



Planning for Audience Response



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What is an Electronic Audience Response System?

A wireless electronic audience response system is a radio frequency network of hand held terminals, or keypads, which allow audience members to anonymously communicate their thoughts on questions asked of them by a moderator/speaker. The system is used to turn passive audience members into active participants and to receive immediate feedback on issues for the purpose of promoting discussion within the meeting.

How does it work?

Attendees use the keypads to answer questions by pushing a button on the keypad that represents their choice to a question being asked. Choices can be Yes/No, True/False, Multiple Choice (1-10), Range/Scale, Vote (Yes/No/Abstain), or Top Poll, depending on how the questions are formulated.

Instantaneously, a computer tabulates and displays the responses in a graphic format on a monitor or projection screen. This display is the communication between the speaker and audience. Ideally the speaker/moderator should comment to the responses and also elicit audience member reactions to the results.

How do I utilise the response system in my meeting?

To maximize use of the response system, the meeting objectives must first be determined.

- Who are the attendees?
- Why are they attending?
- How many will participate?
- How long is the meeting?
- What are the major points you want the audience to remember?

Once these questions are answered, then an application can be developed which will meet all of the objectives in a creative, informative and exciting way.



Do I need to plan questions before the meeting begins?

There are two types of questions... pre-planned and impromptu questions.

Pre-planned questions are developed prior to the meeting. In most instances the moderator/speaker has primary input in question development. Pre-planned questions have two advantages. They assure the user that all issues which need to be addressed are covered and well thought out, and that nothing gets asked or answered which the moderator does not want discussed at the meeting. Questions should be reviewed and edited carefully. Have someone else check them for clarity, relevance and freedom from ambiguity.

The questions may be displayed via screen or by print. Choosing the method used usually requires a consideration of question length, other media used within the same session, stage and mood setting. In most cases, questions are displayed on a screen.

Impromptu questions are developed by the Chair person / speaker or an audience member immediately, on demand. The major advantage to these questions is that they often open up areas of discussion which were not addressed in pre-planning the meeting, but are important to the issue. It rewards everyone in the room with the sharing of ideas and new information.

This format must be carefully considered before it is used. It should only be used with a moderator who is comfortable with the idea.

Impromptu questions may be asked of the group verbally, jotted down on an overhead, or computer generated. In any case, the technician needs to know the number of choices (Scale of 1-5, Yes/No, You'll choose one of three choices, etc.) before activating the system, or beginning to input a question to be displayed for discussion and saved for later analysis.

Generic impromptu screens may also be pre-built in order for the technician to quickly display a set of responses in answer to a verbal question. (For example: Yes/No, Set of Procedures, or Issues, to choose from.)

How are the responses displayed?

The most frequently used display is the bar graph. It is easy to understand and can be graphically interesting, both in color and design. There are several graph options available for display, including:

- **BAR** - Full or partial screen, horizontal or vertical format, 2D or 3D.
- **CYLINDER** - Full or partial screen, horizontal or vertical format.
- **PIE** - Full or partial screen, thickness and angle can be adjusted.
- **DUAL** - Full screen dual or comparative bar graph in 3D format, allows you to compare, side by side results of the currently polled question with results of a previously polled question. Pre-Survey data can also be used for comparison display

Additionally, our latest software allows you to choose from a variety of other graph types. Some examples include: line graphs, plane graphs, step graphs, etc. It also provides the ability to pick from 16 million colors for the graphs, text and background. Examples are given on the next page.

When should I ask the questions?

All meetings are different, so there is no correct answer. If possible, the Response System should be incorporated throughout the meeting. Some presenters like to use a '10-2' rule, one or two questions for every ten minutes of presentation to help the audience absorb new information. This helps keep the attendees involved.

Some suggestions for designing questions to enhance presentations:

Ask questions to find out about your audience:

- Who are they? A couple of demographic questions will help you define your audience.
- What do they already know about your subject?
- How interested are they in your subject?
- Do they use this information frequently?
- What kind of problems are they capable of solving?
- What difficulties have they had understanding the material you intend to present?

Questions may be asked before a presentation to get the feel for the overall knowledge of the group on a subject matter. A review question may be asked in the middle of the presentation to find out if the group is comprehending the material, or if a review is in order.

