

CASIC Survey Management Challenges

Co-Chairs: Karen Davis, RTI and Jane Shepherd, Westat

These panels provide a venue for presenting and discussing the management and administrative challenges in today's CAI environment.

There are two panels, and within each of these topics, the panelists and a moderator address current issues, approaches taken, and lessons learned.

The approach is to discuss the techniques used in different organizations to address key management issues, participate in a discussion of these issues, and have an opportunity to ask the panelists about effective approaches to common situations

CASIC Survey Management Challenges

- First Panel

Management challenges associated with new and emerging survey challenges and approaches

- Second Panel –

Management challenges associated with Employee Recruitment / Retention / Development in Survey Research

Management challenges associated with new and emerging survey challenges and approaches

- This panel will discuss current challenges related to the changing nature of data collection, security, and/or use of administrative or extant data sources in surveys.
- Many projects today are primarily multi-mode and may have many variable components that require specialized programming customization and the integration of different devices and technologies.
- Many surveys utilize mobile devices, or mobile applications, or web-based surveys.

Management challenges associated with new and emerging survey challenges and approaches

Topics include:

- This panel will cover ways that organizations are dealing with security and other challenges around using innovative approaches to obtaining survey data.
- The acquisition, testing and integration of devices and technologies, deployment considerations, accessibility, and other implementation challenges will be discussed.
- Panelists will discuss approaches used by their organizations and examples of how they have addressed these challenges.

Management challenges associated with new and emerging survey challenges and approaches

Moderator: Karen Davis, RTI International

Panelists:

- Kyle Fennell, NORC at the University of Chicago
- Nicholas Johnson, Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Eloise Parker, U.S. Census Bureau
- Gregg Peterson, SRC, University of Michigan

Panel 1: Management challenges
associated with new and
emerging survey challenges and
approaches

Kyle Fennell, NORC

Multimode Projects and Adaptive Design

NORC, like many organizations, continues to move forward with multimode studies and integrating adaptive design into data collection activities.

Challenges

Identifying where to staff interviewers

Deciding how many FIs to staff

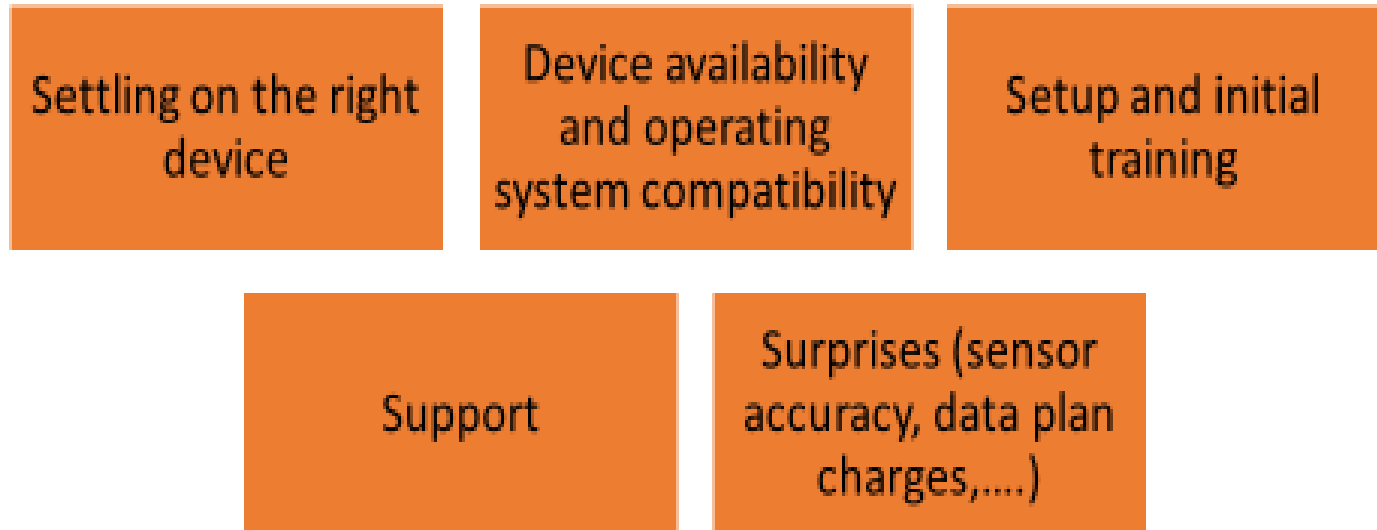
Targeting work on important cases when caseloads are limited

Translating data from Statistics into language the Field can use to manage day-to-day work

Mobile devices

NORC is rapidly moving to a mobile first strategy.

