The Survey Research Unit:
Who are they and what do they do?

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SRU - History

- Established in 2002 to:
  - coordinate survey research at The University of Auckland
  - manage the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) resources
  - provide an organisational unit for staff with expertise in survey research
- Prof David Thomas was the Director of the SRU until November 2008.
- Based in the School of Population Health

Key People

- *Director (PT) – Dr Rob McNeill (SoPH)*
- *Operations Manager (PT) – Angela Robinson*
- *IT support (Casual) – John Trevithick & Sue Blythe*
- *Uniservices – Kerry Price/Shireen Nanayakkara*
- *Academic Advisory Group*
- *Executive Governance Group*

Current Services

- Computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI)
- Computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI)
- On-site computer-based surveys
- Web-based surveys
- Face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups
- Postal surveys
- Questionnaire design and pilot testing
- Data entry from paper questionnaires
- Survey data analysis and report writing

CATI Resources

- Up to 16 work stations
- Each station has telephone dialling, headset and PC linked to a central server
- Interviewer recruitment & training
- Real-time monitoring of interviewer PCs
- Supervisor & team of interviewers

Advantages of CATI

- Relatively high response rates
- Can obtain random lists of residential telephone numbers, with geographical location attached
- Random selection and screening for demographic groups easier
- High accuracy rate as responses entered directly to database
- Quality control of interviewing through supervision & assistance
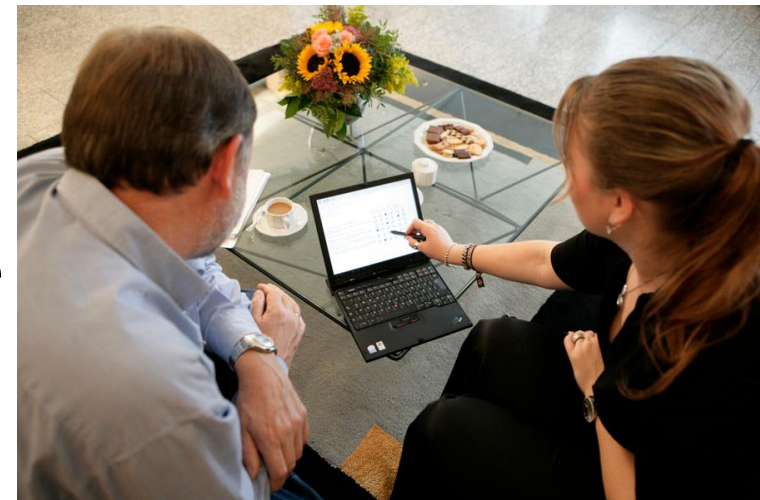- Cost effective for most sample sizes and especially for regional & national surveys

On-Site Computer-Based Surveys

- We have 10 netbooks running a wireless LAN capable of conducting on-site computer-based surveys in groups or individuals can complete the surveys anywhere within the range of the wireless network
- Great for capturing participants in difficult settings
- Great for research requiring group activities
- Can give privacy/confidentiality
- Can deliver multimedia content
- Data collected directly into database

Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews

- Our web survey system can run individually on each of our 10 netbook computers to allow us to do computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPIs)
  - i.e. face-to-face interviews with the computer guiding the interview and capturing the responses.
- Great for complicated surveys
- Good for difficult participants
- Can deliver multimedia content
- Data collected directly into database

Face-to-Face Interviews & Focus Groups

- Some of our staff are trained and available for conducting face-to-face interviews and focus groups

- Good for where you need more in-depth qualitative data
- Good for stakeholder engagement

Postal Surveys

- We can coordinate postal surveys
  - Can obtain random lists of residential addresses for national surveys
  - Good for surveys with engaged participants
  - Good for participants who would find it difficult to do online surveys
  - Good for surveys that wouldn't work online

Current & Recent Projects

- Nelson Marlborough lifestyle survey (CHSRP)
  - CATI with approx. 2000 residents of Nelson Marlborough
- Home Safety Study – FALLS (Bridget Kool, Epi & Biostats)
  - CATI with approx. 1100 people in 4 regions
- Maximizing Health for Older People - BRIGHT trial (Ngaire Kerse, General Practice)
  - CATI with approx. 4000 older people, baseline and follow-up
- Use of Nutritional Resources in Schools & ECEs – MISSION ON (CHSRP)
  - Nationwide CATI with approx. 2000 schools and ECEs
- Workplace Bullying (UoA/Massey Psych Depts)
  - On-site computer-based survey of approx. 1200 workers in Auckland
- Workplace Humor (Business School, UoA)
  - Web survey

Advantages for Using SRU

- Located within the UoA, with links to multiple research centres and units
- Wide range of specialist expertise & strong interdisciplinary links
- Usually less costly than outside suppliers
- Record of completed projects
- Effective use of project teams
- Networks with specialist groups outside Univ.
- UniServices support for proposals and projects

How to Access Our Services

- Contact me (Rob)
- Meet to discuss your needs
- Supply you with an estimate or quote
- Visit us at Tamaki to see our CATI facility
- Set up meetings with research groups/depts

The Future of the SRU?

- Keen to work with other research teams to collaborate on projects, develop teaching and supervision of postgrad students within SRU
  - Give it a more academic focus rather than just being a service provider

- Personal academic interests relating to SRU:
  - Survey methodologies in general
  - Bias and error from different modes of delivery, and in different populations
  - Health measurement by surveys
    - Health status
    - Lifestyles
    - Attitudes, beliefs, motivations, etc.
  - But I'm open to any ideas of how we might collaborate on projects you are interested in…

THANK YOU