



Qualtrics Best Practices for the Academic User

Jag Patel, June 2015

We know a lot about how we could run better surveys.

Now I'm going to show you a series of physical therapy exercises you won't do.



We know that more people spend time on digital media and on mobile.

Time spent per adult user per day with digital media, USA:

- 2.7 hours in 2008, of which 0.3 hours (12%) were on a mobile device
- 4.3 hours in 2012; 1.6 hours (37%) on mobile
- **5.6 hours in 2015 YTD; 2.8 hours (51%) on mobile**

Source: 2015 Internet Trends report, Mary Meeker at Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers: kpcb.cc/9bd9bdd

We know email inboxes are flooded.

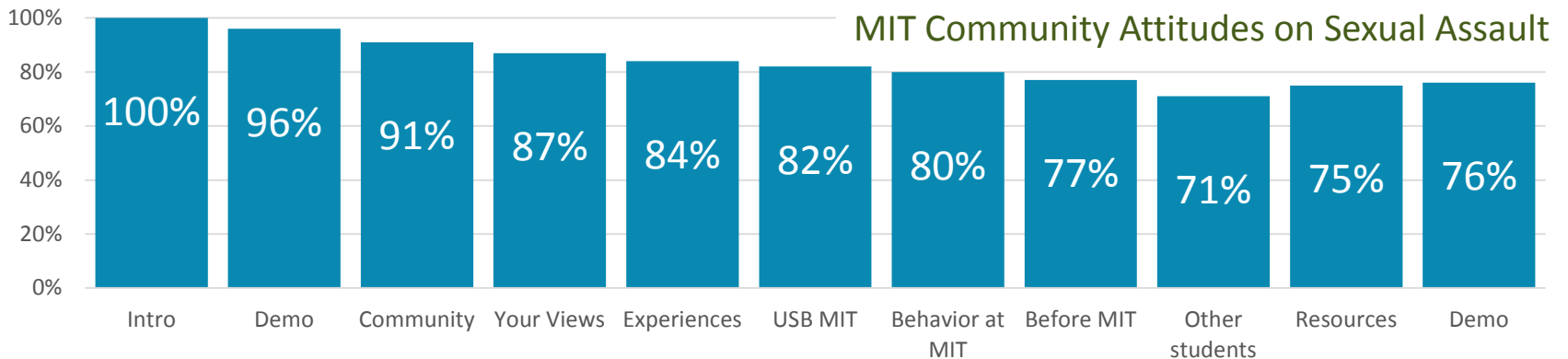
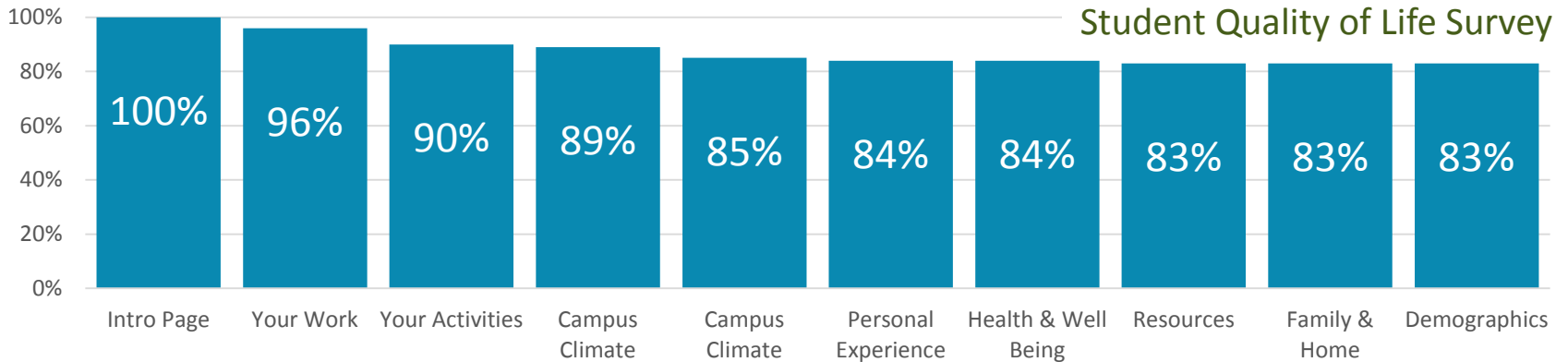
Average Email Campaign Stats by Industry:

- Education and Training: 23% unique open rate
- Non-Profit: 26% unique open rate

Source: Email Marketing Benchmarks, MailChimp: j.mp/chimpstat

The average office worker now sends or receives 121 emails a day, according to a recent report by the Radicati Group.

