



**Vision Critical Global Panels :: ESOMAR 26  
QUESTIONS TO HELP RESEARCH BUYERS OF  
ONLINE SAMPLES**

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## Introduction

Vision Critical runs over 300 online panels worldwide, include several hundred client custom panels, as well as our Global Panels. These pertain to Vision Critical's Global Panels and the sample they provide for online research projects.

It is also important to note that Vision Critical's Global Panels are not directly comparable to the large sample providers known as 'Access Panels'. Our panels are highly restricted in access. Most typically those who are using these panels for sample are our own researcher teams, existing custom panel clients and a few highly trusted partners. This allows for a significant degree of quality control in terms of research, sampling, and panel member experience, which we believe leads to superior quality in all of these respects.

## Company profile

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

*This answer might help you to form an opinion about the relevant experience of the sample provider. How long has the sample provider been providing this service and do they have for example a market research, direct marketing or more technological background? Are the samples solely provided for third party research, or does the company also conduct proprietary work using their panels?*

Vision Critical has been recruiting and managing online panels to facilitate research since 2002. These panels are hosted on Vision Critical's own industry leading software platform Sparq, which offers a panel member-centred experience as well as a full suite of research authoring, analysis, panel health and communication tools. These panels support sample for both qualitative and quantitative online studies on behalf of clients. The panels include over 250 Custom Panels, tailored to meet the specific sample needs of the client, as well as a number of large, national panels in the US, UK and Canada to support research sample to the VC group's research clients (Vision Critical Global Panels).

Vision Critical refers to these national panels as 'restricted access' panels, as access to the panel is limited to our own researcher teams, existing custom panel clients and a few highly trusted partners. This allows a greater degree of both research quality control and management of the wider research and engagement programme that drives the experience of being a panel member. As a result, we see far lower levels of some of the 'problem behaviours' seen on access panels.

## Sample Source

### 2. Please describe and explain the types of source(s) for the online sample that you provide (are these databases, actively managed panels, direct marketing lists, web intercept sampling, river sampling or other)?

*The description of the type of source a provider uses for delivering an online sample might provide insight into the quality of the sample. An actively managed panel is one which contains only active panel members - see question 11. Note that not all online samples are based on online access panels.*

Sample is primarily supplied to our research and fieldwork clients from our Global Panels. These panels consist of participants who are actively recruited through a variety of online (and sometimes offline) methods. Each recruitment campaign is individually tracked and monitored for quality control.

Vision Critical also sources sample for some research projects using a select group of external partners, in markets or verticals not supported by our Global Panels. These suppliers are carefully vetted for their quality processes. Clients are always told where sample is sourced externally and also if multiple sources are blended to meet the total requirement.

### **3. What do you consider to be the primary advantage of your sample over other sample sources in the marketplace?**

*The answer to this question may simplify the comparison of online sample providers in the market.*

The primary advantage is access to high quality sample that comes from carefully nurtured panels, resulting not just by one facet of the way we recruit and manage our panels, but by the full panel strategy package and the positive experience of our members.

Access to our sample is limited to trusted research and fieldwork clients, who share our perspective when it comes to treating survey participants with respect. This means our members are not subject to inappropriately high volumes of survey invites, low invite-to-qualification ratios, overly long surveys, poor or 'long-odds' incentives, badly designed surveys, or poor translations. Our panel members expect and receive a superior experience as a member, and we see this reciprocated in their manner of participation.

In addition, we are able to create a higher level of engagement both via regular research feedback in newsletters, member portal and social media, and by an enhanced survey experience which utilises Vision Critical's rich media capabilities which have been proven to improve participants' perceptions of survey-taking.

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

*Combining panelists for different types of usage (like direct marketing) might cause survey effects.*

Yes – Vision Critical Global Panels are solely used for market research purposes.

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

*The inclusion of hard-to-reach groups on the internet (like ethnic minority groups, young people, seniors etc.) might improve the quality of the sample provided.*

We reach out to 'hard-to-reach' groups by using both the appropriate mode and the appropriate messaging.

In terms of recruitment mode, we try to maximise our reach into the population by using recruitment sources that other panel companies do not. These include online sources such as direct media buys of target email lists, website display ads and social media sites (rather than reliance on ad and affiliate networks).

We have also used offline methods where appropriate e.g. print ads and radio spots in specific target geographic areas. We also develop strategic partnerships with organisations to provide us access to non-commercially-available online and offline media properties.

