

Guardians of the Survey

Protecting Data When Respondents Get Smarter (and Lazier)

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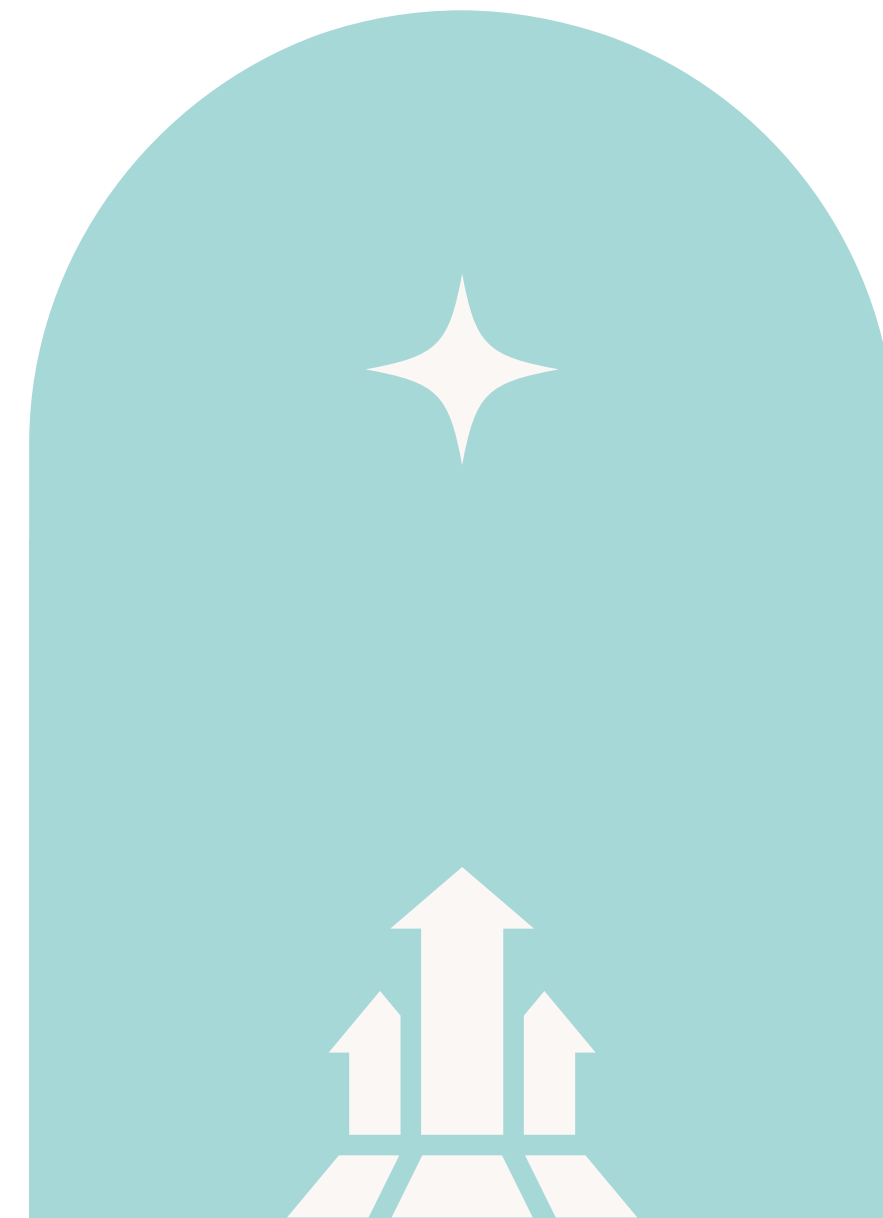


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Data Quality Has Moved Upstream

-  DATA QUALITY HAS SHIFTED FROM “CLEANING” TO WORKFLOW GOVERNANCE
-  AI ACCELERATES WORK – BUT INCREASES QUALITY CHECKPOINTS



Why now?

