



Money Talks, But Will I?

Accounting for the Human Element of Research
in the Digital Age

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Agenda


1. Setting: Research in the digital age
2. Threat: A misalignment of values
3. Opportunity: Realignment for the sake of recovery
4. Battle plan: Inform the army (of researchers)







Research in the digital age / Rise of online research

An illustration of a globe with several wooden poles extending from its surface. At the end of each pole is a spherical pod containing a person sitting at a desk with a computer. The pods are of varying sizes and are distributed across the globe, representing a global network of online research participants.

The rise of online research has led to samples from a number of sources – including Online Panels, River Sampling and Crowdsourced samples such as MTurk.

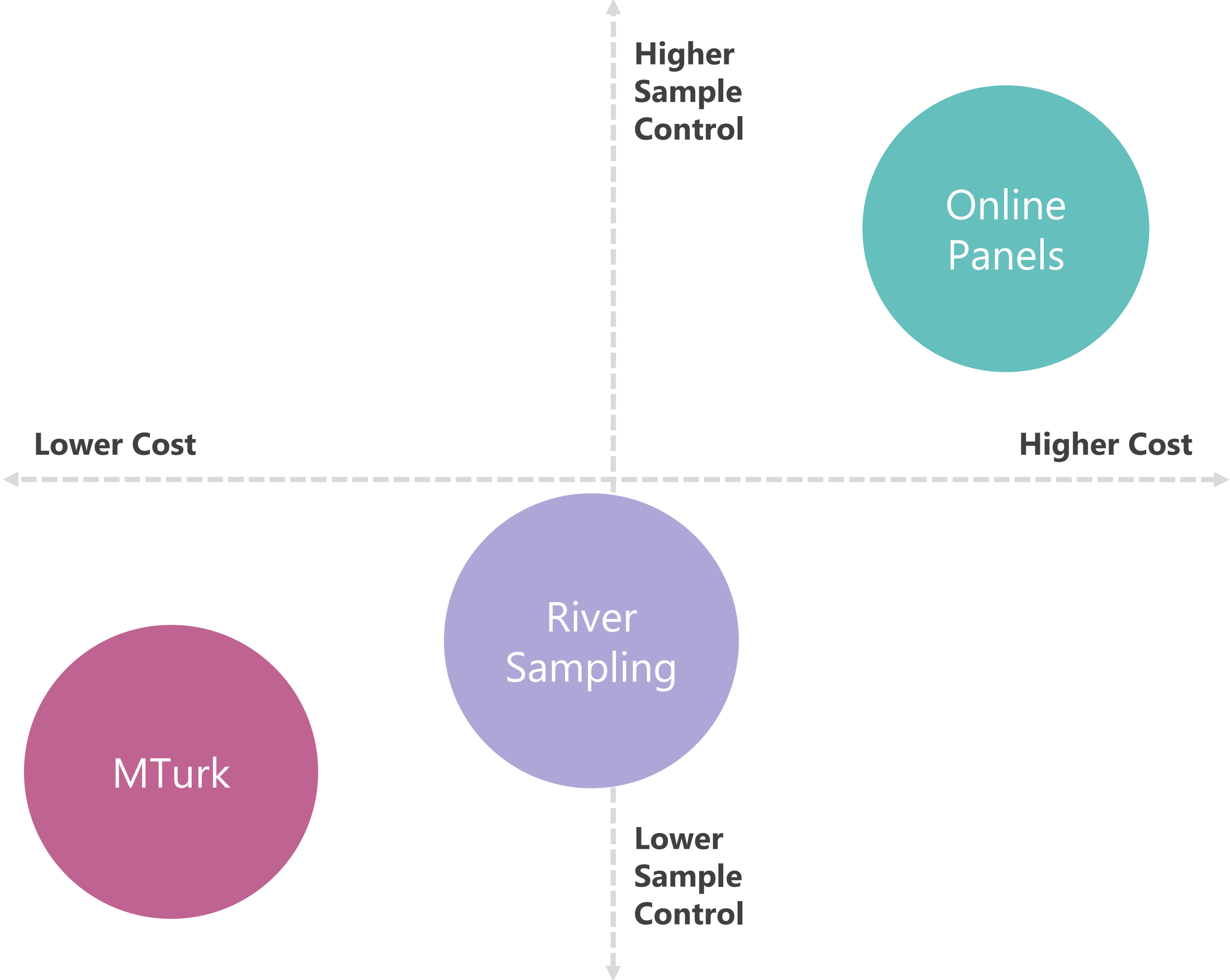
ILLUSTRATION BY: [LAURENT HRYBYK](#)