### **6. What are people told when they are recruited?**

*The type of rewards and proposition could influence the type of people who agree to answer a questionnaire or join a specific panel and can therefore influence sample quality.*

The precise wording may depend on the particular campaign, target audience and vendor / partner, however all recruits are:-

- Presented with core reasons for joining up to the community panel which would speak to both ‘intrinsic’ motivations (e.g. influencing decision-making in business, government and the media, shaping products or policy, sharing their opinions etc.) and ‘extrinsic’ motivations (information on the rewards available as ‘thank you’s’ for participation).
- Told that by registering they will be invited to participate in surveys and research activities online, on a variety of topics.
- Informed that their personal details will be secure and confidential, that they won’t receive spam as a result of joining the panel and provided a link to our privacy policy.

## Panel Recruitment

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

*The panel attrition rate may be an indicator of panelists’ satisfaction and (therefore) panel management, but a high turnover could also be a result of placing surveys which are too long with poor question design. The method of calculation is important because it can have a significant impact on the rate quoted.*

Attrition is a natural consequence of running a large panel. Vision Critical operates a strict purge rule on our panels and deliberately churn out members who are not responsive. This leads to our high rates of response and a greater level of certainty and control in sampling. Annual churn rates vary from panel to panel:-

- Canada: 44% (mature panel)
- US: 10%
- UK: 11%

The churn calculation used is:-

Churn Rate =  $\frac{\text{No. left panel during X period (requested removal + undeliverable + purged)}}{\text{Average panel size during X period}}$

### 8. Please describe the opt-in process.

*The opt-in process might indicate the respondents’ relationship with the panel provider.*

*The market generally makes a distinction between single and double opt-in. Double opt-in describes the process by which a check is made to confirm that the person joining the panel wishes to be a member and understands what to expect.*

Vision Critical’s Global Panels operate on a double opt-in process. Firstly, prospective members are asked to complete a profiling questionnaire which collects a range of key demographic, attitudinal and social variables, as well as name, email address and login information. The prospective members are also shown and must agree to our terms and conditions, as a requirement of membership.

Once the profiling questionnaire is completed, the prospective member is sent a confirmation email. To become a panel member they are required to click on the link in this confirmation email to double opt-in and confirm their membership.

**9. 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.**

*Confirmation of identity might increase quality by decreasing multiple entries, fraudulent panelists, etc.*

The following processes are in place during registration:-

- No individual may sign up more than once using the same email account.
- A digital finger-printing solution is used to detect if the same individual is completing the profiling questionnaire more than once (as defined by a certain level of 'match' in terms of their computer characteristics, in combination with other known demographic variables) enabling us to flag and /or prevent these individuals from being selected to participate in surveys.
- Internal consistency checking e.g. requiring that the zip code matches to the state of residence selected earlier in the registration process.
- As a post-registration measure, a 'match 3' process is implemented which looks for panel members that match on three or more basic details and determines if they are a multiple registration on the panel. Any additional membership accounts identified are deactivated.

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

*Extended and up-to-date profile data increases the effectiveness of low incidence sampling and reduces pre-screening of panelists.*

Comprehensive and regular profiling of panel members is key to the way in which Vision Critical Global Panels are managed. Not only does it allow us to pinpoint sub-samples quickly and accurately for our clients, but it reduces the number of occasions in which panel members are invited to participate in a study but disqualified after a number of questions.

There are a number of ways in which profiling information is collected and updated on panel members, the main three of which are described below. However, Vision Critical's panel software platform Sparq, retains every data point collected on members in every survey, therefore, in reality any survey question asked to any member could be used as a reference point for sampling, or as background data.

**1) Profiling Questionnaire (PQ)**

Every panel member completes a basic profiling questionnaire when they register to become a member of the panel, the core variables on this are therefore collected for ALL panel members.

**2) Updatable Profiles**

Members can update their profile information themselves via the member portals. This includes updating not only basic login information (email, password), but also key profile variables that may be subject to change. As above, the specific variables may vary by market but would typically include zip/postal code and associated geo variables (people may move house), home ownership, marital status, HH composition, presence of children, HH income etc.

**3) Monthly 'Mosaic' Profiling Surveys**

All members are invited to a panel-wide survey conducted each month called our 'Monthly Mosaic'. The primary purpose of these studies is to supplement the profile information held on panel members.

