

ONLINE DATA COLLECTION

Robert W. Schaffer, CSPU, Pomona
Subasree Cidambi, Web Opinion Research

Data collection is the most difficult part of the research process for most faculty and student projects. Lacking a substantial research budget, many academic research projects utilize surrogate samples. For example, evening graduate students might be surrogates for business managers (some even are).

Unfortunately, these convenience samples often lack the demographic and geographic diversity to make meaningful conclusions about the research topic. If an international sample is desired, the process becomes even more problematic - are foreign students studying in the US good surrogates for their home country's citizens?

Online surveys have many advantages. They are extremely low cost and can often be fielded for free. World wide coverage is possible. There are no data input costs or errors as the data is stored in a database as it is collected. Considerable flexibility in design is possible making skip patterns transparent and experimental manipulation easy.

During our Contemporary Issues Session, we will discuss a variety of free services that let people field online surveys. Session participants will leave with a handout that compares and contrasts the various online research sites. In addition, we will present some suggestions for using these services successfully.

TOY OR TOOL? THE ROLE OF PDAs AND HANDHELD COMPUTERS IN BUSINESS AND IN THE MARKETING CLASSROOM

Natalie Lupton and Robert Lupton,
Central Washington University

Everywhere we look we see personal digital assistants (PDAs) and handheld devices on the electronics market. As technology savvy business faculty we wonder how can use these devices to assist us in classroom management and student assessment. Can these devices assist faculty in time management, organization, and assessment? If so, how and where do we start? This presentation offers information about the role of PDAs and handheld computers in classroom

management and assessment; the practical uses of the devices by faculty; the advantages and disadvantages of the technology application, and finally how to choose the PDA or handheld that is right for you.

CROSSING THE LINE: EASE VS. LEARNING

Kenneth J. Chapman, CSU, Chico

Given the ease of posting notes, handouts, articles, etc. on the web, the question arises "Just what should we be giving them?" Is it appropriate to give students Power Point slides? The "notetaking" literature suggests perhaps not. When discussing a topic in class, should the best links and best articles be readily available on the professor's website or would it be better to have the students search out the material? In many cases I have found that in fact, having students do the search on their own, even if they come up with "bad" information, is a better learning process. When students realize that what they collected was perhaps not the greatest information, is a key learning moment.