



## Frequently Asked Questions for Market & Social Research

### What is market and social research?

Market and social research provides accurate and timely information the behaviour, needs, attitudes, opinions and motivations of a population. Armed with this knowledge, businesses are able to develop products and services to meet the desires of their customers and governments can tailor policies and programs to the needs of citizens. Also, important national statistics on tobacco use, television ratings, tourism movements, unemployment and so on can be reliably determined.

### Why participate in a survey?

Participating in surveys:

- Ø Is fun – you often are asked to give opinions about things that you otherwise don't get a chance to;
- Ø Is interesting, it gets you thinking about things that you might not otherwise think about;
- Ø Helps companies improve products and services for you as their customer;
- Ø Helps formulate public policy so that better services can be provided for you.

### How do I know you won't try to sell me anything?

It is illegal to pretend to be doing market research if the real purpose of the call is telemarketing. Anyone caught doing this can be penalised under the Trade Practices Act.

### What gives you the right to call me when I haven't given you permission?

People have the right to privacy and participation in research is always voluntary. But people also have a right to have their opinions heard. From studies on public health, to voting intentions, to television ratings, to surveys of customer satisfaction for developing better products and services, market and social research provides valuable information about our society.

### Won't I get lots of pesky marketing calls or things in the mail if I answer surveys?

No, market and social research companies are not permitted to sell anything or pass your information on to their clients or other organisations – in fact they are not even permitted to tell their clients whether or not they interviewed you – unless you are already listed with their client for some other reason.

### How secure is the information that I give them?

Absolutely confidential! Market and social research companies are bound by the Privacy Act, and there are severe penalties for breaching your privacy. Although the interviewer is likely to ask personal questions such as your age category or your income, research companies are only allowed to keep and use this data as overall statistics, and once their quality control checks are complete they delete the information that associates the statistics with individual respondents.

### How can I check the credentials of a company that has called me to do a survey?

Click [here](#) to see a list of registered research organisation. You can also call the Market and Social Research Surveyline and speak with a customer support person on 1300 364 830.

### Do I have to participate in a survey?

No, you don't, but most surveys are short, interesting, and for the benefit of consumers generally, so you are strongly encouraged to participate. You will find the interviewers are always well-mannered, and you will enjoy the experience.

If the survey is longer than 20 minutes you will usually find that an incentive is offered, such as a gift voucher, cheque, or some other benefit.

### **Why have I been selected to participate in a survey?**

Most surveys are based on random samples, and these are often selected from the telephone book, or sometimes 'random digit dialing' is used for surveys, which means that a computer has generated a random number in your area for the interviewer to call.

### **I have a silent number, why have I been called?**

Research companies are permitted to call phone numbers, even if they are not listed in the phone book. If you do not wish to participate in surveys, the interviewer will always accept a polite 'no thanks'.

### **I think I am getting calls because I completed another survey, completed a promotion, or registered at a web site, and I don't want to get calls on that basis any more.**

You can always ask the interviewer why you have been selected for the survey, and if it came from some other company, research panel or promotion, they will tell you this so you can de-list with that database.

### **I have joined the Do Not Call Register, so why am I still getting research calls?**

The Do Not Call Register does not prevent you from receiving genuine market and social research calls. However now that you have joined the Do Not Call Register, you will not receive tele-marketing calls from people trying to sell you something, so you will get a lot less calls generally.

### **I have joined the Do Not Call Register and I am still getting marketing calls from organisations trying to sell me something**

If you are getting calls from sales people after joining the Do Not Call Register you should ask for the name of the organisation that is making the call, and you can submit a complaint at [www.donotcall.com.au](http://www.donotcall.com.au)

### **What if I don't want to participate in the survey?**

Most surveys are not compulsory, but you are encouraged to participate. However if you clearly and politely decline to participate in a survey, the interviewer will always accept your final decision.

### **I want to do more surveys, can I list somewhere for these?**

Yes, you will find a list of market research companies at [www.amsrs.com.au](http://www.amsrs.com.au) and you will find that many firms have consumer panels with which you can register at their web sites. Research panels are only ever used by the one firm, and there are strict rules to ensure that research companies protect your privacy.

### **Can I call to complain?**

Yes. It is best to complain directly to the research company in question. You can find a directory of market and social research companies at [www.amsrs.com.au](http://www.amsrs.com.au) However if you are still not satisfied, you can call the industry surveyline on 1300 364 830.

## **Script for Interviewers**

### **If respondent doesn't want to get any more calls**

If you don't want to receive any more calls from our organisation, I can arrange that. Note phone number and provide details to shift supervisor.

### **If respondent has signed up to Do Not Call Register**

Our organisation is a research firm and is not covered by the Do Not Call Register. However If you don't want to receive any more calls from our organisation, I can arrange that. Note phone number and provide details to shift supervisor.

AMSRS and AMRO jointly launched a public awareness message called, Your Views Count, supported by a best practice toolkit for the research industry for telephone interviewing, called LIST.



For more details and resources check out the website

[www.yourviewscount.com.au](http://www.yourviewscount.com.au)