

**Toluna**<sup>TM</sup> 

# Esomar 26

26 questions to help  
research buyers of online samples





## Company Profile

Q1. What experience does your company have with providing online samples for market research?

Founded in 2000, Toluna has always been at the forefront of online panel development.

Considered by most as the original creator

of the panel 'community' concept, Toluna launched its first panel community in France during 2000, with its first web 2.0 portals being rolled out from 2007. Toluna now has a unique panel community network of over 2.4 million members across 30 countries and provides online sample, survey programming and its hosted panel community management platform (PanelPortal) to research professionals in over 700 organisations throughout 5 continents.

In 2008, Toluna welcomed Common Knowledge Research Services into the group – complementing our traditional strengths in Europe and Asia Pacific with solid online sample capability in the US and Canada. Common Knowledge has been serving the marketing research community since 1988 and has itself operated online samples for market research since 1997.

Currently, Toluna fields more than 1,000 B2C and B2B projects each month, many of which are fielded across multiple countries.

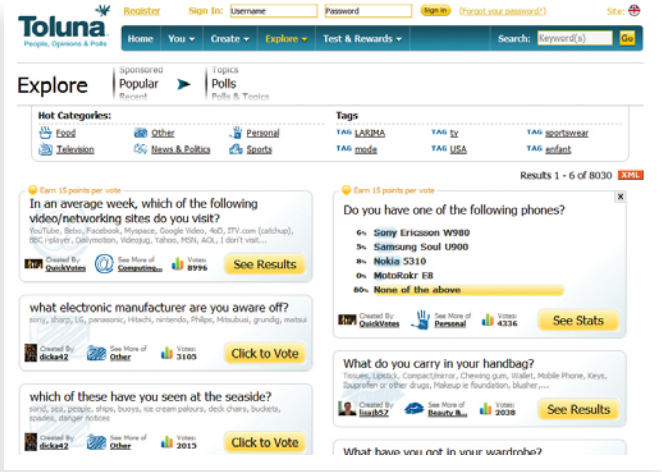
## Sample Source

All of Toluna's 30 proprietary panel communities around the world are actively managed panels.

Our dedicated media planning team manage the entire recruitment process and utilise such methods as banners, referrals, pay per click, natural search optimisation, affiliate marketing, email, and online PR.

Specifically for qualified B2B professionals, Toluna has media agreements with some of the leading publishers of professional titles. For example, Toluna has an exclusive partnership with Incisive Media to utilise their subscription readership across multiple titles in IT, Finance, Accountancy and Risk Management sectors. As an example, these are recruited both on and offline into a dedicated community of business professionals [www.incisiveopinion.co.uk](http://www.incisiveopinion.co.uk).

Members are recruited from a broad array of online and offline approaches that best represent the online community as a whole in each country – the example screen shot below is from the UK.



Unlike other online panels, Toluna has embraced the social media concept and has developed 'panel communities', in order to maximise member engagement and overcome the continual industry problem of declining survey response rates and multi-panel membership. Toluna has launched [toluna.com](http://toluna.com), its 'social voting community', where members can create their own polls or debates for other members to answer and contribute towards.

As part of a continual 'engagement strategy', which focuses on improving and adding value to the panellists online experience, the community regularly deploys new features such as video polling, opinion authority ratings for members and personal profile pages. Since the launch of our social voting communities in Europe we have seen tremendous growth in the number of 'organic registrations'. Many new members are being attracted to the communities because of the unique value that they provide; see Q3 for more information

Through our panels we offer a tremendous advantage with our community approach that maximises respondent

engagement. Today's online consumer audience is fast becoming saturated with survey invitation emails. By focussing on increasing member engagement via the use of the social media concept, Toluna can generate higher than industry standard response rates and improve data reliability for marketing decision support.

Additionally, we believe that the people running our panel have a wealth of experience gained either from themselves having been researchers (so that we speak your language), or because of their specific online community expertise. Toluna prides itself with the integrity, experience and practices of the panel team, ensuring that our panels are operated to provide you with confidence and satisfaction

Toluna's focus on maximising member engagement achieves several critical objectives:

As an online community member, individuals enjoy a 'social reward' of interaction and communication on portals such as [www.toluna.com](http://www.toluna.com). Our panellists are empowered to conduct their own polls and debates, rate others opinions and set up their own community profile pages. An illustration of their levels of engagement is that they typically each answer 10 polls each month (over 150,000 polls answered a day in the UK alone). As a result the Toluna brand attracts vast numbers of new members who would not otherwise have considered joining a panel, and keeps them longer. This provides an organically generated



refreshing of respondents for our clients whilst minimising any reliance on a core number of regular survey takers.

