SSRS

Opinion Panel

A Nationally Representative Probability-
based Panel of U.S. Adults Age 18 or Older

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Background

SSRS is a leading full-service, public opinion research firm. For more than 30 years, SSRS has specialized in healthcare, public and social policy, and non-partisan political research studies conducted via all data collection modes. Our clients are comprised of public and private sector entities including major academic institutions, leading national media organizations, and top research institutes (www.ssrs.com).

SSRS Opinion Panel

The SSRS Opinion Panel is a nationally representative probability-based panel of U.S. adults age 18 or older. The hallmarks of the SSRS Opinion Panel are methodological rigor, accuracy, affordability, mode flexibility, and representativeness. Our panel is actively used by major academic institutions, media organizations, and other private sector entities – both in the U.S. and abroad.

As a charter member of the AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research) Transparency Initiative, SSRS is committed to full compliance of AAPOR standards and transparency.

SSRS Opinion Panel Team and Services

Our highly experienced SSRS Opinion Panel team stands ready to support both data collection and client analytic needs. We work closely with clients from the early project planning stages to developing and delivering effective customized solutions. Our services include questionnaire design, questionnaire programming and hosting, user experience (UX) testing, cognitive interviews, data collection, statistical weighting, and data analysis and reporting. Specific SSRS Opinion Panel services include:

- Questionnaire design consultation that meets industry best practices.

- Methodological consultation.

- Highly collaborative team that works closely in meeting client schedules.

- Design and implementation of subpopulation-specific surveys that leverage panelist profile data, such as for surveys of Hispanics, people with specific health insurance statuses, caregivers, parents, registered voters, and people with different chronic health conditions.

- Establishment and maintenance of custom proprietary panels.

Panel Recruitment

SSRS Opinion Panel members are recruited randomly based on nationally representative Address Based Sample (ABS) design (including Hawaii and Alaska). ABS sample is drawn from the Delivery Sequence File (DSF) maintained by the U.S. Postal Service. Population coverage of the DSF is in the 98%-99% range.

During the recruitment process, full demographic information on panelists is collected. This data is stored securely and used to determine eligibility for specific studies (if needed). We also rely on these data to improve the survey experience for panelists by avoiding the need to re-ask demographic questions with each survey.

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How are SSRS Opinion Panel Surveys Conducted?

The SSRS Opinion Panel is a multi-mode panel. All internet respondents participate via web and all non-internet/web reluctant respondents participate via phone. SSRS's own research on non-internet respondents suggests that more than 8 in 10 non-internet respondents are unwilling to take surveys via web. SSRS has therefore made the decision not to provide internet access to non-internet respondents as doing so does not effectively address the coverage bias of non-internet respondents. By definition, non-internet cases need to be contacted via a non-internet mode.

Samples are drawn among panel members to best meet the study criteria. Selected panelists are sent an email invitation to participate in the survey, including unique survey link. The link allows the respondent to complete the self-administered online survey. Our contact protocol also includes a text survey reminder for panelists that have consented to receiving text messages. All telephone interviews are conducted using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system with live interviewers.

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For studies that need completion via a singular web mode yet seek to ensure national representation, the SSRS Methods, Analytics and Data Science (MADS) Group has developed a proprietary propensity weighting solution that takes estimates derived for the U.S. adult internet population and adjusts them to mirror the full U.S. adult population (see the section on weighting).

The SSRS Opinion Panel also includes panelists who are primarily Spanish speakers. Recruitment is bilingual and we translate and conduct surveys in Spanish as required by a specific project. SSRS web surveys comply with industry best practices. They are optimized for smartphone/mobile device administration and are adapted to all operating systems and browsers.

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Weighting

SSRS Opinion Panel data is weighted to be representative of the entire residential adult population in the United States. The first step in the weighting process is the application of a base weight that accounts for the ABS sample design and the within-household sampling of one adult. For studies that opt to have no telephone component, we then apply a proprietary model-based non-internet propensity adjustment so that results are representative of all adults and not just those who have access to the internet.

Following the base weight, the panel is calibrated to correct for differential participation along demographics such as age, race, sex, region, and education. Benchmark distributions are obtained from the most recently available data from sources such as the Current Population Survey (CPS), the American Community Survey (ACS), the Pew Research Center's National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS), and the Aristotle Registered Voter Database. Additionally, online panelists are known to be more civically engaged than the general population. To correct for this potential bias, we include volunteerism and interaction with neighbors in panel calibration. These benchmark distributions are derived from the Civic Engagement and Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey.

How is the SSRS Opinion Panel an improvement over opt-in Online Panels?

Most recent research suggests that probability samples provide the most accurate data. Surveys that utilize a probability sample combined with an opt-in sample are less accurate than surveys of full probability samples. Least accurate are surveys comprised entirely of opt-in panel sample. The SSRS Opinion Panel is a fully probability-based panel because it recruits randomly selected panelists from a probability-based sample source that reflects the U.S. adult population (ABS). Results obtained from this panel can statistically represent the target population with a known margin of error. Unlike typical opt-in panels, no one can "volunteer" to be part of the SSRS Opinion Panel. They must be selected randomly and invited to participate.

SSRS Opinion Panel Standard Deliverables

SSRS Opinion Panel standard deliverables include a weighted SPSS data file (with standard demographic variables) and an AAPOR compliant methods statement (with response rate calculations) provided after completion of all data collection and weighting. Upon request, we can also provide access to an online dashboard that provides near real-time project updates during data collection.

In addition to standard deliverables, our deliverables and other offered services are fully customizable to client needs.

[1]The Accuracy of Measurement with probability and non-probability survey samples by Bo MacInnis, Jon A. Krosnick, Annabell S. Ho, Mu-Jung Cho, POQ, Vol 82, No. 4, Winter 2018, pp. 707-744

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SSRS Opinion Panel Demographics

A battery of demographic and other questions is asked during the recruitment of panelists. These questions are stored securely and kept for identifying target respondents, used for weighting, and can be appended to study data to expand what is known about respondents. Demographics are typically not re-asked for every survey unless there is reason to believe that the data could have changed in a meaningful way. Available demographics are provided in the table below.

Standard Profile Variables^

Age

Gender

Education

Race/Ethnicity

Employment Status

Marital Status

Party Identification

Political Ideology

Voter Registration

Income

Home Ownership

Home Type

Internet Use Frequency

Household Size/Composition

Parental Status

Region (U.S. Census – 4 category)

Division (U.S. Census – 9 category)

State

Metro Status

DMA (Designated Market Area)

^Included in standard deliverables.

Custom Profile Variables*

Religion

Health Insurance Type

Disability/Handicap

Caretaker Status

Sexual Orientation

Detailed Hispanic Nativity

Work Travel Patterns

Work role/Purchasing power

Employer Size

Retirement Savings Type

Age of Children (Range)

Active Duty/Armed Forces Status

Gun Ownership

Internet Type

Zip code

Social Media Usage

*Available for an additional cost

Who do I contact to find out more about the SSRS Opinion Panel?

Further information about the SSRS Opinion Panel can be found at:

Panel Information

click here

ESOMAR 37 Questions

click here

SSRS is a proud member of the AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research) Transparency Initiative and therefore committed to complete transparency in our methods and reporting.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have and provide a quote for a study to meet your specific objectives.

Please contact us at: info@ssrs.com.

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