We know responders drop out of surveys.



We know what to do.

Design surveys for desktop and mobile devices. For long surveys, time the email contacts to go out at times when respondents are more likely to be on laptops or desktops.

Examine survey meta data. Look at the survey visual to understand where responders might drop out before launching your survey.

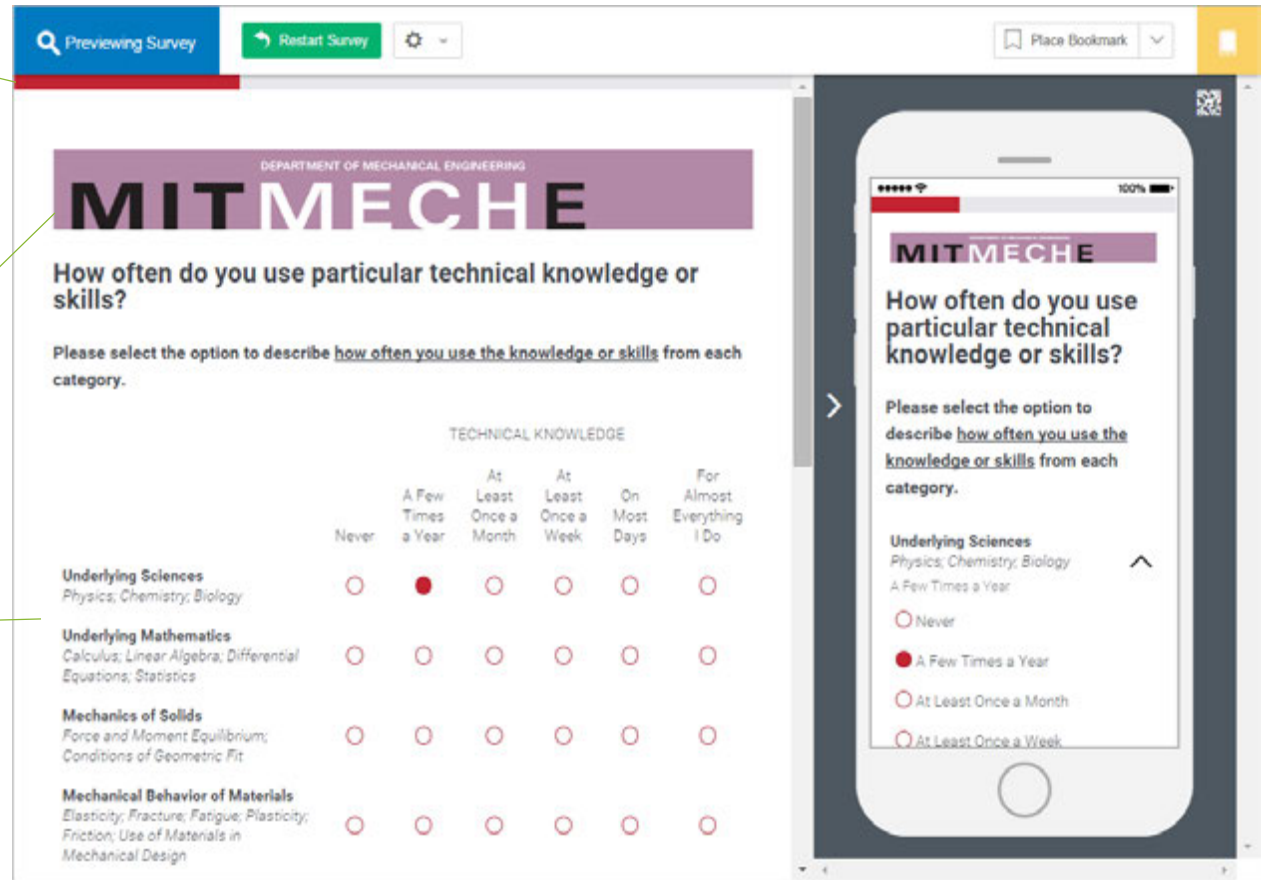
Improve your email open rates. Write better subject lines, vary the sender for reminders, and time the email to come at different times of the day and week.

