



INSIGHTS

Insights is a quarterly publication of Multicultural Insights

THIRD QUARTER 2004

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

Dear Colleagues:

It has been a busy inaugural year for Multicultural Insights. Our success in the first year of business has exceeded our goals and expectations. We want to thank and acknowledge our clients for their partnership.

In this issue of *Insights* we share with you some thoughts on the business of multicultural research with articles on choosing a multi-ethnic research vendor and on writing the best questionnaires possible. While delivering top-notch research and analytics, we are also building long term business relationships that will create deeper understanding and more focused research findings in the future. With the help of our clients we have uncovered and developed newer and more insightful findings on the multicultural research marketplace in 2004. Our everyday approach to research is to give you value added data, results and service above and beyond what is expected.

We would enjoy hearing from you on our newsletter and our comprehensive website, or talking about your next research project. Or, if you'd like, you can simply tell us about your kids, your pets or show us your latest vacation cruise photos.

Muchas Gracias!

The Multicultural Insights Team



IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Fielding Ethnic Research? The Success is in the Details!**
- **Right Questions: Proper Questionnaire Writing for Optimal Results in Research**
- **Hispanic Heritage Month: Hispanic Census Data**
- **Multicultural I.Q. Test**

Fielding Ethnic Research? The Success is in the Details!

By Sylvia Nieto-Vidal

As the U.S. marketplace continues to realize the value and importance of the ethnic markets, we are seeing an increasing number of research firms offering multicultural research services. **Buyer Beware!** Before you select a research partner to conduct research for you in the multicultural marketplace you need to make sure they know the nuances of fielding these projects.

Several market research firms are opening up "ethnic" divi-

sions by hiring one or two multicultural employees to head up their efforts. Keep in mind while a research agency may be top-notch in conducting your general market research projects this does not qualify them for superior performance in handling multicultural research. There are many important operational details that are important and that come with years of experience in intercepting, telephoning and speaking with these multicultural consumers.

Designing the Questionnaire. While many of the same components go into designing a questionnaire for a multicultural project as well as for a general market study, it is important that the research firm be aware of how to define your multicultural target and be aware of the nuances that apply to these segments. Not all consumers process and understand information in the same way, for example, some multi-

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

cultural consumers tend to be more literal in their interpretation of copy and advertising. If a concept test or copy test is being conducted this needs to be taken into account when designing the battery of questions and appropriate probes.

Sampling Plan. Let's assume the methodology and questionnaire have been designed and finalized for a telephone study and it is now time to field your multicultural research project. What is the sampling plan for this project? How is your research partner insuring that your sample is random and representative of this multicultural segment? A surname telephone sample is not always appropriate. Density-based samples may not always be the best method to reach this target and truly meet your objectives. Random Digit Dialing can be expensive when researching the multicultural segments.

Questionnaire Translation. Many researchers conducting multicultural research for the first time may not give much thought to the translation of the survey instrument. This is a mistake! Questionnaire

translation is a crucial step in making sure that the data you are receiving at the end of the study truly is what you had intended. Numerous times the meaning of questions is altered during this process and when results are presented, the data might be misleading. The implications of such an error can have a tremendous impact on advertising and marketing decisions for your product or service. If the consumer does not understand what you are asking or misinterprets the questions being posed, then in the final analysis your data is skewed and your marketing efforts may be misguided.

"Numerous times the meaning of questions is altered during this process and when results are presented, the data does not 'truly' reflect what the client is hearing."

Another important point to keep in mind when administering bilingual questionnaires is that both languages should appear on one survey instrument. This will prevent interviewers from making impromptu translations of questions which the respondent may not understand in one language. Clarification can be provided by simply

reading the same question in the second language.



Interviewing. Once the field briefings begin clients do not truly get re-involved until the field is completed. It is important during this phase of the research that your research firm uses interviewers that are trained and experienced in researching the multicultural segment you are trying to reach. Using interviewers being of the same ethnicity or from the same country of origin may not suffice. During field briefings it is crucial that the cultural idiosyncrasies of the questionnaire be communicated to your data collection team. In some cases, multiple translations or various pronunciations of the same words can be provided to interviewers as a separate help sheet to assist them in the interviewing process.

