CAN LENGTHY SURVEYS WORK ONLINE? THE EXPERIENCE OF TGI GB

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Introduction

This paper provides an update on the experience of TGI GB relating to web interviews. It explains our approach to different aspects of the online interviewing process including respondent recruitment, questionnaire design, fieldwork management and maximisation of response rates. The paper addresses the challenges which we have faced and the solutions devised to meet those challenges. It also explores the online respondents' profile in detail and assesses how it differs from that of the paper respondents' profile. We go on to look at how the online data compares against the paper data, not only for print media, but also on other parts of the TGI data. Finally, we will round up by providing some concluding remarks.

Background

For those not familiar with TGI, it is a syndicated product and media consumption survey operating as a global network in more than 60 countries around the world. TGI GB is a 25,000 sample survey with recruitment undertaken on the back of the face to face Omnibus. The omnibus is a weekly syndicated survey carried out amongst 2000 adults, representative of the GB population. TGI GB has been operating since 1969 so this year, 2009, the survey reached a major milestone, its 40th birthday, which in today's marketplace is quite an achievement.

However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels and it is imperative that TGI continues to develop. Past success is no guarantee of future success. As we are all only too aware, the research market is extremely competitive and clients are ever more demanding. One fundamental shift in the changing nature of the market research industry has been the growth of online interviewing.

The rapid increase in online interviewing has transformed, and indeed continues to transform, the market research sector and online panels have grown enormously in many countries. The Kantar Group's own Lightspeed panel, for example, now numbers in excess of 140,000 in the UK alone and it has access to more than 17m household members across 29 countries in Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. To remain competitive in today's market, while ensuring that a high quality sample is maintained covering all sectors of the population, it was important for TGI to embrace online interviewing. It is often argued that, by moving completely online, it is questionable whether one obtains a truly representative sample. On the other hand, by remaining as a completely paper questionnaire, was TGI missing out on other specific sectors of the population, namely those who may have been only too willing to complete the survey, but only if it was online. Given this possibility, our preferred route was to offer respondents the option of undertaking the TGI survey online or on paper - and not to move totally online. This option would be offered after we had recruited them at the omnibus stage. TGI moved partially to online in 2007 and now approximately 20% of all interviews are via the web. We expect this proportion to gradually increase each year.

The Questionnaire

The paper TGI questionnaire is currently 130 pages long and takes approximately 3 hours to complete. This is no mean task for respondents and we did not envisage that anyone would be willing to undertake the questionnaire online in one session. In truth, a three hour web survey goes against one of the widely accepted rules of online interviewing specifically; limit the length of the questionnaire to no more than 30 minutes. For this reason, the TGI online questionnaire is divided into three separate sections of approximately one hour each, which, of course, is still well above the 30 minute rule. However, the task is made less daunting by the fact that respondents can dip in and out of the survey as often as they wish, carrying on where they left off each time.