Use a Qualtrics skin with a fluid layout to change the display on small screens.

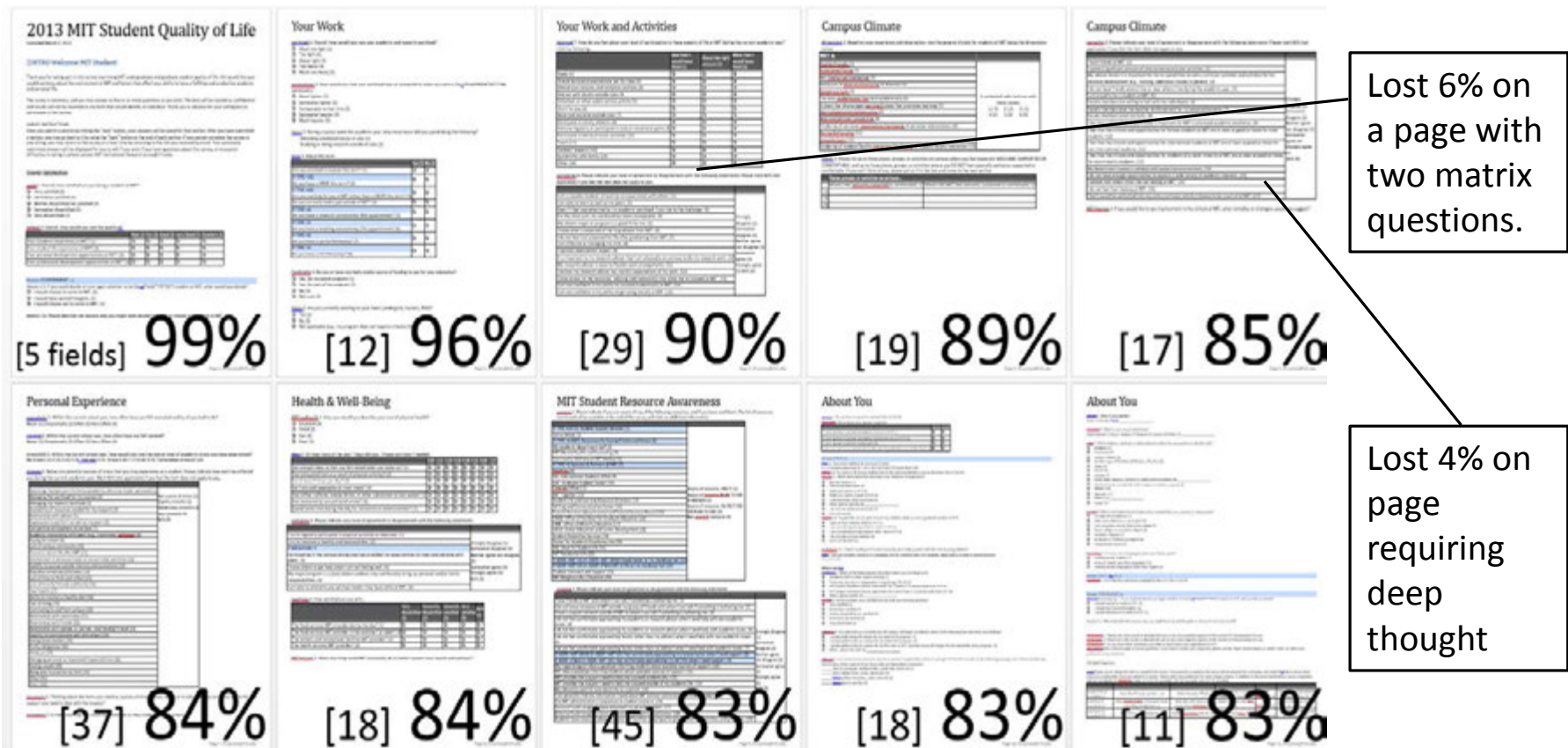
Progress bar should take up minimal real estate.

