Developing an Interactive Survey Question Bank: Early Lessons Learned

Jack Kneeshaw
UK Data Archive
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Promises, promises

“... seek to maximise user involvement and feedback into the resources, creating “collaboratory” spaces based on Web 2.0 interactive technologies, to encourage users to access the real source of methodological expertise – each other. User expertise would be gathered in a variety of ways. There would be, as mentioned above, a “grey literature” repository where users could post and download working papers. In addition, there will be a discussion forum, where users can discuss issues raised, ask questions of one another, share information about upcoming events and work opportunities, etc.

”

Text from successful bid to ESRC.
What do we mean by “interactive”?

• A typology of interaction:
  
  – Consumers
    • Passive: traditional; receivers; top-down delivery of information
    • Active: wants customised secure account/workspace

  – Contributors
    • Engaging: joins discussions; interacts with others; gregarious
    • Sharing: shares; uploads; tags; interacts with content; lone actor

  – Collaborators
    • As per Active Consumer but seeks secure account/workspace for collaboration with selected colleagues
But, really, why do it?

• Harness external expertise/crowdsourcing
  – Contributors (Engaging and Sharing)

• Social networking/collaboration
  – Engaging Contributors; Collaborators

• Create evangelists
  – All types

• (Eventually) uncover emergent properties
  – All types
What will success look like?

• User-generated content will be visible across the website — sharing information will seem normal

• Critical mass of Contributors (Engaging and Sharing) helping/advising/tagging/even disagreeing

• Contributors will surprise us – in a good way!

• (In time) take up of individual/collaborative workspaces
What we’ve done so far

• Initial focus on serving Passive Consumers via top-down communication using JISCMail and twitter

• Efforts to create opportunities for Engaging Contributors focused on Methodspace

• In all cases, we’ve used third party resources
  – Various problems outsourced (registration, potential loss of reputation) but lose some control (registration, resource failure)
## Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User type</th>
<th>User motivation</th>
<th>Tool used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer (Passive)</td>
<td>Receive</td>
<td>JISCMail; twitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer (Active)</td>
<td>Customise</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor (Engaging)</td>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Methodspace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor (Sharing)</td>
<td>Share</td>
<td>(Survey question search)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the Survey Question Bank (SQB), co-ordinated by the UK Data Archive (UKDA) at the University of Essex.

There are currently two methods of searching for information:

- an interface that searches across the major UK and cross-national social survey questionnaires
- a Google search across the whole of the SRN web site

Users may also browse the SQB’s holdings via:

- an A-Z list of major surveys
- an A-Z list of topics covered in those surveys

Get involved

SRN on JISC MAIL
SRN on Methodspace
SRN on Twitter
I want to locate questions

Note: New search interface/functionality expected to go live in Summer 2010.

Make a suggestion. (Registration with methodspace.com required).

The SQB team is currently designing a search tool that will allow users to search across a subset of key, recent UK social surveys. It is expected that the results of this search will be question-level reports that allow the user to link to the relevant part of the questionnaire (PDF) and also to the frequency output of the variable that is derived from that question. The tool will utilise metadata stored in the ESDS Nesstar catalogue.
1970 British Cohort Study

- Survey overview, associated resources (ESDS Longitudinal)

- Survey documentation, including questionnaire(s)
  - 2004-2005
  - 1999-2000
    - 1996 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1992 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1986 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1980 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1975 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1973 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1972 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation
    - 1970 - to be added in 2010, until then see ESDS documentation

- Major survey on: Child development

- Dataset(s) available via the ESDS

- Publications using this survey: ESDS Longitudinal publications database | Centre for Longitudinal Studies bibliography

- View user comments (registration with methodspace.com required to add comments)
Survey Resources Network

Created by Jack Kneesheaw

See also Survey Research and Methodology Group.

Go to Survey Resources Network web site.

Discussion Forum

**British Crime Survey**  1 Reply
Please share anything BCS related: news, events, publications, jobs etc.

**Survey question search**  1 Reply
We're working on a survey question database at [www.survey-net.ac.uk/sqb/qb/questions.aspx](http://www.survey-net.ac.uk/sqb/qb/questions.aspx) will allow users to find questions and then cross-reference them to the same/similar questions asked elsewhere...

