



American Community Survey Data Users Conference

2014 Internet Test Update and
Content Review Update

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2014 Internet Test Update

Outline

- Background
- Purpose of the 2014 Test
- Changes to Instrument
- Design and Sample
- Evaluation Measures

Background

- 2011 ACS Internet Tests
 - Tested notification strategies
 - Evaluated the design of the instrument
- Internet Mode in Production – Jan. 2013

Purpose of the 2014 Test

- Evaluate Potential Improvements to the Instrument Design
 - Reduce incidences of error messages
 - Increase reporting of multiple ancestries
- Reduce Break-offs and Item Nonresponse
 - Addition of a security question
 - Email reminders to those who started, but did not finish the survey

Instrument Changes

Highlight Secondary Tasks for Questions with Multiple Parts on One Screen

**United States™
Census
Bureau**

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→ The following series of questions refer to Big G.

7 Where was Big G born? ([Help](#))

In the United States - *Select name of state.*

→

Outside the United States - *Enter name of foreign country, or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.*

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Where You Are

- Basic Info
- Housing Questions
- Person Info**
- Big G

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Increase Height of Write-in Box for Ancestry



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13 What is John T Doe's ancestry or ethnic origin? ([Help](#))

(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

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Where You Are

Basic Info

Housing Questions


Person Info

• John T Doe

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New Security Question



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- ➔ Please make note of the PIN below.
- ➔ It will allow you to log back into the survey if the session times out or you need to stop and come back later. The session will time out if left idle for more than 15 minutes. This survey will take approximately 40 minutes to complete.

PIN: 1811

Please select a security question to answer. If you forget your PIN, you will be asked to provide this answer to re-enter the survey.

Security Question:

Answer:

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- Please select a security question.
- What color was your first car?
- What is your high school's mascot?
- What is the name of your first pet?
- In what city were you born?

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Collection of email address



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➔ **What is your name, telephone number, and email address?** We may contact you if there is a question. [\(Help\)](#)

First Name MI Last Name

Area
Code Number
 - -

Email Address

Confirm Email Address

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Design and Sample

- 2014 Internet Test uses July 2014 production panel sample
- Six experimental treatments of about 12,000 addresses each
- 3 months of data collection

Main Evaluation Measures

- Self-response rate and Internet response rate
- Breakoff rate
- Item nonresponse rate
- Error rate and rate of multiple ancestry entries



Content Review Update

Outline

- Background
- Timeline & Approach
- Decision Criteria
- Feedback Mechanisms
- How to Participate

Background

- In April 2011, the Census Bureau began a comprehensive assessment of the ACS program – including an initiative to examine and confirm the value of each question on the ACS
- In June 2012, OMB initiated a process to confirm and update information regarding the statutory and regulatory authority for the questions on the ACS with select federal agencies (Sunstein Memo)
- In May 2013, we therefore implemented a more thorough ACS content review

Project Timeline

- Started Project: May 2013
- Initiated communications with Stakeholders: Sep 2013
 - Engaging Data Users at this Conference: May 2014
- Gather input: May – Jul 2014
- Analyze input and make content decisions: May – Sep 2014
- Formally announce decisions and seek public input via Federal Register notice: Oct – Dec 2014
- Communicate with Stakeholders on decisions and feedback from Federal Register Notice via additional mechanisms: Oct 2014 – Jan 2015
- Implement decisions for CY2016 and beyond in coordination with OMB

Approach

- We will review all topics on the questionnaire
- Phase 1 (1st week of June): We will place our *initial* focus on four high-profile topics:
 - Plumbing: 8a, 8b, 8c and 8d
 - Disability: 17a, 17b, 18a, 18b, 18c and 19
 - Journey to Work: 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34
 - Income: 47a, 47b, 47c, 47d, 47e, 47f, 47g, 47h and 48
- Phase II (3rd week of June): We will begin to review the remaining topics on the questionnaire

Decision Criteria

- The Census Bureau has identified 19 decision criteria in all:
 - 13 that measure the utility and quality (benefit) of a variable
 - 6 that measure the difficulty (cost) of obtaining information
- We are gathering input from:
 - Federal agencies: May – Jun 2014
 - Survey Respondents via website feedback form (May – June 2014)
 - Field Representatives via internal survey (May 2014)
 - Internal operational data (Jan – Jun 2014)
 - Data users via website feedback form (June – July 2014)
(45 day window)