Asking questions during the presentation is a good way to stimulate discussion and get the audience more involved rather than just pressing buttons. After the question results are displayed, invite discussion of responses that indicate disagreements or misunderstandings. Ask participants to defend their choice by sharing their reasoning for the selection.

Monitor the Audiences Progress: This can give you valuable guidance on where to take your presentation; however, you have to be ready and willing to make adjustments as you go.

Provide Diversion and Humor: You can do a lot to keep an audience engaged and sympathetic by interspersing some occasional questions that bring a light touch or a bit of humor.

Summarising the Audience's Progress: At the end of the presentation you may want to determine the audience's level of understanding of their opinions, either as an absolute measure or as a contrast to the initial information you gathered about them. When you've had to dispense a lot of information, a few knowledge assessment questions at the end of a meeting will let you know if the methods of relaying that information have been successful.

Do you have some suggestions for wording the questions?

To get the audience involved, questions should be provocative, thought provoking, actually challenging. The choices given should be thought producing. Your objective is to get a graph which shows strong support to some choices and weaker support for other choices, thereby giving you material for providing feedback to the audience.

Individual responses MAY be tracked, but aren't usually unless attendance is taken through the system or a test is given. Although responses are anonymous, questions must be carefully structured with two rules in mind:

- Never ask anything you don't want publicly answered.
- Never ask anything that might appear to jeopardise or compromise the speaker, audience or organisation sponsoring the meeting.

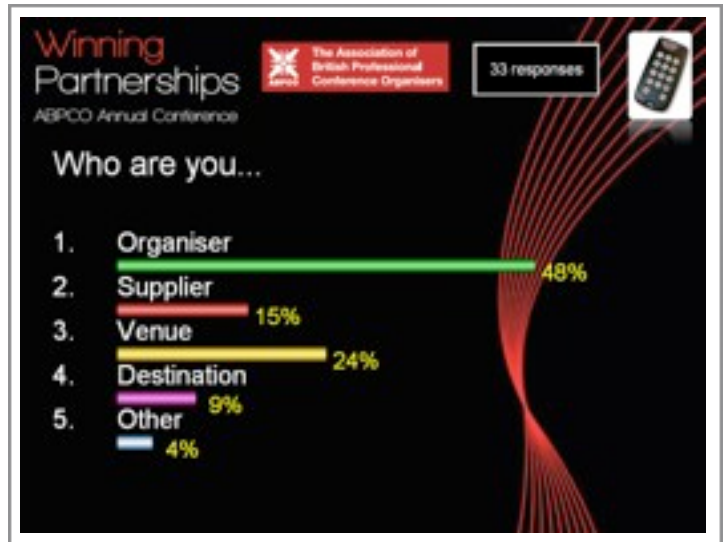
The Characteristics of Good Questions are:-

- Brief - Should be grasped quickly - many audiences become impatient. Provide only as many response choices as needed for your purpose.
- Worthy - The audience will become restless if they dismiss the questions as too obvious, superficial, or unimportant.
- Clear/Unambiguous - Carefully edited to assure maximum clarity. It will help to read the question out loud and to have other experts in your field review your questions in advance for clarity, relevance and freedom from ambiguity.
- Engaging/Intriguing - Audiences like to be engaged when they want to know the correct answer, or the opinions of their colleagues.
- Personal - Questions should be directed at individuals and not to the group as a whole.

