

The RESEARCH CORNER

**A Newsletter about Custom Public Opinion Research (POR)
in the Government of Canada**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2003-2004 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2003-2004 edition of the Public Opinion Research (POR) Annual Report was released in December 2004. It is full of valuable information and interesting facts about research trends in the Government of Canada.

Last year, the Government of Canada invested \$25.4 million in POR. Eighty-seven research firms from across Canada, up from seventy-four firms the previous year, carried out 593 projects. Custom research conducted can be broken down as follows:

- advertising initiatives (28%)
- policy development and program evaluation (24%)
- market research (21%)
- quality of service (14%)
- Web testing (12%)
- other (1%).

The report highlights submissions from departments that provide a snap-shot of some of the key research undertaken by the top ten users of POR. The report and other valuable resources are available on-line at <http://commnet.gc.ca> or www.communication.gc.ca. To obtain print copies of the report, please call the Public Opinion Research Directorate at (613) 943-2976 or e-mail por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca.



RESEARCH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Manage and find public opinion research

Do you need to find research underway or complete on a topic related to your department? Are you starting a research project that needs registering with PWGSC? Would you like to keep track of the projects underway in your department? The new Research Information Management System (RIMS) helps you do all three.

This on-line tool lets departments and agencies electronically submit details of new research projects to advisors at PWGSC. In turn, departmental POR coordinators gain a project management system for tracking and reporting on their departmental projects. Broad details and eventually findings will be available for any Government of Canada employee to use in policy, program or service development.

RIMS has been in use since April 1, 2003 during which time several departments have been testing it. A group of existing and potential users participated in an independent usability study. RIMS will be available to all departments on CommNet in mid-February 2005.

If you'd like more information or to register as a user, please call us at (613) 943-2976, or email us at por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca.

REGISTERING WITH THE CANADIAN SURVEY RESEARCH COUNCIL

In 1992, leaders of the survey research industry formed the not-for-profit Canadian Survey Research Council, (CSRC). The Council aims to raise the level of public awareness and support for public opinion research, protect respondents from unnecessary intrusion and preserve the integrity of the information they provide, and enhance the level of respondent cooperation in research through the promotion of a positive climate.

To help meet these objectives, the CSRC developed and operates a registration system for public opinion research work in Canada, which allows the public to verify that a survey is legitimate, to get information about the market research industry and/or to register a complaint.

The new Public Opinion Research Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements, in place since May 2004, require all Government of Canada (GoC) surveys contracted through these means to be registered in the CSRC system.

Each month, the CSRC will report on the surveys registered by Government of Canada departments and agencies. The Public Opinion Research Directorate (PORD) will receive and share this information with departments and agencies.

Currently, the registration applies only to surveys contracted through the new Standing Offers and Supply Arrangements. We are now considering whether to extend this practice to all Government of Canada POR surveys and are consulting the POR community within the GoC on this issue. If you would like to add your comments, please write to por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca.

For more information about registering with the CSRC, please call 1-800-554-9996, or visit their Web site at www.csrc.ca.

Note: On January 1, 2005, the CSRC became part of the new Marketing Research & Intelligence Association (MRIA).





EDITORIAL

THE RESEARCH CORNER

The Research Corner is produced by the Public Opinion Research Directorate, Government Information Services Branch of PWGSC for the public opinion research community in the Government of Canada. It provides information about custom research projects, offers ideas and information about research developments, and provides a forum for the exchange of experiences and best practices.

Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at:

por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca
or (613) 943-2976

Produced by the Public Opinion Research Directorate, Government Information Services Branch, PWGSC.

The Directorate has valuable resources available in either hard copy or on-line at <http://commnet.gc.ca> or www.communication.gc.ca/services/index_e.html

- **Public Opinion Research in the Government of Canada: An Orientation Guide**
- **Annual Reports (2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004)**
- **Research Techniques: Guideposts to Value**
- **Successful Communication: Literacy and You**

To obtain copies of these publications, please call (613) 943-2976 or e-mail por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca.

