



(STILL) BORINGLY RELIABLE:

**EVIDENCE OF THE
CONSISTENCY OF
MARU/BUE MARKET
COMMUNITY SAMPLE**

maru/BUE

BUT RELIABLE

SOMETHING THAT IS RELIABLE IS USUALLY BORING AND WE DON'T THINK MUCH OF IT. WHEN WE CROSS A BRIDGE AND IT DOESN'T COLLAPSE, DO WE APPLAUD? WHEN THE OFFICE BUILDING YOU ARE SITTING IN DOESN'T SUDDENLY BECOME A SPLINTERED MASS OF GLASS, CONCRETE AND STEEL GIRDERS, DO WE SEND A THANK YOU NOTE TO THE ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS? NOPE. WE JUST TAKE THESE THINGS FOR GRANTED AND ASSUME THAT WE CAN COUNT ON THE SCIENCE BEHIND THEM.

In the world of market research and public opinion polling we tend to take sample reliability for granted. But that trust is, these days, easily misplaced. We have done extensive research in this area and have shown that many of the sample sources that dominate our industry are not very reliable.

EXCITING, BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY

We have [demonstrated](#) that “river” sample, aggregated from social media, publisher sites, click through ads and other sources often does not produce the same results over time. We also have [reported](#) on how the vast majority of the sample sold through large “panel” companies is, in fact, repackaged “river” sample.

Sample recruited from specific sources, like a loyalty card, have also been [shown](#) to distort results—sometimes quite dramatically—because people who use a specific card are often different in their habits than the general public.

We have demonstrated that when you treat the people like sheep that can be herded into answering a few questions the results are less than reliable. A recent test of one well-known consumer survey platform, which sources its respondents from publisher sites, produced results that are wildly inconsistent over time. Not only was it erratic, the [results](#) underestimate the use of different social media platforms by between 50% and 80%.

THESE ARE EXCITING DIFFERENCES, BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY. NOT IF YOU WANT TO USE THE INFORMATION TO HELP YOU MAKE INTELLIGENT DECISIONS.

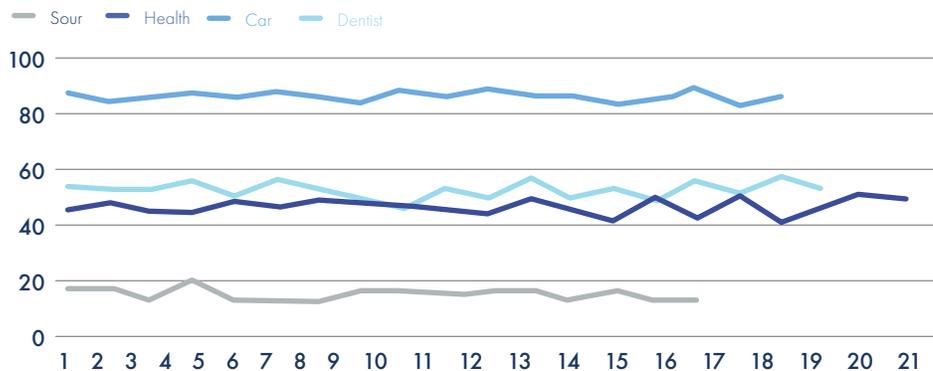
TESTING, RETESTING AND TESTING AGAIN

We test the validity and reliability of our market communities in a few ways. One is by comparing our results to known “realities” like election results. Forecaster Nate Silver’s rating of online sample sources shows [Springboard America is the most reliable](#) in matching election results.

Another way we test our communities is by tracking the

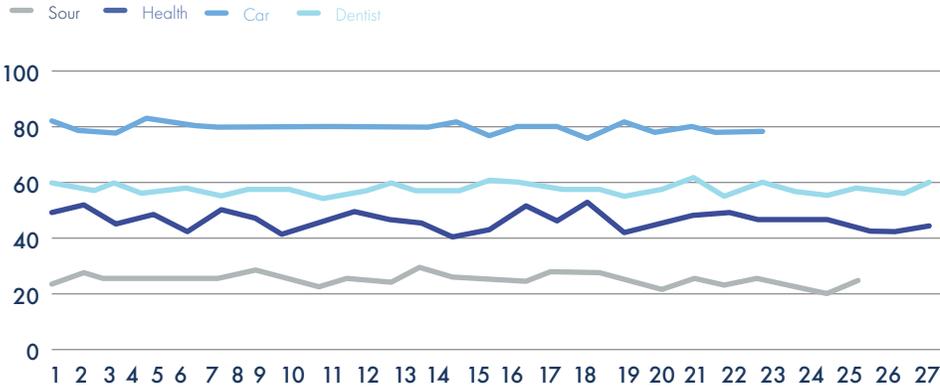
same measures over time, to see if our results are consistent. We have a set of questions we ask on a regular basis. They are designed to measure things that we don’t expect to change very much. They cover four topics: going to the dentist in the past 6 months; owning a car; ratings of your health; and whether you prefer things that are sweet or sour.

