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For Immediate Release

RFL Communications Endorses Study of Online Sample Universe

Originator and driver of MR industry data quality initiatives supports landmark study of online panels that reveals determinants in achieving optimum research results

March 30, 2009 (Skokie, IL) – RFL Communications, Inc., publisher of four market research newsletters and the initiator of the research industry's data quality focus starting in September 2006, today endorsed the efforts of Mktg Inc. (East Islip, NY), which has partnered with 17 leading U.S. online panel providers on the most comprehensive cross-panel comparison study in the MR industry.

"Mktg Inc.'s research—headed by its President, Steve Gittelman, Ph.D.—presents an unprecedented look into the makeup of these panels, creating a 'how-to' for optimizing research results for clients who rely on sample from these providers," explained RFL President Bob Lederer. "For three years, we have devoted our resources to championing the cause of actionability in improving data quality. Steve's work is fully in-line with that principle."

Summary findings provided by Mktg Inc. revealed marked differences among U.S. panels in education levels, employment profiles, media consumption, sociographics and buying behaviors. "There is great value in exploring the exhaustive list of respondent characteristics contained in this study. Another conclusion is the advisability of blending panels to optimize results. Understanding the appropriate panels for each study and the correct mix is key," said Lederer.

With its U.S. panel examinations nearly complete, Mktg Inc. is reviewing leading online panels in 40 foreign markets and continues to recruit. Preliminary results in separate U.S. and global panel studies show that the problems inherent in American data are far less present outside of the U.S. A domestic and a separate global study are to be released later this year.

Lederer said that although the study provides a fresh and thorough examination of adverse respondent behavior, he was impressed to find the report indicates that these appear to be less impactful on results than psychographic and buying behavior differences between the panels. "Steve has explained to us that end-user clients are not as interested in data collection problems as they are in shifts in buying behavior. He told me that while anchoring to particular types of problem respondents is admirable, stabilizing the buying behavior of panels seems to be more fitting and appropriate."

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Lederer continued, "Gittelman's development of what he calls 'The Grand Mean' has the potential to provide new online panel indices against which industry panels can be stabilized. Thirty-seven current Mktg Inc. buyer-behavior segments combine input and output data. More could be added."

"We approached RFL Communications last fall because of the company's concerns about, commitment to and high profile in the data quality cause," remarked Steve Gittelman of RFL's decision. "Their support has been invaluable. Of course, we are pleased that Bob and his associates see merit in our work, and we look forward to continuing to share insights with each other."

About RFL Communications, Inc.

A leading provider of industry news and information for market/media researchers, the company publishes *Research Business Report* and three other acclaimed research industry trade publications. Since 2007, the publisher has championed a number of issues of critical importance to the market research industry, including respondent cooperation and data quality. For more information, visit www.rflonline.com.

About Mktg. Inc.

Incorporated in 1979 in the state of New York and founded by President Steven H. Gittelman, Ph.D., the online and telephone data collection firm prides itself in its leadership position in online data quality and research on research. According to Gittelman, the firm has the largest research-on-research budget/gross billing ratio for any company in the world. The company is exhibiting at the ARF Annual Convention March 30-April 1.

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Backgrounder

RFL Communications has advocated for practical, implementable, low- or no-cost online data quality solutions since organizing “The Research Industry Summit: Improving Respondent Cooperation” in September 2006. At that conference, Procter & Gamble VP-Consumer & Market Knowledge Kim Dedeker uttered her now famous concerns about the state of online data quality. Following that meeting, RFL was asked by several major clients and 24 major online research vendors to put its prestige and contacts behind a drive to elevate industry data quality.

Both constituencies recommended that RFL take the unorthodox approach of pushing data quality through clients, the ultimate consumers of MR. Announcement of that client orientation prompted development of online data quality initiatives by several industry associations. RFL’s 2007 client-only online data quality meeting produced a checklist of concerns to be addressed by the industry at large. Those were adopted, in large part, by the other data quality programs.

Subsequent vendor-only and client-only sessions on these issues led to RFL’s publication of “Platforms for Data Quality Progress: The Client’s Guide to Rapid Improvement of Online Research” in September 2008. It is the sole industry resource for specific, detailed questions that client researchers should ask their research providers related to quality considerations in their online project work. Free PDF and hard copy versions of the “Platforms” are available at www.rflonline.com.

The American Marketing Association, the Marketing Research Association and Canada’s MRIA have reviewed the guidebook and made it available to their members at their respective websites. The University of Georgia is also providing the guidebook to students taking its “Principles of Marketing Research” and “Principles of Pharmaceutical Marketing Research” courses.

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