If the header is an image, it will resize better on small screens.

Newer skins with fluid layouts will turn matrices into vertical single response questions on small screens.



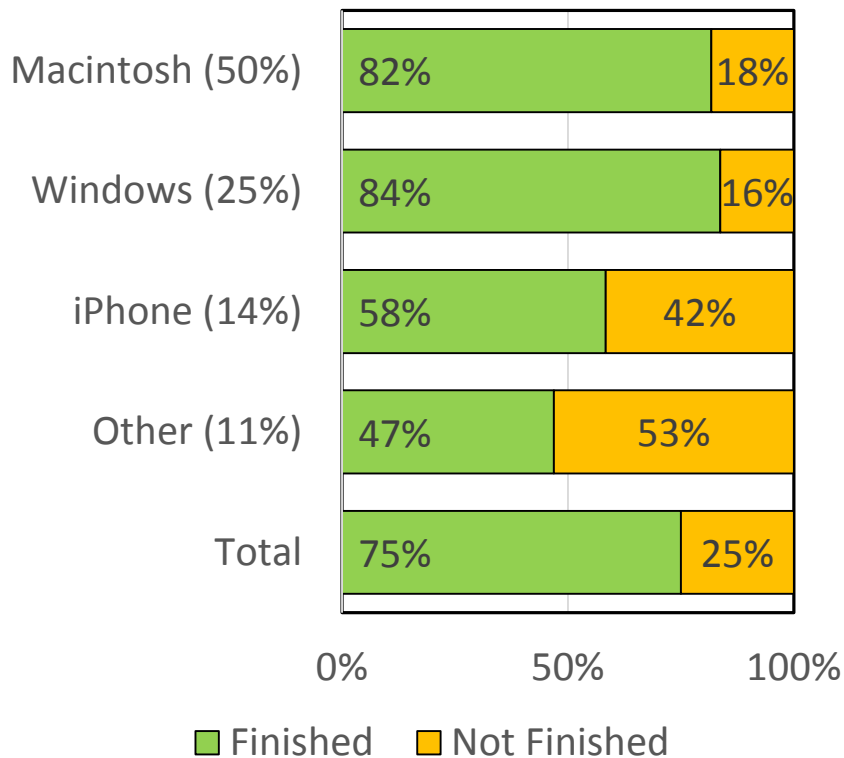
The survey “visual” is meta data: zoom out to see density.



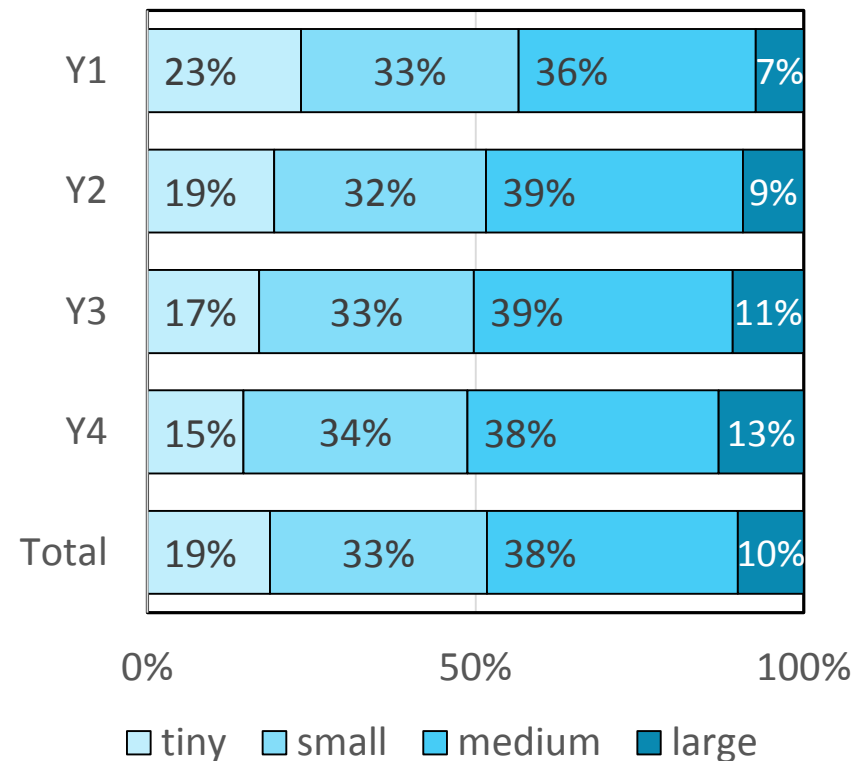
Add meta information question on the first page of your surveys.



