

- WebSurveys.com: Challenges and Opportunities in using Online Strategies for Interviewing Customers (*Tara O'Malley, Sonali Tandon - Chicago Transit Authority*)

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) frequently conducts market research for a variety of reasons: to gauge customer satisfaction; to understand the CTA market share; to assess rider travel patterns; and to get customers' feedback on initiatives. In previous years, the chosen quantitative methodologies for conducting such research were either via telephone surveys or on-board surveys. Methods used for smaller scale research included on-board surveys, mail-out surveys, and limited web surveys. With growing Internet penetration, web surveying has become more attractive. Web surveying has significant benefits over other market research approaches including savings on cost and time, greater sample size, relaxed surveying, superior data quality, customized questionnaire, and potentially shorter surveys thereby reducing the burden on customers. Much like any quantitative methodology, web surveys also have certain limitations and are not all inclusive for the entire audience. According to the CTA 2008 Customer Experience, twenty-six percent of CTA customers do not have any access to the Internet. CTA recently conducted two area studies that consisted of web based surveys using online software tools. This paper would present the challenges and opportunities of web surveying based on CTA's recent experience with these studies, and the implication of findings on future market research.