Coding. Open-ends are common in most questionnaires. Regardless of the segment being interviewed the response must be recorded verbatim. In multicultural research this would mean in the language used by the respondent. Many research firms leave the translation of open-ended responses to their interviewers. While this may be a timesaving step, since interviewers are not trained translators, you run the risk of respondent feedback being altered and skewed. Code lists should either be developed in the language stated by the respondents or developed once all open-end responses have been properly translated. This is yet another safeguard in insuring that the meaning of responses is not altered during the process.

These are just a few things that you should keep in mind when conducting multicultural research. Use a multicultural research firm that knows these and the many more design and execution details that will insure that your multicultural research is a success. ■

Hispanic Heritage Month

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

In 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim a week in September as National Hispanic Heritage Week. The observance was expanded in 1988 to a month long celebration (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15). During this month, America celebrates the culture and traditions of U.S. residents who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central

America, South America and the Caribbean. Sept. 15 was chosen as the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries — Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively.

Population 39.9 million. The estimated Hispanic population

of the United States as of July 1, 2003, making people of Hispanic origin the nation's largest race or ethnic minority. Hispanics constitute 13.7 percent of the nation's total population. (This estimate does not include the 3.9 million residents of Puerto Rico.)

102.6 million. The projected Hispanic population of the United States as of July 1,



68% of Hispanic families consist of married couples.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

2050. According to this projection, Hispanics would constitute 24 percent of the nation's total population on that date.

Nearly 67 million. The number of people of Hispanic origin who would have been added to the nation's population between 2000 and 2050, according to this projection. The projected percentage increase — 188 percent — would amount to a near tripling.

67%. The proportion of Hispanic-origin people who are of Mexican background. Of the remainder, 14 percent are of Central and South American backgrounds, 9 percent Puerto Rican, 4 percent Cuban and 7 percent other Hispanic origins.

50%. The percentage of the Hispanic-origin population that lives in California and Texas. California is home to 11.9 million Hispanics and Texas to 7.3 million. More than 3-in-4 Hispanics live in seven states, which have Hispanic populations of 1 million or more. They are California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Arizona and New Jersey.

43%. The proportion of New Mexico's population that is Hispanic, highest of any state. California and Texas were next, at 34 percent each.

Families 8.5 million. The number of Hispanic families who reside in the United States. Of these families, 63 percent include their own children under 18 years old.

68%. The percentage of Hispanic families consisting of a married couple.

44%. The percentage of Hispanic families consisting of a married couple with children under 18.

Spanish Language 29 million. The number of U.S. residents age 5 and older who speak Spanish at home. Spanish speakers constitute a ratio of more than 1-in-10 U.S. residents. Among all those who speak Spanish at home, more than one-half say they speak English "very well."

Coming to America 40%. The percentage of the Hispanic population that was foreign-born in 2002. Among the foreign-born Hispanic population that year, 52 percent entered the United States between 1990 and 2002.

61%. The percentage of Hispanic children with at least one foreign-born parent.



9.9 million. The number of foreign-born people in 2002 who were born in Mexico, by far more than any other Latin American country or any other country in the world for that matter. Other Latin American countries of origin with more than half a million foreign-born were Cuba (887,000), El Salvador (873,000), the Dominican Republic (654,000), Colombia (566,000) and Guatemala (511,000). Overall, there are 17.3 million foreign-born people from Latin American countries.

Income and Poverty \$33,103. The real median

income of Hispanic households in 2002, down 2.9 percent from the previous year.

21.8%. The poverty rate among Hispanics in 2002, unchanged from 2001.

Education 57%. The percentage of Hispanics 25 and over who had at least a high school education in 2003, up from 53 percent a decade earlier.

11%. The percentage of the Hispanic population 25 and over with a bachelor's degree or higher in 2003, up from 9 percent a decade earlier.

Native residents of Hispanic origin had much higher high-school completion rates (74 percent) and college completion rates (14 percent) in 2003 than their foreign-born counterparts (45 percent and 10 percent, respectively).

2.6 million. The number of Hispanics 18 and over who have at least a bachelor's degree. This is more than double the number in 1990 (1.1 million).

