



EVALUATING THE ACCURACY OF SURVEYWALL SURVEY RESPONSES

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Dec 13, 2013

INTRODUCTION

- Several companies have developed do-it-yourself (DIY) approaches to surveying people online
- One new approach uses a “surveywall” to intercept website visitors attempting to access paid content
- In exchange for survey responses, website visitors are given access to the paid content behind the surveywall

EXAMPLE OF A SURVEYWALL

Refinery reports 135 percent earnings increase

CALGARY, Alberta — Husky Energy Inc. is reporting a 135 percent increase in net earnings in 2011 from production growth, higher crude oil prices and improved refining margins... .

Answer a question to continue reading this page

What kind of packaging do you prefer to have for cereal?

Paper box

Plastic wrapping

[I don't know, show me another question](#)

SURVEYWALL APPROACH

- Short, intercept-style, online surveys
- Proclaimed advantages
 - Fast
 - Affordable
 - Accurate (results are as accurate as probability-based panels)
- Other proclaimed advantages
 - Higher response rates than traditional Internet panels
 - Immediate and relevant incentive
 - Data are analyzed automatically
 - Ability to collect responses from those not enrolled in a survey panel

HOW IT WORKS -- SURVEY QUESTIONS

- Surveys are intentionally kept short
 - Respondent are only asked one or two questions
 - Done to boost response rates
- With longer surveys, each question or question block is answered by a separate group of people
 - Modular survey design or chunking approach
- Questions are intentionally kept short
 - Maximum of 125 characters for questions
 - Maximum of 44 characters for response options
 - Maximum of 5 response options

HOW IT WORKS -- SAMPLING

- Same survey is spread across multiple sites
- Respondents selected through stratified sampling of website visitors
 - Sampling done in real-time as users visit various websites
 - Not all visitors are selected
 - Stratified sampling on age, gender, geographic location
- Done so that survey is fielded to a representative sample

LIMITATIONS

- Non-coverage of non-Internet population
- Non-probability sample
- Coverage of Internet is not known
 - Internet coverage skewed by existence of paid content sites
- Limited ability to look at within-person associations between questions
- English language only

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON SURVEYWALL APPROACH

- White paper
 - Compared survey responses from GCS, GfK, SSI to established benchmarks
 - Comparative evaluation of accuracy
 - Not an independent, third-party evaluation
- Pew Research Center report
 - Compared surveywall responses to Pew RDD dual frame phone survey responses
- 2013 AAPOR presentations
 - Paper and poster by NORC
 -

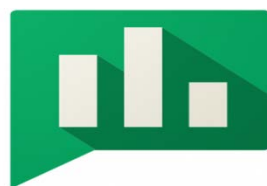
CURRENT STUDY

- Comparative evaluation of surveywall approach
 - Short survey (about 20 questions)
 - Questions on demographics, behaviors, 24 hour recall
 - Similar questions administered via 3 online survey platforms



