

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Ivonne Martinez, Alberta Liquor Stores Association  
Melissa Caouette, MC Consulting

**From:** Janet Brown

**Date:** February 22, 2024

**Re:** Research Options for ALSA

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### BACKGROUND

Theft prevention and security is becoming an increasing concern for Alberta liquor stores. One option being considered to address this concern is requiring all Alberta liquor stores to install a system that would require customers to scan their driver's license before they can enter a liquor store.

The Alberta Liquor Stores Association (ALSA) is interested in conducting research to gauge public perceptions of this idea. In particular, ALSA wants to understand:

- The perceived pros and cons of this system,
- The impact the system could have on purchase behaviour,
- Potential concerns around privacy and the security of data collected,
- The extent to which this system is seen as an effective deterrent to theft, including the ability of thieves to circumvent the system, and
- Support for the use of this system in their local area (urban, suburban, rural).

The purpose of this memo is to outline some of the methodological options available to meet ALSA's research objectives.

## METHODOLOGICAL OPTIONS

### **(1) TrendWatch Alberta Omnibus**

*TrendWatch Alberta* is a monthly omnibus survey that provides clients with an affordable way to field a small number of questions to a large, high-quality sample of Albertans.

A fresh sample of 900 Albertans (ages 18 and over) are surveyed each month. The margin of error for a sample of this size is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (i.e., at a 95% confidence interval). This sample includes 300 in Greater Calgary, 300 in Greater Edmonton, and 300 in the rest of the province.

Survey respondents are initially contacted at random by live telephone interviewers and given the option of:

- answering the survey over telephone at that time,
- answering over the telephone at a more convenient time, or
- receiving the link and answering the survey on-line.

The initial sample list contains approximately 40 percent landlines and 60 percent cellphones. Interviewers make up to five attempts to reach each phone number in the sample before classifying it as unreachable.

All surveys are conducted by qualified interviewers working out of Trend Research's centralized CATI facility in Edmonton. Field supervisors are present at all times to ensure accurate interviewing and recording of responses.

The interviewing staff at Trend receive extensive training on the proper administration of interviews and are closely monitored by supervisors. A minimum of 10 percent of each interviewer's work is unobtrusively monitored for quality control in accordance with the standards set out by the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC).

This is the methodology used when Janet Brown (in partnership with Trend Research) conducted the polls that most accurately predicted the outcome of both the 2019 and 2023 Alberta provincial elections.

One of the main advantages of this approach is that it elicits a better response rate from groups who are typically under-represented in pre-existing online panels (such as rural residents).

*TrendWatch Alberta* omnibus surveys typically launch on (or around) the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, and results are delivered at the end of the month).

Clients who add proprietary questions to the *TrendWatch Alberta* omnibus survey receive a data file (in SAV format) and detailed data tables showing results from their questions broken down by:

- Total
- Region (Calgary, Edmonton, and other)
- Gender
- Age
- Education
- Employment status
- Sector of work (public, private)
- Children at home
- Income

We can also prepare a summary report of the findings that would include written analysis and easy-to-understand charts and graphs.

The per question cost to add questions to the *TrendWatch Alberta* omnibus survey are as follows:

- \$900 for a closed-ended question
- \$1,800 for an open-ended question
- \$300 to \$450 per item in a list question

Janet Brown will provide guidance for questionnaire design at no extra cost. Written reports are usually costed as a 40 to 50 per cent mark-up on the total cost of the questions asked, depending on the number and complexity of the questions asked.

By way of example, if ALSA were to add five closed-ended questions to the *TrendWatch Alberta Omnibus*, the cost would likely be **\$6,500** (including 5 x \$900 for questions and \$2,000 for a written report).



## ***(2) Custom Telephone Survey***

The *TrendWatch Alberta Omnibus* is a cost-effective approach for clients who are interested in asking 10 or fewer questions. If more than 10 questions are required, a custom research approach (whereby clients can more closely control the sample frame and timing) is recommended.

Our preferred methodology for administering a custom telephone survey would be the same as the one used for the *TrendWatch Alberta Omnibus* (i.e., contacting people at random and giving them the option to answer the survey over the phone or online).

The timeline for completing custom research is typically as follows:

- Questionnaire design  
(led by Janet Brown with final approval from client) 8 to 10 days
- Administration of survey 10 to 14 days
- Data analysis 3 days
- Report preparation 8 to 10 days

The deliverables would include detailed data tables, a SAV data file, and a written report.

Costs for custom research are based on sample requirements, sample size and survey length. One possible costing scenario, based on a random sample of 900 adult Albertans (with quotas to ensure representation in terms of region, age, and gender) is provided below.

7-to-8-minute survey  
n=900  
(including up to one open-ended question)

Data collection	\$14,530
Coding	\$600
Data analysis	\$750
Questionnaire design and report preparation	\$8,000
<b>Total (excluding GST)</b>	<b>\$23,880</b>

## **(2) Custom Online Panel Survey**

If ALSA is interested in custom research, but budget is an issue, survey questions could be administered through Trend Research's online panel.

Trend maintains an online research panel in Alberta that includes approximately 30,000 panelists and is updated and refreshed daily. When conducting online panel survey, we take steps to ensure respondents are representative of Albertans in terms of age, gender, location, income, education, and political leaning.

Although we are confident we can provide a high-quality results through an online sample, we still caution clients that online samples are considered to be "convenience" samples and not a true random samples.

Online surveys typically cost 30 to 40 per cent less than telephone surveys.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Final costs can be calculated once project specifications are finalized. Please let me know how you'd like to proceed.

Thanks,



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