

Rural Grocery Summit III

Assessing Community Support: A Survey Approach

Leah J. Tsoodle and Paul M. Clark.

Background

- Prior Studies
 - 2003
 - 2003
 - 2004
- 2007 Initiative
- Statewide Study

Available:

<http://www.k-state.edu/cecd/initiatives/grocerystore/>

Background (cont.)

-Initial surveys from 2007 were designed to gauge perceptions of customers and store owners about local stores.

-Subsequent surveys were designed to gauge community support for re-opening a closed store.

-These surveys were not meant to determine the financial feasibility of re-opening a closed store!

Background (cont.)

- Subsequent surveys
 - Small towns in Kansas
 - Different characteristics
 - Different outcomes

Why Survey?

- What is your objective?
 - Gathering information on residents' attitudes and opinions
 - Soliciting community reactions to policy proposals or solutions
 - Having residents assess the effectiveness of programs, facilities, and services

Why Survey? (cont.)

- What is your objective?
 - Making residents more aware of community problems and their effects
 - Providing residents access to the public policy-making process
 - Providing an opportunity for residents to influence public decisions

Why Survey? (cont.)

- Important outcomes of conducting a survey
 - Increased commitment to the survey findings
 - Increased commitment to subsequent recommendations.

Why Survey? (cont.)

- Early inclusion of the public
 - Commitment to results
 - Psychological satisfaction in participating in public decision making

General Notes on Survey Design

- Identify the objective of the survey
 - What do we want to know?
 - Can we be specific and unambiguous?

- What is the appropriate delivery method?
 - Do we have a target population?
 - Will each member of the target population have an equal chance to be sampled?

General Notes on Survey Design (cont.)

- Mail surveys are relatively low cost
 - Cover should be eye catching and relevant
- Entire survey should be as short as possible and easy to complete
- Follow up is required
- Participation rates can be low

General Notes on Survey Design (cont.)

- Telephone surveys/interviews are efficient
 - With caller ID, will call be picked up?
- Using the www. cheap and fast
 - Does your target population use the www.?
- In-person interviews more expensive and time consuming
 - May be better suited to more detailed information

General Notes on Survey Design (cont.)

- How are you going to collect completed survey?

 - For mail consider stamped/self-addressed return envelope.

- Will compilation of results be easy?

 - How will you report results?

Types of questions

- Use standardized questions
 - Every individual should be asked the same question in the same way
 - Use a consistent format
- Avoid double-barreled questions
- Avoid using negative terms

Types of questions (cont.)

- Generally two types of questions
 - Close-ended questions
 - Limited and mutually exclusive responses
 - Response categories might be some sort of ranking

Types of questions (cont.)

How well does the store where you currently do most of your grocery shopping meet your expectations in the following areas?

	<u>Doesn't meet</u> <u>Expectations</u>				<u>Exceeds</u> <u>Expectations</u>
1. Quality of food	1	2	3	4	5
2. Availability of food (variety, brand choices) ...	1	2	3	4	5
3. Prices of items offered	1	2	3	4	5
4. Customer service	1	2	3	4	5
5. Cleanliness of store	1	2	3	4	5
6. Convenient business hours	1	2	3	4	5
7. Travel time to the grocery store	1	2	3	4	5
8. Supporting local business	1	2	3	4	5
9. Buying locally grown foods	1	2	3	4	5

Types of questions (cont.)

How well does the store where you currently do most of your grocery shopping meet your expectations in the following areas?					
	<u>Doesn't meet Expectations</u>			<u>Exceeds Expectations</u>	
1. Quality of food	1.2%	2.4%	29.8%	45.2%	21.4%
2. Availability of food (variety, brand choices)	1.2%	6.0%	33.3%	35.7%	23.8%
3. Prices of items offered	7.2%	14.5%	36.1%	30.1%	12.0%
4. Customer service	4.8%	4.8%	18.1%	41.0%	31.3%
5. Cleanliness of store	1.2%	1.2%	21.7%	36.1%	39.8%
6. Convenient business hours	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	45.1%	43.9%
7. Travel time to the grocery store	8.4%	16.9%	41.0%	21.7%	12.0%
8. Supporting local business	6.1%	12.2%	14.6%	42.7%	24.4%
9. Buying locally grown foods	12.7%	17.7%	36.7%	16.5%	16.5%

Types of questions (cont.)

- Generally two types of questions
 - Open-ended questions
 - Used to understand why respondents feel the way they do
 - Allows respondents to address issues that weren't included on survey

Types of questions (cont.)