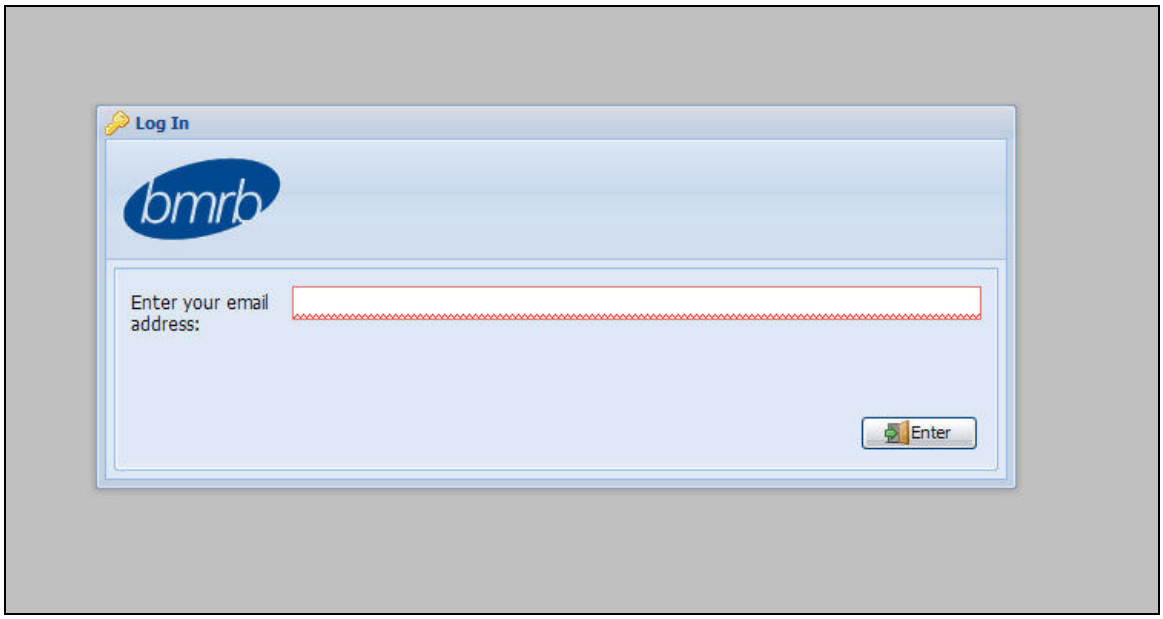
The questionnaire constantly undergoes close scrutiny to see how it can be improved, both in terms of its structure and its appearance. What is the ideal length for each section? What questions should be included in each part? What colour should the template and text be? What images, if any, should be included? Can the long grids be simplified? And so on. All of these issues required careful consideration, in order to maximise respondent engagement and response rates.

TGI also undertook research amongst its online respondents to elicit their views regarding their experience with the questionnaire, and to establish where it could be improved. The general feedback was that respondents wanted the questionnaire to look more interesting, be relevant to them and be shorter.

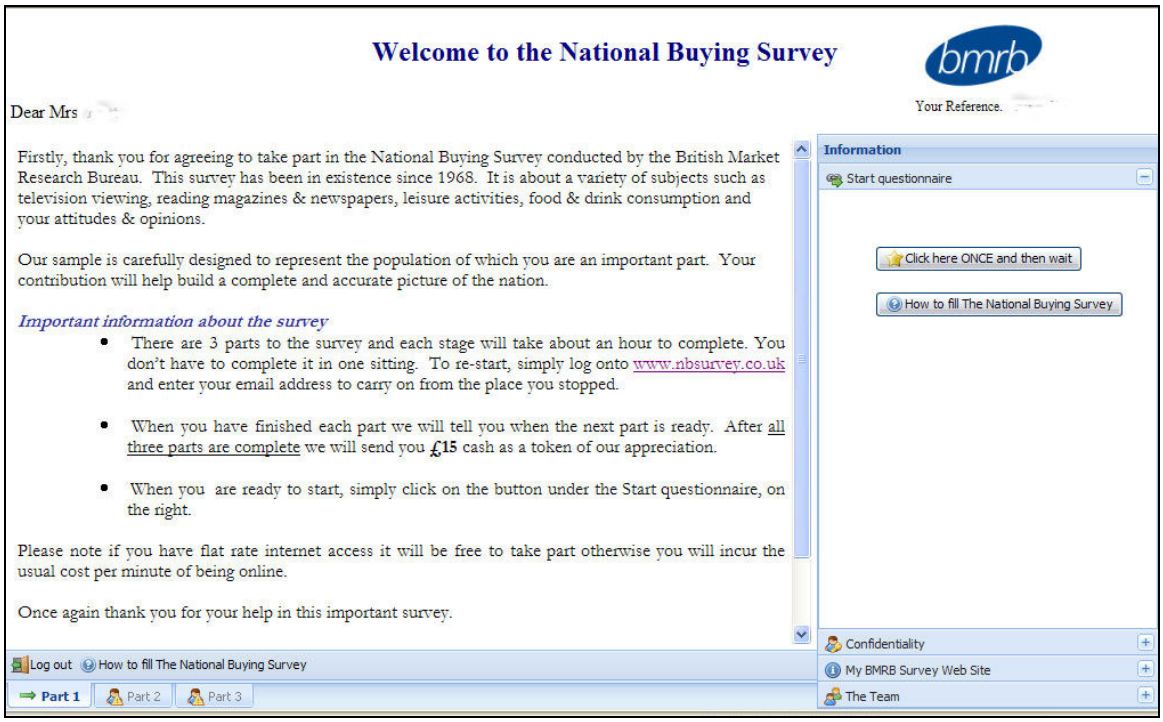
Following the respondents research, the look of the questionnaire was improved. Firstly, the initial log in and introduction pages were refreshed to make them as short as possible, keeping them engaging but still supplying the key information. We knew that the level of drop out was highest at the start of the interview, so it was critical to make the first page as enticing as possible, whilst still adhering to MRS guidelines about informing people of their rights and addressing any data protection issues. The key requirements were to make the questionnaire simple, clear and easy to use.

