Oxford Internet Survey 2009

Sample and Weighting

One of the aspects that makes the Oxford Internet Surveys unique is the fact that they are conducted face-to-face. This has resulted in a high response and completion rate over the years. Since 2003, all OxIS surveys have been conducted in the field with respondents through door-to-door home interviews. The OII designed the survey instruments and research methodology. The personal interviews were conducted by ICM's trained interviewers. ICM is a full-service consultancy that specialises in behavioural and opinion research and which has accumulated a national team of interviewers with experience in face-to-face interviewing.

Sampling

Sampling was based on a multi-stage random sampling design. First, a random sample of 175 paired Enumeration Districts (EDs), stratified by region, was selected. Then within each selected ED a random sample of 10 addresses was selected from the Postal Address File (PAF).

First Stage: Selection of ED Sample points

1)   Sampling points were allocated to each of the 10 Government Regions in proportion to the population in each region.

2)   In each Government Region all EDs were paired with an adjacent ED that is most similar in terms of it's ACORN type

3)   Within 2) above all paired ED with a combined population of 60 or more people were listed in descending order of ACORN type, the most affluent pair at the top of the list and the poorest pair at the bottom.

4)   The populations of each set of paired EDs (of all adults aged 14+) were be accumulated down this list. Using a random start and fixed sampling interval the required number of paired ED's was selected giving each ED a probability of selection proportionate to its size.

Second stage: Household selection

Within each selected ED, interviewers were issued with 10 randomly selected addresses from which they were expected to achieve a 60% response rate. A further three addresses were issued to be used only if 6 interviews could not be achieved with the original 10 addresses. An additional 316 addresses were issued.

Out of a total of 3,816 addresses issued, 572 lay in areas that interviewers felt unable to work in. Overall, 3,244 addresses were visited by ICM staff. The outcome of these visits is shown in the table below.

Address Occupied	97.1%	3149
Interviewer unable to locate address	1.3%	43

Commercial Property	0.6%	20
Property vacant/no longer a dwelling/new build not occupied	0.4%	14
Property vacant – old building	0.5%	17
Property vacant – new building	-	1
Total	100%	3,244

In cases where the selected addresses proved to be vacant, demolished or were commercial property interviewers were allowed to go to the closest inhabited dwelling. In all, out of 3,244 addresses visited by ICM staff for the purpose of this research 95 were substitute addresses used because the original address proved to fall into one of these categories.

Third Stage: Random Selection of respondent

At each address, respondents for interview were selected by asking the person who answered the door if it would be possible to interview the person normally resident at that household aged 14 or over with the next birthday.

A person normally resident was defined as someone living in the household who is related to the person answering the door or living with someone in the household as a partner. In cases where the person answering the door did not know which household member had the next birthday a respondent was selected by choosing the person with a first name starting with a letter nearest the beginning of the alphabet. This rule was employed by interviewers on the first such occasion, and a person with a first name starting with a letter nearest the end of the alphabet on the second such occasion and so on.

In all, only 218 respondents were selected by the alphabet rule.

Response rate

The results of the successful contacts made at each address are shown in the table below.

Addresses visited	3244	100%
Productive interview obtained	2013	62.1%
Refusal by person answering the door	254	7.8%
Refusal by selected respondent including terminated interviews	395	12.2%
Unable to contact after repeated visits to address during fieldwork period	487	15.0%
Replacement address	95	2.9%

The high response rate achieved on this survey was aided by the fact that respondents understood that the research was being conducted by a department of Oxford University and by the promise that £1 would be donated to Oxfam for every successful interview by the University.

Reasons for refusal are given in the table below

Not interested. No wish to participate	485	74.7%
Too busy	62	9.6%
Ill/Not well	34	5.2%
Away for duration of fieldwork	18	2.8%
Language barrier	17	2.6%
Not stated	15	2.3%
Don't know	18	2.8%
Total refusals	649	100%

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is made up partly of the questions which are part of the World Internet Project (WIP) and questions unique to the OxIS and UK context. Many questions have remained the same since 2003 to enable comparisons between years, however, sometimes it was necessary to make small changes to the way in which a question was phrased, to reorganize the ordering of questions and to broaden the scope of who answered the questions. We have not seen major differences between years in the way in which respondents interpreted the questions. Please see the previous Internet use in Britain report (OxIS 2007) for more details on how the questions were asked in previous years. The questionnaire and methodology for all our surveys are available at: http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/microsites/oxis/

This year the questionnaire was piloted because considerable changes were made to the way in which the questionnaires were handled by the interviewers. Instead of one long questionnaire the interviewer had a general section of questions asked to all and separate sections to be asked to users, ex-users or non-users. The filter was made based on the last question in the general questionnaire which enquired about whether or not they used or had ever used the Internet themselves. This should not have influence the way in which the questions were presented to the participant.

In addition, a number of sensitive questions were presented to the participants in a separate envelope which respondents filled out themselves, anonymously, without the interviewer being able to see the answers of the respondent. This might have influenced the answers in comparison to previous surveys, we hope that people felt more comfortable to answer these questions.

Weighting

The profile of the sample achieved and the targets to which the sample was rim weighted are shown in the table below

	Unweighted	Weighted
Gender		
Male	42%	48%
Female	58%	52%
Age		
14-17	4%	6%
18-24	9%	10%
25-34	14%	18%
35-44	19%	18%
45-54	13%	16%
55-64	15%	12%
65+	26%	19%
Social Economic Grade		
AB	16%	22%
C1	34%	30%
C2	17%	18%
DE	25%	21%
Refused	7%	10%
Govt office region		
North East	5%	5%
North West	11%	12%
Yorks and H'side	9%	9%
East Midlands	7%	7%
West Midlands	7%	9%
Eastern	9%	10%
London	12%	13%
South East	15%	14%
South West	9%	9%
Wales	4%	5%
Scotland	9%	9%