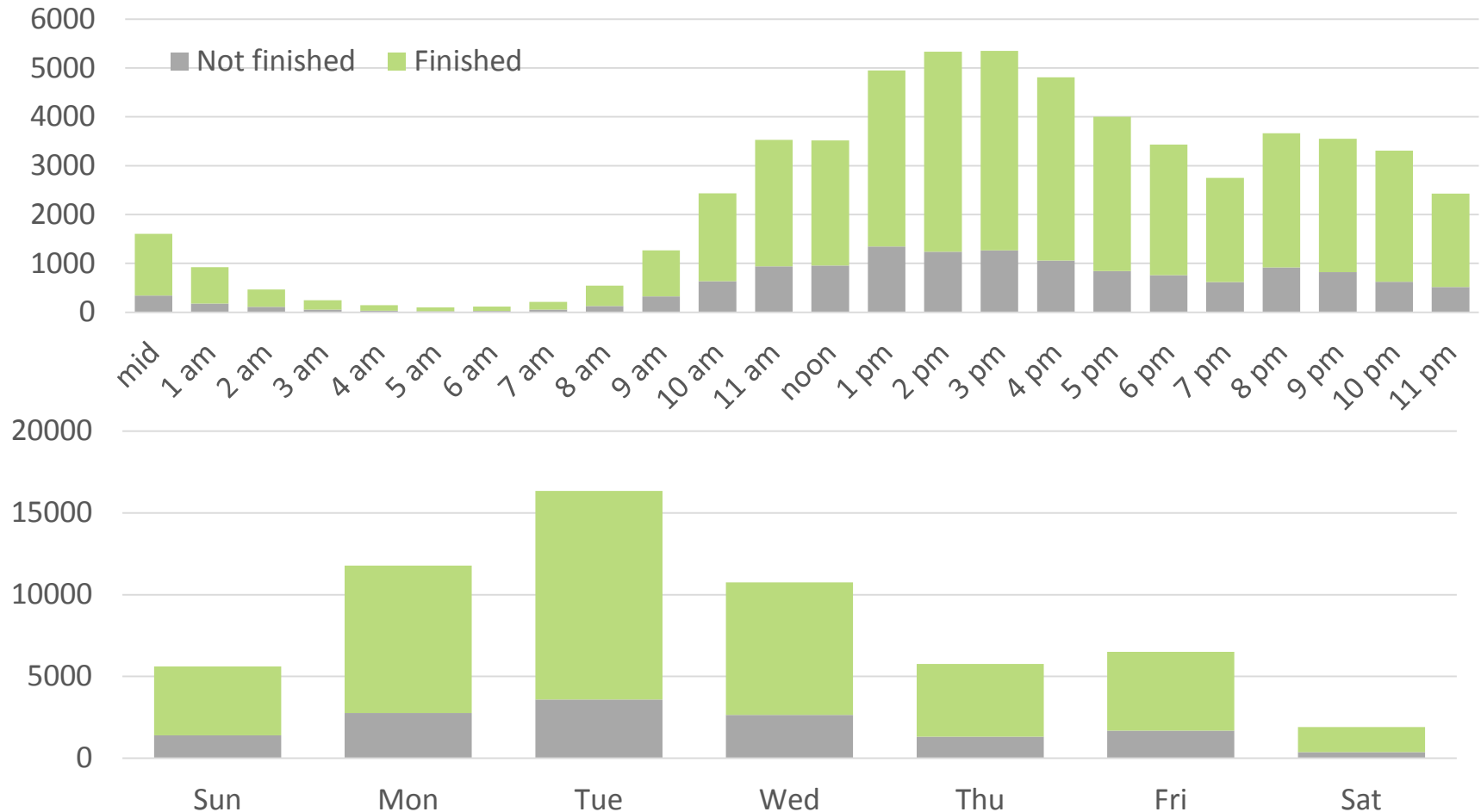
Operating Systems by
“Finished” Flag in Qualtrics



Screen Size by
Class Year



Look at when your population responds and vary your contact times.



