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Surveys samples and savings legit

The idea of making money from survey sites and market research is really appealing. What not to like when you're asked a few questions and paid to give answers? We know companies have to run focus groups. We know they need to test new products, new services and new ideas like commercials. As potential buyers, our opinion matters. But like everything else in this world, there are thieves and fraudsters lurking around the corner willing to take advantage of unsusected people. Ten years ago, most polling firms were clearly fraud. Market research firms simply didn't ask online to invest their polling pools. Today, many market research companies use the internet to get more answers. Legitimate companies drown out scams, but scams still exist. And scammers now have models to copy so they look like readable companies! The end result is that it is increasingly difficult to tell the difference between a legitimate opportunity and fraud. Today we're going to teach you how to know the difference. Want to see some real examples of mystery shopping and working at home? Click here to see a breakdown of three separate scams — including how to identify them yourself and avoid fraud. What's a scam? There are two types of fake research sites: sites that only sell you other products and services. Sites that make you pay for surveys. They lure you with the promise of untold wealth through market research, but the lure and transfer it to you. In the first case, they make money off of you when you sign up for other products or serices. In another case, they make you pay them. The ones you pay to join are similar to old scams working at home. Work at home scams are simple, the promise of work if you buy their startup package. Replace your job with surveys and a membership startup and you have an old scam with a new façade. In both cases, companies will also take advantage of juicy personal information you may have provided. To give you an idea of what's going on, I turn to Troy Hunt, the security expert I last mentioned in Why I Have a Secret Confidential Email Address; his post about how your data is used by shared pages (think about winning free iPad email websites!) must be read. How legitimate business research works before we get into how to determine if an opportunity for a survey is a scam, we need to understand how the legitimate business of market research works. A big well-known company (like the consumer goods company brand) needs to do some market research or lead a focus group. Both are expensive to do in person, because focus groups often pay \$100+ for 60-90 minutes of work to the participant. You can only imagine how much the research company is adding to the bill. Online surveys are much cheaper! So, they companies hire a market research company to send online surveys to people with the right demographic goal (age, income, marital status, geographic region, etc.). You have survey companies with enough work to run their own (Survey Junkie, Swagbucks, etc.) and you have smaller companies that are there to fill in the gaps. These other company levels are often the ones you see listed all over the internet. In some cases, the research company only does surveys. These purists are often closest to market research companies. In others, there are plenty of other points-earning activities you can do such as reading emails or watching videos or playing games. (more on this later) I do surveys for about six months from various verified companies and you start seeing the same names - Qualtrics, Samplicio.us (Federated Sample) - these are the main guys. The hard part about market research is that it's unpredictable business. This is unpredictable for the survey (you) because companies will not always want your opinion. The result is that you get the polls irregularly, but you make a little money along the way. You won't feed your family surveys, but it can get you a little more help paying your bills and getting further financially. How a fraud research company works The problem is that fraud research companies will stalk that money trick and suggest they can send you a flood. I can't. They promise you'll apply. What happens then? They try to make money from you directly rather than make money from market research companies by answering surveys. How do they make money off of you? They send you deals, such as sweepstakes entries (enter your zip code and email for the chance to win a \$500 Apples iTunes gift card!) or other more fake research sites. They'll send you offers of free samples or other bribes so you can enter an email. All the while, earning about \$1-3 per application (that's about the price for double turning off your email address). Legitimate polling companies also face the problem of unpredictable surveys. Many of them have built an entire ecosystem around the research process to give you something to do if you don't have a survey. You see companies like Swagbucks (Swagbucks review) and InboxDollars (InboxDollars review) offer different ways to earn points if you don't have surveys - some of them include deals. A distinct difference between them is that fraud research companies will often flood you with offers immediately after signing up and without any suggestion that you will get anything out of it. Legitimate companies set it up as a cashback or pointback scenario, register for this offer and get 500 points or \$5, reducing you to the commission they earn. You still have to do your research though, which I'll get soon. For a fraud survey You're a product. Beware of copycats I have recently been asked by many readers whether Company X or Company Y is legitimate. In many of these cases, the name of the company was legitimate. The person they spoke to or sent the e-mails to didn't. The fraudster pretended to work at a legitimate research firm! Recognizing this is very difficult, but if you ask questions, that's a good thing. Call the company and find out if this person is real and works for them. I discovered this type of fraud after a reader, Casey, asked me about taylor research firm in the comments below. Someone pretending to be from Taylor sent him an email from his GMail account, which set off alarms for Casey (good!). When he called Taylor Research, which is very real and respected, he found that everything was real except the person who contacted him and the number he was supposed to call. He was the third person to report it and police are investigating. Trust your gut! Who can you trust? (except hoses) It's hard to know who to trust before you sign up, but I always look at the Better Business Bureau and see what their rating is, if they have complaints and what these complaints are about. One of the more popular sites, Swagbucks, has had an A+ and 114 closed complaints in the past 3 years. 