

“QDS™ Audio-CASI Software Makes Sensitive Data Collection Easier, Less Expensive.”

10 Reasons Behavioral Researchers Prefer QDS™ Audio-CASI System Over Face-to-Face For Sensitive Topics Interviewing

1. Respondents Feel “Safer”

Tensions created by the discussion of intimate sexual behaviors, even with trained clinical personnel as interviewers, inhibit reporting. Computer administered self-report formats (such as QDS Audio-CASI) reduce inhibitions respondents may feel when they are asked to report intimate risk behaviors. (Williams, et al., 2000). Studies have shown that the accuracy of information revealed by a respondent is positively related to the level of privacy of the interview. (Newman, Des Jarlais, et al., 2002). Audio-CASI subjects can wear headphones to further enhance their privacy.

2. Studies are More Consistent

Computer administered interviewing provides a uniform and consistent method of data collection. Respondents react to a known entity, a computer, rather than to the variable personalities of interviewers. (Turner, et al., 1998). All subjects with similar behavioral profiles hear the same voice asking the same questions in the same sequence. Thus, variations in administration caused by the interviewer are eliminated. (Metzger, et al., 2000)

3. Low Literacy Not a Problem

Using Audio-CASI, the research subject listens to a recorded human voice (or a Text-To-Speech synthesized voice) and responds to the question via keyboard entry (or the use of another input device such as a “touch screen” or “mouse.”) The addition of audio reduces requirementst for respondent literacy. (Metzger, et al., 2000).

4. Subjects “Enjoy” Computers

Most Americans routinely encounter computers when using an information kiosk, completing bank transactions, or buying groceries at the supermarket. (Williams, et al., 2000). Dr. Edward Morse

notes that his prisoner subjects “enjoy” the computer and he often uses laptops, allowing subjects to hold onto them. They like the sense of independence that this gives, and it helps build trust, since subjects feel more comfortable with the process.

5. Less \$, Fewer Staff Needed

Dr. Morse performs 3-5 Audio-CASI interviews at a time with only one staff person in the room. This has saved his Department thousands of dollars and eliminated the need to manage staffing and hiring issues. Morse can dedicate more time to research efforts without worrying about administrative hassles that slow the process. Plus, with its built-in Text-To-Speech engine, QDS allows Morse to test and evaluate questions before spending time and money on expensive recording sessions. (QDS allows the use of either live recorded WAV files, a built-in Text-To-Speech engine, or both.)

6. Less Paperwork With QDS™

Transfer of data from the subject’s response on the touchscreen or keyboard to the appropriate field is handled instantaneously through QDS. The myriad of paperwork associated with survey research is nearly eliminated. Codebooks and complete change histories can be created instantly. QDS allows Morse to export his data directly into SAS, SPSS, or MS Access for analysis and he can easily reuse one set of questions from one part of a survey and copy and paste quickly into a new survey.

7. Computer Enhances Studies

Dr. Morse reports that since the computer “eliminates barriers that distort data,” studies are enhanced by its use. Audio-CASI offers the potential to improve the quality of behavioral data and, consequently, our understanding of factors associated with diseases and interventions that

may prevent them. (Metzger, et al. 2000).

8. No Need to Hire Programmers

Since researchers use QDS to create their data entry program in a user-friendly, Windows environment, there is no need to hire an expensive computer programmer to build it, saving thousands of dollars. From the one set of specifications, easily created by researchers, several modes of administration can be implemented simultaneously in addition to Audio-CASI giving researchers greater flexibility.

9. Multi-Languages Available

The QDS Design Studio allows users to store multiple translations in a single file. Multi-language Text-To-Speech engines are built into the Audio-CASI component of the software.

10. Unlimited Tech Support

QDS users enjoy complimentary, unlimited technical assistance via e-mail (support@novaresearch.com). ♦

References

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In collaboration with the Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriffs Office (OPCSO) in New Orleans, Edward V. Morse, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics/ Infectious Diseases at Tulane University, and investigators at Tulane and LSU Medical Schools are successfully utilizing QDS™ (Questionnaire Development System) Audio Computer Administered Self-Interview (Audio-CASI) software to evaluate an HIV risk reduction intervention trial targeting young African American injection drug users (IDUs).

Morse and his colleagues recruit young (ages 16-30) male and female HIV, HBV, and HCV negative, African American IDUs who are inmates with OPCSO to evaluate the efficacy of intervention methods on reduction of HIV-related risk behaviors. QDS™ is allowing Morse and his researchers to gain greater insight into the high risk behaviors of subjects using Audio-CASI, a nearly “anonymous” data collection method that eliminates the need for face-to-face interviewing.

Studies have shown and Morse has witnessed firsthand that subjects were more likely to provide detailed sensitive information about high-risk behaviors to an “anonymous” computer than they were to live, even highly-trained interviewers. Not only has this increased the accuracy of his research, but it has allowed Morse to spend far less money and less time dealing with staffing and other administrative “headaches.”

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