Making Sure Buttons are Hot

Communicators are always seeking hot buttons when they are planning communication campaigns. A comprehensive study suggests, however, that some hot buttons might be just warm ones in some parts of Canada and the reaction of audiences might change depending on gender and educational achievement.

A 2003 study by the Government of Canada on the social values of Canadians offers insight into those differences. It provides a snapshot of what citizens consider valuable about their country, by region, by cultural heritage, by education strata and by gender. It helps take the guess work out of trying to reach an audience, obtain a response or shape an opinion.

The study, called *Understanding Social Values to Communicate with Canadians*, identified and explored 27 values. The following selection is illustrative, rather than exhaustive, of the opinions uncovered.

Women place higher importance on social values such as helping others, caring and sharing. Men tend to place greater emphasis on values related to personal freedom such as democracy, opportunity, ambition and economic success.

Educational attainment, too, elicits different views. Those with a university degree attached importance to integrity (69 percent)

and to openness and tolerance (61 percent). In comparison, those two values dropped to 44 percent and 47 percent respectively among those with less than high school.

Overall, family was judged the most important value; wealth was considered the least of the values. Societal issues, across the board, ranked higher than values attached to the individual such as ambition, autonomy and individualism.

The study was based on two waves of focus groups, each involving 20 groups, and a survey of 6,000 Canadians from all provinces and territories. The first wave of focus groups generated the list of commonly held values and concepts. The second group probed and interpreted the chosen values and concepts. The survey used prompts to generate respondent answers.

There was no difference across Canada on the most fundamental subjects, which included freedom, democracy, tolerance, fairness, opportunity and wealth. There was a greater variation of the ratings of values such as caring, hard work and determination, peace, safety and security.

The key findings of the various components of the study have been summarized in the on-line fact sheet entitled *Understanding Social Values to Communicate with Canadians*, available on CommNet.gc.ca.



PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Qualitative Study – Less Literate Consumers' Reaction to Education Material on Banking

Financial Consumer Agency of Canada,
by Créatec, February 2004.

A series of eight in-depth individual interviews, dyads or triads were conducted in four Canadian cities with a total of seventeen low income, less literate individuals. This qualitative research was conducted to better understand how those with lower incomes and levels of literacy interpret and react to written consumer education material on basic financial matters and how they determine meaning.

Public Opinion Research Related to the Canada Site, the Canadians Gateway and the Service Vision for Canadians

Human Resources Development Canada,
by Phase 5, March 2004.

This report presents the findings of three streams of research that were conducted in relation to the *Canada Site*, the *Canadians Gateway* and the *Service Vision for Canadians*. The first was to determine homepage designs that are most effective in achieving desired objectives in terms of ease and use, as well as traffic. The second was to identify brand characteristics associated with GOC online and to test visual and messaging options for the *Canadians Gateway*. The third stream was used to understand preferences related to the *Service Vision for Canadians* and to receive feedback on the GOC's current thinking around the Service Vision. In total, six focus groups, 20 one-on-one interviews and 180 online usability tests were conducted to address the research objectives.

Future Role and Expectations of Government

Finance Canada,
by Ipsos Reid, June 2003.

This qualitative study was commissioned to gauge the views of Canadians on how active the government should be on economic and social issues and to explore the future role of government. According to the study, Canadians want their government to protect the public purse, to run effective and efficient programs, to provide essential services and address some key social problems. Health care and education continue to dominate the public agenda.

Qualitative Assessment of the SITT Values and Ethics Statement

Industry Canada,
by Patterson, Langlois, March 2004.

Four focus groups were held with SITT (Spectrum, Information Technologies and Telecommunications) employees to explore their perceptions and assessment of their current Values and Ethics statement. While the majority consider their workplace environment to reflect a general adherence to these principles, a minority of participants questioned management's commitment to the current statement. Most employees agreed that the statement would benefit from some changes and updates, given that it was first created a decade ago.

Public Views on Compassionate Care Benefits Evaluation of Communications Campaign

Human Resources and Skills Development,
by Ipsos Reid, February 2004.

