EXPERIENCES ON WEB-BASED SURVEY ON MONITORING OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION

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Hämeenlinna 29.5.2008
Internet Use

~70% of households (age group 16-74) has connection to internet

~80% of 15-74 year old population uses internet

Internet users as a percentage of persons aged 15-74, previous 3 months

Statistics Finland 2007
## Methodologies used in national recreation surveys

*(Sievänen et al. 2008, Forest Recreation Monitoring – a European Perspective)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Face to face interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Postal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finland</strong></td>
<td><strong>Telephone and postal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France 1</td>
<td>Face to face interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France 2,</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany 1</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany 2</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Face to face interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Postal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>Telephone and postal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Postal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>Postal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Face to face interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Research questions

1) Comparison of respondents preferences between web and mail survey

2) How representative sample we can get by using web-survey?
   - non-respondents among the older age group

3) Does web-mode bias the participation figures?
   - are active internet users either less or more active in recreation than general population.
Experiment design

WEB-SURVEY      POST-WEB -SURVEY

N=5000

N1=4000
Contact letter:
- Internet address
- User name and password

N2=1000
mail questionnaire
+ possibility to answer in web
Survey process: CONTACTS

Respondents

Duration of the survey, days

web = internetsurvey  mail = mailsurvey  mailweb = mailsurvey, possibility to answer by web

Source: Statistics Finland
Answering

- Length of the questionnaire
  - WEB ~140 questions
  - POST-WEB ~90 questions

- WEB
  - Average time used for answering 43 minutes
  - Percentage of dropped out 11%

- Reasons for non-response
  - Lack of time, Not interested, Do not have internet connection, Difficulties in “login”, Do not usually answer the surveys, etc.
Response rate by AGE

- TOTAL N=1415
  - Web 25.5%
  - P+PW 39.6%
    - Post 35.4%
    - Web 4.2%
  - Altogether 28.3%
Respondents – population: GENDER

- **Web**
  - Male: 47%, 49%
  - Female: 53%, 51%

- **Post-Web**
  - Male: 42%, 49%
  - Female: 58%, 51%
Respondents – population: AGE

**Web/Age**

- Age 15-24: 19%
- Age 25-34: 23%
- Age 35-44: 23%
- Age 45-54: 16%
- Age 55-64: 16%
- Age 65-74: 9%

**Post-Web/Age**

- Age 15-24: 19%
- Age 25-34: 30%
- Age 35-44: 30%
- Age 45-54: 14%
- Age 55-64: 14%
- Age 65-74: 9%
Web – Post-Web: USE OF INTERNET

LIFE-STYLE (1/15): time used in internet

- 27% much
- 24% little
- 18% can't say
- 7% Very much
- 2% very little
- 13% much

Web: 35% 35% 25% 15% 18%
Post-Web: 27% 0% 13% 0% 15%
Web – Post-web: Participation in outdoor recreation activities

- Walking for pleasure or fitness
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Spending time at summer cottage
- Berry picking
- Boating
- Cross-country skiing
Participation in activities – use of internet

- Walking for pleasure or fitness
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Spending time at summer cottage
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- Cross-country skiing

[Bar chart showing participation percentages for each activity with internet usage categorized as very much or much, or little or very little.]
Benefits and weaknesses of two data collection modes

WEB +
- User-friendly (skipping etc.)
- Data available immediately
- Cost effective after initial costs

WEB –
- Small response rate, %
- High number of drop outs

POST-WEB +
- Highest response rate
- Equity
  - Available for all
  - Possibility to choose the survey mode

POST-WEB –
- Double work – double costs
- Small number of web-answers
- Limited length
- Data recording errors
Conclusions:

- Web data represents fairly well all age groups
  - Sample weights: gender, age, area, language etc.
- Proportion of younger respondents is small in both data-sets, but especially low in post-web –data
- Small differences in participation in activities
  - between different survey modes
  - among different internet user groups
Modified data collection

Contact by letter

Filling the questionnaire in WEB

Possibility to get mail questionnaire
-by asking it
-by sending it on 2nd or 3rd contact

Filling the postal questionnaire
THANK YOU!