

turning knowledge into practice

Providing Real-Time Incentives for Anonymous Web Surveys

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RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute

Campus Sexual Assault Study - Background

- The Campus Sexual Assault (CSA) Study
- 3 year study funded by National Institute of Justice (NIJ) at the Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Cross-sectional web-based survey
- Primary Objective: to examine the prevalence, nature, and reporting of different types of sexual assault on college campuses

CSA Study Methodology

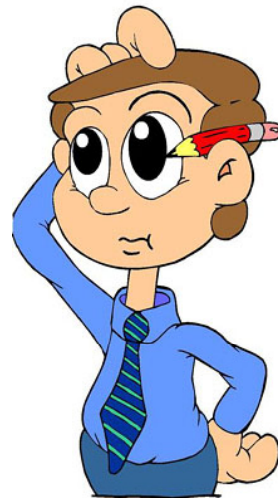
- 2 large, public universities - University of North Carolina -Chapel Hill & University of Cincinnati
- Sampling frame:
 - Undergraduate, traditional (full-time) students age 18-25
 - Random samples (females oversampled)
- Anonymous, 15 minute survey
- Respondents given \$10 Amazon.com gift code & 2 iTunes song gift codes
- Non-respondents were given the option to collect 2 iTunes song gift codes

CSA Study Methodology (cont'd)

- Survey content: Demographics, School involvement, Substance use, Dating and consensual sexual activity, Nonconsensual sexual activity (victimization), Perpetration of nonconsensual sexual activity (males only), Attitudes toward sexual assault
- Survey contained educational module and links to local student resources

The Challenge

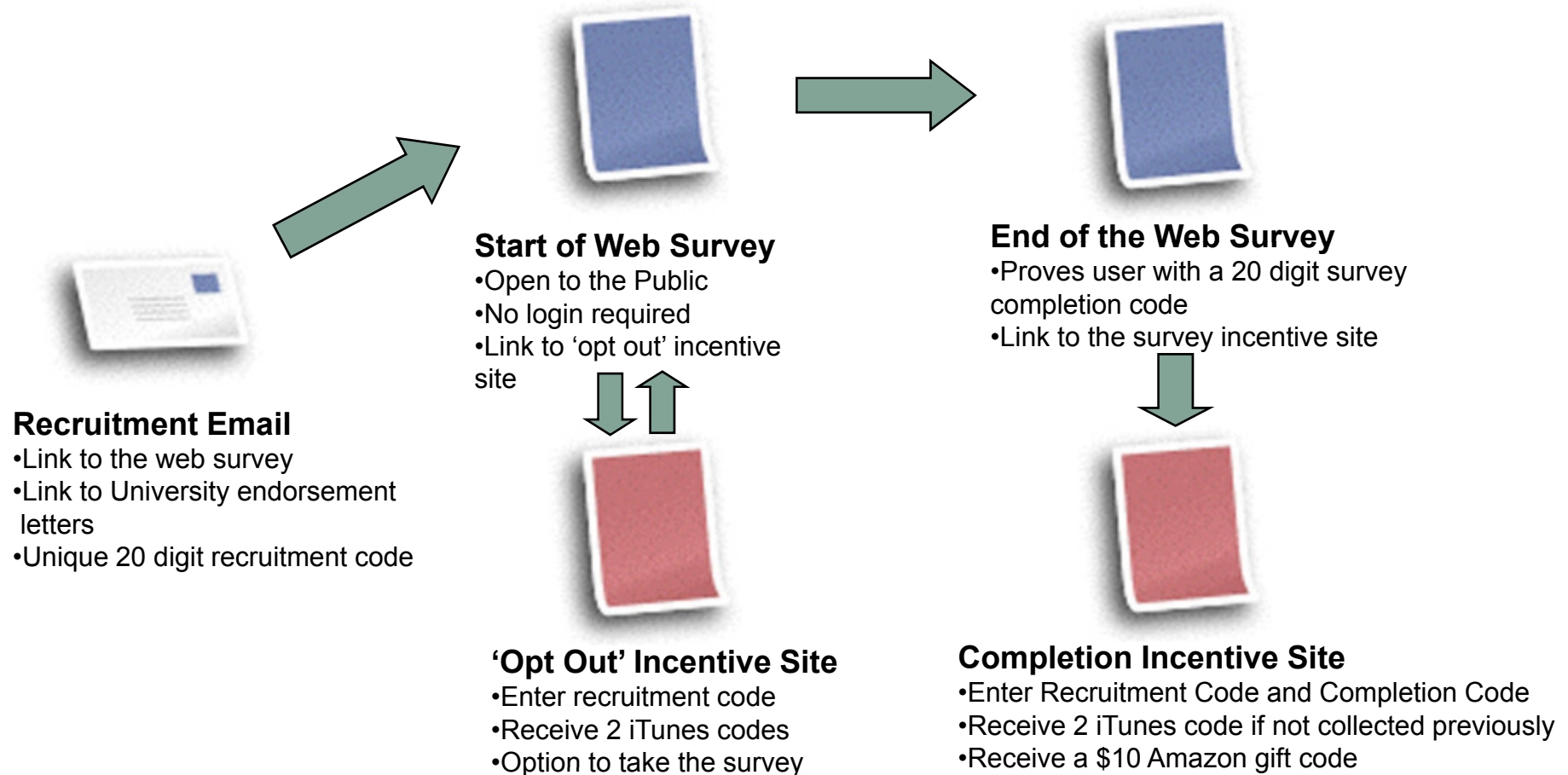
How do we secure and distribute an electronic incentive for an anonymous web survey?