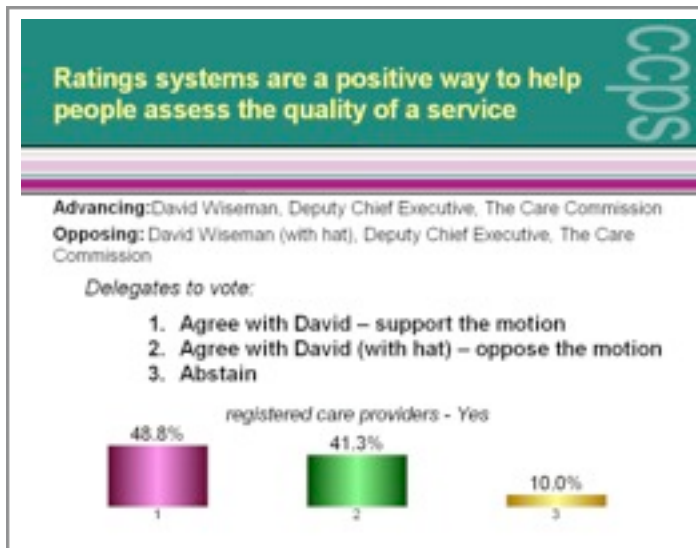
Examples of Audience Response display



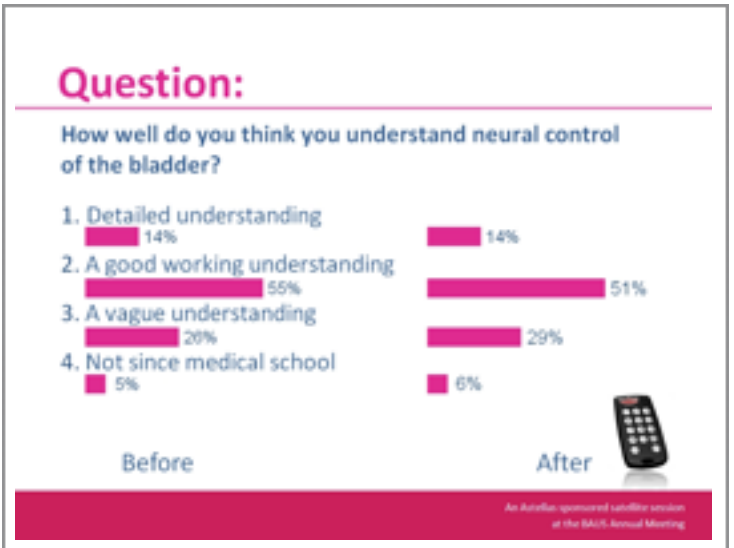
Multiple choice opinion polling question



5 option question designed as a 'filter' to break down further responses in to specific sectors



An example of a filter applied to a later question, here the graphic displays only those 'registered care providers' who voted 'Yes' and their response to the asked question.



Example of a 'before and after' question where responses from the same question, taken at different times, and are shown side by side to show any shift in perception or understanding during the intervening period. (Not much shift shown here though...)



An example of a quiz question where the correct answer is high lighted. Counter shows number of tables / keypads polled.



An example of a quiz score board shows table number, team name and score.

How are the questions structured?

There are six basic ways to structure a multiple choice question:

- Yes/No
- True/False
- Multiple Choice
- Range or On a Scale... Examples include:
A scale of 1 to 5, from strongly disagree to strongly agree
1 to 7, extremely unimportant to extremely important
1 to 9, very unlikely to very likely
- Vote - Yes/No/Abstain
- Top X Poll - For example...Choosing the top 3 items from a list of 8 choices. The audience is polled 3 times and then a graphic is displayed of the overall results. Response is weighted higher for the more important/significant items.

To help hold the audience's attention, a combination of the different formats may be used.

How are the responses saved? Can we get a copy of the responses?

The software stores responses by individual keypad. It is capable of collecting, storing and cross tabulating all of the responses. Standard reports available include:

- Raw Data Summary by Keypad
- Response Summary by Question Number
- Printout Combining Question Text with Response Summary
- Cross Tabulation of any Two Questions
- Test or Score Printout by Individual
- Test or Score Printout by Class or Team
- Filtered Subgroup Report

When planning use of the system, this feature should be kept in mind and explored. Very valuable information can be shared with attendees, as well as analysed by different criteria. It is helpful to ask a few demographic questions to outline the composition of the session participants. They can also serve as questions to help get the audience 'warmed-up'.

Can we get a copy of the responses?

Reports are generally generated on-site and can be emailed or transferred to the clients storage media. Results are given in a PowerPoint presentation format which contains screen shots, as seen above, of the questions as asked and the results as displayed during the session. Data Reports are also generated in Excel and can be of individual keypad or by given by set filters (Region, sex, sector or any demographic) and of course the overall question results.



