

Conducting Social Research Online: A Comparison

Experimental Research

	Basis	Traditional	Online
Time			
Advance Preparation of Pre/Post Test Questionnaires		1 week	0
Collecting Data		2 weeks	2 weeks
Key Punching/Cleanup		1 week	0

Facilities			
Laboratory Space		Grant overhead costs	\$0

Real Costs			
Administrative Assistant	(10 hours/week over an 4 week period) 40 hrs * \$14/hr	\$560.00	\$0
Reproduce questionnaire on paper	(8 pages for both questionnaires) 800 * .10/copy	\$80.00	\$0
Reproduce Informed Consent Form	100 * .10/copy	\$10.00	\$10.00
Lab Assistants x2	(20 hours/week each over a 2 week period) 80 hrs * \$15/hr	\$1,200.00	\$0
Key punching	20 hrs * \$8/hr	\$160.00	\$0
Cleaning Data	8 hrs * \$8/hr	\$64.00	\$0
Creation of SPSS Data File	4 hrs * \$25/hr	\$100.00	\$0

Total Real Costs		\$2,174.00	\$10.00
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Additional Costs			
Cost to increase n		Additive	\$0
Cost to repeat study (longitudinal)		\$2,174.00	\$0
Transcribe open-ended questions to text file	(4 questions each questionnaire, approximately 300 pages of text) 120 hours of data entry * \$14/hr	\$1,680.00	\$0
Cost to increase the number of experimental and control conditions		Additive	\$0

Number of subjects and number of conditions can be increased with no additional costs.

Survey Research

	Basis	Traditional	Online
Time			
Collecting Data		7 weeks	2 weeks
Key Punching/Cleanup		1 week	0

Real Costs			
Administrative Assistant	(10 hours/week over an 8 week period) 80 hrs * \$14/hr	\$1,120.00	\$0
Reproduce questionnaire on paper	4000 * .10/copy	\$400.00	\$0
1st mailing (including SASE)	500 * \$1.43	\$715.00	\$0
2nd mailing to 50% (postcards)	250 * \$0.23	\$57.50	\$0
3rd mailing to 50% (including SASE)	250 * \$1.43	\$357.50	\$0
Key punching	20 hrs * \$8/hr	\$160.00	\$0
Cleaning Data	8 hrs * \$8/hr	\$64.00	\$0
Creation of SPSS Data File	4 hrs * \$25/hr	\$100.00	\$0

Total Real Costs		\$2,974.00	\$0
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Additional Costs			
Cost to increase n		Additive	\$0
Cost to repeat study (longitudinal)		\$2,461.50	\$0
Transcribe open-ended questions to text file	(4 questions each questionnaire, approximately 500 pages of text) 180 hours of data entry * \$14/hr	\$2,520.00	\$0

Number of respondents can be increased with no additional costs.

Price of the research and reports services will vary with the complexity of the questionnaire.

Survey Research Assumptions:

Number of Questionnaires ($n = 500$)
 8 Pages Per Questionnaire
 Targeted 60% Response Rate
 All Hardware and Software is Readily Available

Experiment Research Assumptions:

Simple True Experimental Design
 Number of Subject ($n = 100$)
 Pretest and Posttest Questionnaire
 Random Assignment
 1 Control & 1 Experimental Condition
 All Hardware and Software is Readily Available