.7%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>54.8%</b>
Cell Cooperation	15.8%	14.5%	11.3%
Cell RR	5.0%	6.7%	6.2%

*\*Data are based on three independent RBS telephone polls.*

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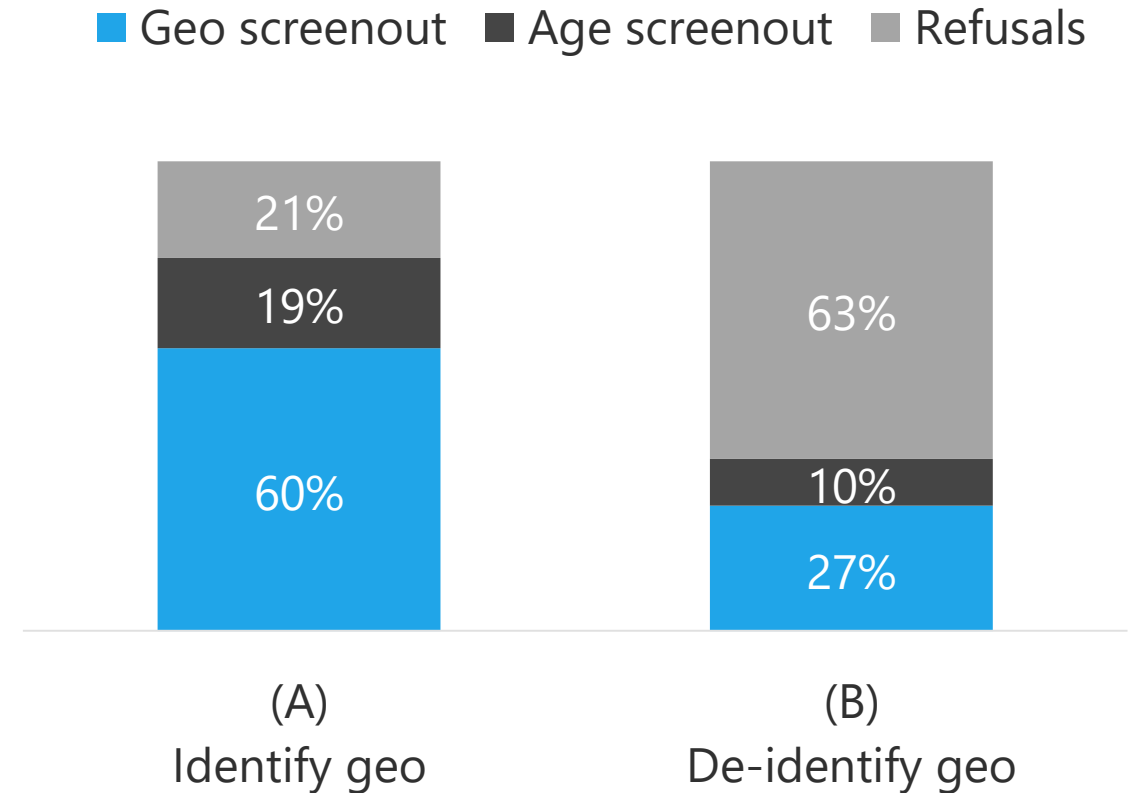
Introductory Text



# Introduction: Identifying Study Geographic Area

What impact does identifying the study's target geographic area in the introduction have on screenouts and refusals?

- Identifying the target geography at the introduction resulted in a higher percentage of geographic screenouts.
- De-identifying the target geography at the introduction resulted in a lower percentage of geographic screenouts but tripled the amount of refusals.



*\*Base: Screenouts and Refusals.*



# Eligibility Screening Questions

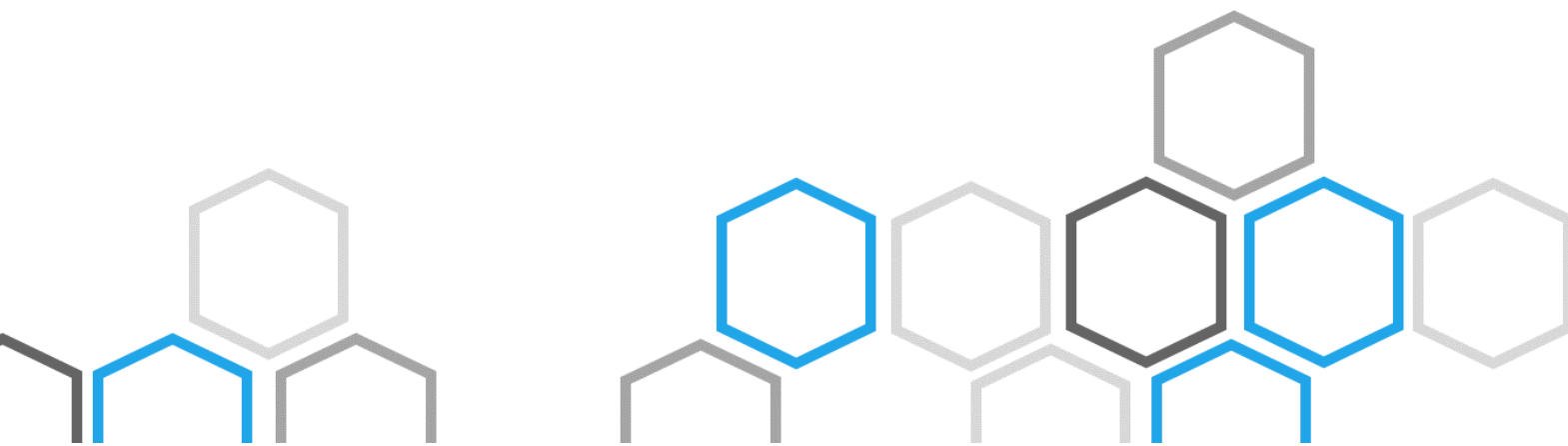
# Age Screening

We examine two separate approaches to screen for adults age 18 or older.

