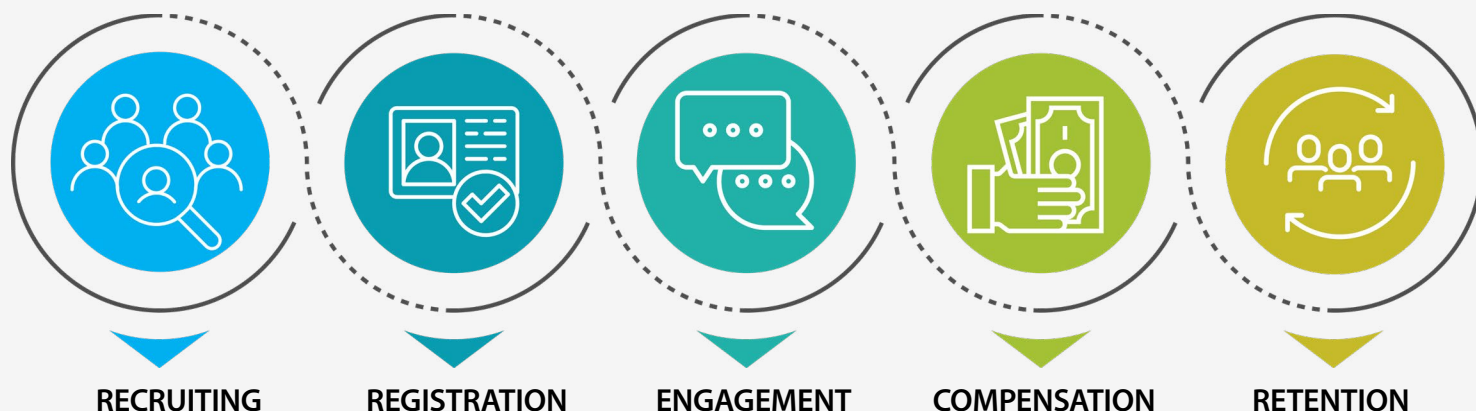# Data Quality

First-Class
Panel Management and Fraud Detection Systems

Combining advanced technology with the human touch to provide the most comprehensive approach in the industry for ensuring your survey contains the highest-quality data.

SYSTEMIC APPROACH

We employ a systemic approach throughout the life of each panel member to ensuring high-quality data from panel participants.

| RECRUITING | REGISTRATION | ENGAGEMENT | COMPENSATION | RETENTION |

symmetric
scientifically balanced samples worldwide

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Data Quality

RECRUITING

Our panel members join because they want to offer their opinions and perceptions to help businesses shape and improve their products/services. We are not part of a loyalty program or a side means to earning points for online games. Panel members sincerely want to participate in marketing research. Our consumer panel was originally created in the 1980's as a mail panel. In 1996 we moved that panel online and many of the original mail panel members are still part of the online panel today. Through the last 25+ years we have focused recruiting using multiple methods- print ads, fax, telephone, refer-a-friend programs, working directly with website owners and utilizing online affiliate programs. We have a dedicated Panel Recruiting department that uses their decades of expertise to find only the best sources for recruiting our panels.
They can also help you recruit your own communities if you need assistance.

REGISTRATION

- We use an industry-leading registration process that purges bad registrants from our panels and removes risky respondents before they ever get invited to your survey. To become a panel member, potential panelists must pass our 3-phase process:

- First, they fill out the detailed registration page and pass the embedded quality checks. We verify all potential panelists through StrikeIron®, which compares registration data to thousands of well-known databases that seamlessly integrate billions of records, to validate the accuracy of a person's demographics.

- Second, they complete the double-opt-in process in order to verify their identity.

- Third, those potential panel members who pass the first 2 steps will complete a follow-up survey loaded with traps, red-herring questions, IP vetting, digital fingerprint checking, and several open-ends that are personally reviewed by someone in our Quality Assurance Department. This identifies potential panel members who will take the time to answer open-ends with thoughtful, detailed responses. Those who successfully complete all these steps and provide thoughtful open-ended responses are added to our panel.

Data Quality

ENGAGEMENT

For over 20 years, we have offered our panel members more than just online surveys to keep them engaged. We regularly do iHuts, car clinics, taste tests, in-person and online focus groups, diary projects, and shop alongs with our panel members. Our vast array of project types makes members feel like they are part of a small community rather than a large online panel. Better member engagement means better data for you!
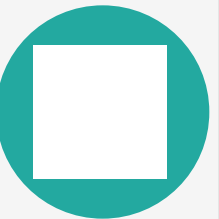
COMPENSATION

Our cash compensation model shows panel members we value their feedback and engagement. We never underpay participants – even if it means we pass on some projects. We believe it is more important to treat our panel members fairly. Our member communications about incentives set appropriate expectations, and our process for receiving incentives ensures a rapid payout, further underscoring how much we value our panel members.
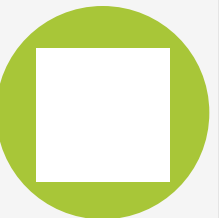
RETENTION

Panel member participation is carefully monitored through our proprietary sampling system, Icion®. We immediately remove cheaters and underperforming panelists. This way, we retain only those participants who are committed to providing high-quality responses and data. Even with our rigorous approach to data quality, our member retention is an average of over 3 years, compared to an industry average of six months.