KPNS



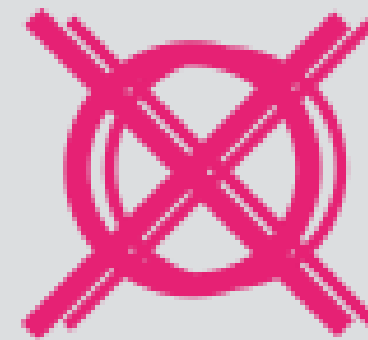
“I’m the real Kevin. This is the guy who plays me on my Facebook page.”

Sample frames

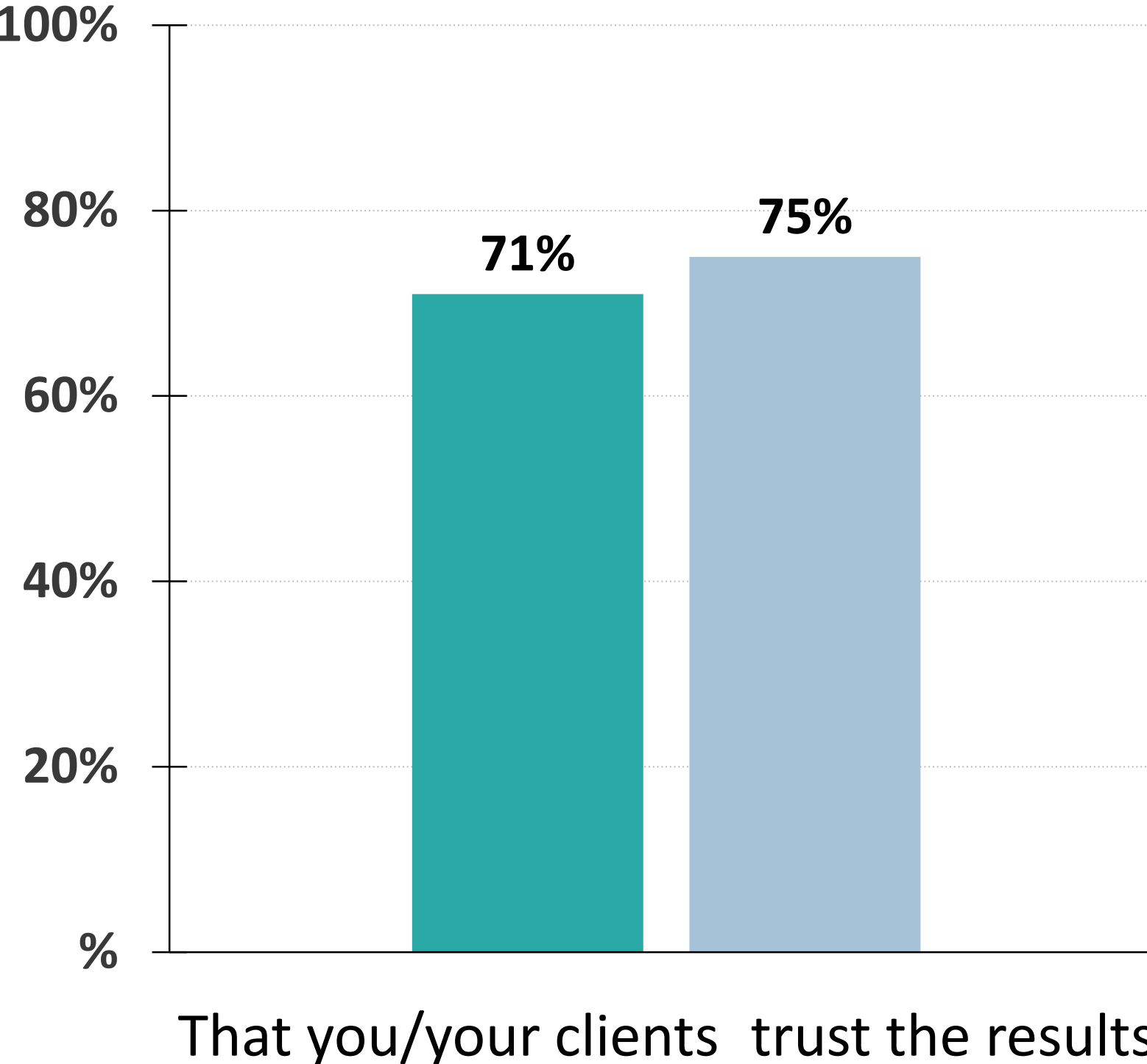




Threat: A misalignment of values



Important Elements of Research Design