Jobs 36,200. The number of Hispanic physicians and surgeons. Latinos are represented in a wide variety of occupations. For instance, there are about 51,400 Hispanic postsecondary teachers; 34,700 chief executives of businesses; 28,600 lawyers; 5,400 news analysts, reporters and correspondents; and 650 legislators.

22%. The percentage of Hispanics who work in service occupations. Another 21 percent work as operators and laborers and 14 percent in managerial and professional occupations. The percentages of Hispanics working in service occupations as

operators and laborers were not statistically different.

Proud to Serve 1.1 million. The number of Latino veterans of the U.S. armed forces. About 63,000 Hispanic-origin people were on active duty in 2002 in the United States. ■



ABOUT US....

Multicultural Insights is a full service qualitative and quantitative research firm specializing in U.S. multicultural markets, Latin America, and specialized segments. Multicultural Insights is a minority, woman-owned business enterprise.

We assist companies of all sizes marketing to multicultural segments through research, advanced analytics, thought leadership, and data collection as they pertain to niche segments including Hispanics, African Americans, Senior Markets and Teens segments.

Contact us
at
305-445-2211

Right Questions: Proper Questionnaire Writing for Optimal Results in Research

by Kyle Langley, Ph.D.

“Ask a stupid question, get a stupid answer.” “Garbage in, garbage out.” There are many old adages that apply to what can happen with data and information when the inputs and outcomes are less than optimal. The same goes for research queries, and even today, often much is left to be desired when it comes to questions and questionnaires in data gathering.

The desired outcomes in research depend on insight and analysis, but *always* begin with questions. Not just questions, but the right questions. Sometimes data is unattainable at the end of a research project simply because key inputs were eliminated due to time constraints, budget restrictions or were left out because of poor analytic planning. Not only can bad questions leave a client or company without valuable and much-needed data, poorly worded questions can also bias outcomes. Bias is much worse, especially when it may not be readily apparent.

Dr. Michael Singletary of the University of Tennessee, writes in *Mass Communications Research* that “questionnaires must be written to accomplish three objectives: comprehension, accuracy and completion.” There are a lot of things that can get in the way of achieving these three goals.

Before discussing some of the mistakes made when questionnaires are written, some background on why poorly written questions enter into expensive research projects is in order.

Lack of preparation and proofing: Many sets of eyes need to review a questionnaire prior to field. Everyone from the client to the chief analyst should review the questionnaire to determine that necessary inputs are there and that the inputs are worded correctly. The client *must* ensure that all questions are entered to deliver desired outcomes while the analyst has to ensure necessary questions are included to get at all of the requested analysis. Certain advanced analytics require specific inputs and without

them optimum analysis cannot be performed.

Too many chefs: The old saying about “too many chefs spoil the broth” is applicable here. Often times too many personnel are in the mix when it comes to a questionnaire’s design. If an advertising agency is involved, it could mean the client, the agency and the research company are all involved. And, many times changes are made for reasons not focused on sound research such as “just because they can” or “justifying their position.” To make it easier, a key experienced researcher should be identified. This researcher has final authority to approve the questionnaire. During the evolution of the project all changes and additional inputs should be tracked and recorded.

Dr. Michael Singletary of the University of Tennessee, writes in Mass Communications Research that “questionnaires must be written to accomplish three objectives: comprehension, accuracy and completion.”

Lack of experience: Too often younger research associates are put in charge of questionnaire writing and preparation. While not at all a bad idea to help them grow in their careers and knowledge, in no way should a junior researcher or a junior account planner have the final say on questionnaire design and approval.

Rushing: Many times research is a fast turn around – although not nearly as much in quantitative research. Quantitative projects are almost always longer in planning and preparation. Often at the end of budgetary years there can be a last minute rush to spend money so it is not lost. This is where problems can arise. Don’t rush and beware of the other stumbling blocks mentioned here that can cause multiple problems. Research money is a much-valued commodity. Don’t blow the project because the process got in too big of a hurry.

Big egos: Unfortunately, there are people in all businesses who change things only because they can. In the research business changes are often made to

questionnaires with no methodological justification. Don’t be afraid to step up and make the right facts known on how a specifically worded question will affect the overall plan. With hierarchy being what it is within companies, create a checks and balances system among client, agency and research vendor.

