How to Use a Low-Response Score to Reach Hard-to-Count Communities

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Session Outline

- What is our goal?

- Purpose of ROAM

- Introduction to the low response score

- Background on the Planning Database

- What is a Census Tract?

- Live Demo of ROAM

- You've identified a hard-to-count community. Now what?

- Resources

- Questions

What is the goal of the 2020 Census?

To count everyone once, only once, and in the right place.

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What is our goal for this session?

When you leave here today, you should have an idea of how to use the ROAM mapping tool to identify hard-to-count areas, analyze what makes them hard to count, and plan appropriate outreach for 2020.

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ROAM (Response Outreach Area Mapper)

- ROAM is a web mapping application developed to make hard-to-count areas easier to identify.

- It provides a socioeconomic and demographic characteristic profile of these areas.

- Used to determine location and understanding those areas' characteristics so the Census Bureau can tailor communications and partnership campaigns.
    - Helps management plan for field resources. For example, how many staff to hire and what language skills should those staff have.

- Informs decision-making efforts to help improve self-response rates.

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Introduction to the Low Response Score (LRS)

- LRS is a model-driven metric calculated in-house.

- Calculated at the census tract and block group level.

- Represents the predicted mail non-response rate ...to be interpreted as the percentage of households predicted to not self-respond to the Decennial Census.

- A *high* LRS indicates a predicted *low* self-response rate → harder-to-survey area.

- LRS is stored in the Census Bureau's Planning Database (PDB).

Hard-to-count variables described in ROAM

- 0-5 years old
- 18-24 years old
- Below poverty line
- Renters
- Foreign born
- No Internet access
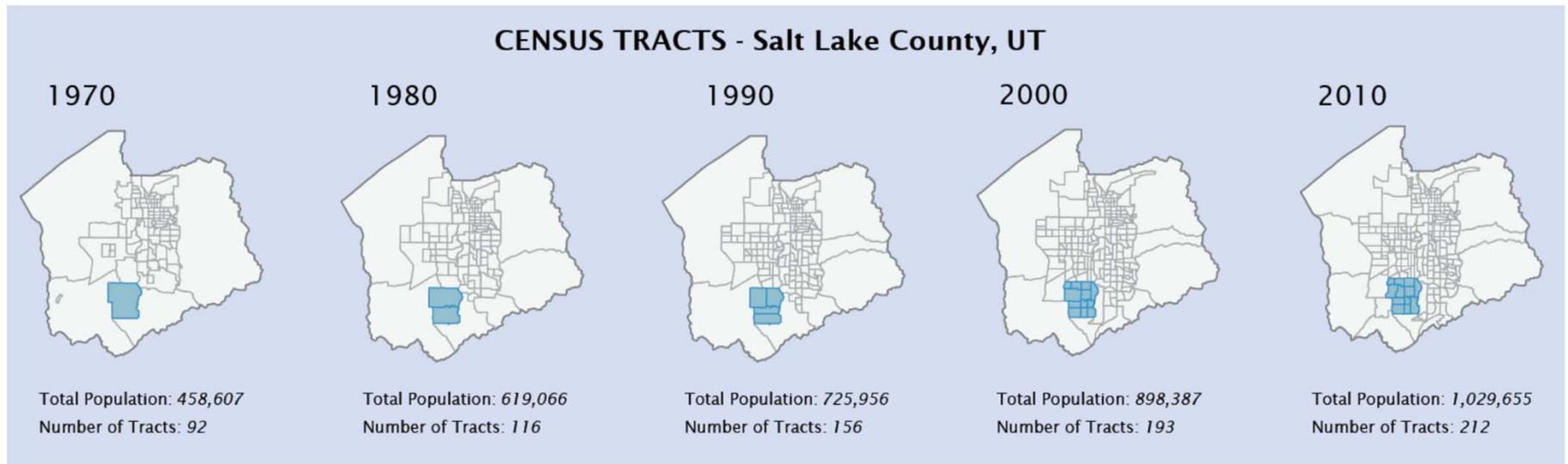- Don't speak English well

Background on the Planning Database (PDB)

- Contains the LRS, a subset of American Community Survey 5-year estimates, and 2010 Census operational data The LRS allows you to target hard-to-survey areas.

- The ACS estimates and 2010 Census data allow you to view the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the area to determine why it might be hard to count.

- Available in two formats: Comma delimited file (www.census.gov/research/data/planning_database).

- Census API (www.census.gov/developers).

- ROAM is a mapping gateway into part of the PDB.

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What is a Census tract?

- Small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or equivalent entity.

- Generally have a population size between 1,200 and 8,000; the optimum size considered ~4,000 people.

- Generally follow visible and identifiable features but may also follow nonvisible legal boundaries.

- Boundaries are delineated with the intention of being maintained over a long time for statistical comparison between censuses.

- Occasionally split due to population growth or merged as a result of substantial population decline in an area.

- Updated by local participants (tribal, state, and local governments) prior to each Decennial Census as a part of the Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP).

Census Tracts: A Link Through Time

CENSUS TRACTS - Salt Lake County, UT

1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Population: 458,607	Total Population: 619,066	Total Population: 725,956	Total Population: 898,387	Total Population: 1,029,655
Number of Tracts: 92	Number of Tracts: 116	Number of Tracts: 156	Number of Tracts: 193	Number of Tracts: 212

ROAM Application
(www.census.gov/roam)

- Accessible to anyone through a web browser (no download required).

- Hosted by the Census Bureau.

- Provides a map and data table interface for users to identify and learn about hard-to-count census tracts.

You've identified a hard-to-count community. Now what?

- Look carefully at the data. Some areas have multiple factors that make them hard to count. Try to get a complete picture of the challenges present in that area.

- Think about who knows that area well. Who are the trusted voices? Who could you enjoin to help you reach this part of the community?

- Create a strategy that engages trusted voices who will help you reach this hard-to-count area. Develop a specific, but flexible plan.

- Talk to a Partnership Specialist if you need additional info. The Partnership Team is here as a resource for you.

Resources

- To access the application and for additional information, please visit www.census.gov/roam User Guide, Data Dictionary, Frequently Asked Questions, Quick Tips Guide, and Fact Sheet.

- Planning Database: www.census.gov/research/data/planning_database

- Questions about the Low Response Score or Planning Database can be directed to: Census.PDB.questions@census.gov.

Questions?