How do I submit Audience Polling Questions ?

1. Questions should be in a multiple-choice format. Choices may be numbered from 1 to 10, or simply 'Yes' or 'No'. **Correct choices, if any, should be clearly indicated**, preferably by an asterisk next to the choice.
2. Questions and choices should be stated as clearly and succinctly as possible, remember, the more words that are displayed on a screen, the smaller they must be and the harder it will be for the audience to read them.
3. Question text can highlight specific words on screen using **bold**, *italic*, underline, and/or a unique highlight colour. Superscripting and subscripting are supported.
4. Use of normal upper and lower case conventions is encouraged, as it makes the questions more readable for the audience. To assure the correctness and appropriateness of all text displayed, we will honor upper and lower case as submitted.
5. Questions should be submitted in the order they are to be used wherever possible. **Inclusion of an event agenda with the questions is very helpful.**
6. Questions should be submitted to us **five working days prior to your event date**, to allow for their accurate and efficient entry, display formatting, proofing, and delivery to your site event.
7. Non-polling (purely information) displays are available; however, the system is not intended to be a replacement for normal PowerPoint presentation.
8. To serve you more effectively and efficiently, we ask that questions be submitted in an electronic form. We prefer to accept questions via PowerPoint (ppt / pptx), Word documents (.doc / docx) or ASCII text (.txt) for importing into the software. We can also accept questions formatted in Apple Keynote and Pages This will help eliminate some typographical errors. Questions should be forwarded via e-mail.
9. Ideally if you are using any other slide, presentation support, logos or specific color schemes, we would like to get a copy of that information and/or files. Please submit your PowerPoint Slide Master. We can use bitmap (.bmp) or jpeg (.jpg) images in any screen resolution and screen ratio above 1024 x 768, 32 bit color format. We can accept a number of different formats (TGA, GIF, TIF, etc.) and convert the image to the desired format for our program. If you have materials to contribute, please forward them to us. Graphic images can be e-mailed directly.

Following entry or importing into our system we are happy to send a screen shot image samples of the questions to you for additional content and graphical proofing. We also encourage you to schedule a rehearsal prior to beginning the meeting for one final review of the questions on screen.

Can I make changes to questions once submitted?

Yes questions can be edited on the day and new questions added. It is recommended though that no major reformatting of the question graphics be undertaken as this can lead to unexpected graphing. This is where a graph overlays the question text, the data is saved and safe but its presentation on screen may be difficult to interpret.



What will be the Speakers, Chair Person or Moderator's role be?

The speakers role is a very important one. The speaker should read the questions to the audience, they start the polling period and facilitate the dialogue that the system creates. It is the speaker who translates the graphs into a dialogue that carry the participant's thoughts and encourages audience discussion. Without the speaker, the response system would be no more than another piece of technology.

To help speakers feel comfortable with the system, these notes have been prepared so the speaker can understand the system more fully. Also, please allow time for rehearsal. We encourage all presenters who are using the system to take a few minutes to cover their portion of the event with the system technician. We will be there to help you. Please don't hesitate to ask questions.



The speaker facilitates the voting and interprets the graphs to stimulate audience participation

How should we introduce the system?

The audience needs a quick introduction to the keypads in order to get them acquainted and comfortable with it. Take the time to explain why you are using the system.

Using your interactive keypad

FIRST - Press any button to activate your handset

TO VOTE - press the button which corresponds with your choice of option on the main screen

'OK' will appear on the screen (*top right*) when your vote has been accepted

MULTIPLE CHOICE – enter your choice of options then press **SEND** (*not required with single option question*)

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To help you introduce the system, we have written a script, see the next page, which you might find useful as well as having an introductory presentation slide (See above). We recommend that the speaker hold up a keypad to illustrate followed by a warm-up question or two, to demonstrate system use.

Moderator Introduction Script:

At your seat you will have found, or you will have been given, an Audience Response Keypad.

These keypads will be used throughout the meeting today to gather your opinion on issues being discussed.

Your answers will be anonymous, so please give us your true feelings... not your neighbour's, or how you think someone else might like you to respond... ***we're looking for your input.***

Each question will be displayed on the screen. I will read it aloud, together with the available voting options. You'll then see a countdown clock appear on the screen. To enter your response, all you need to do is press the button representing your choice while the clock is counting down. If you change your mind, simply press another button, the system will only accept the last response pressed.