Leaving it all to the Research Company:

While your research vendor should know all of the intricacies to questionnaire development, leaving it all to them is a bad idea. While they may get wording and methodological precision down, standing alone and without clear objectives, they usually have no idea of the exact outcomes that are priority and that includes cutting a questionnaire down if it is too long. A well-coordinated effort should be implemented in designing a project questionnaire and the top goals and priorities identified and continually discussed among all parties during the genesis of design and execution of a project.

Ulterior motives: This should not be a problem in “regular” research, but it can be problematic with political research of any kind. Ulterior motives not only cover the macro-idea of getting the results YOU want to see, but it can be done in many ways both on purpose and accidental, and many of those ways are discussed in the next section.

So, now you’ve got your team coordinated, your goals set and you know what you want to find out of the project. Easy, right? Well, seemingly it should be, but a lot of mistakes are made in the actual execution of the survey instrument. Some of the most common questionnaire mistakes involve the following:

Either/Or Questions: The either/or query is just that. It asks respondents to identify some aspect of a question by giving them an either/or opportunity. While this may sound fine it often is not. For example and simplicity, asking a respondent if their favorite color is blue or green is not helpful and can skew data because the execution was biased from the start. Their favorite color may, in fact, be red. Political groups with a partisan agenda use this method many times. Example: Would you describe Bill Clinton as an adulterer or a crook? He may be neither or both, but an unsuspecting public may give unscrupulous or unknowing researchers the an-

(Continued from page 4)

swer they sought out in the first place. More often than not it is just a poorly written question, which leaves respondents with no way out. At first appearance of an either/or question, ask yourself if an open-ended question might be more appropriate?

Double-Barreled Questions: Double-barreled questions also often leave the respondent with no way out. An example is “Do you think your boss is friendly and fair?” The boss may in fact be both, but he or she could be only one or the other or neither, which forces the respondent into an uncomfortable situation. To think that the two concepts are related in some way could be trouble. Singletary suggests that the question writer and reviewers should always put themselves in the place of the respondent as the survey instrument is designed and finalized. It goes without saying that all questionnaires should be tested for time, sequence and clarity before field operations commence. If you are doing cultural in-language research the questionnaire should also be back translated with native speakers to make sure nuances and translations are clear and correct.



Future Intent/Usage Questions: Some future intent questions are workable such as “What is the likelihood you will purchase a new car in the next 12 months?” But often, companies seeking more precise measures of profit potential seek to answer questions that can skew data and make it unbelievable. For example, a question that may be a stretch is “How much do think you will spend on men’s underwear in the next 12-months?” Does anyone really know the answer to this question? In our experience, even among those who think they know, big differences exist among cultural segments, with some tending to exaggerate on future purchase intent. A way to get a more potentially accurate answer is to base future numbers

on past 12-month purchases within certain vertical product segments. With consumer products and goods, purchase cycles are more often and consistent than with large purchases such as houses and cars. One would hope that, on average, underwear purchases are happening far more often and consistently than new car purchases. Deeply delving into future purchase intent can be a slippery slope so navigate with caution and be clear and conservative on financial potential.

Scales Usage Questions: Scales are a valuable part of research but should be designed with expertise and never overused. It is well known that different cultural segments use and understand scales in different ways. Hispanics tend to over rate while some Anglos and Europeans will give only average scores for something they rate highly. While this is better left to an entire essay on understanding scales usage among cultural segments, it has clearly been supported that using varying scales, 1-10, 1-7 and 1-5 along with rotation of inputs will keep respondents from getting overloaded and simply falling into a pattern of responses. Something known as minimum response options is also a part of this equation. Never overload with response options which may cause the respondent to tune out. When using agreement scales try to keep it to no more than four or five options – Excellent, good, fair, poor – or, Very much agree, somewhat agree, disagree, very much disagree, no opinion.

Hypothetical Questions: Hypothetical questions are just that: hypothetical. While these questions are often used in research, using their results to build business models and make business decisions can be problematic. Why? Attitudes do not always match behaviors. An example would be to ask respondents “If car maker X offered a six-door pickup truck would you be likely to buy one?” What does the vehicle look like? How much does it cost and on and on? If the respondent is a fan of carmaker X or a pick-up truck owner they may say yes, but would never have any intent of purchasing the vehicle in question once they saw it. Getting at accurate research answers can be done in better ways than using hypothetical situations in quantitative research (i.e. qualitative research).