Utility vs. Difficulty

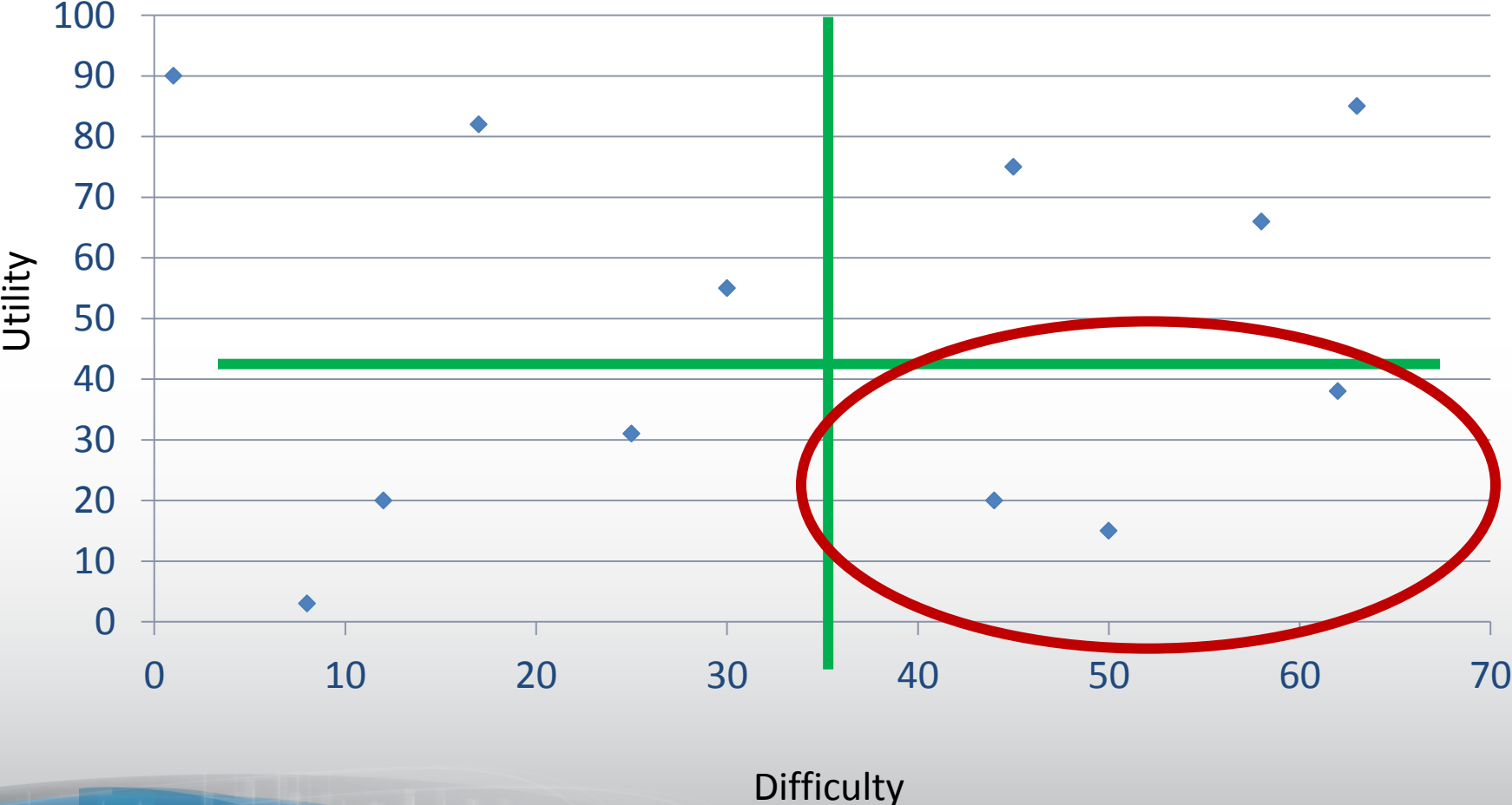
Utility (Benefit)

