What has technology done for us and to us?

Are we ready for what's next?

Carol House
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Presented at FEDCASIC 2005

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Overview

- What have we sought from technology?

- What came along for the ride?

- What's next, and are we ready?

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What have we sought?

- Quality improvements

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Quality

- Relevance
- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Coherence

- Accessibility
- Completeness
- Comparability
- Interpretability

Andersson et al, 1997; Arondel and Depoutot, 1998; Brackstone, 1999, Eurostat, 2000; and others.

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Quality

- Relevance
- **Accuracy**
- **Timeliness**
- Coherence

- **Accessibility**
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- Comparability
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Accuracy

- What?
  - Exert Control
  - Ease Implementation of Practices

- When?
  - Before collection
  - During collection
  - After collection

Accuracy – during collection

Exert Control

- Branching/skips
- Question order
- Interviewer monitoring
- Consistency between answers
- Consistency between contacts

Ease of Implem't

- Complex, real-time sampling
- Control and study of "effects"
- Customization
- Concept clarification

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Accuracy – before collection

Exert Control

- [questionnaire testing]

Ease of Implem't

- Cognitive understanding
- Interviewer training
- **Complexity**

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Accuracy – after collection

Exert Control

- audit trails

Ease of Implem't

- Complex imputation and editing
- QC follow-up
- Coding

Quality

- **Timeliness**

- **Accessibility**

- **Completeness**

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What have we sought?

- Quality improvements

- Efficiency

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Efficiency

- Timeliness of process

Efficiency

- Timeliness of process
- Cost

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Efficiency

- Timeliness of process
- Cost
- Implementation of complex processes

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Efficiency

- Timeliness of process
- Cost
- Implementation of complex processes
- Shift between modes of collection

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Efficiency

- Timeliness of process
- Cost
- Implementation of complex processes
- Shift between modes of collection
- Respondent burden

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What have we sought?

- Quality improvements

- Efficiency

- To meet growing expectations of the public

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Public Expectations

- Expect technology

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Public Expectations

- Expect technology
- Maximize convenience for respondent

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Public Expectations

- Expect technology
- Maximize convenience for respondent

- **Establishments – take directly from their record keeping**

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Public Expectations

- Expect technology
- Maximize convenience for respondent
- Establishments – take directly from their record keeping
- **Panel – access to previous answers**

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What came along for the ride?

- Competition for respondents

- Public concerns and reactions

- Organizational changes

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Competition

- Victims of our own success

- Technology made it easier to field "bad" surveys

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Public concerns and reactions

- **Fear and loathing**

- **Desire to Escape**

- **Privacy**

- **Counter - technology**

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Organizational Changes

- Relative roles between "cognitive" and technology resources

- Interviewers

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What's Next? Are We Ready?

- **Trends will continue!**

- **Technology continues to make it easy to field "bad" surveys!**

- **Telephone surveys??**

- **Technology moving quickly --- lack of funding for research on quality.**

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I'm Optimistic about:

- Database approaches

- Customized approaches

- Panel and incentives

- Alternatives to surveys

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I'm Optimistic about:

FEDCASIC!

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Thank you!

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