Here are examples of:

The log in page;

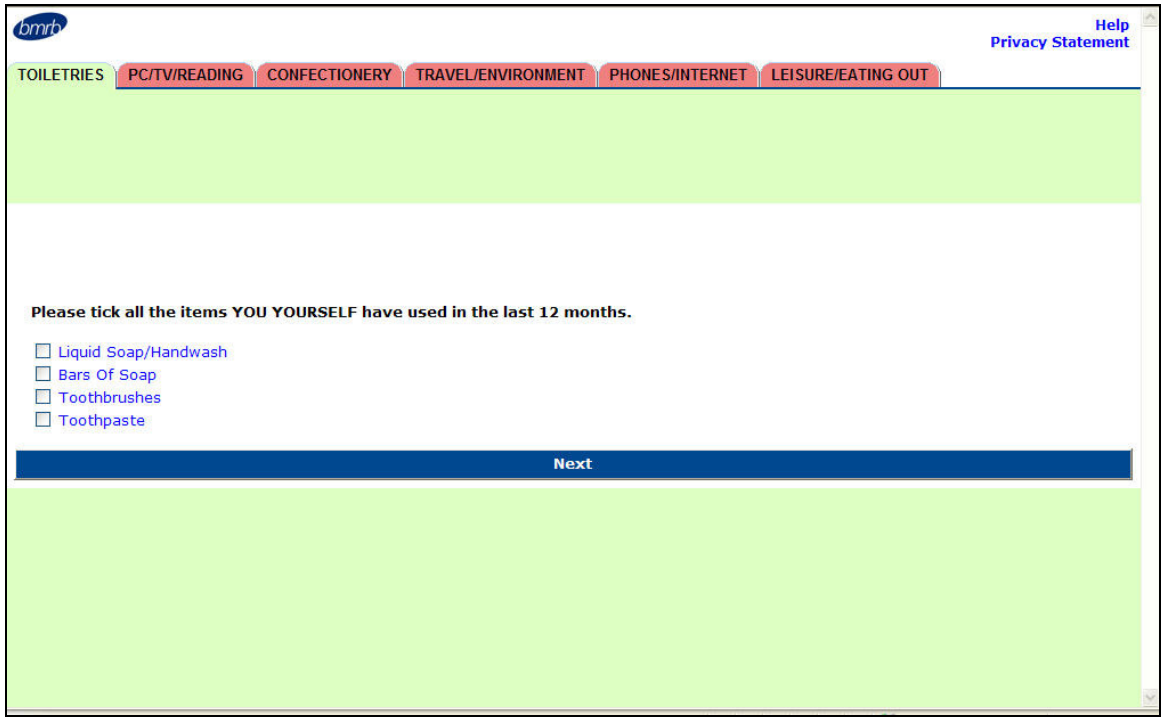


The welcome page;



And we also have simple instructions on how to complete the survey;

For the online questionnaire, a new template was introduced. This included a revised colour scheme and the insertion of a progress bar. The subject of a progress bar received much internal discussion. In view of the length of the TGI questionnaire, we were only too aware that the movement on the progress bar would look painfully slow and may have the effect of discouraging respondents. However, given the strength of feeling amongst respondents that a progress bar should be inserted, we decided to proceed with one in the form of tabs across the screen. Each tab relates to a different category in the questionnaire, which once completed, turns a different colour. An example follows:



The structure of the questionnaire was also revised. The sections were changed such that section 1 was slightly shorter than it was previously, and sections 2 and 3 marginally longer. This was because we knew that once respondents had completed stage 1, they were more likely to stick with the task until the end of stage 3. Making stage 1 too long had the effect of discouraging the respondent. We also tried to make the question sets less repetitive and integrated short and long subjects in each section. TGI

also identified exactly where respondents had decided to pull out of the survey to establish if there was anything we could do about that particular page.