Secondly, every time a member answers a poll running on [toluna.com](http://toluna.com), the data is recorded and updated as part of their current profile. In essence this supplements the traditional method of collecting profiling data (by using specialist screener questionnaires) and creates a large, hugely flexible platform for assessing feasibility through calculation of panel community incidence rates for any consumer profile required. Further, panellists personal dashboards encourage and reward the completion AND regular updating of profiling questionnaires (16 specialist sub panel screening questionnaires, localised by country, are currently live). Toluna records an average of 750 attributes per panellist (out of 1,700 possible), all of which are regularly updated.

Lastly, by interacting with each other, creating and voting on polls, contributing towards debates and managing their online profile, our members' levels of involvement with the panel is much greater than if we provided a purely financial reward, e.g., a voucher. As a result the survey invitations we send to our members are from a brand that each member is familiar with, interacts with and ultimately is 'involved' with. This helps to ensure that the 'delete' button is avoided as if it were yet another survey email.

In summary, Toluna's focus on generating engagement and involvement with the Toluna community leads to deeper profiling, higher response and completion rates and ultimately more reliable data.

Toluna's panel communities are accessed solely for the purposes of market research.

Under no circumstances do we either share panellist data with external organisations or serve any form of either advertising or direct marketing to our members.

Toluna's community panels, and the broad range of polls and opinions that they create, attract a wide variety of groups, profiles and demographic clusters. Together with the ability to attract membership from niche audiences' media placement and partnerships with specialist media titles, Toluna believes that it has an enviable capability to reach hard-to-reach audiences.

The user-driven, interactive value of our portals enables opinion creation and exchange on any subject – which has a broad appeal (i.e. creating polls, seeing results, contributing towards debates, etc.). This has doubled visitor conversion via word of mouth / referral and/or natural search optimisation, whilst attracting very broad and/or traditionally very hard to reach demographic profiles of consumers (such as teens) as well as consumers not normally pre-disposed to join an online panel.

Q4. If the sample source is a panel or database, is the panel or database used solely for market research? If not, please explain.

Q5. How do you source groups that may be hard-to-reach on the internet?



Toluna's dedicated media planning team utilise a broad array of media and affiliate programmes to recruit on demand specific socio-demographic segments for our global panel community network. Our team are highly experienced in tailoring communications for a multitude of differing audiences across 30 different countries.

An optimised and carefully planned registration process ensures maximum conversion to initial membership while a profile management process ensures a seamless and gradual completion of additional profiling data.

Toluna is uniquely equipped to provide reliable access to both broad consumer targets as well as extremely niche profiles because of this sophisticated recruitment and profiling model.

In some countries Toluna has also used mail and telephone recruitment methods to help reach populations that tend not to be as well-represented online, such as those aged above 65 and/or certain ethnicities. Nowadays, the cost and effectiveness of such activities is prohibitive except into some professions such as B2B Decision makers and Physicians - where initial recruitment is often offline.

Q6. What are people told when they are recruited?

Toluna does not communicate a purely financially based proposition.

Instead our proposition is routed in our ability to empower consumers to express, collect and share their opinions as well as be rewarded for their time to complete surveys. All members are clearly told that they are joining an online panel upon initial registration and entered into a prize draw as a 'thank you' for joining.

People are assured that they will never receive marketing or advertising as a result of joining our panel – and that they will be not be rewarded for misleading or dishonest responses. Each member is also made aware their opinions will be used for research purposes only and will not be used by 3rd party organisations for commercial purposes. Members are also informed that they can earn 'reward points' from answering surveys. Links to the sites terms and conditions of service and privacy policy are made clearly available for all.

Within the newer Toluna.com portals, members are asked if they would like to take part in surveys as well as simply answer polls and debates on the site. Note that individuals can choose to become a community member without having to agree to take part in surveys. Further the members can choose whether to receive newsletters and limit the information about themselves is displayed publically to the community.



## Panel Recruitment

Q7. If the sample comes from a panel, what is your annual panel turnover/ attrition/retention rate and how is it calculated?

Our attrition rate is of 25-35% depending upon country per year.

This is calculated on the number of members who have left the panel during

one year versus the average panel size for the same period.

