



Designed with Pollsters in Mind

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**Voter Contact Services specializes in processing computer files of registered voters for preparation of polling samples, mailing labels, computer diskettes and tapes, downloaded data, walking lists, phone lists and statistical reports for political campaigns and organizations.**

## Polling Samples "The VCS Method"

VCS produces stratified random samples from voter files for use in a variety of campaign situations, generally for polling but occasionally for other uses. Our voter files are maintained in "geographic" sequence, which means they are sorted first by county, then precinct, then street name, then street number, then apartment number, then alphabetically by name. One of the big advantages of registered voter based samples is the large amount of specific information available on each individual voter.

Most stratified samples are extracted in this sequence. First a "skip frequency" is picked by dividing the number of desired sample points into the total voter base. Then a "starting" number is picked at random between zero and the skip frequency. A counter is set to the "starting" number and then counted up one for every voter as the file is passed. When the counter equals the "skip frequency", a "sample point" is determined and the counter is reset to zero, to begin counting again. This is repeated over and over again until the entire file has been passed

## "Pure Phone" Clusters

It is very important to count all voters when picking a sample, whether they have phones or not. Counting only those with phones can easily skew a sample towards more stable areas or areas that simply have cleaner addressing structure. At the same time, there is no reason to fill up a cluster with people who don't have phones, even trying to look them up rarely yields results.

VCS has developed the perfect solution to this dilemma, the Pure Phone Cluster. As the voter file is passed, all voters are counted until the skip frequency is reached and it is time to start selecting a cluster. From that point on, only households with phones are selected for inclusion in the cluster. This means every voter in the cluster will have a phone, but the sample will be spread homogeneously over the district based on total voters. A perfect solution to maximum phone connections with minimal fuss!

*The above text was selected from "Polling Samples" an article authored by VCS Chairman Bill Daly. The document in it's entirety is available on the VCS Web Site under VCS Products and Services.*

## VCS, The First Place... The E-Zone

VCS has been using electronic messaging or e-mail since the 1980's, and now it seems that just about everyone has at least one e-mail address.

E-mail can be a wonderful thing, it allows you to communicate with colleagues, clients, and even family without the end user having to do very much, least we say it is passive for the recipient.

However, too much of a good thing can be dangerous. Although we haven't had any clients overdose on e-mail, we have had cases of products sent via e-mail disappear into the E-Zone, never arriving at their intended destination. Many servers along the intended e-path contain limits, and although a polling sample may not appear to be large, if it is slowing down other traffic along the way your file may get purged from the system.

So remember, if you are in a time crunch and need your material ASAP, you should choose an FTP transfer from our Web-Site or Bulletin Board System.

## Happy Birthday to You...

The VCS growth continued through the late 80's and into 1990. The 1988 Presidential election was a busy one for VCS, with eight Presidential candidates using VCS in various states. File building continued with statewide files added in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and a large portion of New York, where the VCS affiliate, PRIME NY, quickly became the dominant voter file vendor. VCSNET continued to improve, moving up to a 14,400 baud modem in 1990. Mike Hannahan, Malia Daly and Ron Bolland joined VCS. But by mid-1990 a change had taken place that was to cause a substantial shift in direction for VCS. Computab, VCS's long time computer supplier in Honolulu, was purchased by a mainland firm, and the Computab main frame was shifted to Santa Clara, California. VCS was able to keep up its usual policy of shipping orders in less than 24 hours of receipt, but changes were on the horizon.

With the new states came a number of new VCS Reps. Jerry Skurnik and Stu Osnow in New York, Chris Moyer and Chuck Vicary in Pennsylvania and Stu Weiss in New Jersey. VCS introduced its Cross Count Profile for campaign targeting, and started its first production processing on pc's. The VCS voter file crossed 80 million, and VCS was matching it all internally against a nationwide telephone file.