

Overall Comment on Providing Incentives for Participation in Marketing Research.

The research in this package is marketing research, designed for fast turn-around to inform key Agency communication decisions. Providing incentives for participation in social research is not uncommon and is being used increasingly as one component of improving overall response rates and reducing non-response bias (see, e.g., Massey & Tourangeau, 2013; Singer & Ye, 2013) even in academic and government-sponsored social research. In the marketing research arena, providing participant incentives is a well-established and accepted standard practice in the healthcare industry. Appropriate incentives are viewed as an important tool in the successful completion of these marketing research studies. In our experience, in order to achieve a representative sample of required participants in a timely and cost-effective manner, projects must provide incentives at levels that attract, retain, and adequately compensate respondents for their time and effort. This is especially true of populations that are hard to reach or hard to engage. The use of incentives to bolster participation applies to both survey and qualitative research. Indeed, incentives improve the quality and efficiency of research in a number of ways, including reducing non-response bias, improving participation by those in hard-to-reach groups, and increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of research (e.g., David & Ware, 2014; Singer & Ye, 2013; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015).

Many marketing research firms have recognized this need and developed participant panels that can provide a sampling source for thematically and methodologically diverse studies. In contrast to ad hoc recruitment, use of such panels can significantly reduce the costs associated with locating appropriate respondents and ensure their immediate availability. Economic and research success with panels is strongly linked with screening, segmentation, and motivational issues which assure panelist availability. Appropriate incentives play a key role in these efforts. As such, we use the government-wide incentive rate of \$75 for a 90-minute focus group and \$40 for a 60-minute interview.

References

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