We define members who have left the panel as those who unsubscribe, whose emails 'hard bounce' and members who cease to respond to survey or profiling activity via emails in a rolling 6 month period.

We will discuss attrition with our clients in the project planning stage if there is potential for attrition to affect a particular project, such as a longitudinal study.

Q8. Please describe the opt-in process

New panellists are required to **double opt-in**. The process is as follows:

Step 1 Prospective panellist completes a panel registration form, which includes contact and demographic information (first opt-in).

Step 2 An automatic email is sent to the email of the prospect, requesting verification of their panel registration by clicking a link that confirms their log in details.

Step 3 Once the prospect has clicked the link (second opt-in), he or she is officially a panellist and is presented with an opportunity to complete additional profiling. Another automatic email is sent that includes the panellist's account login information for future reference by the panellist.

At registration, a user's email must be both valid and unique. Our system automatically identifies duplicate email addresses and is compared against our own 'black list' of excluded respondents who are not allowed to join (or re-join) our community.

Further, there is a more detailed check using a combination of date of birth, name, address and password. All duplicated members are removed. We are also able to identify 'potential' duplicate email addresses such as alpha numeric variations upon an original address e.g. jon01@smith.com / jon02@smith.com. Members are also asked to confirm their postal address when ordering incentives or when registering for an in home product test, which in the largest countries, are checked with current Postal Address File (PAF, or USPS in the USA). This ensures that fake or old addresses are not viable for those wishing to duplicate their membership. Additionally, in the USA,

Q9. Do you have a confirmation of identity procedure? Do you have procedures to detect fraudulent respondents at the time of registration with the panel? If so please describe.



our panel is checked against third party databases for the verification of the existence of the panelist at the address they enrolled with.

We also regularly run consistency checks between the basic registration data given and on-going profiling data. Toluna also includes 'trap' questions in profiling questionnaires to identify inconsistencies in responses e.g. age, gender, income, area, number of children, etc.

- Food & Drink
- Green-Consumer
- Health
- Hobbies and Leisure
- Home (and shopping)
- Media (and communications)
- Mobile
- Sports
- Teens
- Travel
- WebUser (including online shopping and technology)
- VideoGamers

## Registration

Toluna's registration and profile process is continuous through the life of a Toluna panellist – the objective being to have broad and current attributes on each member.

Each member has a personal dashboard and administration area, where they have a dashboard indicator to help them manage their personal profile. They gain points by completing and updating their profile. This dashboard also includes points and fulfilment.

The management dashboard makes it easy for our members to complete a task - below shows how we identify recently completed/uncompleted profiles, as well as those topic based questionnaires which need updating. This system ensures that Toluna's panellists are rewarded, motivated and enabled to continually monitor the depth and accuracy of their profiling information. As a result Toluna can target its survey invitations extremely accurately and our clients enjoy consistently impressive response and completion rates.

Q10. What profile data is kept on panel members? For how many members is this data collected and how often is this data updated?

Toluna collects up to 1,700 current attributes through a number of specialist screeners, plus an additional large number of data points from 'Polls' and 'QuickVotes' live on

the community sites to add more depth as required for areas identified as being of value to Toluna's clients. The current maximum number of data points per panellist is approaching 15,000. The 1,700 are the key profile attributes, for which we have an average or approximately 750 completed per panellist.

Toluna's 'specialist panels', whose profiling is optimised for a specific market sector, see <http://www.toluna-group.com/en/specialist-panels/>, are as follows:

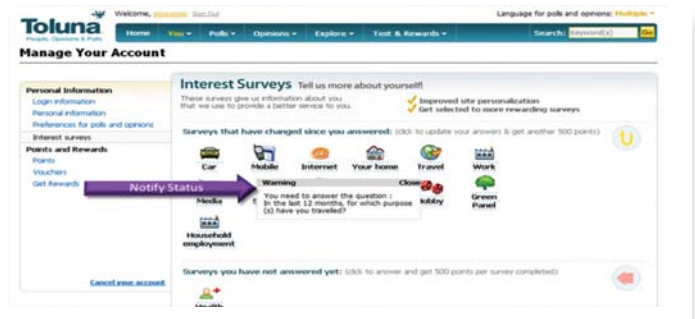
- Automotive
- B2B
- Cosmetics
- Experiences & Expectations
- Fashion
- Finance



Regarding specialist profilers, across all countries and members, the mean Toluna panelist completes above 50% of additional profile information for that country.

