

# White Paper



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## The Future of Mobile Research Technology in Market Research

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Over the last decade market researchers have seen a shift as new technologies present new research methods. Online survey methods provided researchers with cost advantages, an increase in the ease of connecting with survey respondents, and the ability to target niche populations that more traditional research methods could not provide. Mobile research technology promises to shift the survey research world again. Mobile devices are quickly becoming a ubiquitous fixture in the lives of survey research respondents and are providing unique opportunities to conduct market research. As the lines between mobile devices and traditional computing devices merge, blend, and shift, what should market researchers expect?

At SSI, we view the advances in mobile technology and online research as an opportunity to increase the quality of our data, to improve the experience and retention of our panelists, and to maximize the value of our product for our clients. We are investing in and developing research techniques based on these new mobile research technologies:

### **Mobile Apps**

When are online panelists available to take surveys? The simple answer is only when they are in front of a computer. With mobile applications we can now expand a panelist's availability. In addition, mobile applications will allow us to more easily verify the identity of our respondents, store panelist information for shortened logins and automatic field population, and push invitations and updates to better maintain a positive relationship with our most valuable assets.

### **Location Based Services (LBS)**

We can now offer mobile survey research opportunities based on a participant's GPS location – after obtaining permission to track them. Now when a potential respondent passes a store or advertisement we can, on-the-spot, invite them to participate in an online survey or even interact with the store, its employees, products, or services to express their opinions on a particular aspect of an advertisement or promotion.

### **Near Field Communications (NFC)**

Although not yet available in current mobile devices, this technology is expected to make an appearance in commercial mobile devices in 2012. Utilizing similar technology as is found in your keyless security entry cards or "tap" credit cards, this technology will allow us to trigger similar LBS events as above but on a much more detailed level. Imagine a "cookie" for tracking a participant's path through your client's store with survey questions being triggered at various locations throughout the store (e.g. passing by a new end-cap display).

### **Video and Image Capture**

We have long been able to capture video, audio, and pictures of our research participants. Mobile devices, however, allow our participants to capture not only their responses during or immediately following an event (e.g. waiting in line, checking out, following a movie) but now they can include detailed images of their environment and the stimuli they experienced. A mobile device's camera also

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allows the use of QR-Codes (two dimensional bar codes) for the inclusion of large quantities of data in survey responses. For example, a QR-code on the bottom of a store receipt could launch the survey and append the store number, purchase amount, purchase items, cashier, time, date, and any other number of data variables. This would increase data accuracy while simultaneously decreasing survey length, improving the experience for market researchers and survey respondents.

### **Social Media**

One of the greatest driving forces behind the explosion of smart mobile devices has been the inclusion of social media. These devices have been designed to facilitate a participant's interaction with these social media sites. Given current market research efforts into social media, these efforts can now be blended with LBS, NFC, multi-media, and cooperative researching.

### **Environmental Sensors**

Ever wondered if your data is being influenced by a participant's environment? Now you can verify if your concerns were valid and measure the effects. Mobile devices frequently include sensors that detect the ambient light, noise levels, and even barometric pressure. These measurements can then be used to measure the survey respondent's environment.

Mobile research technology will significantly change how survey respondents communicate with market researchers. As mobile devices become more prevalent, they can be the standard for accessing key segments of the population.