**11. 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 panelists by type of source?**

*The size of the panel might give an indication of the capacity of a panel. In general terms, a panel's capacity is a function of the availability of specific target groups and the actual completion rate. There is no agreed definition of an active panel member, so it is important to establish how this is defined. It is likely that the new ISO for access panels which is being discussed will propose that an active panel member is defined as a member that has participated in at least one survey, or updated his/her profile data, or registered to join the panel, within the last 12 months. The type and number of sources might be an indicator of source effects and source effects might influence the data quality.*

*For example, if the sample is sourced from a loyalty programme (travel, shopping, etc.) respondents may be unrepresentatively high users of certain services or products.*

The Vision Critical Global Panels use a tighter definition of what constitutes an 'active' member than that which has been proposed for the new ISO standards for access panels. An active member is defined as a member that has participated in at least one survey, or updated his/her profile data, or registered to join the panel, within the last six months (the proposed ISO standard suggests 12 months).

This means that the panel sizes that Vision Critical quotes are always our 'active' panel size. Current panels sizes are listed below, as well as projected size based on estimated recruitment volumes:-

	Q4 2009	Q1 2010	Q4 2010
US	60,000	75,000	150,000
UK	30,000	50,000	75,000
Canada	90,000	100,000	100,000

All 3 panels are currently in active and rapid growth phases so for current panel sizes, please contact the Vision Critical Global Panels team.

The panels are recruited using the following types of sources:-

- Online Ads
- eDMs
- Search
- Print Ads
- Radio Ads

The percentage by source varies by panel and over time.

**Panel and Sample Management**

**12. 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?**

*The sampling processes for the sample sources used are a main factor in sample provision. A systematic approach based on market research fundamentals may increase sample quality.*

The appropriate sampling process may vary from project to project, however this is a broad overview of the process used to create a balanced sample, according to known population statistics, using a technique of interlocked quota

sampling combined with response propensity. This process ensures that the sample achieved may be described as 'representative' of the population which it is designed to model, according to those variables by which it is balanced.

- 1) The population of interest is defined and a balancing matrix is created according to known profiled information
- 2) The number of completes required per cell is calculated according to the total sample size required, multiplied by the target % for the cell as defined by the target matrix.
- 3) The total outgo (invitations) required per cell is calculated based on the known response rate for that cell (response propensity).
- 4) Available panel members are assigned the cell to which they belong, and then a random selection is drawn of qualifying panel members, per cell, up to the number of invitations required for that cell.
- 5) Selected panel members are deployed an email invitation to complete the study. Each link is unique to the panel member therefore only sampled panel members can participate in the study. Depending on the length of time in field, reminders may also be sent.

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

*Survey results can sometimes be influenced by the wording used in subject lines or in the body of an invitation.*

Members are invited to take part in a survey via email. The email contains a unique link which means that only those members that are invited may participate in a study and may only do so once.

A typical survey invitation will provide the following pieces of information:-

- The approximate survey length
- Any incentive or reward available for completing the survey (and a link to accompanying legal terms where appropriate)
- The date on which the study will be closed. Where the study will be open for a particularly short timeframe, this is also noted.

### **14. 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?**

*The reward or incentive system might impact on the reasons why people participate in a specific panel and these effects can cause bias to the sample.*

The Vision Critical Global Panels operate on a per complete incentive model, whereby for the majority of surveys, panel members receive a small cash incentive if they complete the survey. The cash incentive amount offered varies according to survey length and the range is typically between \$1-\$5 (US, Canada) and £0.50 - £3 (UK).

In addition, each panel operates a schedule of regular prize draws with cash prizes as a supplement to the cash credits system. Draw entries are awarded for a number of actions including participation in the Monthly Mosaic profiling survey and when members attempt to, but are unable to complete a survey due to full quotas.

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

*Frequency of survey participation might increase conditioning effects whereas a controlled survey load environment can lead to higher data quality.*

We retain a complete history of each panel member's participation in surveys which we use to determine response propensities as well as to implement the 'burden rules' which ensure that no single member is invited to too many studies in any one month (no more than 8), or more than one study within too close a time frame (within 3 days of another invitation).

## **Policies and Compliance**

**16. 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.?**

Each panel has a privacy policy in place, accessible from the footer of the panel portal pages and each page of our surveys. It is also high-lighted to prospective members prior to joining the panel.