### Polls

If a target profile of respondent is required, which is not profiled as part of the standard registration and addition profile management process, Toluna can launch a poll within minutes. This poll can generate thousands of responses per day and each response is recorded against the profile of a registered member. Given that nearly 100% of all poll responses are from registered members and not random web traffic, Toluna can provide extremely accurate feasibility assessments of the panel for even the most challenging of target profiles.



In addition to the in-house demographic, consumer usage/ownership/interests, B2B, medical, and lifestyle profiling, we can also apply ESRI's Community Tapestry Segmentation in the USA to enhance the lifestyle portrait of our panel segments.

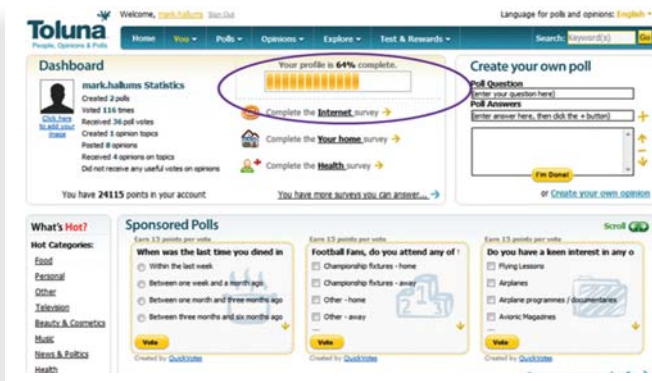
The total size of Toluna's global panel community (30 countries) is currently over 2.4 million members. Actual panel numbers available for surveys at any time, is defined through panellist participation rules relating to the number

Q11. What is the size and/or the capacity of the panel, based on active panel members on a given date? Can you provide an overview of active panellists by type of source?

of completed surveys or number of invitations in a rolling thirty day period. This is a system rule set at panel level and implemented automatically to ensure that it is followed.

Toluna defines an active panel member in line with ESOMAR guidelines. An active panellist is one who has taken part in at least one survey or responded to a survey invite within a maximum of the last twelve months.

Overall, about 95% of the panel is recruited online, the balance being recruited offline.





## Panel and Sample Management

Q12. Please describe your sampling process including your exclusion procedures if applicable. Can samples be deployed as batches / replicates, by time zones, geography etc? If so how is this controlled?

Toluna pride ourselves on our research sampling expertise – requiring investment not only in processes and systems, but in the skills of the team responsible for sampling.

Email address selection is made randomly using the

profile criteria specified in client quotas, taking account of predicted response rates by target demographic and country to avoid wastage of panelists and ensures that we do not introduce a bias in the responses.

Please note that historical propensity to answer surveys is not used to select a sample. The sample itself is then automatically randomised for potentially-qualifying individuals.

We can exclude any panellist from a client's survey by topic of survey recently taken, frequency taken, or for tracking study waves. In some countries, such as the USA, category exclusions are particularly requested and so are supported on those panels.

Our sample can be deployed by batches, time, geography, and is programmed in advance.

Toluna's normal process is to have a soft launch to achieve approximately 10% of the total number of required completes. This enables tuning of the sample selected based on project specific response

characteristics as well as providing a quality check for unforeseen errors due to programming or survey hosting (that may occur with Sample Only projects). The sample composition and size is then adjusted and mailed in batches in line with project requirements of target audience and timescales.

Sample is then sent in batches – which has the added advantage of not overwhelming the survey in the case of a survey hosted by a client.

Toluna's proprietary panel management platform enables a dedicated project manager to run a live count of available members of the panel matching a clients' desired target profile. Based on internal guidelines relating to historical response (for example by age, gender and country of residence), a random sample is pulled for completion of the project. That same project manager is also responsible for the mailing of invitations in batches and managing filling of required quotas.

