

THE INTERVIEW

The NRS interview is designed to generate two main classes of information about readership:

- a) 'Average Issue Readership'
- b) 'Reading Frequency'

Questions to measure recency and frequency of readership of Saturday issues of daily newspapers were included on the questionnaire experimentally for half the sample in the periods January to June 1991, October to December 1992, August 1993 to March 1994 and on the full sample from April 1994 onwards. An ascription procedure is used to produce 6 day, 5 day and Saturday AIR for daily newspapers.

A question to broaden the Survey's coverage of Newspaper Supplements was tested experimentally on half of the sample from July 1996. The survey design was modified in May 1997, and the test questionnaire ran until June 1998. In July 1998, it was applied across the full sample. Data for Newspaper Supplements were taken from the test half of the sample and ascribed to the control half for the period July 1997 to June 1998. From July 1998, data are taken from the full sample.

A source of copy question has been asked since January 1992 and was last updated in January 2009.

A how disappointed question was included on the questionnaire experimentally for half the sample from January to September 1994 and on the full sample from October 1994. The question was removed in January 2007 and replaced by a Time Spent Reading question.

Average Issue Readership

The principle of measuring 'readership' which has been used in these surveys since their inception is to attempt to establish at each interview whether or not the person interviewed has looked at any copy of the publication in question during a period back from the day of interview equal to the interval at which the publication appears. (Reading on the actual day of interview is not included). Thus, for each daily newspaper the survey attempts to establish whether or not the person interviewed looked at a copy of it 'yesterday', the day before the interview (or 'yesterday or Saturday' in interviews conducted on Mondays). For each Sunday newspaper or weekly magazine, the survey finds out whether or not the participant has looked at a copy of it in the past seven days, and for each monthly magazine, whether or not he or she has looked at a copy of it during the past four weeks.

Past Year Reading, Recency of Reading and Frequency of Reading

The sequence and wording of the readership questions on the questionnaire were modified from October 2003 when Double Screen Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (DS-CAPI) replaced CAPI as the method of data collection. CAPI was the data collection method from July 1992 until September 2002. For the period October 2002 – September 2003, a split sample test was conducted on the survey whereby half of all interviews were conducted using CAPI and the other half using DS-CAPI. The DS-CAPI sequence and wording of readership questions are set out below.

The principal features of the DS-CAPI method in full-scale use from October 2003 are:

- a) Participants are shown publications on screen. Each screen contains up to six 'grouped' titles. As a first step, participants are asked to say for each screen in turn whether it contains any publication read or looked at "*for at least two minutes or more in the past 12 months*". Titles are presented to the participant in a common typeface. If the participant is not sure whether a screen contains any titles seen in the past year, the screen is shown to them again, along with screens where the participant has said 'No'. This time the participant is shown the mini-mastheads of the titles. Any further screens selected are coded as 'Yes' screens.
- b) For all screens containing any title read or looked at in the past 12 months, participants are asked for each title on each screen in turn whether they can remember "*reading or looking at any copy of it for at least two minutes in the past 12 months*". All titles are then coded as "*read in the past 12 months*" or not.

There are then additional questions asked for any title read in the past 12 months.

- c) For all publications apart from daily newspapers, participants are asked for each title read or looked at in the past 12 months: "*When did you last read or look at any copy of (NAME OF TITLE) (apart from today)?*" The participant's answer is coded into one of the following recency codes:
 - Yesterday
 - Past 7 days
 - Past 2 weeks
(fortnightly publications only)
 - Past 4 weeks
 - Past 2 months
(Bi-monthly publications only)
 - Past 3 months
 - Longer ago
- d) For daily newspapers only, participants are asked for each title read or looked at in the past 12 months whether they have read or looked at any copy of it 'yesterday' ('yesterday or Saturday' for interviews conducted on a Monday). For those titles not yet claimed, the participant is then asked "*When did you last read or look at any copy of (NAME OF TITLE) (apart from today)?*" The participant's answer is coded into one of the following recency codes 'Past 7 days', 'Past 4 weeks', 'Past 3 months' or 'Longer ago'.
- e) Participants are then asked the frequency of reading question for each title read or looked at in the past 12 months, immediately following the recency question for that title, with reference to the frequency scale shown to them on screen, as follows: "*Which of these best describes how often you read or look at (NAME OF TITLE)?*" Answers are then coded from the following:
 - Almost always (at least 3 issues out of 4)
 - Quite often (at least 1 issue out of 4)
 - Only occasionally (less than 1 issue out of 4)
 - Not in the past 12 months
- f) For daily newspapers only, participants are asked for each title read or looked at in the past 12 months when they last read or looked at any Saturday issue. Read past year readers of the Saturday issue are then asked the frequency of reading question for the Saturday issue.

- g) Read past year readers of the Saturday issue of daily newspapers are asked about read past year readership of each of the publication's supplements. A recency question is also asked for some supplements to establish average issue readership.

New Titles Screen

Titles first published in the past 12 months are featured on 'New Titles Screens' that are shown to participants after the read past year question has been asked for all other selected screens. Titles on this screen are shown to the participant in mini-masthead form only.

The duration that publications stay on the new titles screens is shown below. Depending on when a publication is launched this could lead to them being held on the new screens for variable periods.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • Daily publications | 3 – 5 months |
| • Sunday & Weekly publications | 6 – 8 months |
| • Fortnightly, monthly and longer period publications | 12 – 14 months |

Newspaper Supplements

From October 2003, Newspaper Supplements are asked about directly after questions on readership of the parent newspaper. RPY and recency questions are asked for newspaper supplements, but not frequency questions. Frequency questions are omitted to avoid the heavy load on the participant and the extra length of interview these would entail. Instead, reading probabilities are estimated for each Newspaper Supplement. It should be noted that the probability of a participant reading a given title has been estimated and not the frequency of reading.