Challenges:



Innovations and Headaches

Innovations	Headaches
Great strides in GIS	Dearth of affordable solutions which meet privacy standards
Better rendering of surveys on mobile devices	Limited options for authoring questionnaires, limited questionnaire complexity
GPS logging, CARI, silent capture of video, sensors,....	Mountains of paradata!
Integrated data collection (questions, records, environmental samples, biomeasures)	Increased complexity of data collector's tasks

Panel 1: Management challenges
associated with new and
emerging survey challenges and
approaches

Nicholas Johnson, BLS

Current Employment Statistics (CES)

- The Current Employment Statistics (CES) program of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics is a monthly payroll survey of 149,000 businesses and government agencies representing approximately 651,000 individual worksites.
- Provides detailed industry data on employment, hours, and earnings of workers on nonfarm payrolls.

CES Data Collection

- Survey enrollment primarily by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI).
- Goal to shift survey respondents, who will report monthly for 2-4 years, to electronic methods.
- Complication: Having the appropriate electronic method appropriate for respondents of varying size (ranging from one unit to thousands of units).

CES Electronic Collection by Size of Firm

- Larger firms with many (>50 units) are more willing to commit to large set-up costs to program recurring reports to minimize ongoing monthly burden.
 - ▶ Solution: Collect by a consistently formatted text file programmed by the firm. Processed at the BLS Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Center.
- Medium-sized firms (~5-50 units) generally not willing to commit to large set-up costs, want streamlined way to transfer from their payroll system to BLS.
 - ▶ Solution: Respondent completes a formatted spreadsheet and uploads to BLS. Previously an Excel sheet, but moving towards an web-based spreadsheet.
- Small firms (fewer than 5 units) want simple data entry without having to manage accounts/passwords.
 - ▶ Solution: Single web data entry page that doesn't require a password.

Addressing Management Challenges Associated with an Evolving Survey Environment

Eloise Parker

FedCASIC Conference

U.S. Census Bureau

April 17, 2018



U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

What's Going On?

Yesterday's Challenges

- Response rates on a steady decline
- Respondents distracted and irritated at intrusion on their time
- Transitioning surveys from one mode to another (e.g., Paper to CAPI)
- Engaging stakeholders to ensure we're collecting data that meets policy needs
- Ensuring confidentiality through established disclosure protection methods
- Securing networks to protect data



Today's Challenges

- Response rates on a precipitous decline
- Respondents increasingly distrustful and protective of personal information
- Executing multi-mode surveys and integrating other data sources
- Balancing expanding desires for more content and access to more granular data
- Advancing disclosure protection methods given increasing ease of matching outside data
- Proactively updating protocols and infrastructure to provide advanced security and facilitate appropriate access

Response & Respondents

Taking a walk in our respondents' shoes

- Rigorously evaluate the current length and content of our surveys
- Multi-mode surveys help meet respondents where they are
- Leveraging administrative data in sampling design to maximize reach to eligible respondents and reduce burden on ineligibles
- Adaptive design strategies to reduce burden and target interviewers and incentives effectively
- Role of the Respondent Advocate at the Census Bureau

To Survey or Not to Survey

Are there alternatives to high-quality data besides primary collection?

- Rarely a clear-cut, “survey vs. no survey” proposition
- Consider existing data sources as potential to
 - Save money
 - Reduce burden
 - Replace or enhance questionnaire content
 - Providing more granular context when there’s insufficient resources to expand sample size
- Managing breaks in series
- Investments in infrastructure and staff expertise
- Fostering collaborations across statistical agencies

Data Protection & Access

Protecting Our Respondents While Facilitating Appropriate Use to Data

- Clear-eyed assessment of disclosure risks posed by increasing availability of data and technologies
- Managing “privacy budget”: balancing data protection and utility
- Need for cultivating staff expertise required to analyze new disclosure risks and develop new data protection methods
- Infrastructure improvements, e.g., cloud computing and “data lake”
- Evaluation of current dissemination tools and introduction of new ones
- Working with user communities to understand limitations and embrace new approaches for access

Thank you!