■ Researchers ■ Suppliers

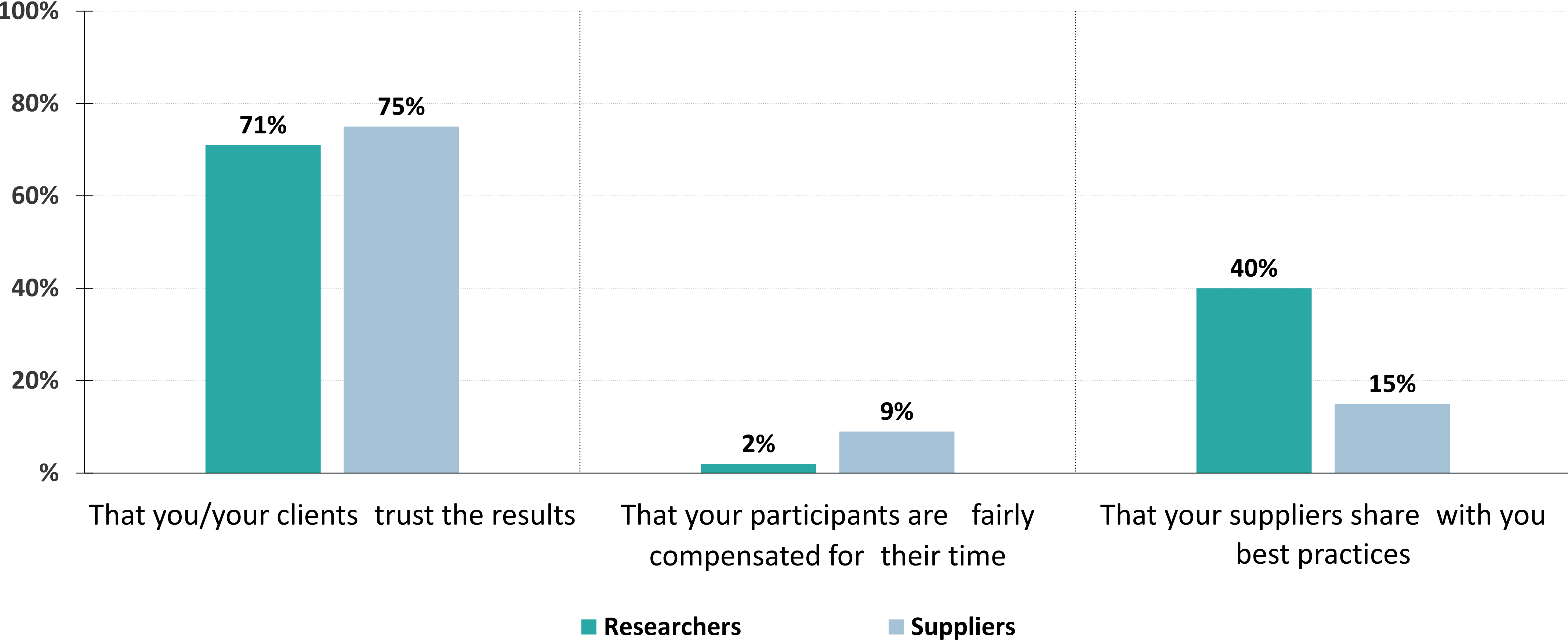
Source: Greenbook (2016)

Show of hands

Approximately what percentage of researchers believe that it is important for participants to be fairly compensated for their time?