What one thing would encourage you to shop at a grocery store in *hometown*?

What would discourage you from shopping at a grocery store in *hometown*?

Demographics

<u>Customer Survey</u>		
I shop Primarily where I work		
<u>40.8%</u> Yes	<u>19.4%</u> No	<u>1.4%</u> Retired

<u>Customer Survey</u>	
So that we may group your responses with those of similar respondents, please answer the following questions:	
Distance you are willing to travel to get groceries?	How far do you live from <i>hometown</i> ?
11.1% 0-5 miles	60.2% 0-5 miles
8.6% 5-10 miles	26.5% 5-10 miles
40.7% more than 10 miles	13.3% more than 10 miles
39.5% distance is not an issue	
What is your weekly family grocery budget?	What is your annual household income?
18.3% under \$50	29.9% \$20,000 to \$35,000
57.3% \$100 to \$200	27.2% \$35,000 to \$50,000
22.0% greater than \$200	39.2% greater than \$50,000
2.4% \$50 to \$100	3.2% less than \$20,000
What is your age?	What is your gender?
4.8% under 30	63.9% Female 28.9% Male
15.5% 31-50	
51.2% 51-70	
28.6% Over 70	

Finally -

- Keep it short
- Don't underestimate the time needed
- Don't use biased questions

PROVIDE CONFIDENTIALITY!

Survey Case Studies

- Community 1: Reopen former grocery store
 - Community leader
 - County extension agent
- Community 2: Fund opening of a local grocery
 - Local Economic Development Group
- Project Purpose
 - Create awareness
 - Determine consumer preferences
 - Estimate community support base

Survey Notes

- Survey Instrument
- Potential statistical bias
 - Small sample, but generally higher response rate
 - Postal list
 - Those most interested in a local store are more likely to return the survey

What Expectations are Important?

- Community 1
 - Quality of food >80%
 - Customer service >57%
 - Cleanliness of store >77%
 - Supporting local business >65%
- Community 2
 - Quality of food >72%
 - Prices >58%
 - Cleanliness of store >65%
 - Supporting local business >55%

Is Current Store Meeting Expectations?

- Community 1
 - Prices
 - Travel time
 - Buying locally grown
- Community 2
 - Travel time
 - Supporting local business
 - Buying locally grown

Store Visits

- Community 1
 - Current store < 4; Local store > 5/month
 - Spending \$20-\$100/visit
 - Reasons for visits
 - Monthly/weekly shopping
 - Pick up a few essentials
 - Supporting community
 - Supporting local growers

Store Visits (cont.)

- Community 2
 - Current store 2-3; Local store 2-3/month
 - Spending \$20 to >\$100/visit
 - Reasons for visits
 - Monthly/weekly shopping
 - Pick up a few essentials
 - Supporting community

Locally Grown

- Community 1
 - Over 95% willing to buy
 - Local is within 50 miles or in county
- Community 2
 - Over 98% willing to buy
 - Local is within county

Shopping Locally

- Community 1
 - Encourage
 - Convenience
 - Reasonable prices
 - Clean store
 - Discourage
 - Dirty store
 - High prices
 - >50% purely want to support local community

Shopping Locally (cont.)

- Community 2
 - Encourage
 - No reason received >50%
 - Nothing listed would really encourage shopping locally
 - Discourage
 - High prices

Other Factors

- Some other important questions for rural stores
 - Shopping time—highly variable
 - Hours of operation—important in Community 1
 - Comments
 - Extremely vocal/volatile in Community 2

Socioeconomics

	Community 1	Community 2
Shop where you work	~40%	~34%
Distance willing to travel	Not an issue	>10 miles
Weekly budget	\$100-200	\$100-200+
Income	35-50k+	35-50k+
Age	51-70+	31-50+
Gender	~64% female	~67% female

General Survey Observations

- Community 1
 - >60 % live within 5 miles
 - Overall the survey results SUPPORTED re-opening the local grocery store
- Community 2
 - >71% live within 5 miles
 - While the survey results did not differ dramatically from Community 1, the open-ended comments DID. Overall, the results did NOT SUPPORT opening a local grocery store

Store Comments

- Generally, customers are encouraged to shop locally by:
 - Food quality
 - Cleanliness
 - Customer service
 - Supporting local community

Case Study Comments

- Proactive community development group
- Open communication lines
- External funding

Questions?
and
Thank You