Further development work is now underway to speed up the questionnaire and make it more interesting to respondents. This includes keeping the number of words in the questions to a minimum, introducing more visually appealing buttons, drag and drop of images or words, and slide bars. We also need to address the issue of large grids through the use of flash technology.

Questionnaire Delivery

TGI has constantly reviewed how the online questionnaires should be delivered to respondents as this has a pronounced effect on the response rates. The questionnaire was originally distributed using web-links in emails, which respondents had given us at the recruitment stage. However, we found that a significant proportion of the emails were not getting through for a number of reasons including: emails were being blocked by the ISPs as TGI was sending out too many, respondents giving incorrect email addresses, interviewers incorrectly typing the email address, or the emails simply disappearing into the respondent's spam box. The net effect of all of the above was a relatively poor response rate.

Therefore, we decide to adopt a different approach. This involved setting up a specially designed website for the survey. At the recruitment stage the respondent typed in his or her own email address, twice, into the CAPI machine, the second time for verification. The interviewer then wrote this email address on a postcard, which also included the address of the questionnaire website, and handed this back to the respondent. The respondent would then go to the website using the card as a reference, and log in using the email address they had given the interviewer. It is not unusual for respondents to have multiple email addresses and it was particularly important that the email address used when logging into the survey, was the same one as the respondent had put into the CAPI machine. Once this was confirmed the respondent was ready to start the interview. This method has proved to be far more effective than previously, and has resulted in a much better response rate.

At the end of the first section of the questionnaire, the respondent receives a message which tells them when the second part will be ready. The same applies when they have completed the second section. In between we also send respondents email reminders. An incentive of £15 is provided on completion of all three parts. Therefore, if respondents complete only parts 1 or parts 1 and 2 they receive nothing, but we do not use the data from these interviews. We have found though, that by providing the next section as quickly as possible, we can increase response rates. This is because there are a number of respondents out there who are keen to press on and complete the whole questionnaire as quickly as possible.

Response Rates

When offered the choice between taking a paper or online questionnaire, 29% now choose the online version, an increase from 25% two years ago. This figure is achieved when respondents believe that the incentive for the online version is the same as the paper questionnaire. Only when respondents have given their preferred option, do we reveal that the incentive is in fact £15 for online. This compares to £5 up front for paper.

Of those who agree to take the questionnaire online, approximately 39% complete all three parts. The response rate has improved as we have introduced new design changes to the online survey including the structure, the aesthetics and on the reminders. However, it still compares unfavourably with about 46% for the paper questionnaire. Bear in mind though, that the profile of the online respondent is markedly different from that of the paper questionnaire. Online respondents are likely to be male, young and upmarket, the groups which are harder to reach whatever method of interviewing is used. Once we have enlisted respondents at stage 1 of the interview, they generally tend to stay on board for all three parts. The biggest drop-out is between those agreeing to take the questionnaire at all and then actually starting stage 1.

Table 1 details the proportion of respondents which accept the paper and online questionnaires and the eventual response rates. Interestingly, a high proportion of 15-24s still opt for the paper version. Moreover, although the acceptance rate for the online interview is lower amongst older respondents, the eventual response rate is higher than for their younger counterparts

Table 1

	Jan - March 2009	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
All Placements	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Paper Placement	71%	61%	65%	63%	69%	85%
Online Placement	29%	39%	35%	37%	31%	15%
Paper usable on paper placement	46%	30%	35%	32%	45%	60%
Online usable on online placement	39%	24%	29%	39%	45%	59%

Despite this, we can see from table 2 that the online sample is still biased towards respondents aged under 45.