The privacy policies can be viewed here:-

<https://www.springboarduk.com/portal/privacy-policy.aspx>

<https://www.springboardamerica.com/skin/privacy-policy.html>

<https://www.springboardamerica.com/skin/privacy-policy-es-ES.html>

[https://www.angusreidforum.com/skin/images/en-CA/PrivacyPolicy\\_en-CA.pdf](https://www.angusreidforum.com/skin/images/en-CA/PrivacyPolicy_en-CA.pdf)

[https://www.forumangusreid.com/skin/images/fr-CA/PrivacyPolicy\\_fr-CA.pdf](https://www.forumangusreid.com/skin/images/fr-CA/PrivacyPolicy_fr-CA.pdf)

Our panels comply with all regional, national and local laws with respect to privacy, data protection and children, in the US, UK and Canada, including COPPA and EU Safe Harbour. We are also compliant with the ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research, the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct, MRIA, and CASRO guidelines.

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

*The sample provider usually stores sensitive and confidential information on panelists and clients in databases. These need to be properly secured and backed-up, as does any confidential information provided by the client.*

Vision Critical has published internal information security policies for both corporate as well as client hosted environments/data. A full review and update of all Vision Critical's security policies are completed yearly. In addition, Vision Critical enlists external security assessment providers for quarterly security vulnerability assessments. For more information, a full Security Policy Questionnaire may be obtained from Diraj Goel, Director of IT (diraj.goel@visioncritical.com).

**Data Storage:** Our Datacenters located in North America and in the UK are highly secure environments. Physical access to the facility is controlled by a combination of zoned Photo ID/Keycard authentication and Access Master List verification. Remote connections to our datacenter are only permitted from our head office location. Our production facilities consist of a web tier behind a firewall with IPS/IDS and our database and authentication layer is behind another distinct firewall layer with fine grained access controls.

**Date Back-up:** Our tape backup is performed over the wire at an alternate datacenter for immediate, offsite storage. We follow the standard Iron Mountain tape exchange process for monthly archives.

**Data Transfer:** All data transfers and work on Vision Critical software is handled through HTTP connections over SSL. Server hardening ensures that only secure, high grade encryption can be negotiated by the servers.

**Application Data Security:** Each customer database is separate from other customer databases. All customers have their own database logins. All customers have their own separate windows user accounts. All users of the system (administrators and respondents) are required to log into the system using a unique username/password combination in order to access data.

The main role of the system is to collect, manage and protect (from access and tampering) Client and Respondent Assets. A list of Assets is outlined below, incl. considerations for the Storage of the Assets, in decreasing order of the perceived value as attack target:

- a) Collection of bulk personal information (lists) associated with Panel members (per Client): stored in the database, access restricted per Client to only authorized representatives of the Client.
- b) Consolidated Market Research Information collected from Panels: stored in the database
- c) Format, content and structure of specific Studies (individually or in combination), which can be used to infer Market and Market Research strategy: stored in the database and a collection of Study Logic scripts
- d) Individual Respondent personal information (Respondent Asset), which could be used for hijacking potential incentives associated with Studies: stored in the database

Security objectives of the System:

- e) To restrict access to all Client Assets, per Client, to only authorized representatives of the Client and authorized
- f) To restrict access to Respondent Assets to the Respondent and –where allowed— to authorized Vision Critical personnel.
- g) Where allowed, to permit access to Respondent Assets associated with specific Studies or Panels of specific Clients to only authorized representatives of the Client and authorized Vision Critical personnel.
- h) Sensitive data may be encrypted on a per question basis:-
  - I. Study verbatim questions can be marked as private. The panelist responses to these questions will be encrypted in the database using AES 256bit.
  - II. The database connection information is encrypted using DPAPI
  - III. The panel windows user account impersonation information is encrypted using DPAPI
  - IV. SSL encryption is available for administration and panelist portals utilizing latest 128 or 256 Bit strength

Vision Critical Help Desk staff will not provide information regarding a user's account, or provide information on data hosted by Vision Critical. In order to obtain such information, the user must use the mechanisms for access (including obtaining lost passwords) contained in the application.

## 18. Do you apply a quality management system? Please describe it.

*A quality management system is a system by which processes in a company are described and employees are accountable. The system should be based on continuous improvement. Certification of these processes can be independently done by auditing organizations, based for instance, on ISO norms.*

While we are investigating third party options we maintain a strict internal quality control process, with regular reviews of process and procedures related to our ongoing commitment to being the quality leaders in the online market research space.