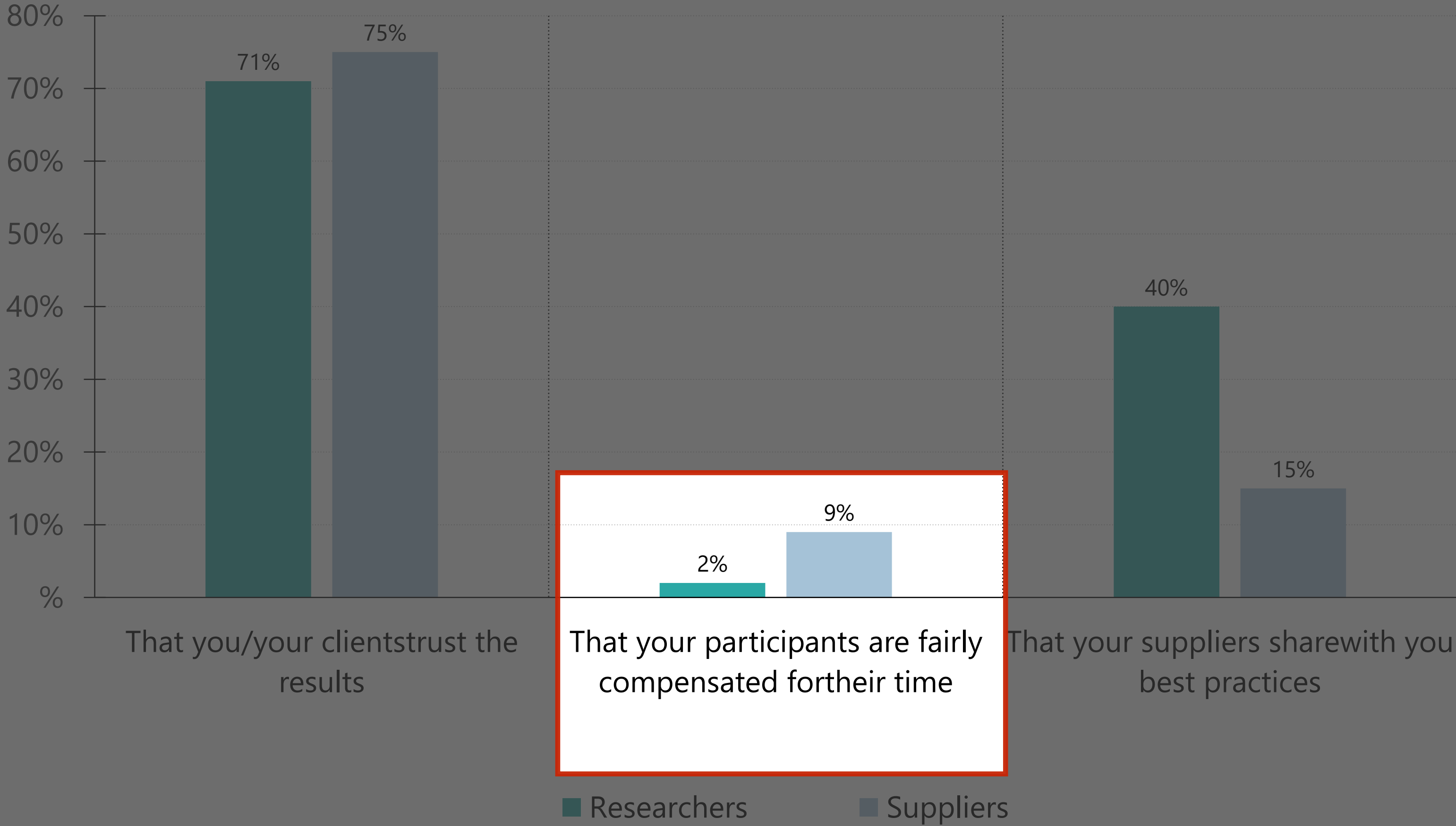
- 0%-25%
- 26%-50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-100%

