

Russia

GfK Rus has started to introduce scanning as a method of data collection

In 2009 the GfK Rus Household Panel initiated a transition from paper diaries to scanners for data collection.

GfK Rus has chosen an optimal technical solution for Russia, taking into consideration the experiences of other European countries. The obvious advantages of the new data collection technology include high ease of usability and an absence of barriers for those respondents who are not particularly familiar with modern electronic equipment and the internet.

First of all, our technology does not require a household to have its own personal computer or internet access. Members of the panel are provided with a compact scanning device (no larger than a wireless home telephone) and a docking station / charger. This means that an electric socket is the only item the respondents are required to have at home.



As a result, there are no special requirements of the panel members such as computer literacy or the availability of connection to the internet and a personal computer at home. Furthermore, the scanner is always ready to use - no need to wait while the computer is booting up and an internet connection is being established – a factor which is also very important in everyday life. And the easier the task is for our respondents, the higher is the quality of the data!

Secondly, the scanner is a portable wireless device: it is not attached to the charger or a personal computer. With wired scanning technology, strong correlations are observed between device placement and the purchases scanned. For instance, not every respondent will bring frozen food, large packages of washing powder or pet food to the bedroom (if that is where the computer is located). On the contrary, portable wireless scanners allow the panel members to scan their purchases wherever it is convenient for them - in the kitchen, the bathroom, the living room.



In addition to collecting information about the products purchased, the scanning system can also be used for asking questions about details of the purchase and its consumption - for example, for whom in the household a product was bought, what is the intended use and so on.

Besides the usual categories measured in the GfK Rus Household Panel, the introduction of scanning enables the tracking of "fresh food" categories such as fruit, vegetables, bread, meat and fish etc. without the constraints which were present previously.

With the launch of the new technology, the GfK Rus Household Panel will continue to gather information about purchases: who bought it, where it was bought, what was bought, when it was bought and how much they spent. In addition, products which do not have EAN-codes on the package – which is often the case for direct sales - will also be registered.

The transition to the scanning system will be gradual. In Moscow it will be complete by January 2010 (n=1,500 households) and in other cities with a population of over 500 thousand the switch to the new information collection method will be completed by January 2011 (5,000 out of 7,065 households).

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