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

*The ICC/ESOMAR International Code requires special permissions for interviewing children.*

From time-to-time interviews are conducted with children and young people via our panels. The precise process varies according the appropriate regulations by market. For example, in the UK, young people aged 16 and 17 (under the age of majority) are able to join the panel themselves, directly, without parental permission, as this is legally and ethically permissible.

However, for those ages, per market, for which children and young people are only eligible for interview with parental permission, the following process is implemented:

- 1) **Screening & general permission:** All panel members are screened for having children, plus the ages and genders of their children. Those with children are then asked whether they would be willing for us to invite them to participate in research in which the survey would be completed by their child / children. Those that provide this permission form a 'sub-panel' from which we can choose who to invite for individual studies, based on the data we have on their household and children.
- 2) **Study Pre-warning:** For a particular study we will select a sample of parents from the qualified sub-panel. A 'pre-warning' email is typically sent a few days prior to the study launch to alert them to the up-coming study and that they will be asked to request that their child fills in all, or part of the study.

The child or parent may choose not to participate at any point in the process. They may also request that we do not invite them to this type of research in the future.

## Partnerships & Multi-Panel Memberships

### 20. 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?

*Many providers work with third parties. This means that the quality of the sample is also dependent on the quality of sample providers that the buyer did not select. Transparency is a key issue in this situation. Overlap between different panel providers can be significant in some cases and de-duplication removes this source of error, and frustration for respondents.*

On some occasions we may supplement samples drawn from our own panel with samples from other providers. These would most often be in cases where the study is multi-country, including some countries in which we do not

currently have restricted access panels. Less often, this may occur with projects which require low incidence samples which we cannot completely fulfill through our own panel.

In all cases, the client will be notified that we are sourcing sample from another provider, and we will also let them know the provider we are using, should they wish to be informed, or to influence the choice. We would be unlikely to recommend the sourcing of sample from multiple providers for a tracking study, in the knowledge that evidence has pointed to significant 'house effects' in terms of finding different results from different panels, however should it be necessary we would put measures in place to ensure that the sample composition remained matched over time in terms of sample source.

Our choice of provider depends on an assessment made as to the quality of their panel practices (for example, examining their own answers to the ESOMAR 26) and on our experience in working with them. In addition, different sample providers may be more appropriate depending on the project and sample specifications.

We work with a third party industry-leading digital finger-printing solution provider which enables us to identify and remove potential duplicate respondents that may be members of both panels and have answered the study already, eliminating this potential source of error.

## **21. 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?**

*It is not that uncommon for a panelist to be a member of more than one panel nowadays. The effects of multi-panel membership by country, survey topic, etc., are not yet fully known. Proactive and clear policies on how any potential negative effects are minimized by recruitment, sampling, and weighting practices is important.*

Findings of the recent ARF Online Research Quality Council initiative has concluded that multi-panel membership is less of an issue in relation to data quality, than previously thought, with virtually no difference in results found between results from multi versus single panel members, and no degradation in the quality of responses.

That said, we are not complacent about this, and recognise that it remains an area of concern for some clients.

Primarily, our ethos is that prevention is better than cure. We therefore address this issue at the stage of recruitment, to the extent possible, by our careful selection of recruitment sources and the way in which we position our panel membership:

- Avoidance of sources which are known to have been used extensively by other panel companies.
- When working with ad and affiliate networks our ads are restricted from being displaying on 'free offer', 'make money online', and 'professional survey sites'.
- Ad messaging and creative artwork is carefully positioned to appeal to a wide range of individuals on topics of interest to them, or current issues. It does not place heavy emphasis on financial rewards, so to not encourage solely financially motivated registrations which many panels use to attract their members. As a result, our panels tend to attract a wider range of individuals than would be the typical profile of online access panel members.

We also monitor the portion of members that acknowledge their membership of other online survey panels, as well as the frequency which they typically take online surveys. Questions about this are asked in the 'welcome survey' which members are sent subsequent to their joining, allowing us to monitor each recruit source for the proportion of multi-panel members it appears to attract and adjust recruitment on that basis, as well as in our annual member satisfaction study.

## Data Quality & Validation

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

*Panel response might be a function of factors like invitation frequency, panel management (cleaning) policies, incentive systems and so on. Although not a quality measure by itself these rates can provide an indication of the way a panel is managed. A high start rate might indicate a strong relationship between the panel member and the panel. A high drop-out rate might be a result of poor questionnaire design, questionnaire length, survey topic or incentive scheme as well as an effect of panel management. The new ISO for access panels will likely propose that participation rate is defined as the number of panel members who have provided a usable response divided by the total number of initial personal invitations requesting members to participate.*

The following Start, Drop-out and overall Participation rates are based on average survey activity during 2009.