- Uses at Block Group/Tract Level—Statutory
- Uses at Place/County/MSA Level—Statutory
- Uses at State/Nation Level—Statutory
- Uses at Block Group/Tract Level—Required
- Uses at Place/County/MSA Level—Required
- Uses at State/Nation Level—Required
- Uses at Block Group/Tract Level—Programmatic
- Uses at Place/County/MSA Level—Programmatic
- Uses at State/Nation Level—Programmatic
- County-Level Interquartile Range in Values
- Used to Select frame for a Federal Survey
- Other Data Sources Exist
- Median County-Level Coefficients of Variation

Difficulty (Cost)

- Cognitive Burden
- Sensitivity
- Overall Difficulty
- Number of Complaints
- Seconds to Answer
- Median Item Response Rate at County Level

Notional Example



Data User Feedback Tool

Feedback Form - ACS Content Review -- The Census Bureau is trying to learn more about how people and organizations use ACS data. If you are an ACS data user, please help us improve the survey by telling us about the specific data you use and how you use it.

1) Please select **up to 5** questions on the ACS that are most important to you or that you use most frequently.

Social (Characteristics about people such as Educational Attainment, Marital Status, Language Spoken at Home, etc.) [See All Social Topics](#)

Economic (Characteristics about people and households such as Income, Occupation, Health Insurance Coverage, etc.) [See All Economic Topics](#)

Financial (Characteristics about housing such as Property Value, Mortgage, Rent, Utility Costs, etc.)
[See All Financial Topics](#)

Physical (Characteristics about housing such as Acreage, Year Structure Built, Computer & Internet Use, etc.)

[See All Physical Topics](#)

Data User Feedback Tool

Financial (Characteristics about housing such as Property Value, Mortgage, Rent, Utility Costs, etc.)

[See All Financial Topics](#)

[Value of Property](#)

[Business or Medical Office on Property](#)

[Mobile Home Costs](#)

[Mortgage/Selected Monthly Owner Costs \(SMOC\)](#)

[Real Estate Taxes](#)

[Condominium Fee](#)

[Tenure](#)

[Rent](#)

[Cost of Utilities](#)

[Insurance](#)

[Value of Property](#) -- About how much do you think this house and lot, apartment, or mobile home (and lot, if owned) would sell for if it were for sale?

Data User Feedback Tool

2) For each of the 1 questions you selected, please provide further details below.

- a. Please tell us how you use the information from this question.
- b. The ACS might not be the only source for this information. Is there another source that you use?
- c. If yes, is the ACS your primary source for this information?
- d. If yes, please tell us why the ACS is your primary source for this information.

3) Please tell us if you have any additional comments about any of the questions on the ACS that you use.

4) Please select your affiliation below so that we can better understand your use of the ACS.

U.S. Congress; State, Local, or Tribal Elected or Appointed Official; State, Local, or Tribal Government Agency; Federal Government Agency; Business or Corporation, including Business Association; Private non-profit or for-profit organization; Educational Institute or Think Tank; Planning agency Media outlet; Other

5) We may want to highlight various uses of the ACS. If you are willing to be contacted about your responses, please provide the following information.

First Name; Last Name; Name of agency, office, or company; Telephone; Email

How to Participate

- There are several mechanisms available to enable your participation in the Content Review:
 - Talk to the Census Bureau representatives here today
 - Respond to the ACS Data User Feedback Tool, available on the ACS Content Review website at:
http://www.census.gov/acs/www/about_the_survey/acs_content_review/ or on the DUG website at <http://www.acsdatausers.org/>
 - Respond to the Federal Register notice (Oct-Dec, 2014)
 - Join the DUG On-line Community <http://www.acsdatausers.org/>
 - Communicate your concerns to Federal Agencies through local offices
- Resources to engage us:
 - SDCs – <http://www.census.gov/sdc> or <http://sdcclearinghouse.wordpress.com/>
 - CICs – <http://www.census.gov/cic/>
 - FSCPEs – <http://www.census.gov/popest/fscpe/index.html>
 - Other Local Community Stakeholders