Table 2

	Jan - March 2009 (online and paper weeks)	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
All Usable	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Paper Usable	75%	66%	69%	59%	69%	85%
Online Usable	25%	34%	31%	41%	31%	15%

Reminders

A number of different reminders have been tested to boost response rates. The cheapest and quickest forms of reminders are emails and TGI uses these on a regular basis. However, to be sure that everyone actually receives a reminder of some sort, and to overcome the problems outlined previously regarding the sending out of emails, we also despatch postcards to those who have not started the questionnaire. This obviously incurs extra costs, but it has had a positive effect on the overall response rate. Automated voice messages to respondents' landline phones have also been used for online respondents, but have not proved as effective as the combination of email and paper reminders. Nevertheless, AVMs continue to be deployed on the paper survey and remain a relatively cheap and effective form of reminder.

Data Quality and Integration

Data quality is of paramount importance to TGI and we take great care to assess the responses. For the online interviews, this comprises of thirteen measures which identify poor quality response during an interview. These are:

- Total number of answers across the whole of each of the 3 interviews
- Time taken to complete each of the 3 interviews – very short times signify a poor response
- Number of products used (for each of interviews 1 & 2)
- Number of codes in Print Media grids in each of the 3 interviews
- Number of codes in Print Media Topics of Interest grids (in interview 3)
- Number of codes in TV programmes grids (in interview 3)

Respondents in the lowest 5% for at least 6 of these 13 measures are rejected. Typically, the overall rejection rate averages at about 2%.

In addition, TGI has added satisfaction questions to the end of the online questionnaire, to ask how respondents feel about the experience and see where it can be improved. We are yet to analyse the results of these questions as they were added in the July-Sept 09 fieldwork cycle.

Given that TGI decided to opt for the dual online and paper approach, this meant that we had to combine two data sources. The online interview is scripted in Dimensions, our data processing software. The paper questionnaire is produced in Microsoft Word, scanned using the ReadSoft Eyes and Hands software and then processed in PTK (TGI's proprietary software). Great care is taken to ensure that both questionnaires are identical which can be quite time consuming. Moreover, the two datasets are meticulously scrutinised to produce one harmonised database. Our data checking process involves a continuous comparison of data, quarter by quarter, and comparing online against paper, by means of significance tests. Data from the previous quarter are checked against the new quarter's data and we investigate any significant shifts which can arise for various reasons. Should our investigations identify errors, a corrective solution is applied. Errors can differ in nature, but in the main, they are caused by questionnaire changes or during data capture and processing.

TGI is currently working on producing one update of the questionnaire which then splits into online and paper. Although we are looking at various alternatives, the favourite to date is the OPAL software developed by our partners at Research International in Sweden. We are working closely with them to create a workable solution but we are not there yet.

Data Comparison

In this section we take a close look at how online respondents differ in terms of their profile, compared with the paper respondents. We have analysed the demographics as well as the media and product consumption habits of both groups to establish what is distinctive about each of them. What makes them choose the online approach for completing a long survey such as TGI? By exploring their characteristics, TGI gains a better understanding of the respondents, allowing us to work towards an improved sample profile.

Groups

We based our data investigations on GB TGI 2009 Q3 which covers the fieldwork months from April 2008 until March 2009. This equates to a total sample of 24,836 weighted to 49.2 million adults, which represents the GB population age 15 +.

The two groups are defined as follows:

	Groups	**Sample**	**Population in '000**
1)	Web respondents	3185	7,822
2)	Paper respondents	21651	41,383

1) those respondents who completed the TGI online
2) those respondents who completed the TGI paper version

Demographic Profile - Topline

We first defined these two groups in terms of their basic demographics and identified some major differences.

Table 3 reveals that respondents from Group 1, the web respondents, are predominantly male, young, belong to the higher end of the social spectrum (A, B and C1 social grade) and live in London and the South East of England.

Table 3

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents
Total Sample	100%	100%	100%
Sex: All **Men**	49%	**56%**	47%
Age Group: **15-24**	16%	**23%**	15%
Age Group: **25-34**	16%	**19%**	15%
Age Group: **35-44**	18%	**24%**	17%
National Social Grade : **ABC1**	56%	**67%**	54%
Standard Region: **Greater London and South East**	32%	**39%**	31%

The data from table 3 indicates that the option of completing TGI online is more attractive to those groups which are traditionally more difficult to reach than with a paper self-completion questionnaire. Therefore, the online version would seem to benefit the overall TGI sample profile by making it more representative of the whole GB population.