Fraud + AI moved upstream

FRAUD IS NO LONGER RARE - AND IT OFTEN “LOOKS GOOD”

*Rep Data ran research-on-research across six online sources and found **29%** of respondents flagged as suspicious or fraudulent.*

TEAMS DISCARD SUBSTANTIAL DATA DUE TO FRAUD/QUALITY

*Kantar reports organizations may discard up to **38%** of collected data because of quality concerns and panel fraud.*





Know Thy Enemy: Tech & Human

High-volume fake
responses that can flood
surveys in minutes.

01

**TECH
FRAUD**

**AUTOMATED
BOTS & AI AGENTS**

Deliberately skewed
data and quota
distortion.

02

**HUMAN
FRAUD**

**OPERATORS/
CLICK FARMS/
SURVEY FARMS**

Adds noise, reduces
signal quality, and
increases the need for
manual cleaning.

03

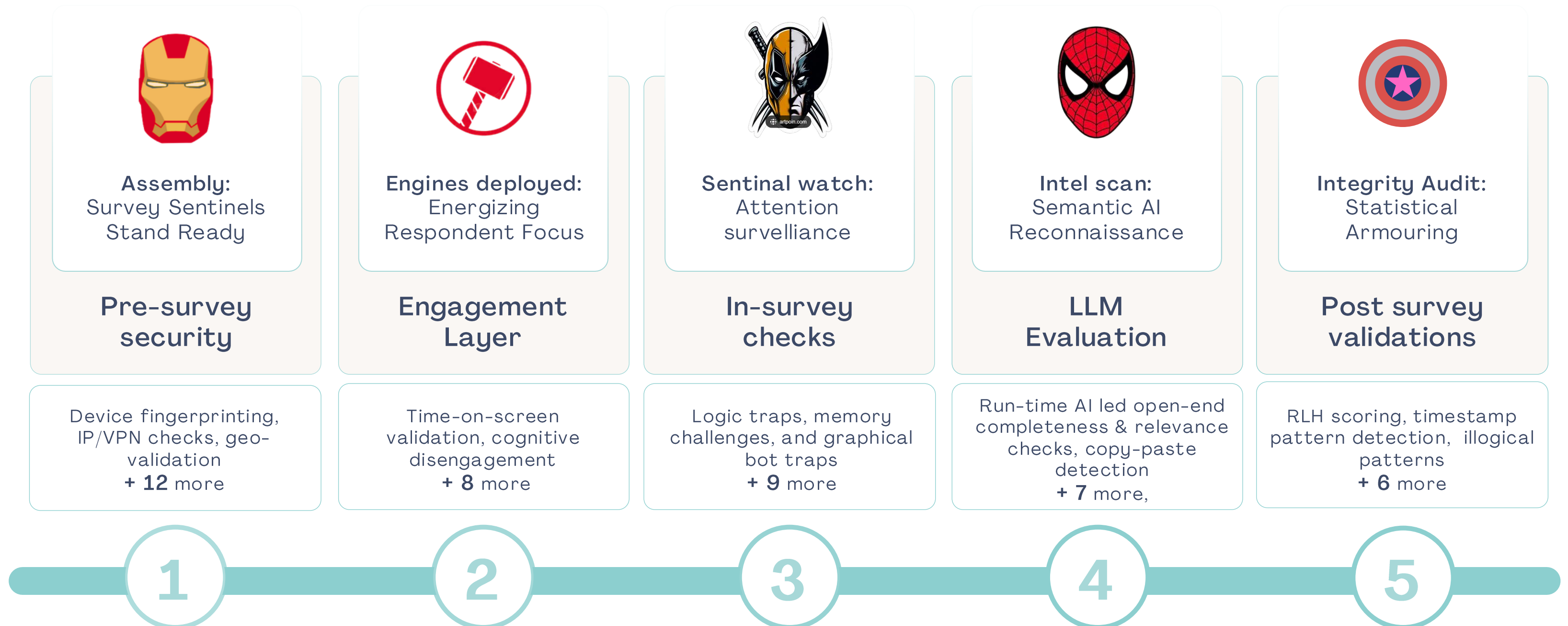
**BAD RESPONDENTS,
NOT FRAUD**

**INATTENTIVE OR
CARELESS
RESPONDENTS**



The Guardian Shield

Fortress for Data Integrity



Dual Scoring System

Individual Shield & Guardian Score



Individual Shield Score evaluates each respondent's performance across the five guardian shields.