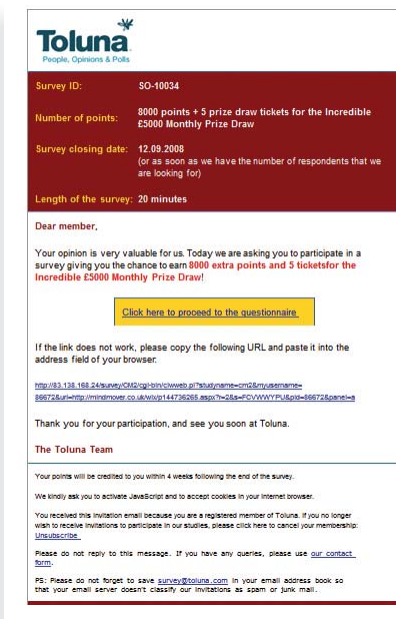
The invitation itself contains incentive information (dependent on length of survey and target group), any project timescales along with approximate length of survey – together with a link to the survey and the entire URL which recipients can paste into their browser so as to ensure there are no issues with pop-up blockers. No information linked to the target sought is

Q13. Explain how people are invited to take part in a survey. What does a typical invitation look like?



included in the invitation so as not to introduce a bias in respondent answers to screening questions.

The typical email invitation to Toluna members is shown below.



Naturally the email will contain an unsubscribe link, but also provides members with a link to the panellist support team who are on hand to deal with any problems.

Non-monetary rewards are provided through providing members with an opportunity to create their own polls/opinions as well as contributing towards polls/opinions of other members. Further, community features such as opinion authority ratings and showcasing members profiles on the home page provide a social value, a value of social voting, a feeling of community.

### Points

Points are earned for completing a survey. Points are also rewarded for answering a 'sponsored poll'. These polls differ to user generated polls as they are created by Toluna on behalf of clients wishing to gain instant top-line research data or to assess project feasibility on a particularly niche target profile. Points are also accumulated by members for completing their profiling questionnaires, accessible in the personal account management area and for regularly updating them.

### Reward

Our points based incentive system enables members to use their points to exchange for vouchers and gifts from our reward partner network which is clearly highlighted to all members. Panellists can manage their account within their own personal dashboard area. Here their entire reward history can be viewed and points automatically exchanged for vouchers.

### Prize draws

Members can also enter into multiple prize draws for cash and products. Points earned can be exchanged for prize draw tickets.

### Product tests

Toluna also offers in home product tests of new products coming to market ranging from chocolate bars to computer and entertainment equipment, all funded and managed by Toluna.

Q14. Please describe the nature of your incentive system(s). How does this vary by length of interview, respondent characteristics, or other factors you may consider?

Toluna.com aims to offer a truly balanced survey reward and overall membership value for our panellists. The primary factor influencing incentive values for each project is the length of survey, which is generally

converted into a number of points of financial value, or in the US, a financial value.

Normally, additional incentives are not offered for short turnaround projects and never linked to incidence expected from the study.



## Cash reward

For most adult consumer studies in the US, our panelists earn interval-based cash rewards. These rewards are immediately credited to panelists' accounts upon survey completion.

## History:

Our proprietary panel management platform, PanelPortal, automatically records all panellist interaction history including emails sent, emails opened, links clicked, screen-outs / quota-full, survey completion, survey topic, incentive given, and the incentive redeemed.

Q15. How often are individual members contacted for online surveys within a given time period? Do you keep data on panellist participation history and are limits placed on the frequency that members are contacted and asked to participate in a survey?

### Frequency of contact:

The system default will not allow invitations to be sent any more than once every two days and a maximum of twelve invitations per month.

### Participation in surveys:

Panellists are normally limited to a maximum

of 2 surveys completed per month (plus one tracker), though in periods of particular demand and for some demographics, we may allow up to four completed surveys per month. Please note that we do not count an internal survey, Community Poll, incidence check or profiler survey, nor do we count reminder emails.

### Email reminders:

The total number of email reminders a panellist can receive depends on available field time. For each 3 days in field, a panellist may receive one reminder.

## Policies and Compliance

The Toluna Panel Privacy Policy has its own page on the panel website and is easily accessible from any page on the site. A link to the Privacy Policy is contained in all survey invitations as a standard practice. The Policy complies with established industry guidelines and states that members' personally identifiable information will never be rented, sold, or revealed to third parties except in cases where Toluna must share it in order to comply with the law. It also explains the technical security measures used to ensure members' information is held in the strictest confidence.

Q16. Is there a privacy policy in place? If so, what does it state? Is the panel compliant with all regional, national and local laws with respect to privacy, data protection and children e.g. EU Safe Harbour, and COPPA in the US? What other research industry standards do you comply with e.g. ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research, CASRO guidelines etc.?



The full policy can be viewed at <http://uk.toluna.com/Privacy>. Please see [www.Your2Cents.com/Privacy.asp](http://www.Your2Cents.com/Privacy.asp) for the North American privacy policy.