Sleuth™

A Proprietary Tool to Ensure Data Quality
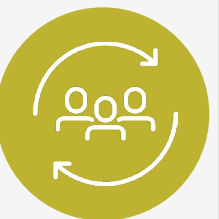
At Decision Analyst, we aren't satisfied with providing just the highest-quality respondents available. We continue to monitor data quality throughout each survey project. Sleuth™ is a proprietary system that combines industry-leading fraud-detection tools of Research Defender, StrikeIron®, BrowserHawk®, Maxmind, digital fingerprinting, and our fraud checking methods, algorithms, and a human element to review all survey data by hand. Sleuth™ ensures that each participant is a legitimate person through these checks:

- **Digital Fingerprinting:** Everyone's personal computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone creates an individual "fingerprint" by the browser and other device-specific settings. By checking the digital fingerprint, Sleuth™ reduces the chance of having a duplicate respondent in a given survey to less than 1 in 10,000.

- **Risky Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) Addresses:** A TCP/IP address is a label assigned to each device (e.g., computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone) in a computer network on the internet. We monitor all TCP/IP addresses for irregularities and block those deemed "high risk" of fraudulent behavior from surveys.

- **Geo-Location Verification:** The TCP/IP address's physical location is checked against target geographic areas to verify compliance with sampling specifications.

- **Anonymous Proxies:** We block respondents who hide their identities by routing through an anonymous proxy server or VPN.

- **Threat Potential Score:** The numeric value of a respondent's threat level

- **Tor:** Tor (The Onion Router): hides a user's location and usage.

- **Bot:** A bot is a software application that performs automated, repetitive, pre-defined tasks that mimic human behavior.

- **Text Analytics Score:** Composite score for text analytics. This score takes into consideration profanity, gibberish, copy/pasting, similarity to other responses, and response length.

- **Speedsters:** Checking how quickly the respondent is taking the survey and comparing it against the average survey time.

- **Straightliners:** Choosing the same response over and over again or making a pattern with their answers

- **Time Zone Check:** Checking if the time zone on the respondent's computer is in line with your sampling frame.

- **Suspicious Changes:** Changes to an IP address, digital fingerprint, and/or complete status are flagged. Multiple changes in IP and fingerprint indicate a user is employing software, or a plug-in, that blocks or masks our ability to track location.

- **Reviewing Panel Partners Respondents' Past-Survey History:** When we bring our vetted, trusted sample partners into a project, we can view how many surveys they have completed in the past 24 hours. We can then decide if we should disqualify them as a professional survey taker or high-risk respondent.

Sleuth™ also adds a human element to data quality:

- All surveys contains open ended questions that ask all respondents to go into details about the survey they just completed. Those who do not answer properly are also removed from the survey completes by our dedicated Quality Assurance Department. Validating with technology is step one; validating that someone has read your survey and understood it is an added step Decision Analyst offers that no one else does.

- We augment these tools with custom pre-screeners: a uniquely innovative, proven, and proprietary approach to data quality that detects outliers in data and removes over-reporters. By asking pre-screening questions (that are customized based on your target audience), we make sure we are getting only the right people to your survey.

- We have also partnered with Research Defender to apply their proprietary machine learning APIs to identify respondents who are either fraudulent or who have committed fraudulent behavior in the past. This allows us to look beyond your survey to evaluate respondent behavioral credibility within and outside the marketing research ecosystem.

SOURCE VETTING

In addition to building and managing our own panels for more than 30 years, we specialize in aggregating and vetting other sources. We apply our quality standards to all survey responses running through our system, whether that is through our panel, a third party, or a client list. Our experience gained from collaborating with panel partners for over three decades allows us to complete even your most difficult and hard-to-reach audiences with only the most trustworthy sample in the industry.

Our Panels Stand Out From the Competition

- **Worldwide consumer panel**
  Millions of members take surveys in 11 languages and in over 200 countries and territories

- **5 Specialty B2B panels**
  Medical, Contractors, ITDMs, Executives, and Physicians

- **Average panel member tenure 3 years**
  (industry average is 6 months)

Learn More about
Our Panels:

CLICK HERE

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