If a participant has a read past 12 months claim for a newspaper, they are filtered to the supplements questions. It should be noted that for daily newspapers, a frequency claim for the Saturday issue is used as the filter.

Participants are presented with a screen of the different supplements including the parent paper and asked, "*Thinking of (PARENT NEWSPAPER) Have you read or looked at (SUPPLEMENT AND MAIN NEWSPAPER) in the past 12 months?*" For selected supplements read in the past 12 months, participants are then asked "*When did you last read or look at (SUPPLEMENT)?*"

The participant's answer is then coded into the standard recency codes.

Source of Copy

A source of copy question was added to the questionnaire in January 1992, following testing of the question for half the sample in April to June 1991. The question is asked following completion of recency and frequency questions for all titles and is asked for average issue readers only. The question was most recently amended in January 2009.

Participants are shown a list of precoded options as follows:

- I obtained it myself
- Someone else in my household obtained it
- Someone from another household obtained it
- Saw work or office copy
- Saw copy elsewhere

The participant is then asked "*Thinking of the last copy of (NAME OF TITLE) you read or looked at, which of these best describes how you came to see it?*"

If the participant answers one of the first two codes, they are then asked “*And which of these best describes how the copy was obtained?*” and is presented with the following options:

Paid-for copy –

- Bought at newsagent or shop
- Delivered by newsagent
- Subscription by post

Free copy –

- Delivered to home
- Picked up on bus, train or tube
- Picked up at station
- Handed out in street
- Picked up on plane or at airport
- Picked up in shop
- Other

Time Spent Reading

A ‘time spent reading’ question was added to the questionnaire in January 2007 and updated in October 2011. The question is asked after the source of copy question for average issue readers only. Participants are shown a list of precoded options and asked “*Roughly how long do you usually spend in total reading or looking at an issue of (NAME OF TITLE) by the time you’ve finished with it, including all the times you look at it and all the parts and sections?*”

The participant’s answer is coded into one of the following codes:

- Less than 5 minutes
- About 5 minutes
- About 10 minutes (new in October 2011)
- About 15 minutes (removed in October 2011)
- About 20 minutes (new in October 2011)
- About 30 minutes
- About 45 minutes (new in October 2011)
- About 1 hour
- About 2 hours
- About 3 hours or longer

For daily newspapers, time spent reading is recorded separately for the weekday and Saturday issues, with an instruction to include readership of all the sections of the newspaper.

Questionnaire/Screen Versions

From July 1998, and coinciding with the decision to adopt the new questionnaire concerning Newspaper Supplements, the number of rotations was increased to 24. From May 1997 – June 1998, and coinciding with the second stage of the split sample test concerning Newspaper Supplements, the number of rotations was increased to eight to fully rotate card order by layout by publication order within card on the CAPI questionnaire. Prior to May 1997 there were only four versions.

Three types of rotations are used. Details of the versions are shown on the next pages. The first type of rotation relates to the order in which publication screens are presented to participants. There are two orders, forward and reverse. The second type of rotation relates to the positions publications occupy on the publication screen. There are six versions, referred to as Layout 1-6. The six versions ensure each title occupies one of the six positions on the screen. The third type of rotation relates to the order in which publications are asked about in the DS-CAPI questionnaire. There are six versions.

NRS Rotation Orders

	Rotation	Screen Order	Layout	Verbal Prompt
A	I	Forward	1	Forward 1
	II	Forward	2	Forward 2
	III	Forward	3	Forward 3
	IV	Forward	4	Forward 4
	V	Forward	5	Forward 5
	VI	Forward	6	Forward 6
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B	I	Reverse	1	Forward 1
	II	Reverse	2	Forward 2
	III	Reverse	3	Forward 3
	IV	Reverse	4	Forward 4
	V	Reverse	5	Forward 5
	VI	Reverse	6	Forward 6
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C	I	Forward	1	Reverse 1
	II	Forward	2	Reverse 2
	III	Forward	3	Reverse 3
	IV	Forward	4	Reverse 4
	V	Forward	5	Reverse 5
	VI	Forward	6	Reverse 6
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D	I	Reverse	1	Reverse 1
	II	Reverse	2	Reverse 2
	III	Reverse	3	Reverse 3
	IV	Reverse	4	Reverse 4
	V	Reverse	5	Reverse 5
	VI	Reverse	6	Reverse 6

Screen Order in Each Questionnaire

	Forward Screen Order	Reverse Screen Order
National Daily Newspaper	1	41
	2	40
	3	39
Regional Daily Newspapers	4	43
	5	42
Regional Monthly Magazines	6	44
Consumer Magazines	7	38
	8	37
	9	36
	10	35
	11	34
	12	33
	13	32
	14	31
	15	30
	16	29
	17	28
	18	27
	19	26
	20	25
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	24	21
	25	20
	26	19
	27	18
	28	17
	29	16
	30	15
	31	14
	32	13
	33	12
	34	11
	35	10
	36	9
	37	8
38	7	
39	6	
40	5	
41	4	
Sunday Newspapers	42	3
	43	2
	44	1

NRS Layout Rotations and Verbal Prompt

	<u>Layout</u>		<u>Verbal Prompt</u>													
	<u>First Sort</u> (typescript)	<u>Second sort</u> (mini-mastheads)	<u>Forward</u>	<u>Reverse</u>												
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Numbers 1-6 indicate the 6 different publications on each screen.