Important Elements of Research Design

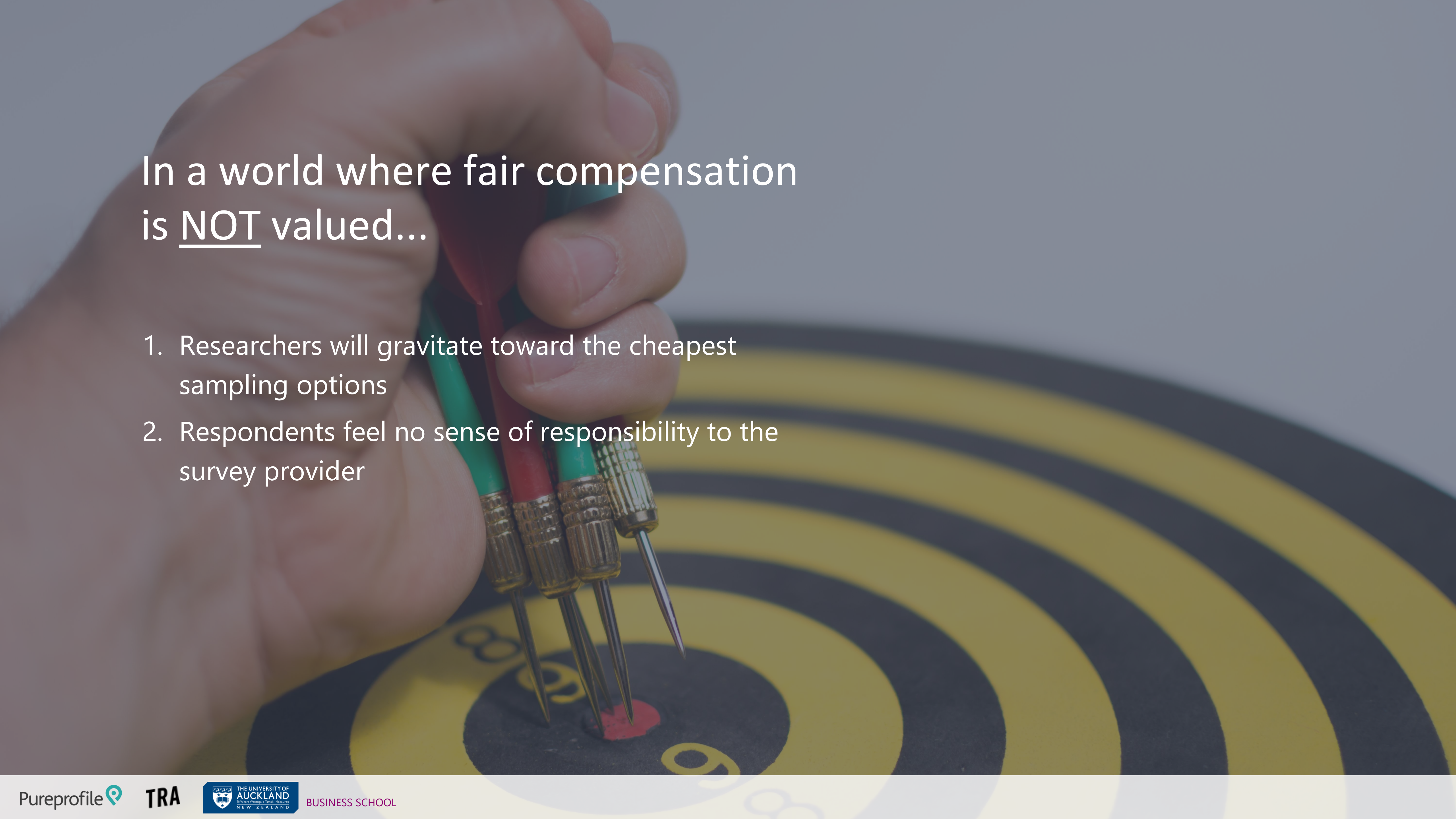


Source: Greenbook (2016)

Important Elements of Research Design



Source: Greenbook (2016)