Test (and vary!) senders and subject lines. Try to personalize the emails.

From line	Invited	Opened	Finished
MIT Innovation Initiative***	11,449	31.0%	2.8%
Professor Vladimir Bulović and Professor Fiona Murray	11,093	38.3%	3.8%
Vladimir Bulović and Fiona Murray	11,281	37.6%	3.7%
Professor Fiona Murray and Professor Vladimir Bulović	11,207	37.9%	3.8%
Fiona Murray and Vladimir Bulović	11,427	36.8%	3.4%
Total	56,457	36.3%	3.5%

Subject line	Invited	Opened	Finished
MIT Alumni Survey	11,029	34.1%	3.3%
MIT Alumni Study***	11,459	37.6%	4.2%
Experience of MIT [SCHOOL] Alumni	10,457	33.7%	3.1%
Experience of MIT [DEPT] Alumni***	11,313	37.6%	4.0%
Impact through Innovation	11,302	37.5%	2.8%
Total	55,560	36.1%	3.5%

Greeting in email	Invited	Started	Finished
Salutation + Last Name	28,397	***0.8%	***4.1%
MIT alumni	28,060	0.6%	2.8%
Total	56,457	0.7%	3.5%

Write better subject lines.

Best practices in email subject lines

Mailchimp: j.mp/bestchimp

“Provide the reader with a reason to explore your message further.”

- Help and Reminder will **negatively** affect your open rates
- Provide “**localization**”: Physics Alumni
- General rule of thumb is keep your subject line to **50 characters or less**
- Put yourself in **your recipients' shoes** to decide what will work

World's Best Headlines: BBC News

Nielsen Norman Group: j.mp/bbcbest

Think of the subject line as a headline:

- **Short** (because people don't read)
- Rich in information scent, **clearly summarizing** the email
- Front-loaded with the most important **keywords** (users often scan only the beginning of list items)
- Understandable **out of context** (your email is surrounded by other, much more interesting subject lines)

Better subject lines start with the survey title.

MIT's Sexual Assault Survey

1. Study of Sexual Assault
2. Community Attitudes on Sexual Assault (CASA)
3. Sexual Manners and Respectful Treatment (SMART)
4. Understanding Perceptions of Sexual Assault
5. Student Understanding of Acceptable Sexual Behaviors

Other Survey Names

MIT Transportation Survey—vs—
Commuting to MIT
Impact of MIT Alumni —vs—
MIT Founders Study
MIT Undergraduate Student
Experience (MUSE) Survey
—vs— Thriving Survey
MIT Enrolled Student Survey
—vs— MIT PULSE (Perceptions of
Undergraduate Life and Student Experiences)

Proposal:

Test all components of your survey. Your survey is more than the questions.

Use Qualtrics to try options in a soft launch before going to the entire population.

Don't forget to test the questions; consider sending your survey to 2-5% for feedback.

Review the Chancellor's Survey for \$10

President Reif recently asked Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart to assess the nature and extent of the problem of sexual assault at MIT. One component of this assessment is to survey all MIT ... In advance of this survey going to a wider audience, MIT IR is asking a select group of students to respond to the survey early to get feedback on the questions, and to help us understand how long the survey takes to answer.

4. What is your sexual orientation?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual or straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Pansexual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homosexual, gay, or lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asexual | |

Survey Reviewers: Do you have any feedback on this page? Are any of the questions confusing or difficult to answer? Please refer to the question number if needed.

For internal surveys:

Promote policies to collect better data, and make the data last longer by sharing it.

Proposed Commandments

Thou shalt not run surveys without:

- *Senior officer approval*
- *Checking for recent overlap*
- *Thorough review of questions & survey administration*
- *A data terms of use*
- *Answering the survey yourself*
- *A plan for analysis, dissemination, and archiving*

Social Survey Contract

- Survey questions will be public before launch
- Overall frequencies will be public after close
- Senior leaders will be given reports and analyses for their areas
- Optional Rider: Incentives are tied to community response

Thank you!

Thank you!
We hope you
take away some
survey exercises
you **might do.**

j.mp/askjag