Toluna complies with the standards and codes of conduct set forth by the following organisations

- ESOMAR (European Society for Market Research)
- MRS (The UK Market Research Society)
- AMRS (The Australian Market Research Society)
- BVM (Berufsverband Deutscher Markt- und Sozialforscher)
- CASRO (Council of American Survey Research Organizations)
- MRA (Market Research Association)
- MRIA (Marketing Research & Intelligence Association)
- ARF (Advertising Research Foundation)
- Syntec Etudes Marketing et Opinion
- MRO (Interactive Marketing Research Organization).

The Toluna panel is compliant with all EU, Federal and local laws regarding privacy and data collection.

Toluna has several layers of security to ensure the protection of our panelists' information.

All of our panel data is accessible only by employees with assigned security privileges through encrypted passwords. This access is logged and monitored. Further access to the data is never provided to sub contractors or non Toluna employees. Data can only be accessed from a Toluna network as well as an application log in procedure.

Our servers are stored behind a firewall in a secure professional data centre with restricted access. Data cannot be accessed in the data centre and systematic back up of all data is undertaken on a daily basis. The backup storage drives are stored in a separate fire proof site. To meet local market demands, SAS 70 type II audits are conducted regularly in the US.

We also take measures to ensure the security of responses, stimuli and client-confidential information. Only those panelists who are invited can take a survey by logging in to a secure website. Responses are encrypted using Secure Socket Layering (SSL) to ensure a high level of security. Proprietary, confidential graphics or images supplied by clients are secured by disabling the Copy function. The right-click function can also be disabled to prevent material from being saved, and the clipboard is cleared every half second. In addition, the print function can be set to print only blank pages.

Q17. What data protection/security measures do you have in place?



Q18. Do you apply a quality management system?

Toluna has a dedicated in-house team dedicated to quality management.

This group defines, trains staff and measures against our quality processes. Each year the team reviews thousands of survey invitations, questionnaires, samples and data files to make sure that our clients receive nothing short of a flawless online survey project. Additionally, Toluna makes extensive use of client satisfaction surveys to gain important feedback on levels of satisfaction to continuously monitor and improve quality as defined by our clients.

Our quality management procedures are detailed below for both providing sample and for programming client's questionnaires. Our company operations are governed by documented processes, including those for project management, survey programming, quality control, sampling, panel management, and confidentiality and security of information provided by clients, panelists, and other proprietary records. These processes are reviewed and updated on a continuous basis. We have reviewed the proposed ISO standards for market research access panels and have found our processes to be substantially in compliance.

As it relates to specific tasks:

### 1: Project Feasibility

A Project/Quality Control Manager will check that client's request is compliant with the original order to confirm that the project is feasible, i.e., we can deliver the desired number of responses, within the required time and budget. If the specifications are different, a project

manager will reassess feasibility to complete the project and within the time frames. This ensures that we deliver according to our clients' needs, but also to our actual capacity. This avoids over promising to our clients and ensures Toluna's clients are never misled.

### 2: Quality Checking

Questionnaire programming (Full Service projects)

The client's questionnaire is read and the logic (filters, loops, rotation, quotas, etc.) is double checked by our dedicated full service team of experienced survey programmers. Any question/query/doubt is validated with the client. We also advise on questionnaire design if we feel it is not really compliant with the nuances and legal requirements for online data collection.

In cases where we feel the way of addressing the panellists or asking the question may lead to unreliable data, we also advise the client to change/rephrase their questions. All translations are double checked by native speakers so as to ensure data reliability.

Once the questionnaire has been programmed and the first link to the survey is available, a project manager will test all questions, logic, media, data collection and display considerations. All the changes are kept in one single document for an easy follow up and the questionnaire amended with the final changes. Each change is checked by the Toluna 'Full Service' team and the project manager in charge. The questionnaire will go live only after the client's final approval has been received.

We run Random Data Generation on the questionnaire and analyse the results before sending the first batch of sample. This is to ensure complete analysis of all eventualities and logic flows particularly for complex cell and quota allocation.



### Step3: Sampling and field work

The online sample is drawn from our panels according to client's specification (either nationally representative, or targeted) and randomly selected within our data base, according to the quotas set in the questionnaire, and the anticipated response rate per quota group. This process applies to 'Sample only' and 'Full Service' projects.

The survey email invitation is designed based on templates written by native speakers in the panel team. Specific invitations can be designed on request.