Guardian Score Benchmarks

Trusted :
Score $\geq 70\%$ - full integrity

Watchlist :
Score 40%–70% - needs review

Excluded :
Score $< 40\%$ - fails to protect data

Guardian Score calculates the weighted composite sum of individual Shield Scores, depicting integrity strength.

FAILURE MODE 1

Identity & eligibility fraud that “looks good to go”




- “BAD DATA LOOKS GOOD” IN MODERN ONLINE SAMPLES
- SIGNALS: DEVICE/VPN, DUPLICATES, BEHAVIORAL ANALYTICS





FAILURE MODE 2

Engagement Collapse

-  **LONG SURVEYS →
FATIGUE/SATISFICING → WEAKER DATA**
-  **DISENGAGEMENT CAN DOMINATE
EXCLUSIONS**
-  **ENGAGEMENT IS A PRIMARY QUALITY
PILLAR**

FAILURE MODE 3

Meaning Failure

- MODELS CAN HALLUCINATE; RELIABILITY REQUIRES PROTOCOLS
- DETECTING HALLUCINATIONS IS AN ACTIVE RESEARCH AREA

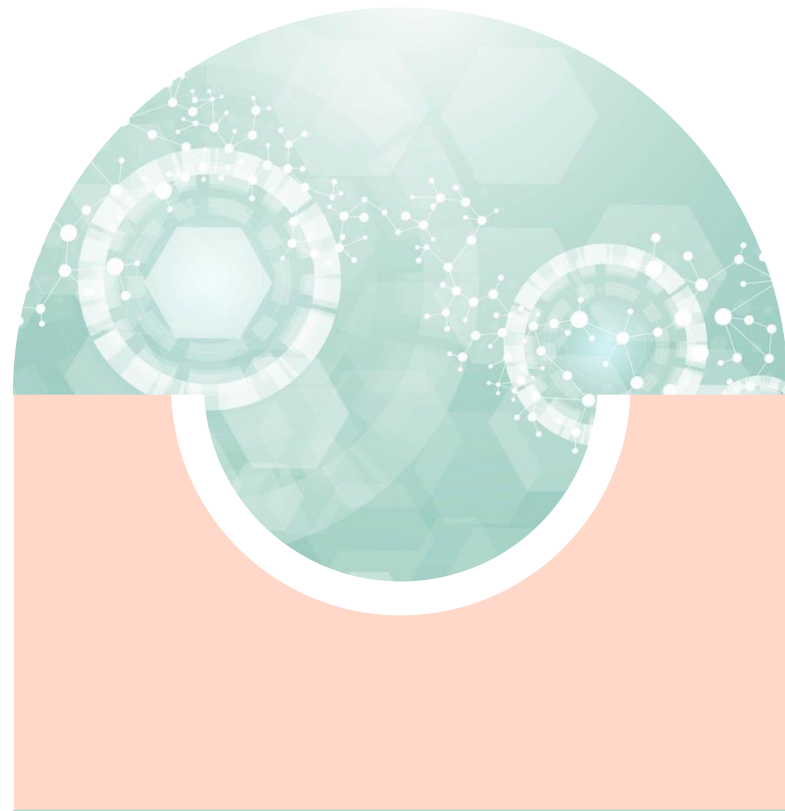


FAILURE MODE 3

Meaning Failure

- RESPONDENT SAYS - 'It's okay... I use it sometimes, but not when I'm in a hurry. I still like it, though..'
- 'AI REWRITES - 'Users are moderately satisfied but avoid the tool in time-sensitive situations.'





The response model: Firewall + The Discipline

Layered firewall across the lifecycle



Draft → **Check** → **Escalate**

turns AI speed into decision-grade quality

The role shift- researchers become the quality layer

Next:

Sawtooth Research Conference
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