- Surveys fielded in March 2013

SURVEY SAMPLE INFORMATION

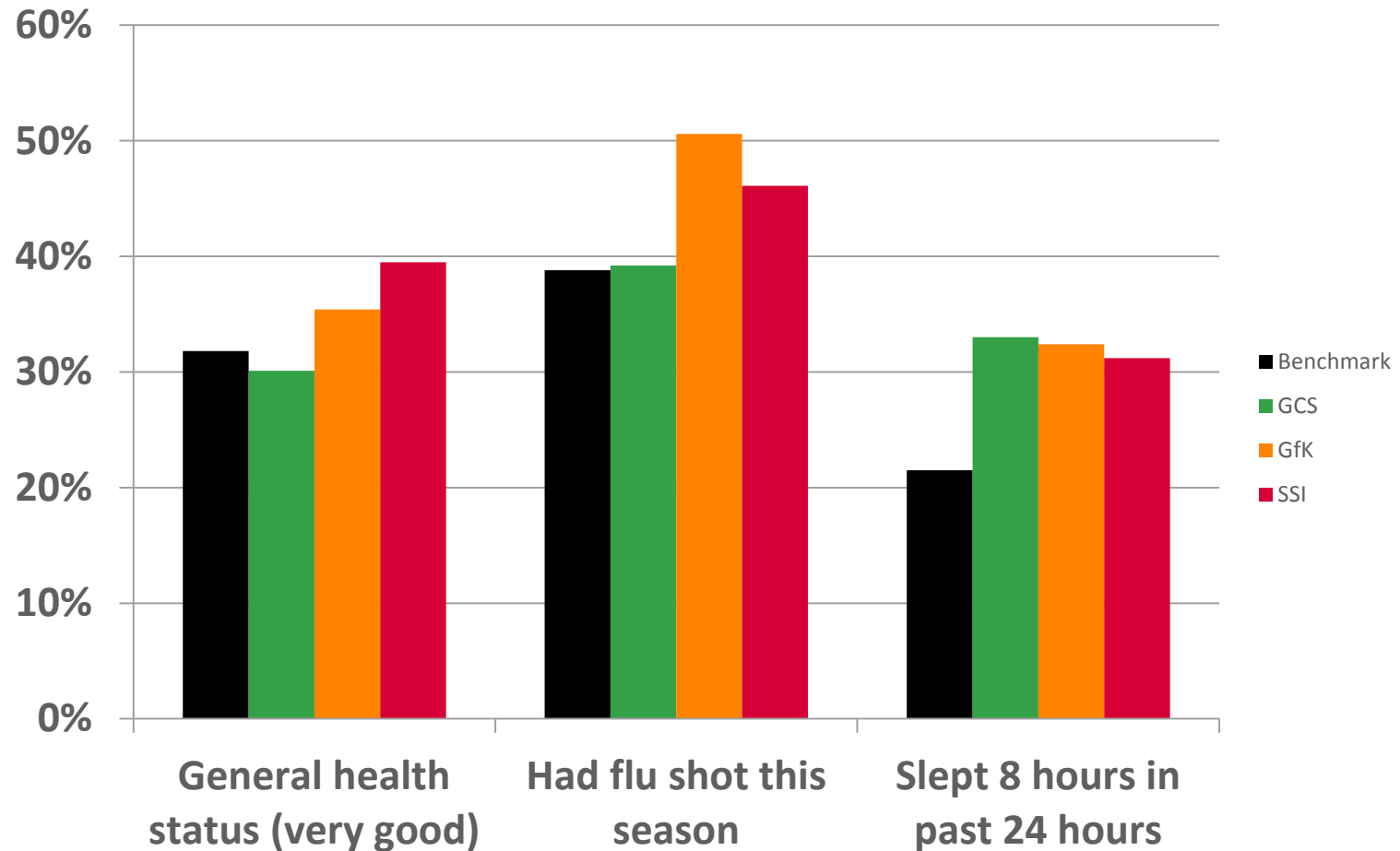


Impressions/Invitations	86,369	3,623	Unknown
Responses	33,497	2,119	1,000
Completion rate	39%	58%	Unknown
Cost	\$3,000	\$11,475	\$3,350
Field dates	March 8-17	March 6-18	March 7-8
Probability sample	No	Yes	No
Demographic quotas used	No	No	Yes