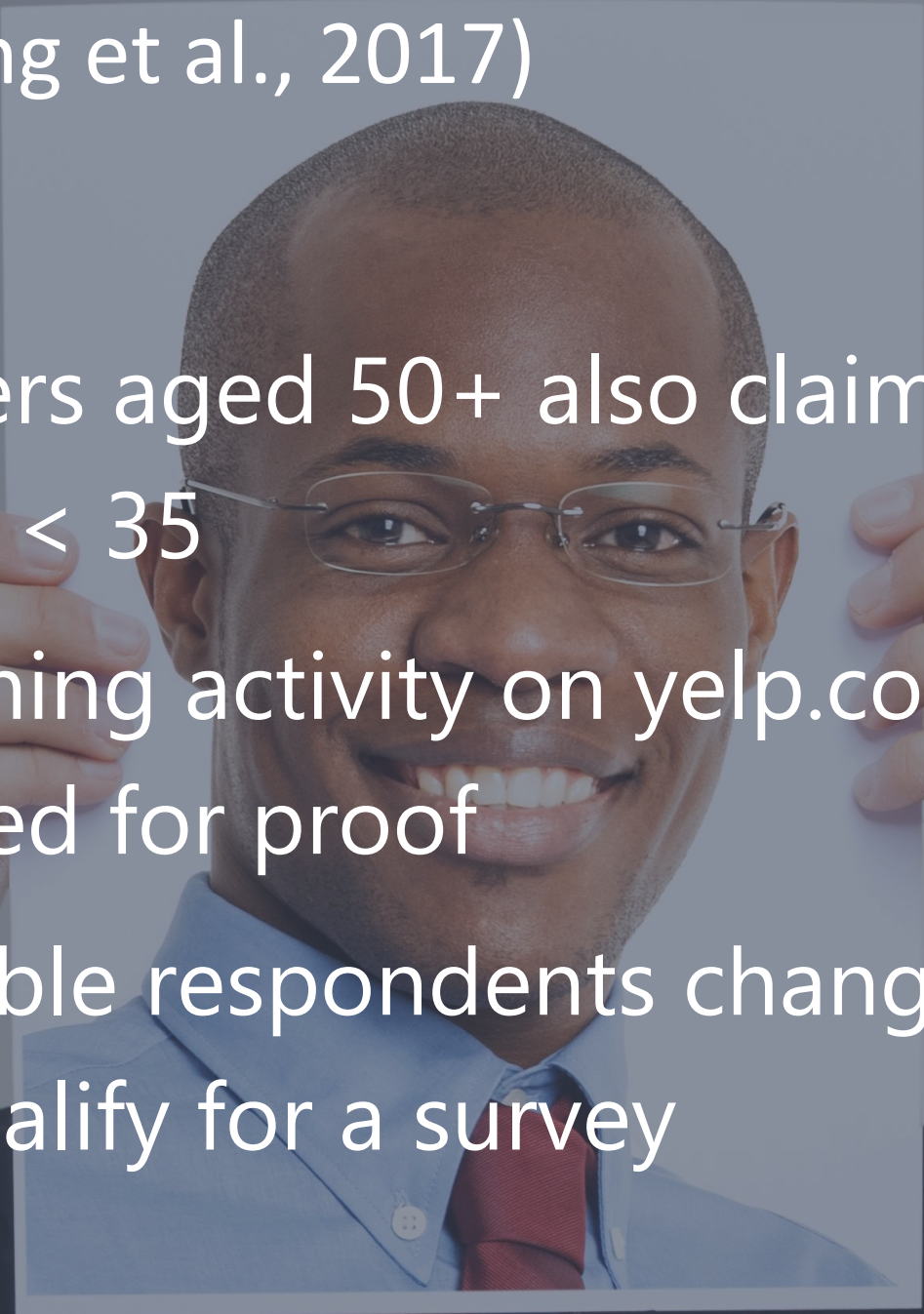
In a world where fair compensation is NOT valued...

1. Researchers will gravitate toward the cheapest sampling options
2. Respondents feel no sense of responsibility to the survey provider

