



How Long Is Too Long to Keep a Physician Online?



In this age of limited budgets, the tendency during survey tool development is to squeeze in just one more question—often by each person reviewing the tool.

So, when does a physician's attention span start to drop off in an online survey? This is a particularly critical metric in our business, where online research is the basis of forecasts that inform licensing deals. We want the highest accuracy possible.

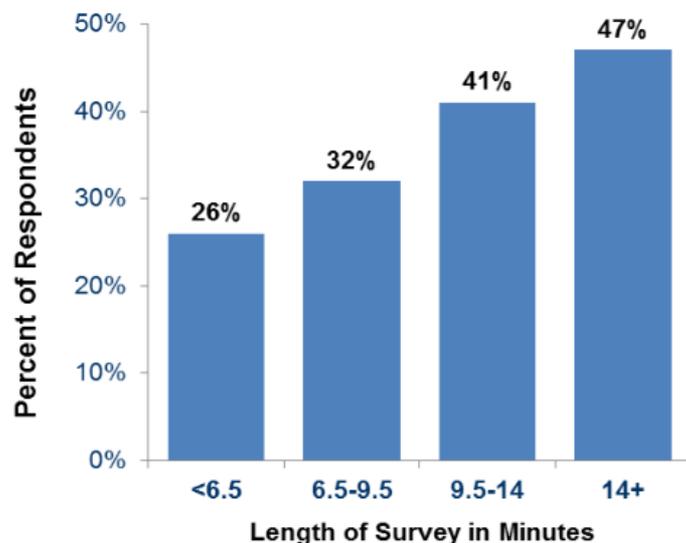
In a training program for the Advantage Healthcare staff, we posed that question to the Burke Institute. Based on their experience, a physician's attention span begins to drop off at **9 minutes**—yet the industry continues to field 45- or 60-minute online surveys.

- Higher dropout rates occur with longer surveys.

- 53% of those who dropped out said they did so due to length.¹
- The dropout rate doubles when going from an 8- to a 24-minute survey.²
- Demographics may be different for those who drop out versus those who stay in to complete long surveys.²
- Longer questionnaires lead to more straight lining responses.²
- **Most importantly:** longer surveys may lead to higher stated adoption/use rates of the product being tested (see data below).²

Data are woefully lacking in “research on research” with professionals, but perhaps we can extrapolate from “research on research” with consumer online surveys:

Purchase Intent by Survey Length²



Respondents Are More Favorable to New Products in Longer Surveys

Might we be overestimating the adoption rate of new products?

In surveys with consumers, the longer the survey, the higher the stated likelihood of use of the product being tested.

Could this dynamic be true for professionals responding to Web surveys?

1. Cartwright T. TNS (now Kantar). CASRO Panel Conference. 2008.
 2. *Online Survey Length Effects*. Burke Institute. 2013.

We are interested in hearing your comments on this subject—and on our inaugural issue of critical topics in new products and business development activities support. Feel free to send us your comments via the feedback link below.

Advantage Healthcare, focused on new products and business development support, has been a valued partner to pharmaceutical, biotech, device, diagnostic, and consumer companies for more than 20 years. We



Debbie Glick

Managing Partner

understand your need for quality work, delivered rapidly, from a smart and accessible team, and at a realistic fee.

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