

GD CONTROL DATA PRIVATE

RADIO SURVEY RESPONSE RATES

RADIO ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MARCH 1986  
CLAIRE KUMMER

**ARBITRON RATINGS**  
**RADIO**

RESPONSE RATES

- DEFINITION
  
- TRENDS
  - INDUSTRY
  - ARBITRON
  
- ARBITRON INVESTMENT IN IMPROVEMENT
  - IDEAS THAT WORKED
  - IDEAS THAT DIDN'T
  - CURRENT EFFORTS
  
- "MODEL CITY" PROGRAM

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SURVEY COOPERATION DEFINED

- CONSENT RATE = PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS IN DESIGNATED SAMPLE AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE
- RETURN RATE = PERCENT OF PERSONS AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE WHO ACTUALLY DO RETURN A 7-DAY USABLE DIARY
- RESPONSE RATE = PERCENT OF ESTIMATED PERSONS IN DESIGNATED SAMPLE WHO RETURN A 7-DAY USABLE DIARY

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SURVEY COOPERATION DEFINED

• EXAMPLE:

1000 RESIDENCES IN DESIGNATED SAMPLE  
 2500 ESTIMATED PERSONS 12+ IN DESIGNATED SAMPLE  
 800 RESIDENCES AGREE TO PARTICIPATE  
 2000 PERSONS WERE SENT A DIARY  
 1000 PERSONS RETURNED A 7-DAY USABLE DIARY

CONSENT RATE = 800/1000 = 80%

RETURN RATE = 1000/2000 = 50%

RESPONSE RATE = 1000/2500 = 40%

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INDUSTRY TRENDS

CASRO (COUNCIL OF AMERICAN SURVEY RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS)

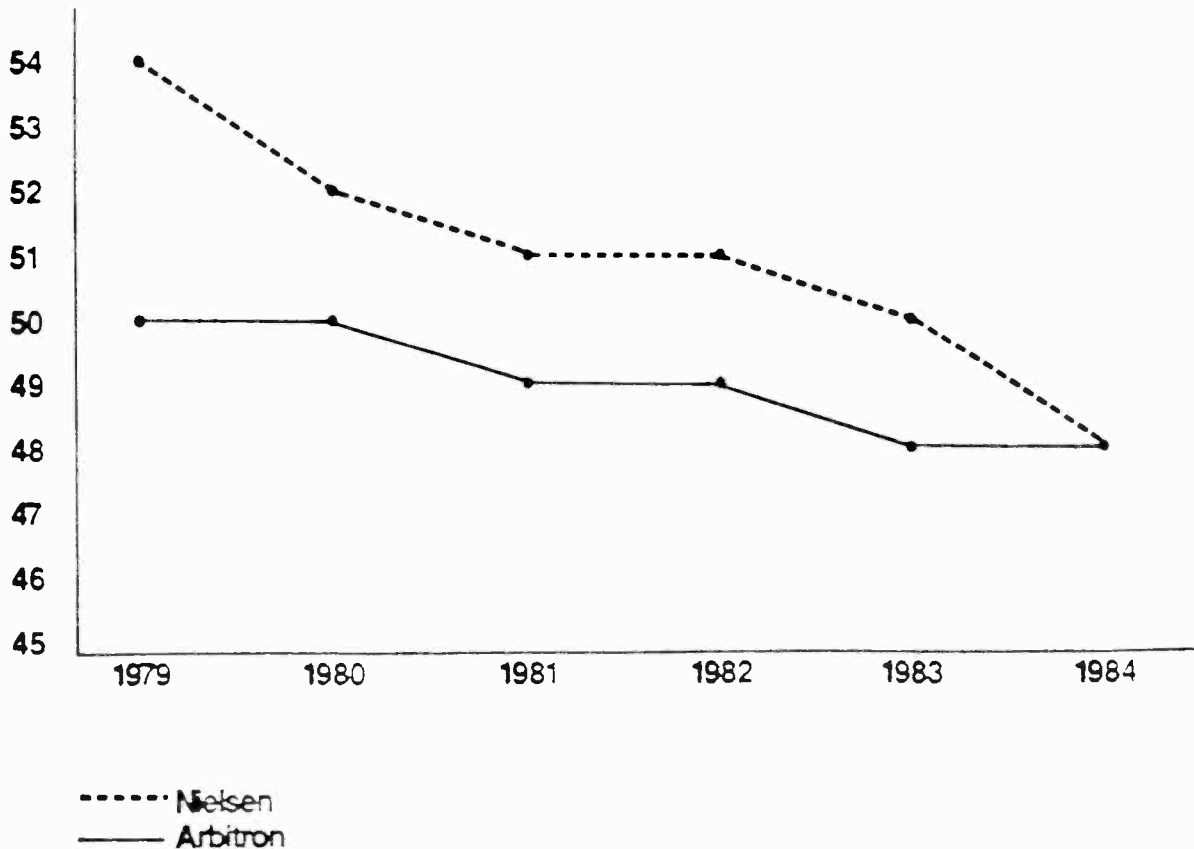
- TRADE ASSOCIATION WITH A MEMBERSHIP CONSISTING OF THE 130 LARGEST SURVEY RESEARCH COMPANIES
  