Contact Information:

Eloise K. Parker

Assistant Director for Demographic Programs

(301) 763-1679

Eloise.K.Parker@census.gov



U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov



Management challenges associated with new and emerging survey approaches

FedCASiC Conference
April 17, 2018

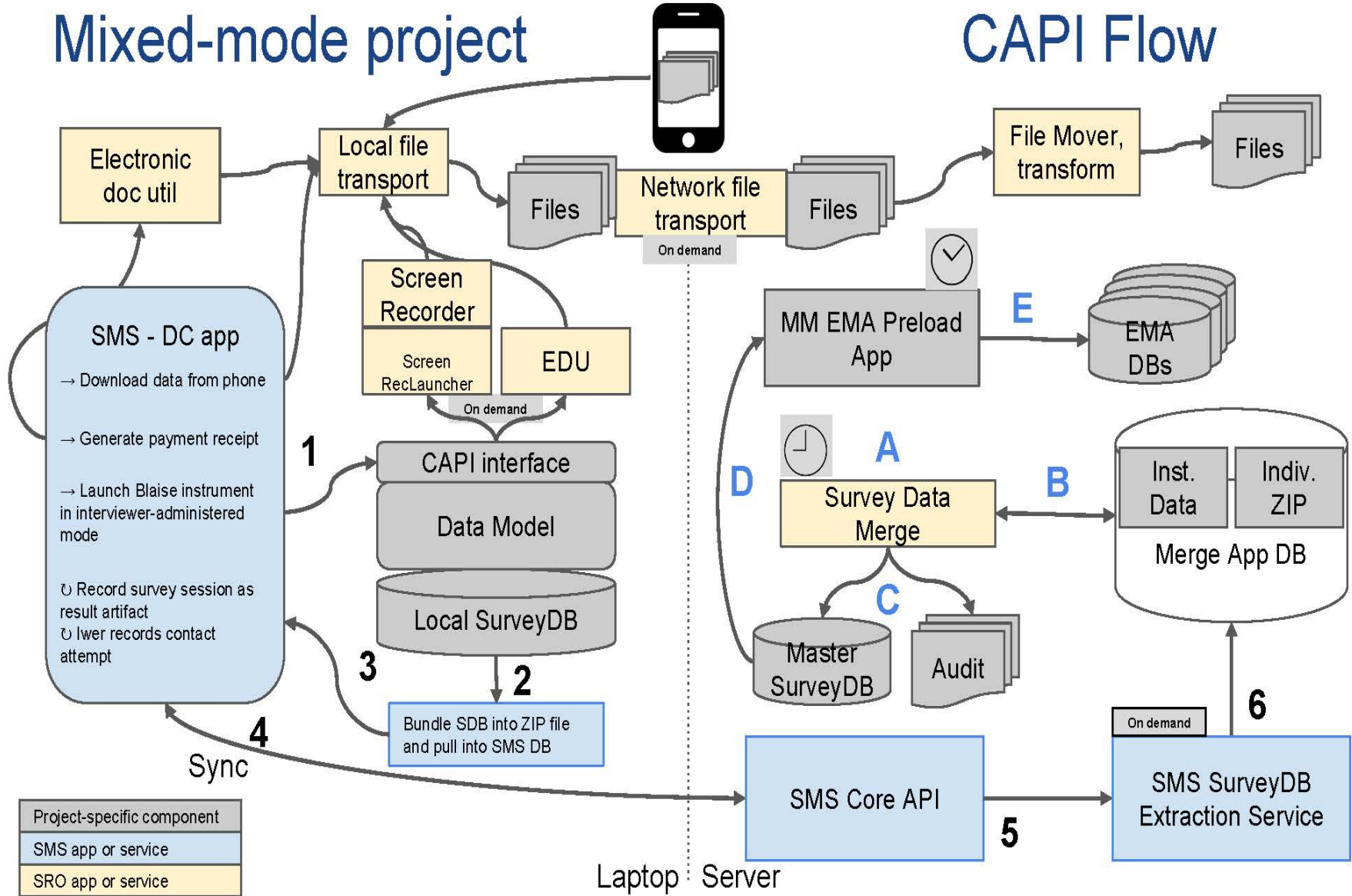
Gregg Peterson
University of Michigan
Survey Research Center

