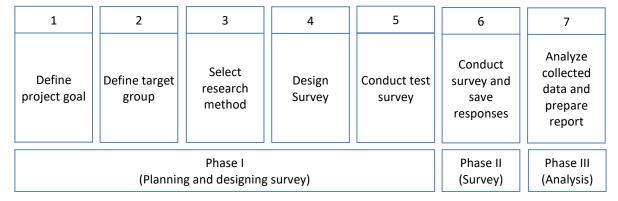# SurveyLab

Guide to Online Survey Projects

Online survey project

Below you will find a short guide to online survey projects. We created this document for all people that are working on their first surveys. It should help you to organize your project and give you few hints how to build professional surveys.

Survey project phases

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Define project goal	Define target group	Select research method	Design Survey	Conduct test survey	Conduct survey and save responses	Analyze collected data and prepare report
Phase I (Planning and designing survey)					Phase II (Survey)	Phase III (Analysis)

Picture 1. Online survey project phases

Survey project and its deliverables

#	Task	Description	Outcome
Phase I			
1	Define project goal	Decide what you would like to learn during survey research.	Project goal defined
2	Define target group	Decide who will be your respondent	Target group defined + contact information
3	Select research method	Decide how you would like to conduct research. SurveyLab is supporting research methods that use Internet / Intranet networks, including: ▪ email surveys ▪ Internet / Intranet surveys (web based)	Research method selected
4	Design survey	Design your survey	Survey created
5	Conduct survey test	Test your survey	Test result, list of corrections for a survey
Phase II			
6	Conduct survey and save responses		Collected responses
Phase III			
7	Analyze collected data and prepare report		Survey report created

Table 1. Description of survey project phases and main tasks

Description of project steps

Standard survey project can be organized into seven steps. Below you will find short description of each step.

Step 1.	Set your project goal

Project goal should be precise and clear. It is good to write it down. The more precise project goal, the easier it will be to obtain clear and easy to interpret survey responses.

Step 2.	Select your target group

Define the profile and if you conduct named surveys a list of your respondents. While selecting your target group, remember to:

- decide who your target group is. Proper definition of target group is crucial for survey success.
- decide how big the target group (sample) will be. The bigger the sample, the better representation of the surveyed population.

Step 3.	Select research the method (data collection channels)

Decide how you would like to conduct your survey. SurveyLab supports online research methods, that use Internet / Intranet networks:

- Email survey
- Internet / Intranet survey (presented on web site)

Users receive six collection methods for survey distributions:

- Survey link (email surveys)
- Survey link (web based surveys)
- Collection prepared with SurveyLab system to Contacts
- Pop-Up survey (link)
- Pop-Up survey (box)
- Survey widget

Step 4.	Design your questionnaire

Below you will find several tips and best practices that will help you prepare good survey.

1. Remember to take into account the data collection channel that your survey will be using. It means that phone surveys can't contain pictures, and respondents filling in Internet / Intranet surveys won't be able to ask the researcher "What did you exactly mean by asking this question?"
2. The shorter survey, the more probable that the respondent will answer all questions.

3. When you design your surveys use the KISS rule (Keep It Short and Simple). Each time you write question ask yourself *"What will I do with this information?"* If you are not able to give yourself a satisfactory answer delete the question from your survey. Avoid the temptation to include a few more questions only because you are conducting a survey. If you need divide your questions into the following three groups:

   - must know,
   - useful to know,
   - nice to know.

   Delete the third group (nice to know), unless the first two groups are very short.

4. Start your survey with a short invitation in which you introduce yourself and briefly describe the reason for the research.

5. Ask only about one thing at a time. Avoid questions such as *"What do you think about tomato soup and bacon sandwiches?"* Your respondents may have different opinion on both subjects.

6. Design your questions and answer choices as short as possible.

7. Allow your respondents to answer *"Don't know"*, or *"Not applicable"* for each question, unless you know that respondents will be able to answer the question. In most cases those answers will be lost anyway, opting out from such questions will limit random and chaotic answers.

8. Use advanced question logic in order to skip questions, and shorten the time that is needed to complete the survey.

9. Avoid abbreviations and technical jargon, unless you are sure that your respondents will properly understand it.

10. Put instructions for your survey in places where they are needed, instead of only in the beginning of the survey.

11. Remember to say *"Thank you"* to your respondents on the last page of the survey.

Step 5.	Test your survey

Before you start your survey we recommend that you test it on a small sample. The best way to do this is to choose respondents with similar profiles to those that will participate in your survey. The test should help you to discover any issues that have been hard to find in the survey design phase. It will also give you a feedback if respondents understand questions and can give readable and trustable answers.

Step 6.	Conduct survey and save responses

SurveyLab will automatically save each response into database.

Step 7.	Analyze the collected data, prepare the report

SurveyLab will automatically generate report with survey responses. You will be able to analyze the responses separately or as aggregated data for the whole survey.