

# The Delphi Method

## What is the Delphi Method?

The Delphi method is used to forecast, make decisions and solve complex problems using a panel of experts. Objectively with application of Delphi Method researchers will explore creative ideas and produce valuable information. Knowledge collected during the Delphi study is synthesized and distilled by use of a series of questionnaires. Responses to questionnaires are collected on site and can be reviewed directly following implementation of study (Adler and Ziglio, 1996).

The Delphi Method is a research technique that is used to address complex problems by using a structured communication process. (Mattingly-Scott, 2006)



## Regardless of situation or circumstance, these characteristics will define the Delphi Method:

- Presence of structured information Flow
- Systematic feedback process
- Participants remain anonymous
- Deals with complex issues
- Panel members need to be experts in field

### Table of Contents

What is the Delphi Method?	1
Characteristics of Delphi	1
Conducting Delphi Method	2
Strengths in Delphi Method	2
Limitations in Delphi Method	2
Uses	3
References	3

### Special points of interest:

"The technique can be adapted for use in face-to-face meetings, and is then called mini-Delphi or Estimate-Talk-Estimate (ETE). Delphi has been widely used in business"

(Wikipaedia.org)

# How do you conduct such method?

## Steps Involved in Using the Delphi Method

- Identify issue or question that needs to be addressed; typically this will be a complex issue requiring expert advice.
- Form Delphi team: voluntary participants set to undertake in project as well as monitor research activities. Select appropri-



ate participants who are experts with matter at hand.

- Create first set of Delphi question, pilot questionnaire to avoid using improper wording that is ambiguous or vague.
- Distribute first questionnaire to panelists.
- Analyze results produced by panel; based on these responses the second rendition of the questionnaire will be prepared.
- If time allows test the questionnaire as done with first version.
- Distribute second rendition of questionnaire to panelists.
- Analyze round two of responses. These steps are to be repeated as many times as necessary or as desired by researchers.
- Prepare a report that discusses information found through analysis of panel responses concluding of

## Strengths and Limitations

Strengths	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid consensus.</li> <li>• Participants can live anywhere in the world.</li> <li>• Avoids group-think</li> <li>• Flexible with no set meeting times, only an agreeable deadline.</li> <li>• Information can be very powerful in predicting future trends and events.</li> <li>• Gain consensus on a large scale (provincial to national to global).</li> <li>• Cost effective.</li> <li>• More detailed than typical survey responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of responses depend on panel.</li> <li>• Researchers must choose participants selectively.</li> <li>• Time consuming. This process is rarely used by researchers/agencies.</li> <li>• Panel may lose interest in topic if consensus is not reached within reasonable time.</li> <li>• Panel may lose cohesiveness overtime.</li> <li>• Interactions between participants and researcher are not face-to-face, depending on subject matter this fact can hinder or assist in information gathering.</li> </ul>

## **A Guide to Research Tools**

Vancouver Island  
University  
Recreation Tourism  
Research Institute



▶ Skye Skagfeld  
Mark Derbyshire

## **Delphi used for Rec & Tourism: Knowledge Transfer in the Leisure Industry**

There was a need for effective knowledge transfer in the field of recreation and tourism between researchers and practitioners. By using a panel of experts', researchers came to a consensus of 11 theme areas of interest as expressed by panel. These results were to be used in determining effective communication of synthesized and relevant information to practitioners from researchers. These ideas have since been used in creating a survey for the CPRA to discover what areas are most important to practitioners



## **References**

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