Managing system complexity

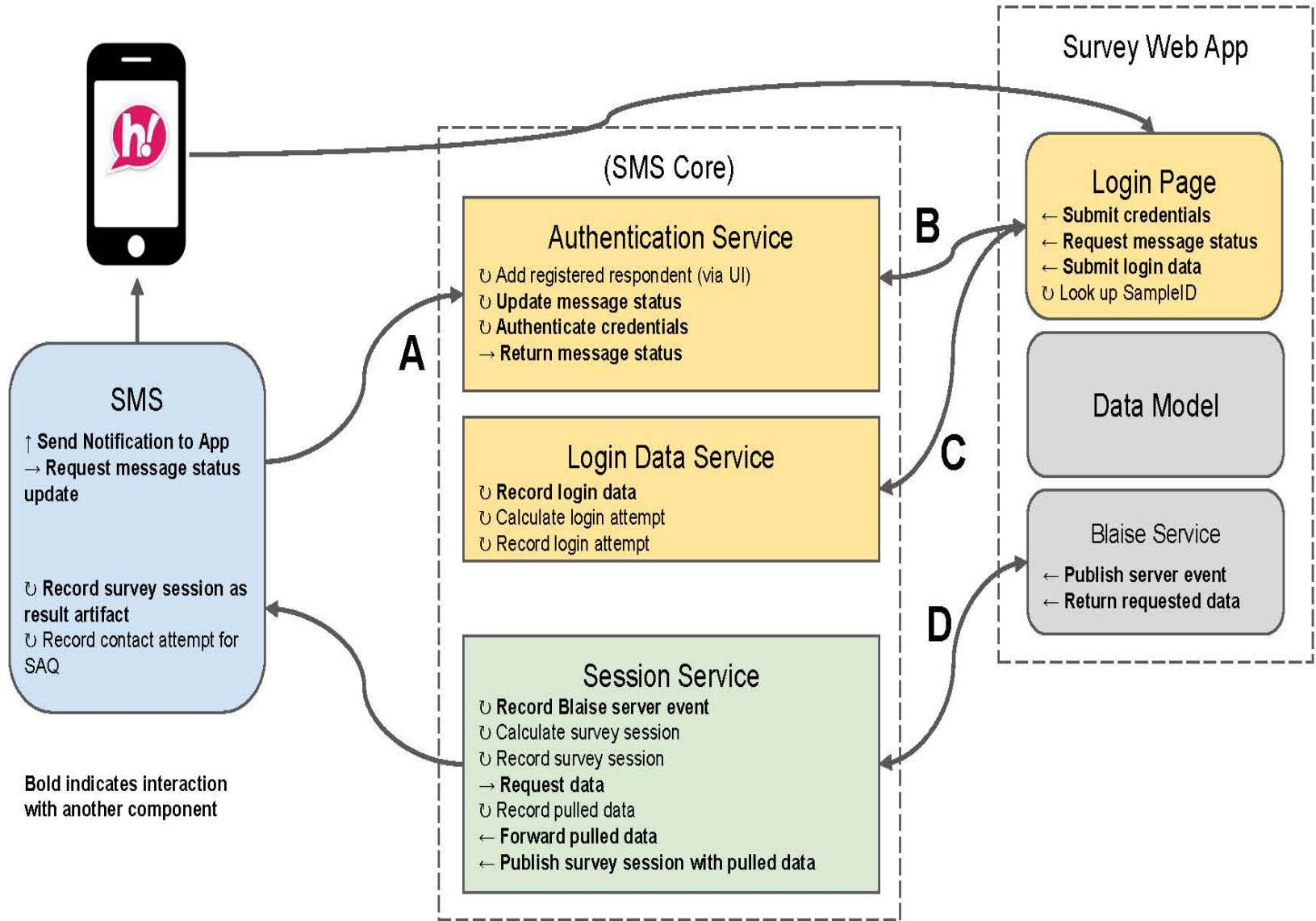
- New tools for a mixed mode world
- New ways of thinking → new vocabulary
- Managing technology transitions