To ensure that the overall profile remains without bias (now that TGI had embarked on the dual online and paper self completion method), we examined a third group of respondents which was a subset of group 2, those who completed the survey on paper but who were still heavy Internet users and belonged to the higher end of the social spectrum (ABC1). We felt that this group compared favourably to the web respondents in terms of their basic demographic characteristics. We wanted to show that these two groups demonstrated very similar (if not identical) product and media consumption patterns, and hence provide proof that, by using different methodologies, we would not be biasing the data.

Demographic Profile - Details

The profile of the web respondents points to young and dynamic individuals. They tend to be single, in employment, are more likely to have changed job in the last 5 years and have a higher income. Furthermore, they have achieved a higher level of education, with the younger respondents still studying. Finally, online respondents are more likely to speak and understand a foreign language than their paper counterparts. Table 4 reveals that the third group, our paper internet users, demonstrate similar characteristics to web respondents

Table 4

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100%	100%	100%	100%
Marital Status: **Single**	25%	**31%**	24%	**26%**
Working Status: **Full-time**	36%	**45%**	30%	**54%**
Job Mobility: **Changed job within the last 5 years**	23%	**29%**	22%	**32%**
Family Income: Over £30,000 p.a.	32%	**45%**	30%	**54%**
TGI Socio Economic Levels (SEL): Top 10%	10%	**15%**	9%	**21%**
TGI Socio Economic Levels (SEL): Next 20%	20%	**25%**	19%	**32%**
TGI Socio Economic Levels (SEL): Next 30%	30%	**35%**	29%	**33%**
Highest Level of Education: High School up to Doctorate	46%	**58%**	44%	**66%**
Highest Level of Education: **Still studying**	9%	**15%**	8%	**13%**
Any foreign language knowledge	32%	**37%**	31%	**38%**

Print Media Consumption

This section looks at readership habits in terms of the traditional printed versions of newspapers, as opposed to the viewing of newspaper websites. Table 5 reveals how more or less likely respondents are to read certain types of press. The figures are illustrated as indices against the average which has been set at 100.

Weight of Reading

Table 5 looks at the weight of reading for newspapers, split into quality, mid-market and popular newspapers. We can see that the web respondents as well as the paper Internet respondents, are more likely to be readers of the quality press than the mid-market or the popular newspapers.

Table 5

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Quality News				
Weight Of Read: **Heavy (5.0+)**	100	**135**	93	**164**
Weight Of Read: Medium (2.1-4.9)	100	112	98	**152**
Weight Of Read: Light (0.1-2.0)	100	100	100	**164**
Weight Of Read: None (0)	100	94	101	65
Mid-Market				
Weight Of Read: Heavy (5.0+)	100	86	103	100
Weight Of Read: Medium (1.1-4.9)	100	104	99	126
Weight Of Read: Light (0.1-1.0)	100	112	98	110
Weight Of Read: None (0)	100	93	101	73
Popular News				
Weight Of Read: Heavy (6.6+)	100	72	105	48
Weight Of Read: Medium (2.0-6.5)	100	83	103	68
Weight Of Read: Light (0.1-1.9)	100	99	100	117
Weight Of Read: None (0)	100	116	97	117

Looking at the total readership levels of all newspapers, the general finding is that web respondents are less keen on reading the paper versions of newspapers per se. The paper Internet respondents demonstrate a slightly greater propensity to read paper versions of newspapers compared to the web respondents.

Table 6

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Weight Of Read: Heavy (8.1+): All News	100	93	101	104
Weight Of Read: Medium (3.1-8.0): All News	100	93	101	93
Weight Of Read: Light (0.1-3.0): All News	100	102	100	115

Table 7 reveals that a large part of the reading activity of both web respondents and the paper Internet users is performed online. The two groups note high indices for online reading in terms of newspapers, magazines and all other news sites. This highlights the importance of offering an online methodology, as opposed to more traditional methods, to those respondents who favour the Internet generally.