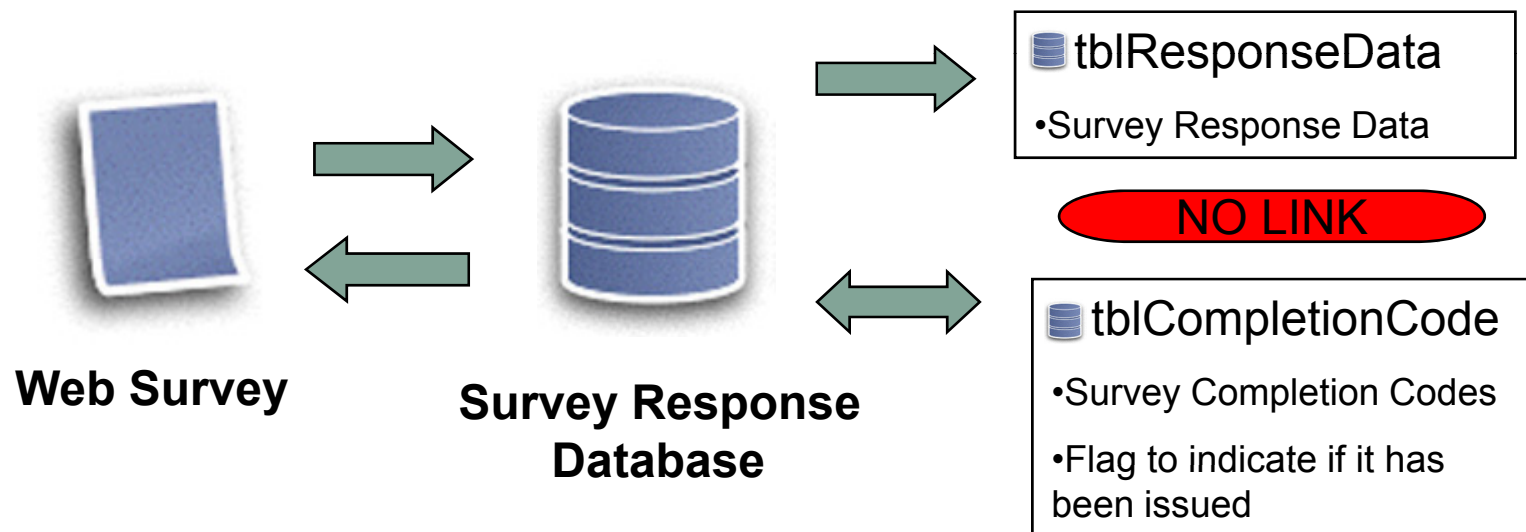
An Overview of the Approach

- We built 2 independent web applications (sites). One site handled the anonymous web survey & the other handled the distribution of the incentives.
- In the recruitment emails, we provided respondents with a unique code so to validate they were a member of the sample eligible for incentive collection.
- After the web survey was completed, respondents were provided with a survey completion code. The code was not tied to response data.
- The users could then take survey completion code and code in the recruitment email to collect the incentive from a site that was independent of the web survey.

Respondents View of the Data Flow



Data Flow During Data Collection



How the Data was Handled



Survey Response Database

tblCompletionCode

- Survey Completion Codes
- Flag to indicate if it has been issued



Sample & Incentive Database

tblCompletionCode

- Survey Completion Codes
- Flag to indicate if it has been redeemed

tbliTunes

- \$1 iTunes gift codes
- Flag to indicate if its been issued

tblSample

- Email Address of the Sample Member
- 20 Digit Recruitment code
- Flag to indicate if they redeemed iTunes code
- Flag to indicate if they redeemed Amazon code

tblAmazon

- Amazon \$10 gift codes
- Flag to indicate if its been issued

Success of the Protocol

- Overall good response rate on a very sensitive topic
 - 5,446 women (42.8%)
 - 1,377 men (33.9%)
- Very economical protocol to distribute and manage incentives
- Even though the survey was anonymous, the protocol allowed us to only follow-up on respondents that had not collected an incentive.
- Being able to provide an 'opt-out' incentive for the students that did not want to participate made procuring the sample much easier.

Challenges of the Protocol

- Still a leap of faith for the respondents to trust we don't link the data
- Respondents could answer the survey more than once
- If respondents had problems with gift codes (lost them, wrote them down wrong, etc) we had no way to link the codes with the respondents email address
- Some respondents 'raced' to complete the survey to collect the incentive

Summary

- Extremely economical and effective approach to survey University Students on a sensitive topic.
- We will be using this protocol for NIJ in the fall focusing on Historically Black College & Universities.

Questions?

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