- 1984 SURVEY RESEARCH IMAGE SURVEY
  - RESPONDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD THE SURVEY PROCESS ARE DOWN SOMEWHAT
  
  - DISGUISED SALES PITCHES ARE AN INCREASING PROBLEM FOR THE INDUSTRY

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INDUSTRY RESPONSE RATE TRENDS

MAJOR SUPPLIERS OF LOCAL TV BROADCAST RATINGS TRENDS  
AS FOLLOWS:

Arbitron/Competitor Response Rate and Trends



\*Source: NAB Local Television Trend Analysis, November Survey

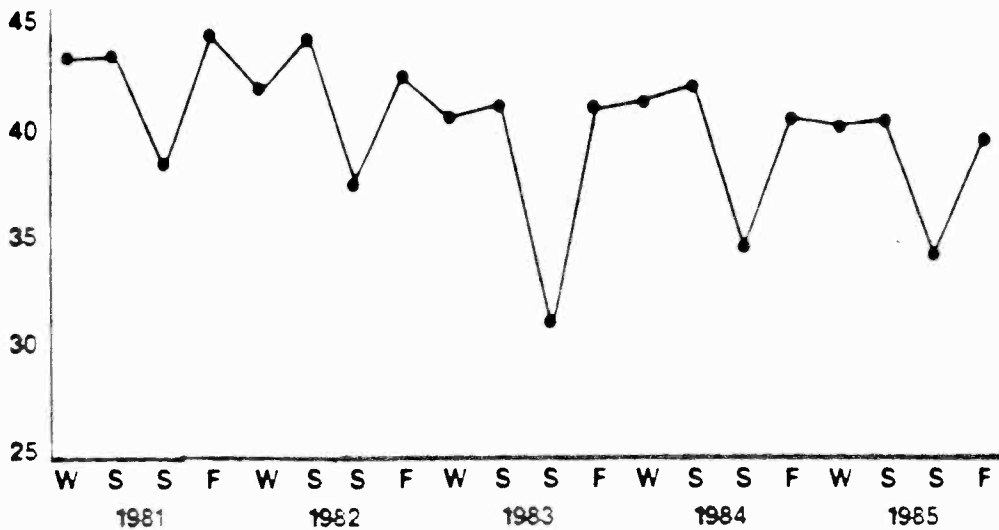
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ARBITRON RESPONSE RATE TRENDS

ARBITRON RADIO RESPONSE RATES HAVE ALSO BEEN ON A DECLINE:

Radio Metro Response Rate Trends  
1981-1985



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TRENDS

SOME CHANGES TO REDUCE RESPONSE ERROR HAVE RESULTED IN LOWER RESPONSE RATES:

- INCLUSION OF UNLISTED TELEPHONE HOUSEHOLDS IN THE SAMPLE FRAME (1978-1982)
- ELIMINATION OF TELEPHONE RETRIEVAL IN FAVOR OF BLACK DIFFERENTIAL SURVEY TREATMENT (WINTER 1982)

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TRENDS

CONCLUSIONS:

- THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAS BECOME LESS RESPONSIVE TO UNSOLICITED REQUESTS OF ALL KINDS
- SURVEY RESEARCH INDUSTRY HAS INCREASED ITS DEMAND FOR INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC
- "IN-HOME SELLING", TELEMARKETING, ETC., HAS ALSO INCREASED IN FREQUENCY AND PERSISTENCE
- HOUSEHOLDERS HAVE BECOME MORE SELECTIVE ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL SUPPORT
- SOME HAVE TURNED OFF COMPLETELY

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OUR OBJECTIVE:

- INCREASE SURVEY COOPERATION THROUGH THOUGHTFUL INVESTMENT IN SURVEY MATERIAL RESEARCH AND THE "INTERVIEWING" PEOPLE AND PROCESS

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INVESTMENT IN RESPONSE RATE IMPROVEMENT

SINCE 1980:

- 23 RESEARCH PROJECTS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED TO PROCEDURES THAT MIGHT IMPROVE RADIO SURVEY COOPERATION
- 24 OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS WHICH HAD RADIO RESPONSE RATE AS A SECONDARY OBJECTIVE
- TOTAL EXPENDITURE \$4 MILLION

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RESPONSE IDEAS THAT WORKED:

- DOLLAR DIARY PREMIUM
- WINDOW ENVELOPE/RESPONDENT-ADDRESSED LETTERS
- SIMPLIFIED LETTERS
- ESF POST-PLACEMENT LETTER
- INTERVIEWING SYSTEMS TEST
- NEW DAYPART DIARY

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IDEAS THAT DIDN'T:

- NON-MONETARY INDUCEMENTS
- "FAST REPORT" FOLLOW-UP LETTER
- "REWARD FOR DIARY" PREMIUM
- RETURN DIARY ENVELOPE

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CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

- ALTERNATIVE FOLLOW-UP
  - MAILGRAMS RATHER THAN PHONE CALLS AND LETTERS
  
- DIARY REVIEW WITH RESPONDENTS
  - "GO GET IT AND BRING IT TO THE PHONE"
  
- GEODEMOGRAPHIC PREMIUM
  - APPLY CLUSTER ANALYSIS TO PREMIUM EXPENDITURE;  
VARY THE PREMIUM BY LIFESTYLE
  
- MALE 18-24 PROCEDURES
  - PREMIUM AND SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP INDUCEMENTS TO  
HOUSEHOLDS WITH A YOUNG MAN IN RESIDENCE

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IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR OPERATIONS IN 1985 AND 1986  
RESULTING FROM INTERVIEWING SYSTEMS RESEARCH:

- RECRUITING, HIRING AND TRAINING
  - PHONE-IN RECRUITING AND HIRING
  - INCREASED "FIELD BRIEFINGS"
  
- SUPERVISION AND MOTIVATION
  - NEW PERFORMANCE-BASED PAY PLANS
  - NEW HIGH-LEVEL STAFF POSITION DEDICATED TO PERFORMANCE OF INTERVIEWERS
  - FIELD MANAGEMENT REORGANIZATION; MORE HOME OFFICE SUPPORT TO FIELD INTERVIEWERS
  
- TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS
  - PILOT TESTING NEW APPROACHES TO RESPONDENTS
  - IMPROVED SUPPORT MATERIALS

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"MODEL CITY" PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE: USE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN A LIVE  
SETTING TO LIFT RESPONSE RATES.  
DUPLICATE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS IN  
OTHER LOW RESPONSE MARKETS AS RAPIDLY  
AS POSSIBLE

CITY SELECTED: HOUSTON

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WHY HOUSTON?

GENERALLY A TOUGH MARKET FOR COOPERATION WITH  
SURVEY RESEARCH EFFORTS:

- IN TELEVISION, ALSO RESPONSE RATES IN THE 30'S
- IN OTHER RADIO SERVICES, BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE

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"MODEL CITY" PROGRAM

- INCREASE DIARY PREMIUM (SPRING 1986)
- NEW DAYPART DIARY (SUMMER 1986)
- PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN (TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO BEGIN IN MAY AND CONTINUE)
- USE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO PROSPECTIVE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS (SUMMER 1986)

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"MODEL CITY" PROGRAM

- TAKE SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO OTHER LOW RESPONSE MARKETS IN 1987

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