Table 7

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Visiting Sites On: Newspapers	100	**172**	86	**179**
Visiting Sites On: Magazines	100	**176**	86	**174**
Visiting Sites On: News (excluding Newspapers & Magazines)	100	**194**	82	**179**

Print Media - Topics of Interest

Table 8 displays the level of interest each group shows in individual topics, typically found in newspapers. Both the first and third group tend to read about business, science and technology and computing. They also show an interest in art, books, music and theatre.

Table 8

Very Interested in newspapers	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Art/Books/Music/Theatre	100	**131**	94	**131**
Business/Company News	100	**154**	90	**158**
Media/Marketing/Advertising	100	**189**	83	**134**
Personal Finance & Investments	100	**121**	96	**124**
Science & Technology	100	**150**	91	**148**
Computing/Multimedia/Internet	100	**171**	87	**144**
Very interested in magazines				
European News	100	**145**	91	**137**
Other Foreign News	100	**149**	91	**146**
Property	100	**145**	91	**140**
Art/Books/Music/Theatre	100	**136**	93	**140**
Business/Company News	100	**199**	81	**149**
Personal Finance & Investments	100	**148**	91	**123**
Science & Technology	100	**153**	90	**155**
Computing/Multimedia/Internet	100	**174**	86	**161**

Average Issue Readership of Newspapers

In this section we take a more detailed look at the penetration levels of individual newspaper titles (Average Issue Readership) amongst the three different groups. Table 9 lists a few selected examples from the quality, mid-market and popular press in GB. It would seem that both the web and the paper Internet respondents are very much in line in terms of their reading behaviour, noting a lower AIR on popular titles such as the Sun compared to the paper respondents, but a higher than average issue readership of the quality press titles such as the Guardian or The Times. We also looked at the results for the Metro, a free publication, which is distributed primarily at underground stations and enjoys an urban, dynamic readership profile. As we would expect, the Metro records a higher readership level amongst the web and paper Internet respondents.

Table 9

	Pop	Web respondents	Paper respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total sample	100%	100%	100%	100%
Popular Press				
The Sun	16.0%	10.4%	**17.1%**	10.7%
Daily Mirror	7.1%	3.8%	**7.7%**	5.0%
Mid Market				
Daily Express	3.2%	1.6%	**3.5%**	2.7%
Quality				
The Guardian	2.5%	**3.8%**	2.2%	**4.6%**
The Times	3.6%	**4.6%**	3.4%	**6.2%**
Financial Times	0.9%	**1.8%**	0.7%	**1.3%**
Free Newspapers				
Metro	7.1%	**8.5%**	6.8%	**9.7%**

So in terms of print media readership, when web respondents are compared to a similar group of people amongst the paper respondents, the results in terms of titles read and mode of consumption (online vs. paper version) are comparable. This provides strong evidence for TGI that by offering an online questionnaire, we are proceeding down the right road and are not compromising the quality of the data.

Consumption of Other Media

We now turn to the results from other media. Web respondents and indeed the paper respondents are not as interested in TV and are relatively average on radio listening compared to paper respondents, but they show relatively more interest in going to the cinema. That said, looking at their online activities, when they are watching TV or listening to the radio, both groups of respondents are doing so in a more modern way. As table 10 shows, web respondents are relatively enthusiastic users of TV on Demand and online radio. Moreover, their TV service is more likely to be subscription based, through which they can customise their choice of channels.

Table 10

	Pop	Web Respondents	Paper Respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
TV				
Heavy Viewers - more than 40 hours per week	100	67	**106**	45
Heavy/Medium Viewers - more than 30 hours to 40 hours per week	100	61	**107**	63
Medium Viewers - more than 20 hurs to 30 hours per week	100	103	99	83
Light Viewers - 20 hours or less per week	100	**118**	97	**132**
Radio				
Heavy Listeners - more than 14 hours per week	100	106	99	89
Medium Listeners - 7 to 14 hours per week	100	103	99	107
Light Listeners - under 7 hours per week	100	**115**	97	**115**
Non Listeners	100	61	107	72
Cinema				
Cinema Heavy Goers- Once a month or more	100	**155**	90	**156**
Medium Goers - 2 to 6 times a year	100	133	94	131
Light Goers - Once a year or less	100	100	100	102

