

Router Effects: Trading off Sample Bias for Data Quality and Engagement
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In a world where we are concerned about the survey taking behaviour of online panellists it may seem strange to know that one of their biggest complaints is that they rarely get to do surveys!

On our US panel, for example, only 1 in 8 survey starts results in a completed interview. The rest comprise Quota Fills and Screen Outs. The result of this excessive screening out is shortened panellist lifetimes, increased dissatisfaction with the research process and, at worst, an incentive to cheat into surveys.

Routers decide which survey a panellist should be presented with as they arrive to take a survey in response to a generic invitation.

By utilising such an approach we expect to improve data quality and engagement but at what cost? The biases introduced by a survey router (as such systems are generally known) are complex, subtle and entirely dependent on the interplay of the surveys currently in the system.