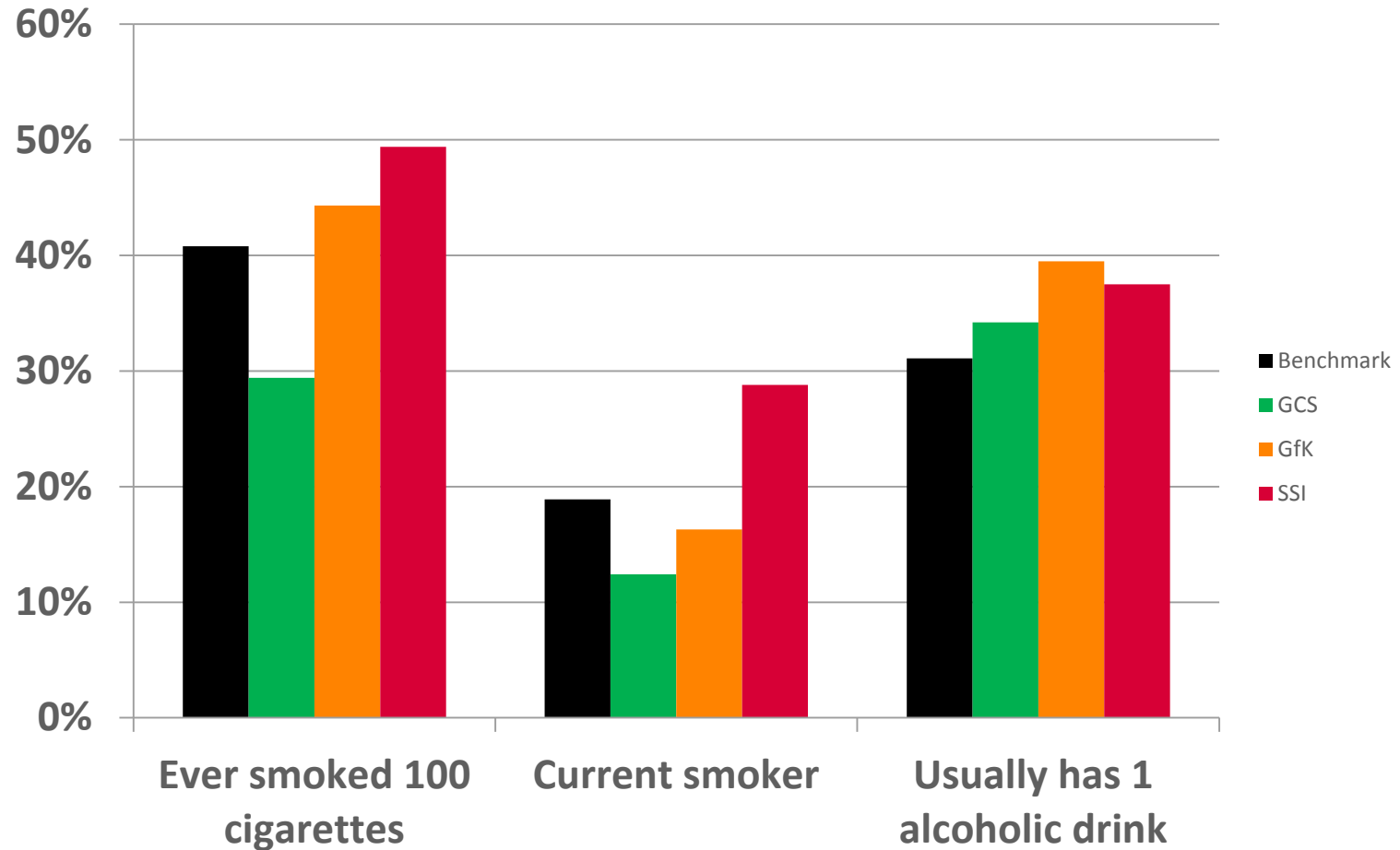
MEASURING ACCURACY

- Survey responses compared to external benchmarks
 - From ACS, NHIS, Pew
- Accuracy measured by average absolute error
 - Same metric used in White paper
 - Same metric used in Yeager, Krosnick, et al. (2011) POQ paper
 - Comparative evaluation of online probability and non-probability panels