In a study on Mturk

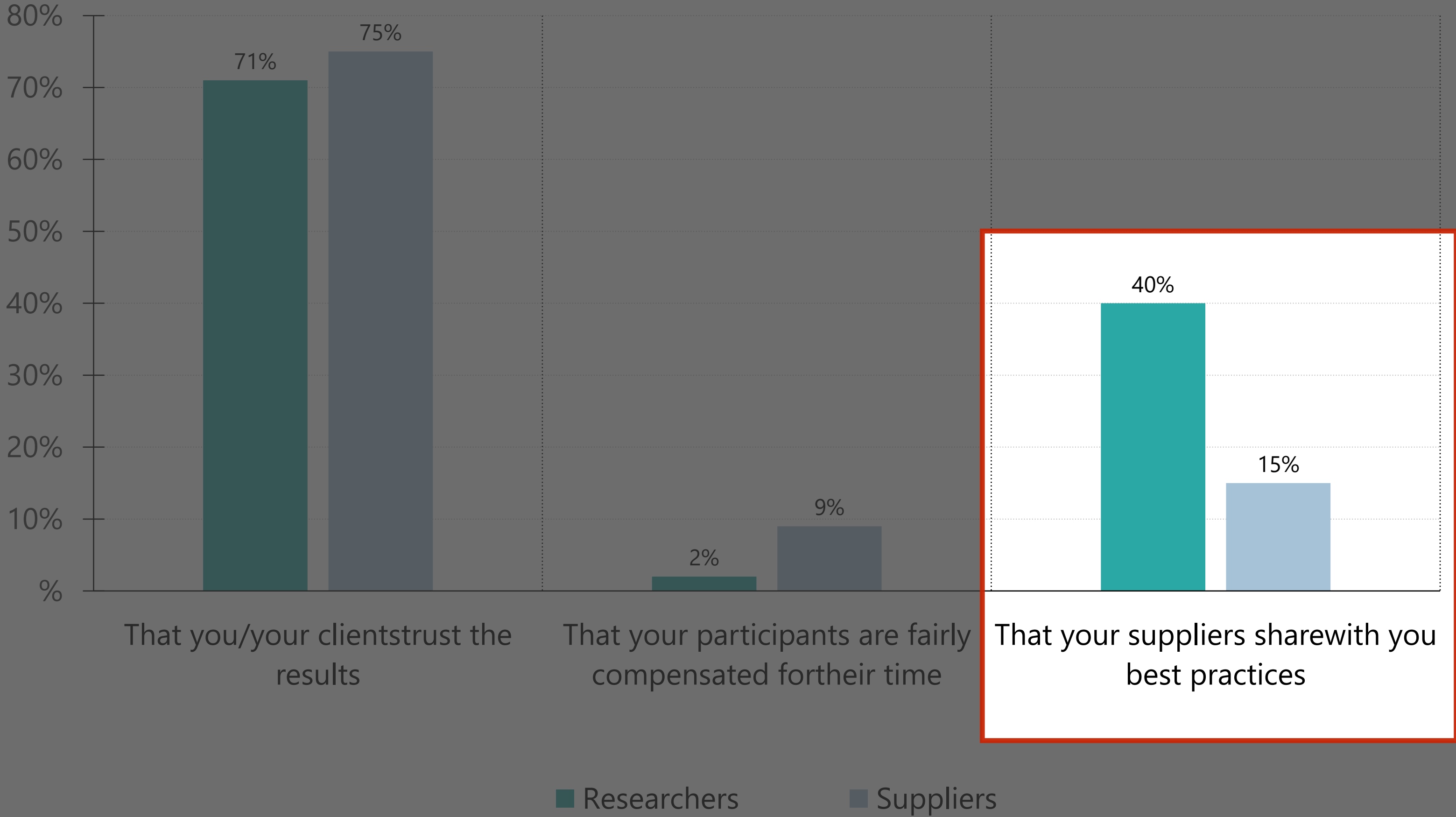
(Sharpe Wessling et al., 2017)

- 17% of smokers aged 50+ also claimed to be athletes aged < 35
- Of those claiming activity on yelp.com 96% dropped out when asked for proof
- 50% of ineligible respondents changed their gender in order to qualify for a survey



Source: Sharpe Wessling et al. (2017)