114 sounds like a lot, but when you consider how many members there is also a time frame. ~3 per month is a low number. Here are five survey companies I signed up for and can confirm that they don't have any flags listed below. Then start looking for these red flags: Never pay to join – Huge red flag, you should never pay to join... legitimate companies spend a lot of money building their lists because the more people they have, the more likely they are to be able to fill those demographic gaps. They'd never ask you to pay to join. Never provide a Social Security number, credit card details, or full address — there's really no need for any of that information. The most a company should ask for is general demographic information (age, gender, zip code, income, family, etc.), they don't need your full address, and certainly not your Social Security number. If they force you to go through promotional offers before they show you anything - some companies have added these other pieces, like watching movies and playing games, to the basic survey offer. The reality is they only get so many polls so they would keep you active, they offer these other parts. You don't have offers to get to the polls. Look for a privacy policy - Legitimate companies will always have a privacy policy and it will be prominently linked on their website, often in the footer. If it's hard to find, I'd move on. They email you from an anonymous account - A legitimate company won't email you with @Gmail.com or @Yahoo.com or any other free email service. They'll have theirs. websites with their own email address, such as @wallethacks.com. Never take a large payment of any kind where you have to return a portion – It is a common scam for someone to send you a large check and send them something of value, whether money or an expensive product. This is known as an advance fraud and the cheque will bounce (after spending a few days looking like it has been successfully cashed) after a few days, having already sent the money or items. He never does that. If it sounds too good... – The language companies they use can tell you a lot about them. Scams will promise you hundreds or thousands of dollars a month or extremely high payouts in surveys. Your internal BS detector is very good, if you feel something is wrong then leave. Here's a research page I find suspicious... Here's the homepage... At first, nothing looks suspicious about this company. When you click Get Started, the green box is replaced with a letter from Patricia Johnson with a form at the bottom for the name and email. When you enter your name and email, you are sent to this screen where you watch a short video. The video explains how Kevin makes hundreds or thousands of dollars sharing his opinion, from the comfort of his own home. The video explains how market research works, as I did in the paragraph above, and is completely accurate. The only complaint I have about the video is that it resells too much of how much those surveys pay and how much you can earn. Watch long enough... and then this comes up. And that, my friends, is why I would never sign up for this site. They want you to pay for your membership. The biggest red flag of all. The tricky part is that it's hard to know before you sign up! You may be tempted, after you put your data on and watch the video, to try. Which is the worst that can happen, isn't it? Will you make hundreds and thousands of dollars? may be. Is it worth it? may be. Would it shock you to know that this company is willing to pay a \$26 commission for each person who signs up? © final quick tips... Here are some other ideas that can help: Always use a separate email address just for a survey – some companies pay you to read emails (which is an email code to send to ads) and that can be a lot of email. In addition, if you accidentally sign up for a scam, you don't destroy your regular email address. Set up a junk tester email address - If you're really worried, you can always set up a tester-only email address (I have a Gmail account I never check, especially for that) to go through the sign-up process once, just to be sure. Sometimes you can get away with temporary one-time email, such as the one offered through Cuerrilla Mail, but sometimes sites won't let you sign in with a one-time email address. Check BBB - If the name is Generic with a lot of dashes, it will be difficult to find your company name. That in itself is a bit of a red flag because most legitimate companies have real names that help with branding. Those with generic words don't want to stand out! For legitimate companies, they should be easy to find at the Better Business Bureau. Make sure they are affiliated with CASRO - CASRO (Council of American Research Organizations) is a leading market research and research organization. If you find a research company and you're not sure if they're readable, you can always email me, and I can have a look. I can even be your quinea pig and sign up first. © just send me an e-mail with the company name on it and I'll take a peek. List of readable research sites This list includes legitimate research sites I know. If the company you are wondering about is on this list, you can be reasonably sure that they are legitimate at the time of writing this text. If they are not on the list, they can still be legitimate only smaller (so I do not know about them). I can't say in any way. All these companies are on my list of ways to make money. If you want to share the experience (good or bad) you've had with a market research company, let us know in the comments. Comments.

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