Immediately following, a graph will appear on screen displaying the results.

At the end of the session ,or day, please return your keypad as they are expensive and we will be charged for any that have not been returned. They do not change the channel on you TV, operate garage doors etc...

Let's try a sample question to see how this works. Could we have the first question please.

(Question is displayed speaker reads through question and available choices)

Please vote now, you have 10 seconds to make your choice.

(Countdown clock activated at the end of the 10 seconds the clock disappears)

OK all voted? Can we see the results please.

(Graph is displayed, speaker comments to graph and opens debate)

Distribution and collection of the keypads: PLEASE NOTE!!!

The keypads will need to be distributed to your audience to allow them to enter their responses and at the end of the voting session they will need to be collected again. This process is normally the responsibility of the hirer.

The keypads do have a value and should be looked after and care taken in their distribution and collection as **the liability for losses remains with the hirer**. Losses are usually small and are normally returned within a week as each keypad has an address label on the back of the unit. Losses are sustained not by purposeful theft but by accidental placement in bags etc.. High visibility lanyards are provided, on the smaller keypads, to help aid recovery.

The liability to the hirer extends, and is limited to, the replacement cost of the units lost. This is invoiced separately (but at the same time) to the job invoice. As keypads are returned we will issue refunds. Refunds will be issued for up to one year from the date of loss.

The keypads can't be used for any other purpose or function.

Distribution and collection is normally carried out by the clients 'on the day' staff. Depending on the size of audience and the seating arrangements of the event there are differing methods to best proceed with the distribution.

Theatre style.

Distribute at the points of entry to the hall, giving each delegate a keypad as they enter the hall. This prevents keypad placement in areas where no one is seated and ensures only the correct number of keypads are distributed. Many theaters have flip up seats which also makes placement difficult without losing the keypad down the back of a seat. We would recommend 1 on the day staff member per 100 keypads to cope with peak flow at the start and end of the sessions. Actively ask delegates to return their keypads to a collection point when exiting and ensure staff are available to receive them. **Ensure the chair person is briefed to remind delegates to return the keypads**

Cabaret, Class and Board room styles.

Place keypads on the tables at each place setting. We would recommend 1 staff member per 200 delegates. At the end of the session ask delegates to leave the keypad on the table for collection.

In all instances keypads are cased and presented in number sequence. To ensure accurate counting and notification all keypads must be returned to the correct cases and returned to the original number sequence. Our technician will always play an active role in the distribution, collection and sorting of the keypads.



Available keypad types:

The **Reply IQ** keypad is a fully featured handset with a clear mono chrome lcd display. The display has icons that convey battery condition, communications channel, transponder communication and vote status. The display's main area shows voting instructions, messages and vote selections before transmission. This gives the user knowledge and confidence in the systems correct operation. Simple to use and easy to hold, the keypad has a sealed key area which is resistant to the ingress of dust and moisture.



The **Reply Mini+** keypad is a wearable keypad designed to be affixed to the delegate lanyard. The device is simple to use and its relative size makes it easy to transport and deploy. Vote confirmation is given by a coloured led. Both illustrated below to comparative scale.



Available keypad types:

The **Reply Plus** keypad is a fully featured handset with a clear back lit mono chrome lcd display. The display has icons that convey battery condition, communications channel, transponder communication and vote status. The display's main area shows voting instructions, messages and vote selections before transmission. This gives the user knowledge and confidence in the systems correct operation. Simple to use and easy to hold, the keypad key pad has the ability to submit text messages to the system so making a 2 way engagement tool.



Do you do supply just the equipment or 'Dry Hires'?

The Reply mini + keypads are available for 'dry hires' (without technician support on site). We supply the keypads, with a laptop with software. The software supplied is a cut down voting software suitable for training and smaller events. We use 'SNAP' from Audience Response Systems Inc. You can down load and view the software at www.snap-ars.com It is a free down load in demo mode to allow preparation of your event. We do not recommend dry hires to audiences above 100 persons.



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