	Pop	Web Respondents	Paper Respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Free TV (incl. freeview or freesat)	100	82	**103**	99
TV (with subscription)	100	**119**	96	**110**
Viewed TV On Demand in last 12 months	100	**153**	90	**135**
Online radio listening	100	**167**	87	**181**
Online TV watching	100	**173**	86	**175**

The Environment

We then took a look at the level of awareness of environmental problems amongst the three groups, and what, if anything, they were doing in terms of their behaviour. Despite their claims to be very knowledgeable about issues such as climate change and global warming the actions of web respondents and paper internet users, do not demonstrate a real concern about the environment. Our findings show that they are relatively more likely to keep electrical appliances on stand-by and leave their mobile phone charger in the socket when not in use, both actions which waste electricity. However, by way of compensation the web respondents seem to have a more favourable view of recycling.

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Table 11

	Pop	Web Respondents	Paper Respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Know a lot				
Climate Change/Global Warming	100	**152**	90	**119**
Carbon footprint	100	**164**	88	**124**
C02 or Carbon dioxide emissions	100	**147**	91	**124**
Carbon offsetting	100	**194**	82	**114**
Always / Very often				
Leave your TV or PC on standby for long periods of time at home	100	**128**	95	**116**
Keep the tap running while you brush your teeth	100	**108**	98	94
Leave the heating on when you go out for a few hours	100	**116**	97	101
Decide not to buy something because it has too much packaging	100	74	105	91
Take your own shopping bag when shopping	100	102	100	101
Leave the mobile phone charger in the socket when not in use	100	**140**	92	105
Recycle items rather than throwing them away	100	**110**	98	102
Make an effort to cut down on the use of gas/electricity at home	100	101	100	87
Make an effort to cut down on water usage at home	100	104	99	80

New Technology

Finally on the subject of new technology, not surprisingly, web respondents and paper Internet respondents are more likely to be equipped with the latest technology in their homes than the paper respondents.

Table 12

NEW TECHNOLOGY IN YOUR HOME	Pop	Web Respondents	Paper Respondents	Paper Respondents and Internet Most Days ABC1
Total Sample	100	100	100	100
Blu-ray Disc Player	100	**131**	94	102
Photo Printer specifically for digital cameras	100	**112**	98	**115**
LCD Projector	100	**175**	86	**166**
Digital camcorder with in built hard disk	100	**130**	94	**124**
Wireless digital music streamer	100	**172**	86	**148**
DVD recorder / HDD recorder (built in hard disk)	100	**142**	92	**113**
Media Centre (all in one TV Tuner/DVD player/recorder/MP3/PC etc)	100	**120**	96	**109**
Laptop with Blu-ray player	100	**145**	91	**131**
Wireless internet radio	100	**175**	86	**134**
MP3 docking station	100	**180**	85	**158**
Digital photo frame	100	**148**	91	**129**
High definition camcorder	100	**152**	90	**128**
High definition digital camera	100	**128**	95	**134**

Conclusion

In conclusion then, online interviewing has taken the market research world by storm during the last 10 years and this method is now as much a part of the industry as face to face and telephone interviewing. For its part, TGI could not afford to sit back and continue with only the paper survey as we have done for forty years. In our view, to remain successful, it was important that we moved with the times and offered an online version to respondents. Moreover, given that online interviewing by its very nature is self completion, it fitted well with the TGI paper version which, of course, is also self completion.

This paper has focussed on all aspects of the TGI online survey including questionnaire design, questionnaire delivery, response rates and data quality. We have also examined in detail the profile of web respondents compared to the paper respondents, demonstrating that by offering the web interview, TGI has improved the overall sample profile, without impacting on data quality. There have been many challenges along the way, and no doubt further challenges lie ahead, but TGI online has been operating for two years and is now firmly embedded in our processes. We therefore believe that, not only is TGI online here to stay, but it will continue to grow in importance in the coming years