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EXPLORING WEB SURVEY PARADATA TO IMPROVE SURVEY DESIGN

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Abstract

At Statistics Canada, electronic questionnaires (web questionnaires or e-questionnaires -EQ) have long been recognized as very important reporting options for survey collection. Various electronic data reporting tools have been explored over the last 20 years. Statistics Canada (STC) has continued its attempts to develop an effective and efficient e-questionnaire solution that will meet respondent expectations, comply with Statistics Canada requirements for confidentiality, security and data quality standards, and comply with Government of Canada requirements for accessibility and common look and feel.

The key drivers for moving to web-based questionnaires were:

- Requests from respondents to provide an electronic means for reporting their data;
- Provide a secure, convenient and simple means to respond to our surveys;
- Reduce respondent burden and help counteract anticipated declining response rates;
- Reduce costs by reducing mail, data capture and follow-up collection costs.

This presentation will examine paradata generated by the electronic questionnaire to mine for lessons that can be learned by survey design teams. For example, do new businesses in the sample spend more time on certain pages than respondents who have been in the survey for longer periods? Are help pages accessed by respondents as they progress through the questionnaire? What devices are businesses using? Does the device use frequency change according to the survey complexity?

The presentation will examine paradata from a range of web-based business surveys ranging from mission critical monthly surveys, to longer, more complex, quarterly surveys.