Note: our invitations do not contain any information on the subject of the survey if it may lead to guiding the respondent's answers.

These email invitations are double checked by assigned project managers (sent to themselves in different accounts). This check focuses on ensuring the link to the survey is working, the invitation is in the right language, the HTML displays correctly, the email is delivered etc.

Once the email invitation has been thoroughly checked we always start with a soft launch, aiming at getting about 10% of the required number of completed questionnaires. This allows us to check the anticipated incidence rate, actual response rate, and design of the sampling plan. The sampling plan enables us to maximise the time we have to complete a project and ensures the clients quotas are met as agreed.

For Full Service projects, we double check all filters and logic based on real time data before proceeding to a full launch.

Once the project is in field we send email invitations every day or several times a day to complete a project. The number of responses achieved is monitored in real time and more email invitations sent as and when required to achieve the target.

### Step 4: Data processing

Once the project quota is completed, data quality is checked and the data processing team start to prepare the reporting files for clients. We over-recruit by 10% in order to provide a margin to eliminate speeders (people that went too fast through a questionnaire), straight liners, and incoherent answers.

Toluna respects all local laws with respect to interviewing children and young people - where they would be below the legal age in that geography, we would invite them to participate through their parents/gardian that would need to agree to participation. Above this age (which varies by country), Toluna may recruit these people into our Teens panel.

Toluna has run many such projects and can advise any client wishing to conduct research into this age bracket across Europe, Asia and North America.

Q19. Do you conduct online surveys with children and young people? If so, please describe the process for obtaining permission.



## Partnerships and Multiple Panel Membership

Q20. Do you supplement your samples with samples from other providers? How do you select these partners? Is it your policy to notify a client in advance when using a third party provider? Do you de-duplicate the sample when using multiple sample providers?

Toluna's capacity and reach is such that we seldom use external panel partners to complete research studies. On occasion, we may use certified third parties, though this would predominantly be where we are not ourselves present. In which case, there is no risk of duplication.

Toluna may also have projects where we have over-estimated our capacity to complete the project with our own panels (this may include a change in project specifications affecting capacity). In these situations, should we require 3rd party sample to complete a project in field, our policy is to advise the client that we would be using a third party BEFORE going to field with them. In such circumstances, we may at client request, de-duplicate on email address. Please note that no attempt is made to disguise the use of 3rd party panel links.

Toluna has a thorough evaluation process and maintains a constant appraisal system of its approved suppliers. When combining sample Toluna will de-duplicate respondents and will naturally notify a client that an approved 3rd party supplier is being used BEFORE the project is commissioned. Our teams are able to forecast the incidence rate on our panel of any

profile using our unique poll technology, hence our ability to anticipate the need for 3rd party sample well before the 1st email invitations are sent.

Currently Toluna do not believe that there is a completely reliable and industry-wide way of monitoring global multi panel membership.

On occasions where several panels must be used, we may de-duplicate the entire sample for our clients.

Limiting of survey participation is our first line of defence to guard against any bias that might be introduced by the presence of frequent survey takers – quite simply, a professional survey taker would be more likely to join a panel focussing on unlimited survey completion. Toluna also believes that our unique blend of both monetary and non monetary rewards, coupled with its ability to attract panellists who would not otherwise have been pre-disposed to join a panel. Toluna believes that this inherently reduces overlap between our and other organisations' panels, making it a less attractive proposition to the professional survey taker compared with those panels which offer purely financial rewards and do not limit participation.

Q21. Do you have a policy regarding multi-panel membership? What efforts do you undertake to ensure that survey results are unbiased given that some individuals belong to multiple panels?



# Data Quality and Validation

Q22. What are likely survey start rates, drop-out and participation rates in connection with a provided sample? How are these computed?

## Response rates

Toluna's Response rates are amongst the best in the industry and range between 10% and 40%. Naturally, response rates vary by target profile (young males being particularly

unresponsive), topic of the study, seasonality, rewards offered and the tonality and effectiveness of translation of the email content. Also the overall capacity of the panel affects the response rate (i.e., if a specific cluster/demographic regularly completing their maximum number of allowed surveys within a time period).

## Drop-out

The drop out rate from a survey, excluding individuals screened out due to qualification / filtering questions depends upon a plethora of factors and is heavily influenced by survey length and question types. Toluna's average dropout rate is below 10% which we believe reflects our member's high level of engagement with Toluna's social voting community. All participation indicators such as dropout rates are automatically tracked by our panel management system.

