National Endowment for the Arts
How the Arts Affect Audiences – Pilot Study

Data Collection Guidelines:
Intercept Methodology for Online Survey Administration

Background of the Study

In October 2010, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) released a strategic plan establishing a new set of goals, outcomes, and performance measures for the Agency. Under the plan, a critical NEA goal is to "engage the public with diverse and excellent art" so that three specific outcomes are achieved. The first outcome is that "Americans throughout the Nation Experience Art."

To track its performance in achieving this outcome, the NEA will conduct a survey of audiences at NEA- funded arts events nationwide. The survey will allow the NEA to measure the percentage of audiences "affected" by attendance at NEA-funded projects.

The rationale for this measure is simple: individual encounters with art can prove transformative. As NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman has stated: "Art works on and within people to change and inspire them; it addresses the need people have to create, to imagine, to aspire to something more." As a partial measure of its success, the Agency plans to gauge the quality, depth, and nature of audience responses to NEA- funded projects.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate essential information to participating grantees, including instructions for creating a sampling plan, and guidelines for surveying audiences that will maximize the probability of successful data collection efforts. WolfBrown (www.wolfbrown.com) prepared these guidelines for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Overview

This survey approach encompasses two phases of data collection: 1) collecting email addresses from patrons who visit the specific exhibition/event of interest, and 2) administering an online survey.

1) Collecting email addresses from patrons
For the collection of email addresses, at least three survey workers will be stationed at the exhibition/event's exit. To solicit a random sample of email addresses, staff will count each person who walks through the "counting area" – an area demarcated with landmarks, such as

doors or an imaginary line near where staff is stationed. Survey workers will stop every "Nth" adult (aged 18+) who walks past the line and ask him/her to provide an email address so that you may send them an online survey - "Nth" stands for the number by which you count patrons in order to identify those who approached for their email addresses (e.g. every 3rd person).

Important notes about random selection:

- The counting plan (counting every "Nth" visitor) of adults who walk past the "counting area" may need to be adjusted, meaning to increase or decrease "N", during the fielding session depending on foot traffic. You may shift the count based on how crowded the museum is at a given time, but this shifting should be done at maximum once a day, and with sound justification (i.e., the counting plan should not be changed only to speed up survey collection). Any shift in the counting plan must be reported (see Reporting Requirements). Initial "N" will be determined in consultation with WolfBrown liaison, depending on the time of day and scale and scope of exhibition (e.g., traffic over the weekend will be higher so "N" will be higher).
- Count all adults (aged 18+) whether they are in groups, couples, or alone
- Always exclude – from both counting and intercepting – anyone under 18. If in doubt about whether the person is age 18+, either ask or err on the side of caution (e.g., assume they aren't an adult and move onto the next person)
- INCLUDE in counting but EXCLUDE from intercepting for an email address:
  - Leaders of group tours
  - Museum employees or volunteers
  - School groups
- Only select one member of each visiting party to be asked to provide their email. If the next "Nth" person is in the same party/group, begin counting again until you get someone not affiliated with that party/group
- Do not allow anyone not selected to provide their email address.
  - If a selected visitor refuses but says "My wife will give you hers" (or something similar), explain that following a random sample is crucial to the validity of our study. Encourage the selected visitor again to provide their email, but if s/he still does not want to, say thank you and move on and begin counting again
  - If someone approaches you wanting to provide their email when they have NOT been randomly intercepted, explain that we are taking a random sample of visitors for the survey
- Visitors must have been inside the exhibition/event for an appropriate amount of time (at least five to 10 minutes, depending on the scale and scope of the exhibition) to complete the survey

Intercept Script

When intercepting visitors, we suggest the following language:

> *"Hello, we are conducting a very important online survey for the National Endowment for the Arts on how the arts affect audiences. Would you be willing to provide us with your email address so that we may send you a link to the online survey? Your email address will not be used for any other purpose."*

IF "NO" OR RESISTANT, politely press for participation using these points:

- The survey is very important – it will help us to better understand how our work affects you
- We need to get a representative sample of our visitors. Because we are only collecting emails on certain days, you represent the many other visitors who will come on a day when we're not here
- It is completely confidential and anonymous, and your email will not be used for any marketing or fundraising purposes

Once audience member [visitor] agrees to provide their email, thank the audience member [visitor] for participating in the survey effort, and hand them a clipboard for them to write down their email. Please ask that they write legibly so that you can transcribe later.

When interacting with audience members, remember to always be professional and polite (but not "chatty" or a "friend").

2) Administering an online survey

The second phase of this survey methodology is to email an invitation, with a survey link, to all those for whom you collected email addresses on the <u>same day</u> you collect their email addresses. In other words, if you collect their email address on a Tuesday afternoon, you will send the email that evening. WolfBrown will provide the survey link and the language for the email invitation for you. An example of the email language follows:

Subject Line: Please Share Your Feedback on Today's [Event/Exhibit] of [Program Name]

Dear Patron,
Your feedback on today's [Event/Exhibit] would be very helpful to the National Endowment for the Arts. Please complete the survey as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours afterwards, while the memory is still fresh. Your feedback helps us understand the affect of our work on stage. Please be as candid as possible. Your answers are anonymous and confidential.

To take the survey, click here. [hyperlink] or paste this link into your browser:
[insert full survey URL here, in case people receive their email in text-only format and the hyperlink is not active].

Thank you for your cooperation.
Rocco Landesman
Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts

Staffing Requirements & Responsibilities

A team of at least three is needed. Two of the team members are responsible for identifying and intercepting every "Nth" person. They will also be the ones to gather email addresses. A third worker will count the number of men and the number of women who exit the exhibit.

You will designate one person as the survey captain who is responsible for:
- Conferring with WolfBrown on the best location to intercept patrons
- Gathering and preparing all needed materials (see Materials Checklist)

- Coordinating with on-site staff (e.g., security, front of house) that you will be administering the survey and inform them of the plans (ex. how long, where, etc.)
- Assigning roles to survey workers (see description above)
- Ensuring that counts are taken of a) the number of refusals and b) the number of men and the number of women exiting the exhibition
- Identifying your survey area with a large sign and wear "Survey Researcher" badge
- Overseeing the typing up of email addresses and sending out the survey link on the same day as email collection
- Printing out an Administrative Sheet to write on during the survey administration (see Reporting Requirements)
- Submitting online Reporting Requirements (see Reporting Requirements)

Materials Checklist

The grantee is responsible for providing all materials listed below, except where specified.
1. Large sign identifying survey area ("NEA Survey Today – Tell Us What You Thought of the Exhibition!")
2. Badges for survey workers ("Survey Researcher" and Name)
3. Clipboards and pens
4. Email collection sheet (provided electronically by WolfBrown) for printing

Reporting Requirements

After the survey administration, please submit the following information using the online reporting system:
1. Name of exhibit [event]
2. Date of surveying
3. Start & End times of surveying for each date
4. Number of men and the number of women exiting the exhibition
5. Total number of people intercepted (Number of emails collected + Number of refusals)
6. Number of refusals (and specifically, number of males and females)
7. Number of usable/legible email addresses (and specifically, number of males and females)
8. Notes about survey experience for each date (e.g. changes in counting approach, questions people had, anything notable or out of the ordinary that could affect that data)
9. If possible, the open and click rates of emails (if email system allows)