

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

NOAA AWARENESS STUDY

OMB CONTROL NO.: 0648-xxxx

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Data on the number of entities in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The potential respondent universe is the total population of the U.S who currently has internet access. There are, according to a 2006 nation-wide Harris Interactive study, approximately 172 million Americans online. The research sample will be purchased from one of many firms specializing in extracting online email records, such as American Business Information, Donnelley Marketing/American Consumer Lists, Hugo Dunhill Mailing Lists, and Experian. Hard census-based quotas will be set so that our collective pool is reflective of a convenience sample of the broader U.S. population, but note, it will not be representative.

After reviewing refusal rates across hundreds of Kelton Research studies, online statistics, and other available research data, the research firm finds that refusal rates for marketing research studies typically run between 20%-50% depending on the nature and timing of the project. We will continue the interview process until we have the required number of interviews. All interview attempts will be among individuals within the specifications for that given phase.

In order to find the most articulate and insightful respondents for the qualitative component, the research firm uses its proprietary StreetSmart research team to recruit respondents online, via telephone and in-person. It uses tiered recruit screening criteria to ensure the most accurate, reliable and knowledgeable participants. Respondents are selected to participate based on multiple demographic and psycho-graphic criteria. For NOAA, this would include, but not be limited to: age, gender, income, interest in earth sciences, and self-reported knowledge of earth science related issues. The sample will not be representative of the target audiences.

Respondents for the Focus Groups are sent lobby exercises prior to each session to further test for quality and ensure we interview a pool of articulate and engaged participants. The research firm's principals speak with every focus group participant on check-in to confirm their information is correct and make sure they are representing themselves accurately. Participants are paid \$50.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including: a. Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection, b. Estimation procedures, c. Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification, d. Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burdens.

Proprietary emailing software is used to invite each survey respondent to participate in the study. Respondents will be selected using screening criteria at the beginning of each survey to ensure that we are only interviewing the correct respondent types for each subgroup. Hard quotas are programmed into the online survey logic to ensure that respondent data reflects available U.S. census information for each relevant audience. Completion times are monitored to ensure that each respondent is accurately taking the study and not simply clicking through to the end.

Upon completion, all data is collected into a proprietary database system where results are processed and monitored. All fieldwork, processing, and analysis of results are conducted internally to ensure complete data integrity and security. The research firm employs a variety of analytical tools in each deliverable, including but not limited to drivers analysis, correlation and regression analysis, t-testing, and cross-tabular analysis.

The research firm does not anticipate any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures nor the use of any periodic data collection cycles to reduce burdens.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield “reliable” data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Respondents are immediately notified that the online survey is for a national market research study on current social issues in our society, and that they will remain anonymous and not be held accountable for their views. They are additionally assured that they are not being solicited to try or use any product or service.

Surveys are distributed electronically from a secure central location. Distribution is computerized, so that all contacts are automatically verified and classified. Additionally, supervisory personnel are monitoring electronic responses for validation and other aspects of quality control.

Multiple respondents can connect simultaneously to the online survey, and any respondents who are unwilling to participate or do not qualify for the survey are automatically thanked for their time and opinions and then terminated.

Non-respondents will be sent two reminder emails informing them that the survey is still ongoing and that their feedback is still desired. Because the survey is relatively brief and has been carefully designed using input from qualitative sessions and pre-survey testing of our key audience groups, respondent fatigue is minimized.

This collection is not based on sampling, other than convenience sampling reflective of different segments of the public, and we are making no claims that the results can be generalized to the public.

4. Describe any tests or procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Detailed survey designing software ensures that all appropriate questions are asked, and that any skip patterns are followed. The online surveys are carefully crafted and tested to ensure that administration is consistent from interview to interview. Any interview found for any reason not to be completed to standards will be terminated and replaced by another suitable respondent with identical demographic characteristics.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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