Mixed-mode project

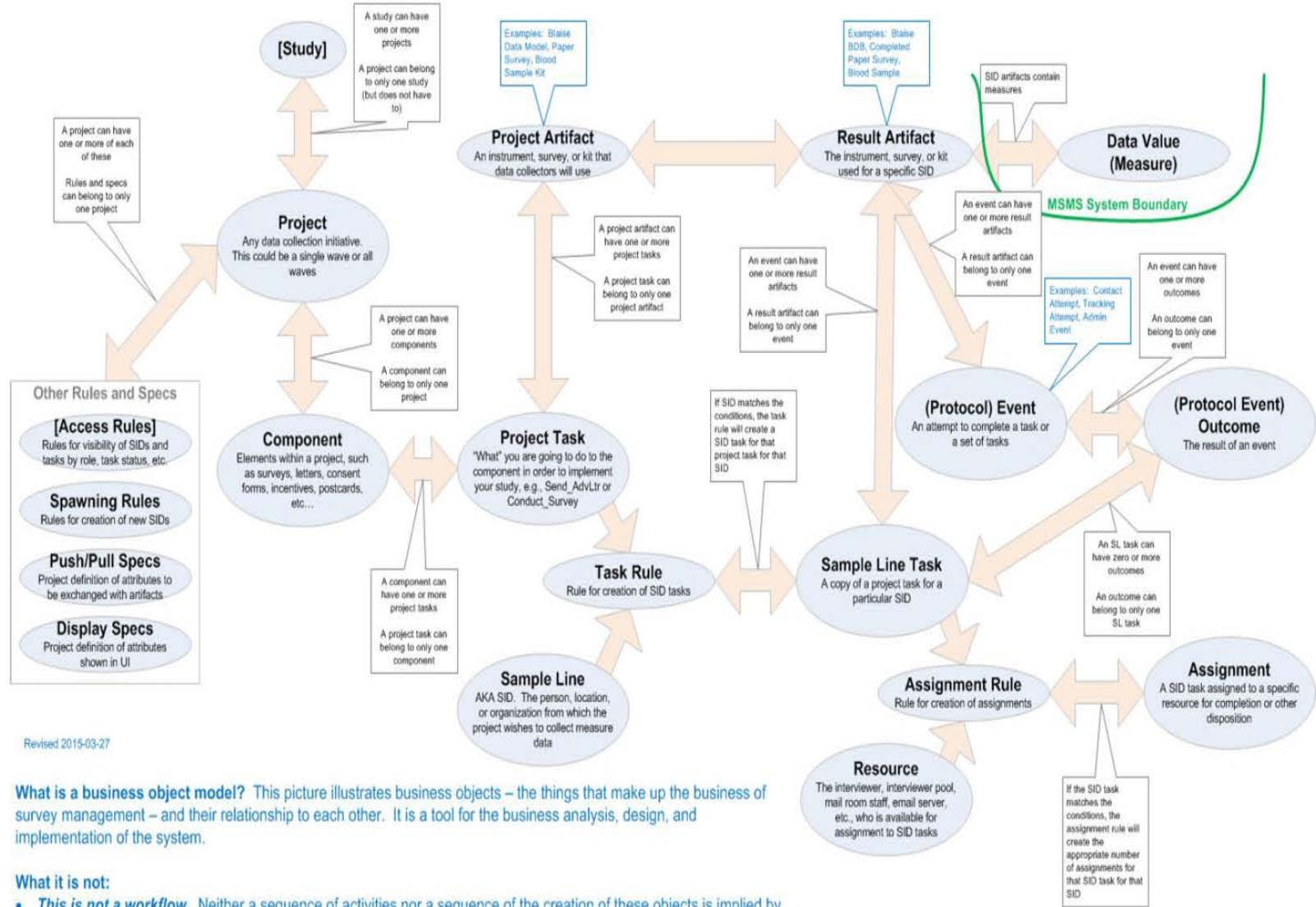
CAPI Flow



Mixed mode project -- EMA Flow



Business Object Model - new mixed mode systems



Revised 2015-03-27

What is a business object model? This picture illustrates business objects – the things that make up the business of survey management – and their relationship to each other. It is a tool for the business analysis, design, and implementation of the system.

What it is not:

- **This is not a workflow.** Neither a sequence of activities nor a sequence of the creation of these objects is implied by this diagram.
- **This is not a database schema,** although the actual schema must conform to this abstraction.
- **This is not a diagram of the classes** that will actually be implemented in code, although the actual classes must conform to this abstraction.