TRACKING ON SPRINGBOARD AMERICA
January 2016 to May 2018



TRACKING ON MARU VOICE CANADA

January 2016 to May 2018

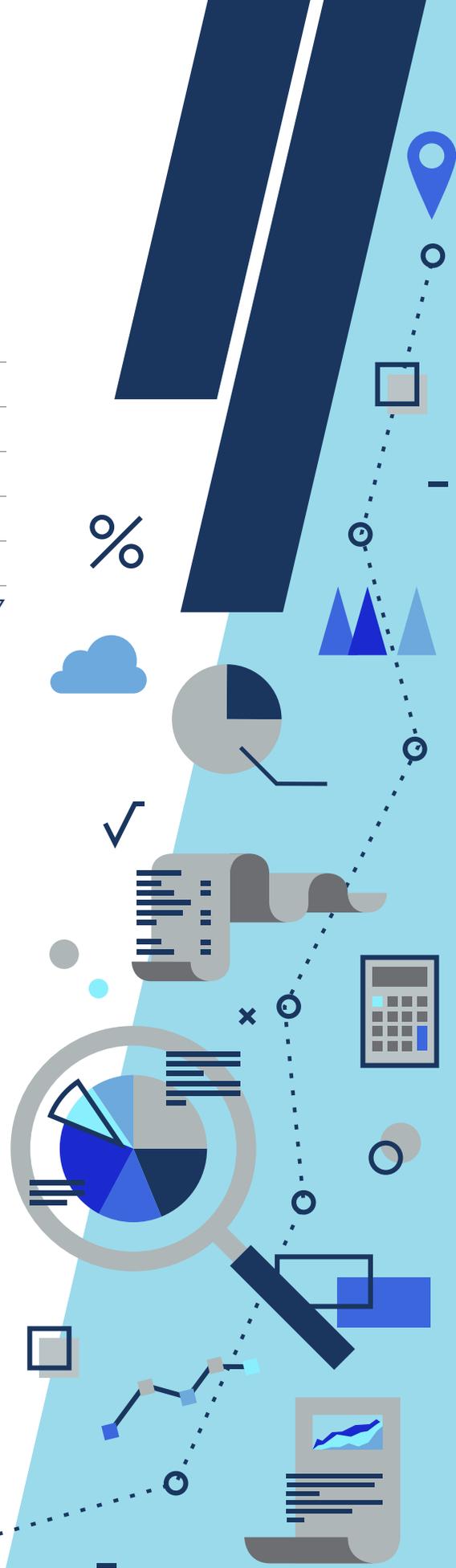


We tracked these measures on omnibus surveys on our [Springboard America](#) and [Maru Voice Canada](#) market communities in the U.S. and Canada. The samples are balanced to be representative of the general population. The sample size was generally 1,000 people per question in the U.S. and 1,500 in Canada. These questions were asked between January and May of

2016, January through March 2017, and between September 27 and May 2018.

The results are, well, boring. We see nothing we would not expect if we used a margin of error at a 95% confidence interval—aka the proverbial 19 times out of 20. As boring as that is, it's yawn inducing in a good way.

THE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THESE COMMUNITIES MEANS THEY CAN BE COUNTED ON TO PROVIDE RESULTS THAT REFLECT THE REAL WORLD.



#1 MOST ACCURATE ONLINE SAMPLE SOURCE

NATE SILVER'S FIVETHIRTYEIGHT POLLSTER RATINGS
PLACE SPRINGBOARD AMERICA AS THE #1 MOST
ACCURATE ONLINE SAMPLE SOURCE

Our data tells us these communities are representative and reliable, but it's always nice to get external validation of that. Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight website aggregates election polls and makes predictions based on those aggregations. As part of their process they weight the polls based on their accuracy. Their [assessment](#) is based on an analysis over 8,500 polls from the final 21 days of gubernatorial and congressional elections since 1998, and presidential primaries and general elections since 2000.

The polls run on Springboard America had 93% "Elections Correctly Called" and the lowest "Difference from Actual" among those online sources that had covered ten or more elections. We were #1 in both categories in the last analysis the FiveThirtyEight published, in 2016.

All the surveys analyzed by FiveThirtyEight were conducted on Springboard America by an organization listed on their site as Angus Reid Global, but which now operates as the Angus Reid Institute, a non-profit foundation.

BORING LIKE A BRIDGE

When you are using research to help make the right decision, you need results that are reliable in the way that bridges and buildings are. Our market communities are sources of dependable information because we carefully recruit from a vast array of sources—to ensure we don't introduce a notable source of bias. We also take great care in how we engage the people that join our market communities. We create true communities where we value people's opinions, respect their time and show them how their feedback makes a difference. For us, they are not just "sample," they are people.

We'd like to extend a special thank you to Daniel Faziluddin who makes sure we continue to track these measures. "It may not be exciting, but it is vitally important."

**AS A RESULT,
WE GET THE
REPRESENTATIVENESS
AND CONSISTENCY
OUR CLIENTS WANT
AND NEED. IT MAY
NOT BE EXCITING,
BUT IT IS VITALLY
IMPORTANT.**

TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT
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ABOUT MARU/BLUE

Maru/Blue is a premium quality data services firm that provides reliable global data connections for brands, agencies, and market research. We create value for our clients by connecting them with expertly profiled known respondents. The result? Reliable, reproducible insights. We deliver instant access to the general population, specific markets, and your or your competitor's customers.

We began disrupting the market community industry in 2000. Our market communities broke new ground, adding depth and richness to clients' understanding of what motivates their customers and shapes their markets. Now, as part of the Maru Group, we continue to provide reliable global data connections for agencies, brands, and market research firms.

Springboard America, and Maru Voice Canada, established more than a decade ago, are a testament to our commitment and depth of engagement. More recently we developed the Maru Voice Business Canada and Springboard America Business Forum, both an excellent source for business to business research.