	Survey Start Rate	Survey Drop-out rate	Participation Rate
US	37.87%	2.30%	35.55%
UK	33.17%	1.17%	32.00%
Canada	51.86%	2.64%	49.22%

Start Rate = 
$$\frac{\text{All who start the survey}}{\text{All invited}}$$

Drop-out Rate = 
$$\frac{\text{All who exit the survey without reaching a completion point}}{\text{All invited}}$$

Participation Rate = 
$$\frac{\text{All valid responses (inc. qualified completes & disqualified & over quota)}}{\text{All invited}}$$

The rate that can be expected for any individual survey will vary according to a number of factors including the length of the survey, the fieldwork period, the topic, the target sample and whether there has been pre-screening done. For example, the above overall response rates reflect the fact that we specialise in running 24 hour turnaround omnibus studies in which the fieldwork period may be less than 18 hours. In this instance we need to send out more invites to ensure enough completes within the short time frame. A typical study with a 2-3 day fieldwork would see response rates that are 10 percentage points higher than these fast omnibus studies. If a sample has been pre-screened using our Monthly Mosaic survey, it is not uncommon to see response rates of upwards of 50-60%.

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

*This type of data per respondent increases the possibility of analysis for data quality, as described in ESOMAR's Guideline on Access Panels.*

We have a full participation history on every panel member (indeed, they are able to access this information themselves via the membership portal), as well as the date they joined / their panel tenure, the recruitment sources via which they came (since Jan 2009, even down to the individual online ad or email they clicked on).

## **24. 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?**

*When the sample provider is also hosting the online survey, preliminary data quality analysis and validation is usually preferable.*

We have recently implemented an industry leading validation solution which checks on a per survey level for duplicate survey responses, i.e. the same individual taking the same surveys using more than one registered account. We also employ Geo-IP checking to ensure that members are located where they say they are. In addition we are also implementing real-time “speeder” checks to replace current post-survey check, which determines whether an individual has completed the survey in an unacceptably short time and therefore was either deliberately clicking-through or not answering thoughtfully. These criteria are used to exclude these responses from the dataset.

## **25. Do you measure respondent satisfaction?**

*Respondent satisfaction may be an indicator of willingness to take future surveys. Respondent reactions to your survey from self-reported feedback or from an analysis of suspend points might be very valuable to help understand survey results.*

We take member satisfaction very seriously and measure / monitor this in a number of different ways:-

### **1) Panel Members Satisfaction Study**

Firstly, we run a bi-annual Panel Member Satisfaction study. This study asks about overall satisfaction with membership of the panel as well as satisfaction with a number of key aspects of membership. In addition to the general findings, we run a regression analysis which tells us which of the drivers of satisfaction have the most impact on overall satisfaction. This provides us with very actionable insight as to which aspects of membership we could improve to have the biggest affect in driving up satisfaction overall. Since this survey is also made available to our custom panel clients as part of their panel management package, we are also able to develop a large bank of data against which individual panels can compare themselves, our Global panels included.

### **2) Survey Satisfaction**

At the end of each study run on our Global panels, we ask respondents a brief, standardised set of questions in order to get their feedback on the survey. This data is made available to the Project Manager and Researcher responsible for the study, and may be passed onto the client as appropriate. We also track this over time to examine overall trends in questionnaire preferences and what makes for a positive / negative survey experience.

### **3) Stop Points Reporting**

For every survey run on Vision Critical’s Sparq survey platform a ‘Stop Points’ reports is available. This shows the last question answered before an individual exited from the survey (without completing it). This report helps to identify any areas of the study which may have caused members not to want to continue.

### **4) Panel Member Support Service**

Our highly responsive panel member support service provides responses to panel member emails within 24 hours. The ‘qualitative’ feedback gained via this method also helps us to identify and resolves any issues that relate to member satisfaction whether they be survey-specific, related to overall membership or technology focused. Member support is provided in the appropriate language, including Quebec French and Spanish.

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

*One might expect a full sample provider debrief report, including gross sample, start rate, participation rate, drop-out rate, the invitation text, a description of the field work process, and so on.*

Reporting on the sample post-field is available on a per project basis, depending on client requirements.