New ways of thinking, new vocabulary

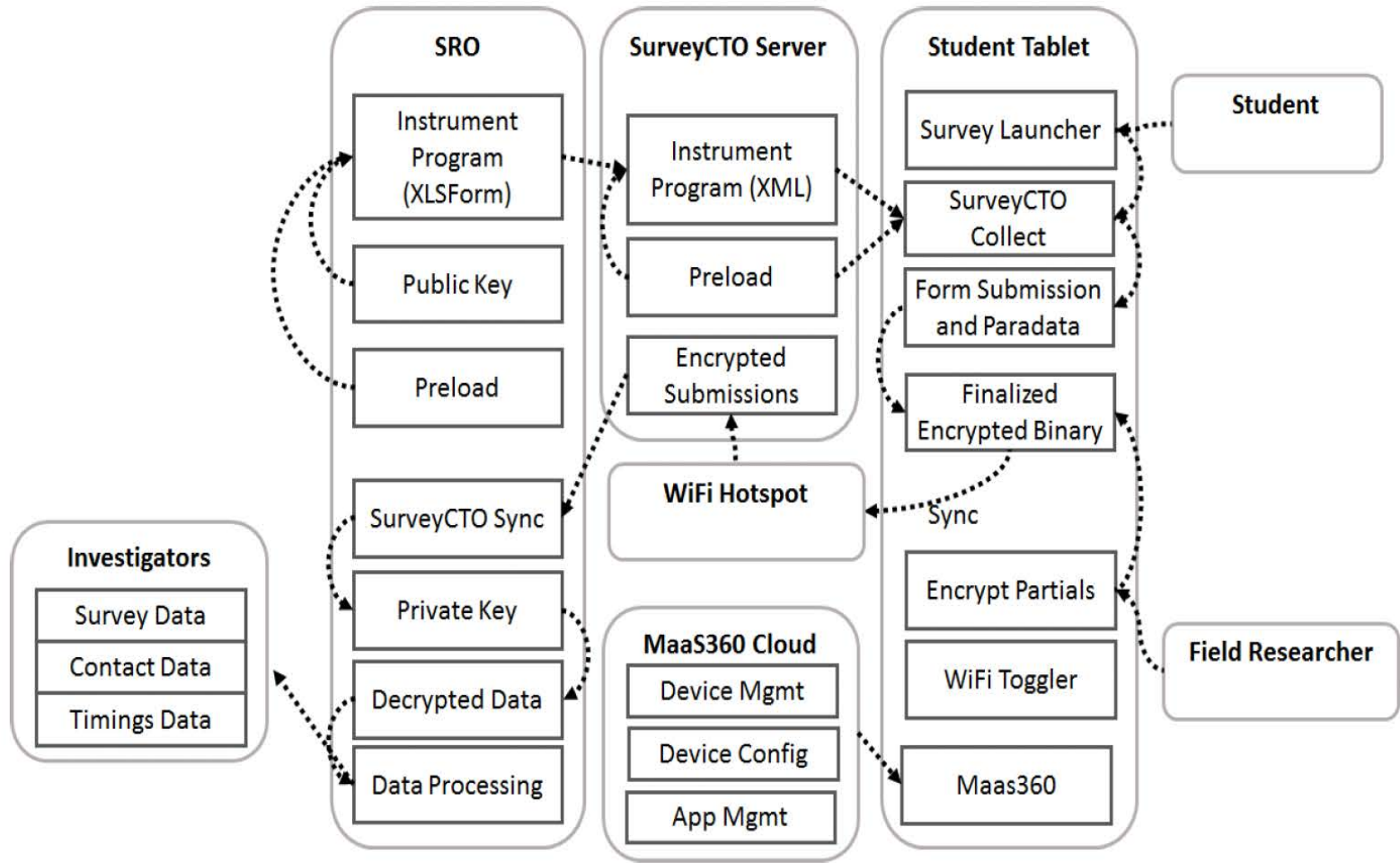
- Tasks, task status, task rules...

How to design an automated survey protocol...

...think like a *finite state machine*

- Conditions
- Entry actions
- Transitions
- States

Technology transition challenges



Thank you

Gregg Peterson

Associate Director, Survey Research Operations
Institute for Social Research
University of Michigan

greggjp@umich.edu

Thank You!

Discussion and
Questions