This quantitative evaluation of 1,500 Canadians was done in response to a commitment from the January, 2001 Speech from the Throne regarding a new type of Employment Insurance benefit called "Compassionate Care Benefit". Ads were placed in the national

Final Reports, Please!

We receive hundreds of final reports each year. This enables us to share research findings across departments and with the public. Please ensure that you send us your final reports as soon as they are complete.



press and local daily newspapers and also in community and ethnic newspapers. This study was conducted to measure awareness, recall and impact of the ads among the general public.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Government Online Research Panel – Fourth Online Survey Results

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat,
by Phase 5, April 2004.

The GOC's service vision is to have its most frequently used services online and realize a 10% increase in citizen satisfaction by 2005. The research panel, which has been maintained by the federal government since 2001, consults with Canadian Internet users including users and non-users of government web sites. This survey consisted of 47 questions, with a total of 4,141 panelists completing the survey. It found that reactions to the GOC online service delivery was fairly positive.





ON THE SHELVES

PORD is the repository for all custom research reports completed by the Government of Canada. The reports can be reviewed at Library and Archives of Canada or copies can be accessed using inter-library loan through departmental and local libraries. Many are useful resources for the Government of Canada research community. Below is a sample of the reports received.

- *Pre-test of the CCRA Web Site User Survey/CCRA Web Site User Survey* (Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, June 2003)
- *Service Vision for Canadians Focus Group Testing/Vision du Service pour les Canadiens – Groupes de discussion* (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, December 2003)
- *Qualitative Research among Aboriginal Audiences to Identify Key Success Factors in Social Marketing Campaigns* (Health Canada, March 2004)
- *West Nile Virus Intercept Survey of Shoppers* (Health Canada, September 2003)
- *GCMS Change Management Survey* (Citizenship & Immigration, January 2004)
- *Qualitative Research on Workplace Training* (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, March 2004)
- *The Arts in Canada: Access and Availability 2004* (Canadian Heritage, March 2004)
- *Qualitative Research on the National occupational Classification and Career Handbook* (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, April 2004)
- *On-line Survey of National Occupational Classification Web Site Users* (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, May 2004)
- *Canadian Attitudes towards Climate Change: Spring 2004* (Natural Resources Canada, April 2004)
- *Multiculturalism and Ethnic Tolerance* (Canadian Heritage, May 2004)
- *Summary of Focus Group Findings Re: Privacy and Personal Health Materials Evaluation* (Health Canada, February 2004)
- *Qualitative Research on Radio Advertising Concepts: Canadian Forces Pilot Recruiting* (National Defence, March 2004)
- *Qualitative Research on the Accessibility of Cultural Information to Diverse Youth Audiences* (Canadian Heritage, March 2004)
- *Report of Findings: Testing On-line Access to Government Funding Assistance Programs* (Industry Canada, March 2004)
- *Atlantic Canada Business Service Centres Awareness and Perception Study* (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, March 2004)
- *National Ethanol Awareness Survey* (Natural Resources Canada, March 2004)
- *Tracking Public Views on the Library and Archives Canada and Genealogy* (National Archives of Canada, December 2003)
- *Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre Client Survey Results* (Industry Canada, March 2004)
- *Employer Attitudes Towards Older Workers and the Labour Market* (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, March 2004)
- *First Nations' Services Guide Focus Groups/ Results of Services Guide Recall Survey* (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, June 2003)

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN MARKET RESEARCH JOURNALS?

Here are a few that may be of interest to you. You can view or subscribe to these journals by visiting the following Web sites:

www.arfsite.org The Advertising Research Foundation site is where you will find the *Journal of Advertising Research*.

www.trendsresearch.com The Trends Research Institute's site will introduce you to the *Trends Journal*.

www.marketingpower.com/jmr The American Marketing Association site is where you will find the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

Don't forget about other important marketing and research professional associations like the PMRS, CAMRO and AIRMS that may of assistance to you. Links to these organizations can be found at http://commnet.gc.ca/por/links_e.html



Questions or Suggestions

Do you have questions about public opinion research or suggestions about content for an upcoming issue? Contact the Editor at por-rop@pwgsc.gc.ca