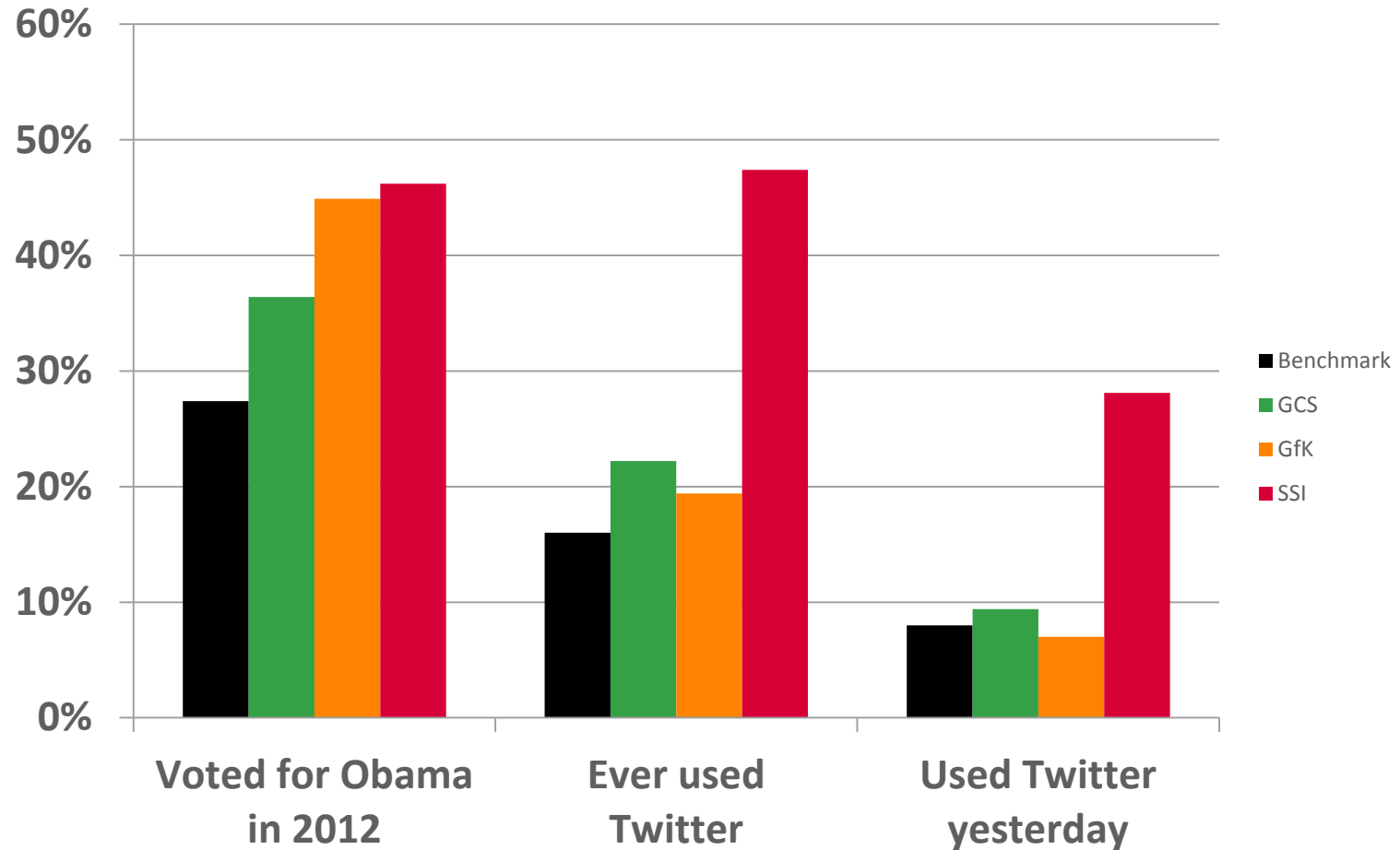
RESULTS – COMPARISONS TO EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS



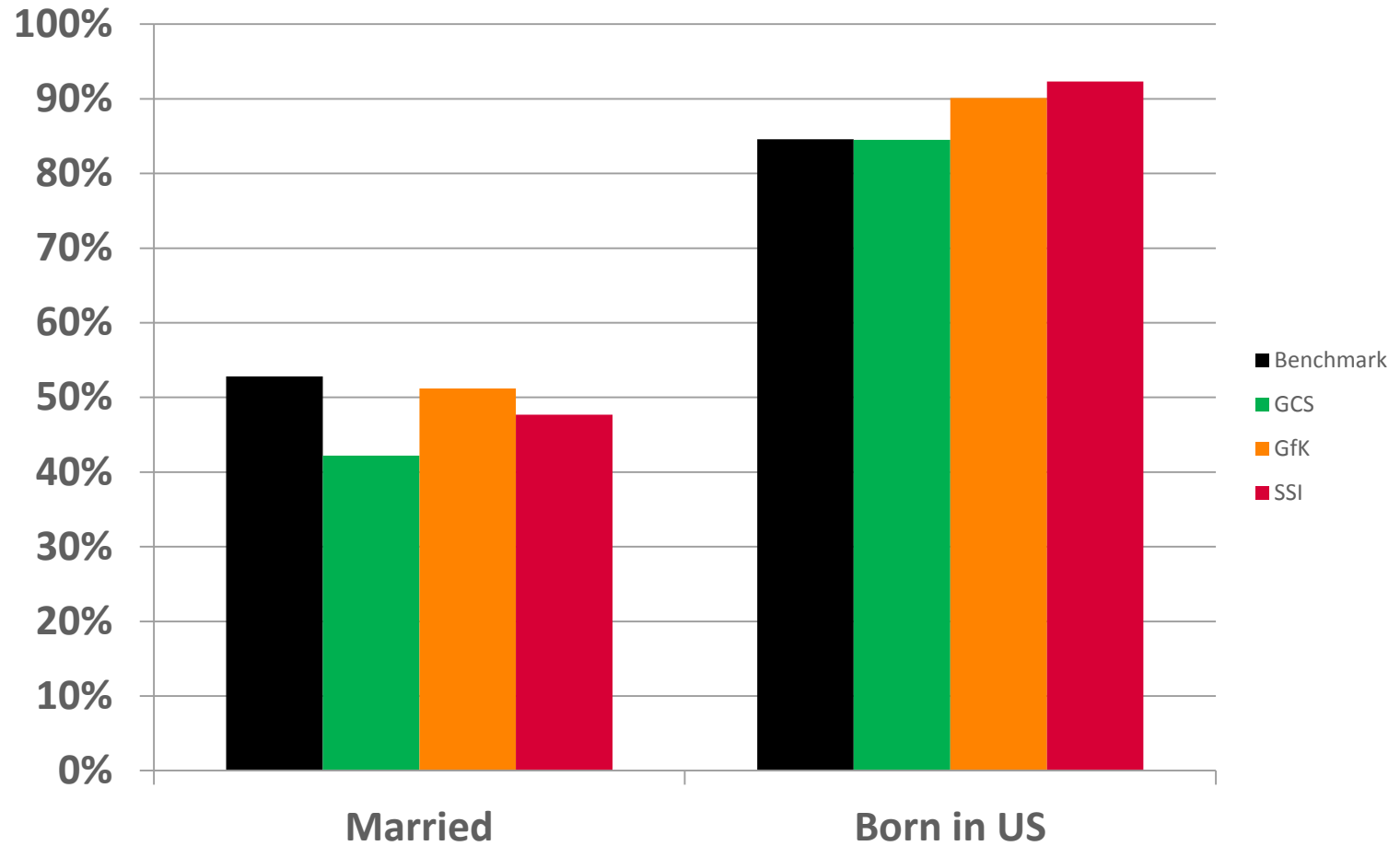
RESULTS – COMPARISONS TO EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS



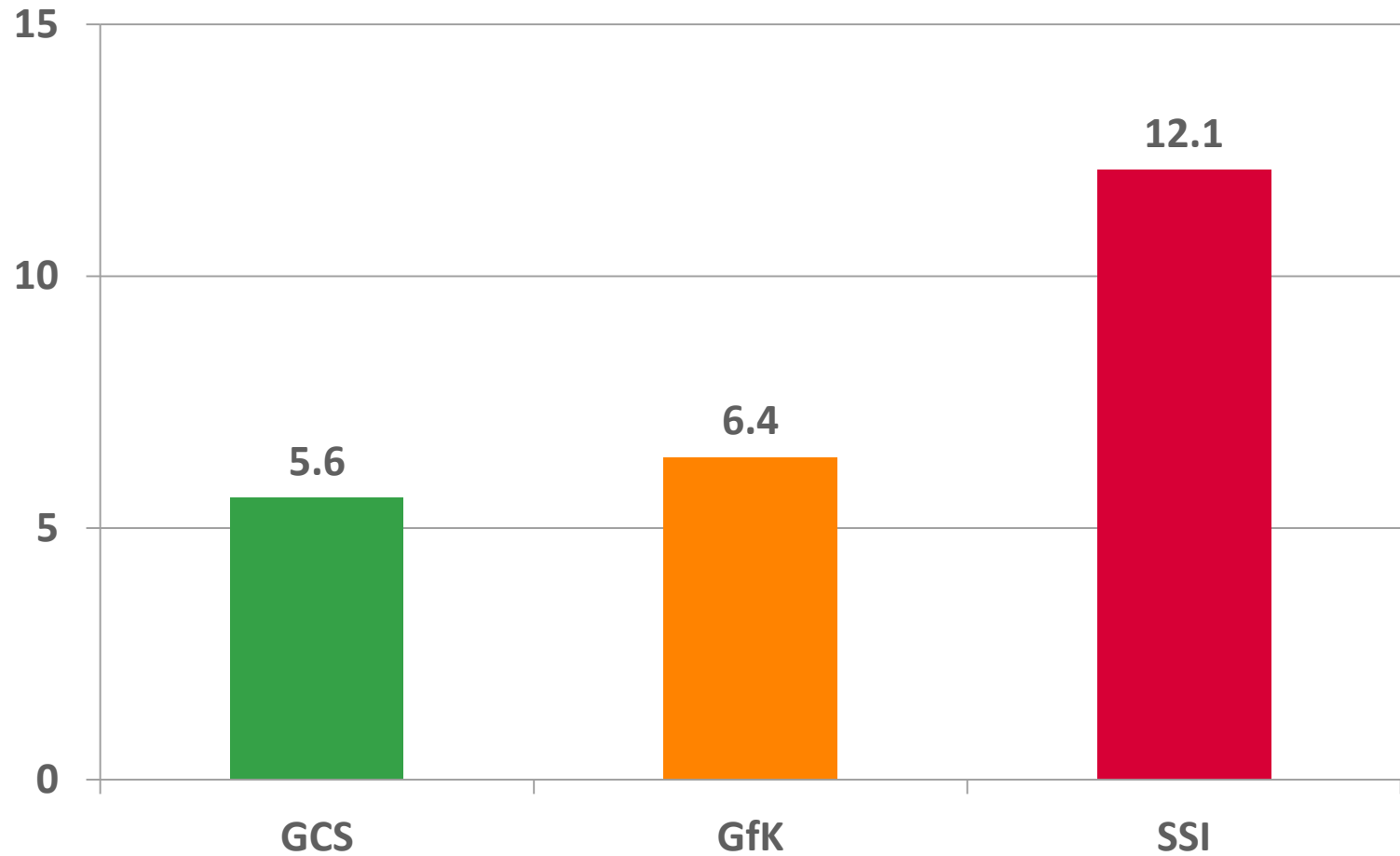
RESULTS – COMPARISONS TO EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS



RESULTS – COMPARISONS TO EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS



RESULTS – AVERAGE ABSOLUTE ERROR



CONCLUSIONS

- Comparative evaluation of 3 online survey platforms
- Focus on accuracy
- Surveywall approach is more accurate than other traditional online, panel-based survey platforms
- The previous claim that results are as accurate as probability-based panels is upheld
- More research needed to test the generalizability of findings across various survey settings

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

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