



# Welcome to CIPHER!

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# A bit of history

# Willem Saris, Inventor of Probability-Based Internet Panels



# Where Willem discovered the modem



“We walked in the Kärntnerstrasse at the opposite site of the Opera when we passed a computer shop.”



“There we stopped for a moment because I saw a new toy for home computers: a tool by which a computer could contact other computers through telephone lines: a modem.”

“I immediately saw the possible application of modems for social science research: one did not need interviewers any more once people had at home a computer, a modem and a telephone connection. Interviews could be sent from a central computer to the household, they could answer the questions and next the answers could be returned to the central computer. The interviewer, one source of errors, could be removed. More precise measurement using computer assisted interviewing would be possible.”

# And there it is

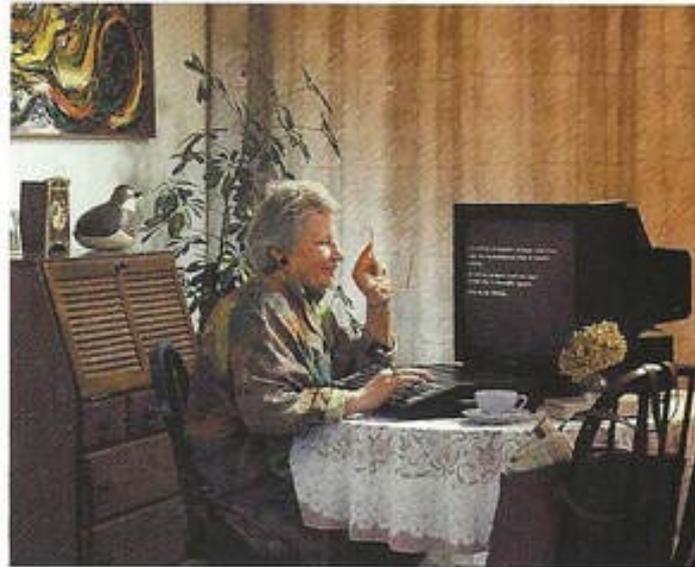


# Birth of the Telepanel



- Saris and de Pijper (1986) developed a working system for this purpose, the so-called Telepanel.
- A random sample of the population was provided with home computers and modems, and if needed with a telephone connection.
- The experiences with this first system for interviewing without interviewers, before the Web existed, are summarized by Saris (1998). The system was bought by the Dutch Gallup organization and turned into the first nationwide computer-based panel for data collection in 1986.

# Telepanel in practice



“A respondent quietly answering questions on our computer connected to her TV”

# Birth of CentERpanel



- In 1991, the University of Amsterdam started, with the support of the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO), a larger panel (of about 3,000 individuals).
- The Center for Economic Research (CentER) at Tilburg University commissioned a longitudinal study of saving behavior of Dutch households.
- After 5 years this panel was taken over by the Tilburg University Center for Economic Research. That panel, CentERpanel, is the oldest probability-based Internet panel in the world\*.

\*Hays, R.D., Liu, H., and Kapteyn, A., “Use of Internet Panels to Conduct Surveys”, *Behavior Research Methods*, Vol. 47, 2015, 685-690.

# Upgrade of infrastructure



- After the transition to CentERpanel, Bas Weerman completely restructured the system and made it Internet based, while also replacing the interview software

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# Upgrade of infrastructure



- Households without internet were provided with set top boxes (Netbox):



- Soon after, Knowledge Networks in the U.S. started with a similar set-up using Web TVs.

# Why Cipher?



- The field has come a long way since these early days.
- There is enough left to explore
- Have a great conference!