Important Elements of Research Design

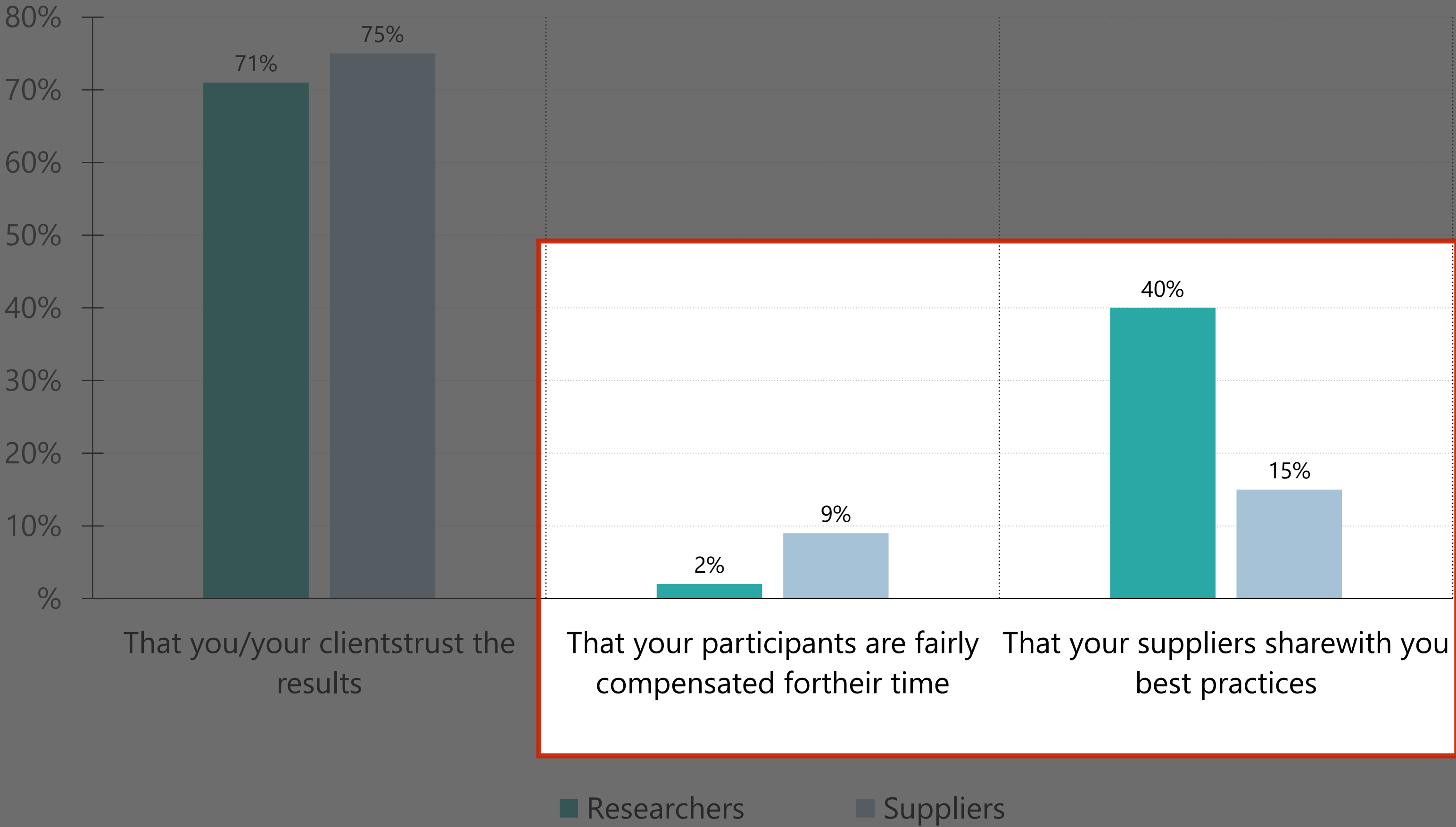


Source: Greenbook (2016)

In a world where the best practices of suppliers are NOT valued...

1. Researchers will choose sample sources that don't provide (or charge for) these services
2. Fears of biased data manipulation (see Chandler et al., 2014)
3. Compromised data structure and representativeness (Smith et al., 2016)

Important Elements of Research Design



Source: Greenbook (2016)



While this might reflect a dim future,
we do have an alternative...

3. Opportunity: Realignment for the sake of recovery



Our study

- n=1,013 Pureprofile panel members

Explored:

- the effect of the motivation provided by Pureprofile's incentives on respondent data quality
- the response behaviour of respondents whom Pureprofile would have normally excluded

Findings

1) Fair compensation

- Material motivations positively correlated with data quality -
> Suggests that fair compensation is important
- Also panel tenure correlated with positive data quality
- The incentive offered by panels creates a sense of obligation that leads to better data quality (Klausch, 2010)





In a world where
fair compensation
IS valued...

...respondents feel a sense
of responsibility to the survey
provider to give quality responses

Findings

2) Supplier best practices

Of the respondents Pureprofile would have normally excluded:

- 46% failed to select a certain answer when instructed to
- 62% demonstrated infrequent or inconsistent answering behaviour (Maniaci & Rogge, 2014)
- 61 failed in either or both of these checks (71%)

-> Suggests sample management is important (as these respondents would not be excluded under other sampling methods)





In a world where the best practices of suppliers ARE valued...

...clients will come to accept the costs of effective panel management as being necessary in the acquisition of high quality data

So what's the opportunity?

4. Battle plan



4. Battle plan

When it comes quality online sample, what are the key questions you (and your clients) be asking of panel suppliers?

1. What do they do to ensure a valid and representative sample?
2. Who is answering your survey (and how can you ensure respondents are who they say they are)?
3. What do they do to ensure that respondents feel valued in the survey process (and, as such, will provide honest and thought-out responses)?
4. What quality data checks do they have in place?
5. How do they protect respondents and clients?





Questions?