**British Election Study**
Please share anything BES related: news, events, publications, jobs etc.
Started by Jack Kneesheaw May 21.

**1970 British Cohort Study**
Please share anything BCS70 related: news, events, publications, jobs etc.
Started by Jack Kneesheaw May 21.
State of play, raw data

visitors - 28,209

sign-ups - 84
sign-ups - 41
sign-ups - 22

Contributors to JiscMail/twitter/Methodspace - 6

“i-RATIO” - 4701 : 1 (or 0.02%)
State of play, Venn

JISCMail (4)

twitter (0)

Methodspace (2)
“We built it; they didn’t come (yet)!”

• Why not?:
  
  – Failure of service to make contribution attractive and easy
    • Nowhere near the goal of making information sharing the norm
    • Low visibility
  
  – Academics traditionally reluctant to share?
    • Possible but unlikely given other evidence, e.g., case studies/fact sheets etc. provided
  
  – Other barriers:
    • Third party resources one step removed from SQB?
    • Related to above: no SQB membership = no community?
“We built it; they didn’t come (yet)!”

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Lessons learned

• Treat building an interactive service like establishing a garden
  – Need to seed, fertilise and then nurture until established

• Strength in numbers?
  – Hope to team up with related data services so that Methodspace area has multiple entry points and visible to more users

• Limit reliance on third party resources
  – Allow users to interact with content on SQB web pages
Forthcoming: Survey Question Search

• Searchable archive of survey questions
  – Best features of some of those listed @ surveynet.ac.uk/sqb/qb/otherquestionbanks.asp

• In-house programming, customisation of database sitting behind ESDS Nesstar catalogue

• Push to enable Sharing Contributors > real effort to harness wisdom of crowd
  – Comments/tags
  – “See also” connections/associations – emergent properties?
  – Suggest new content
When people are facing difficulties in their lives, sometimes they use 'self-help' of various kinds to find ways of dealing with those issues. In the last year have you done any of the things on this card?

| British Social Attitudes Survey, 2007 | Access full detail |

Which, if any, of the alternative or complementary therapies shown on this card have you used? Just tell me the numbers | British Social Attitudes Survey, 2007 | Access full detail
**Question text:** When people are facing difficulties in their lives, sometimes they use ‘self-help’ of various kinds to find ways of dealing with those issues. In the last year have you done any of the things on this card?

**Survey title:** British Social Attitudes Survey, 2007

**Country:** Great Britain

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**Valid responses:** 2102

**Invalid responses:** 2022

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Response value</th>
<th>Response value label</th>
<th>Response frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mentioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>Skip, versions A+B</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interviewer instructions:** CARD L17 CODE ALL THAT APPLY Multicoded (Maximum of 5 codes)

**Question applicable to:** VERSIONS A+B: ASK ALL

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**Universe sampled:** Location of units of observation: National Population: Adults (18 and over) living in private households in Great Britain (excluding the ‘crofting counties’ north of the Caledonian Canal).

**Sampling:** Multi-stage stratified random sample. Sampling is conducted in four stages; from 1993 the sample has been drawn from the Postcode Address File, whereas in previous years it was drawn from the Electoral Register.

**Study type:** Repeated cross-sectional study. The BSA survey is conducted annually.

[View user comments (3)](https://ukdataarchive.ac.uk)
Issues to consider

• How to contribute?
  – Freetext
  – Http links
  – Radio buttons

• Identifying what is/isn’t user-generated content
  – Risk to reputation

• Legal
  – Copyright/defamation

• Moderation
  – Checks prior to publication
  – Mechanisms for challenging/correcting content
  – Resources required

• Registration or anonymous posting?
Finally: For next year ...

- “Grey” literature repository
  - Though may not be required if users can add http links to content in the Survey Question Search (avoids responsibility of hosting)

- Customised workspace for Active Consumers and Collaborators