Some of the most important factors that affect dropout rates include:

## Visual design

Is the survey visually engaging? Is it credible and is it clear. We have found the use of Flash animation technology and a fundamental understanding of web usability helps to increase completion rates of surveys. For example, longer surveys, and surveys featuring long grids or complicated question types tend to have higher drop-out rates.

## Questioning

Are the questions clearly written and worded? Are they confusing to the respondents?

## Length of questionnaire

Whilst we advise clients to field surveys of no more than 20 minutes for adults and 10 minutes for children, there are cases where we have fielded 45 minute or longer questionnaires. However, when designing methodology, one should bear in mind the questionnaire design. Is it feasible for instance to expect respondents to complete a 45 minute questionnaire on a very dull topic? Can it be achieved with fewer questions? Cutting redundant or superfluous questions serves to ensure more reliable data, faster project completion and ultimately reduces costs.

## Incentive

Using our experience of running projects for clients across many different regions, socio-demographic segments and topics, we have a keen understanding of the required incentives for a particular study. We will always go to every effort to offer the optimal incentive for a given project. As email invitations are deployed



in batches after an initial soft launch, we can invite additional members as and when needed against the required number of completed questionnaires.

Q23. Do you maintain individual level data such as recent participation history, date of entry, source, etc., on your panellists? Are you able to supply your client with a per job analysis of such individual level data?

Our proprietary panel and community management system enables us to record a complete and automatically updated history of all panellist participation and interaction. We record such data as recruitment source, incentives awarded/claimed, emails

opened, surveys taken, profiling data and questions answered. This data can be provided to a client upon request.

Q24. Do you use data quality analysis and validation techniques to identify inattentive and fraudulent respondents? If yes, what techniques are used and at what point in the process are they applied?

Toluna's dedicated quality management team use a variety of different techniques for monitoring and limiting fraudulent respondents through active cleaning and exclusion of observed offenders from the panel.

In-active, un-responsive, inattentive and fraudulent panellists are regularly eliminated from the panel. Fraudulent panellists are put in a blacklist (to avoid any possible re-registration) and are automatically and instantly removed from the panel. Under no circumstance will these members be sent an invitation email to complete a survey or are included in the size of our panels.

During a project our team will run systematic checks to ensure the quality of data generated for our client is of the highest standard.

- Our profiling screeners include dummy/trap questions to flag inconsistencies in data
- Multiple survey completions – Every questionnaire has a unique URL which is sent to a panellist with a unique i.d. This eliminates the possibility of duplicate questionnaire completion by the same individual.
- And when Toluna has programmed a questionnaire we can...
  - Compare the coherence of responses given in a survey with the profiling data we have gathered on a specific panellist
  - Straight lining – We can incorporate controls such as algorithms on straight-line responses within a questionnaire
  - Open ended – Our team can flag those who do not respond to open questions
  - Dummy / Trap questions - We can include dummy/trap questions within a survey
  - Speeding – Project Managers will look for overly fast completions



Q25. Do you measure respondent satisfaction?

Toluna has a quarterly panellist Satisfaction Survey across all panels – reflecting

our belief that each member is an important asset.

During the first half of 2008, approximately 9 out of 10 panellists recorded being satisfied with being a member of the Toluna community.

Panellist satisfaction questionnaires include collection of views to include:

- Surveys
- Email invites
- Newsletters
- Incentives
- Web usability
- Support quality

Toluna also has a team of panellist relationship managers in native language, covering each of the 30 countries where we have proprietary panels.

For our US panels, we also ask for respondent feedback at the end of each survey on length of time to complete, ease of understanding and interest, compensation, and willingness to take a survey with us in the future.

For every project we provide the following as standard

We cannot close a project until we have confirmation from a client that we have met all specified criteria, including number of completes (overall and per quota cell).

For 'Full Service' projects we will complete a project once a client has accepted the data as specified.

Upon request we can also provide...

Completion rates, dropout rate, response rate per cell / target profile, total number of invitations sent, number of screen outs, timings of email delivery and responses, number of reminders sent either during or after fieldwork.

For the vast majority of projects our dedicated quality team invite clients to take part in a short satisfaction survey.

The responsible client services manager will conduct a post project debrief call with clients to appraise the success of the project in terms of data, timescales, process and client experience.

Q26. What information do you provide to debrief your client after the project has finished?

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