**“Are you under 18 years old, OR are you 18 or older?”**

**vs.**

**“What is your age?”**



# Age Screening: Two-Way Age or Exact Age

	National		State		County Clusters	
	<18/18+	Exact age	<18/18+	Exact age	<18/18+	Exact age
Age Screenout	16.0%	4.2%	19.6%	4.3%	14.9%	6.4%
Difference	<b>-11.8%</b>		<b>-15.3%</b>		<b>-8.5%</b>	
Refusals	79.4%	94.7%	67.1%	85.6%	74.8%	88.4%
Difference	<b>+15.3%</b>		<b>+18.5%</b>		<b>+13.6%</b>	

*\*Base: Screenouts and Refusals*

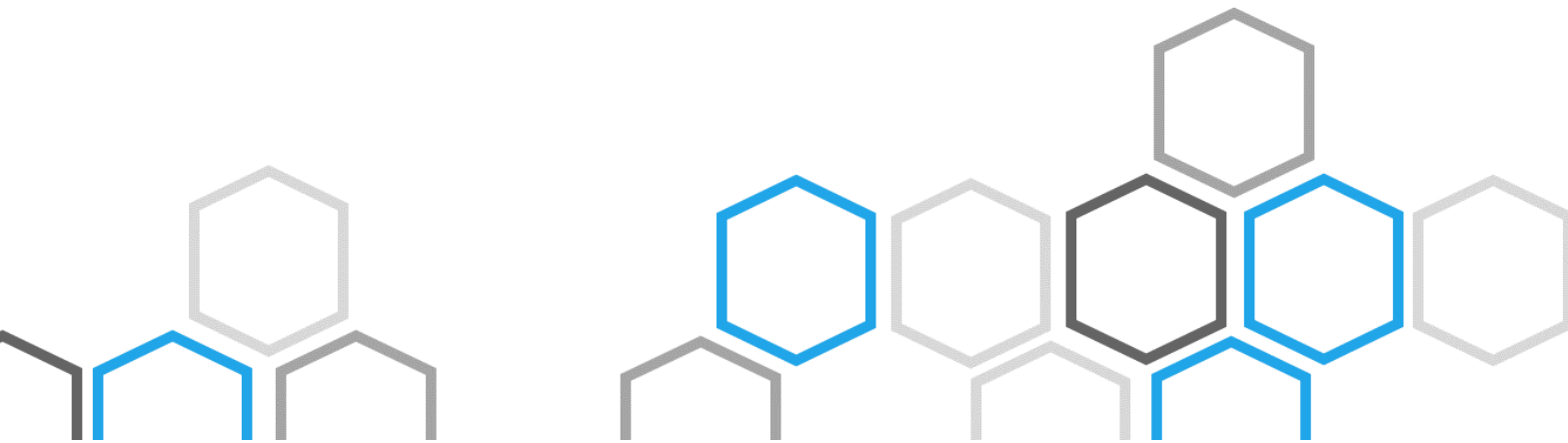
# Geographic Screening

We examine two separate approaches to screen for the geographic area of study.

**“Do you live in [STATE]?”**

**vs.**

**“Could you please tell me what state you live in?”**



# Geo Screening: Named/Unnamed Study Area

	State	
	Study area named	Study area masked
Geo screenout	47.9%	9.2%
Difference		<b>-38.7%</b>
Refusals	49.1%	82.0%
Difference		<b>+32.9%</b>

*\*Base: Screenouts and Refusals.*

# Net Impact on Incidences

	National		State		County Clusters	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
Incidence	53%	68%	53%	60%	46%	61%
	<b>+15%</b>		<b>+7%</b>		<b>+15%</b>	

*\*Based on the net impact of asking for age and/or geographic more directly or more indirectly.*



# Final Takeaways



# Key Takeaways

- Contact rates for telephone interviewing, especially via cell phones, are declining. Use of local area codes can be helpful to make that initial contact. Researchers can make dialing of cell sample more efficient by removing inactive cell numbers, which boosts contact rates.
- After contact is made, asking “indirect” questions to mask the “right answer” to screening questions makes it harder for potentially eligible study participants to guess who you are trying to reach, resulting in a smaller share of screenouts.
- The tradeoff to fewer screenouts: more refusals (and therefore more unresolved telephone numbers to try to convert to completes or to call back to determine eligibility if unknown from an earlier attempt).



Jennifer Su

SSRS

[jsu@ssrs.com](mailto:jsu@ssrs.com)

@jennifersu

contact



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