Negatively Phrased/Double Negative Questions: One might be surprised that so many negatively worded questions are included in questionnaires. “Would it not be fair to say

this is untrue?” If you had stop and think about that question imagine being on the phone and having to think something like that through. Imagine how such questions can take up valuable time in questionnaire completion. Converse and Presser (1986) identified many words and phrases that can wreak havoc by using what they call implicit negatives. Implicit negatives are words and phrases that seem to have meaning beyond their face value. Be careful with using negatives and don’t assume that a mirror positive version is a true opposite. Stay away from negative words like “not”, “forbid” and the like.

It is well known that different cultural segments use and understand scales in different ways. Hispanics tend to over rate while some Anglos and Europeans will give only average scores for something they rate highly.

Leading Questions: This example is seen more often in partisan political research. Setting the respondent up with leading information in advance of the question is bad research. “The media has really been down on George Bush because of Iraq, would you agree he is not doing a good job on Iraq policy?” If you don’t believe such questions are asked, simply read the inputs into many of the political polls that are published in print and online. The reputable political research companies usually avoid such bias, but it occasionally can be seen in consumer research as well. Don’t lead. Just ask a simple straightforward question.

While there are many more examples, the above-mentioned are the most common areas where bad questionnaire design and execution can cause trouble during the entire research process. One thing to keep in mind is “**keep it simple**”. It may sound cliché, but it is true. Keep it simple and understand the ideas and concepts discussed in this article. By doing so, one can accomplish what the research questionnaire is all about: comprehension, accuracy and completion. This in turn produces quality data for the creation of valuable analytics. Success at comprehension, accuracy and completion most always equals happy agencies and happy clients. ■

Test Your Multicultural I.Q.

If you are involved in any type of marketing communications for a product or service, you should be aware of your multicultural IQ - and that of your company. While some companies have gained genius status in marketing to cultural and niche segments, many need more education. The following test will let you know where you and/or your company stand. Once you know where you are on the multicultural genius scale, you can take the appropriate approaches to specialized research in cultural markets.

- African American, Hispanic and Asian markets combine for what amount of total spending each year?
 - More than one billion
 - More than one trillion
 - More than one zillion
- What level is the Hispanic population projected to reach by 2020?
 - 75 million
 - 85 million
 - 100 million
- What percent of married African American households have an income of \$50,000 plus?
 - 25%
 - 50%
 - 75%
- Which major American television network owns the major Spanish-language network Telemundo?
 - CBS
 - ABC
 - NBC
- When it comes to advertising likes and needs, Anglos are most like which group in their attitudes and opinions?
 - African Americans
 - Hispanics
 - Asians
- Of Hispanics living in the United States, which two countries are most represented according to the Census?
 - Mexican and Cuban
 - Mexican and Puerto Rico
 - Mexican and Colombian
- What percentage of those living in the United States speak a foreign language at home?
 - 1 in 5
 - 1 in 10
 - 1 in 8
- The best way to reach Hispanics is with a "one size fits all" approach such as a national ad campaign with a single, focused message?
 - True
 - False
- Minority-owned businesses grew at what rate as compared to the national average during the 1990s?
 - Two times faster
 - Four times faster
 - Three times faster



If you wish to get the results of your Multicultural I.Q. test, take the test on our website at:

www.multicultural-insights.com

Multicultural Insights

Full-Service Research for Specialized Markets

4000 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Suite 470
Coral Gables, FL 33146
Tel: 305-445-2211
Fax: 305-777-0201
info@multicultural-insights.com



Sylvia Nieto-Vidal
Managing Partner, Operations

Kyle Langley, Ph.D.
Managing Partner, Research & Analytics

Marlise Rojas
Managing Partner, Project Mgt.

Rose Becker
Managing Partner, Data Management

Jacqueline Sanchez-Volny
Qualitative Director

©Multicultural Insights. All rights reserved. Material from this publication may not be reproduced in any form without written permission from Multicultural Insights. All inquiries regarding permission, subscription and advertising are to be directed to Multicultural Insights.