

# HEADLINE RESULTS

## METHOD

### Procedure

Seven hundred and fifty-nine Australian participants recruited via an online survey panel provider took part in this study. The study was presented to participants under the guise of assessing various facets of consumer decision making, and to maintain this cover story, participants were asked to complete a series of decision making-related survey items. Upon completion of these items, participants were asked to select one of two reward options:

- Receive \$2 immediately
- Receive \$1 immediately + chance to win \$25

The proportion of participants that chose each reward option is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

Proportion of participants selecting each reward choice

Initial reward choice	<i>n</i>	%
\$2	519	68.4
\$1 + chance to win \$25	240	31.6

The 240 participants who selected the '\$1 + chance to win \$25' reward option were then randomly allocated to one of four study conditions:

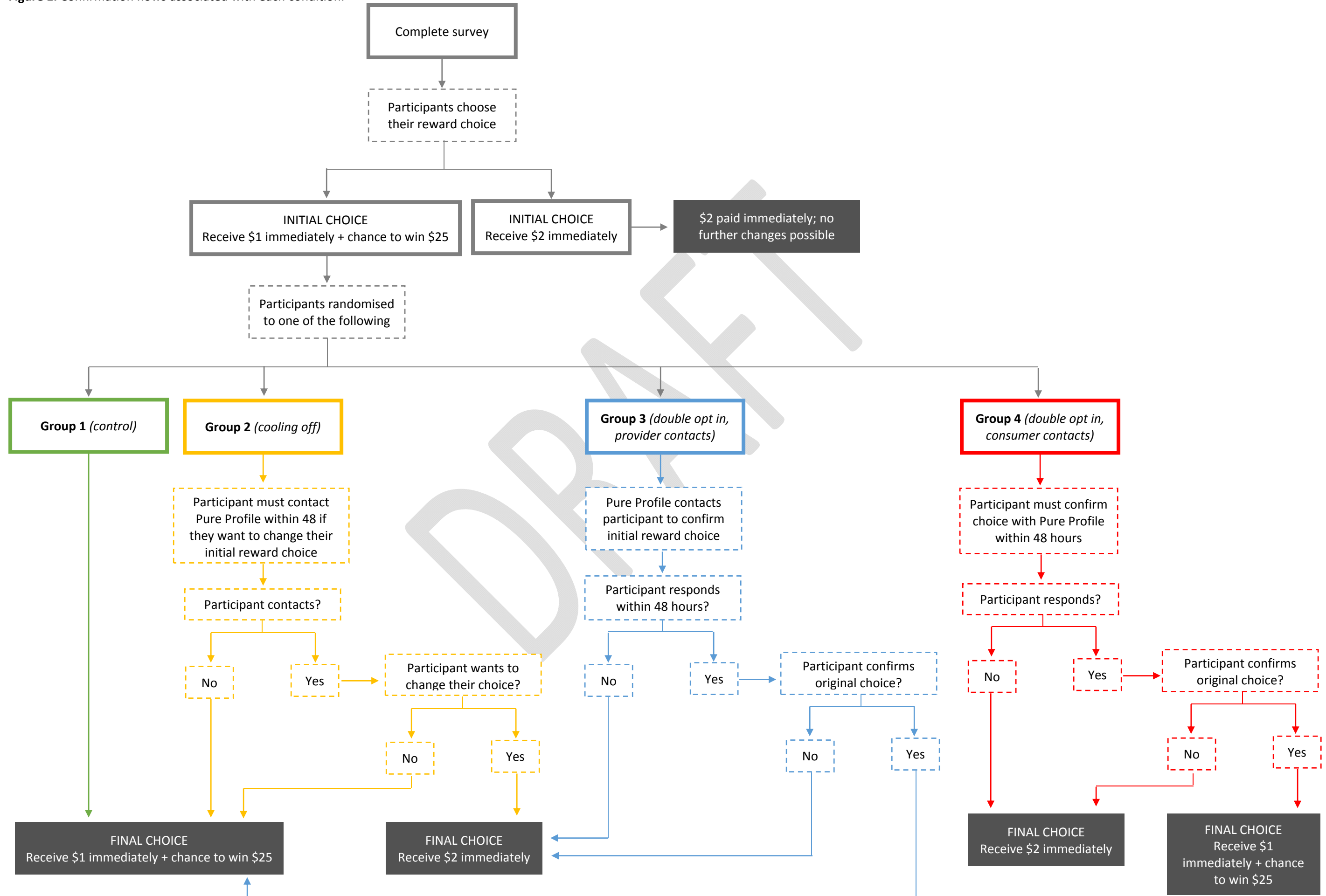
- Control (*n* = 60 participants)
- Cooling off (*n* = 60 participants)
- Double opt-in, provider contacts (*n* = 60 participants)
- Double opt-in, consumer contacts (*n* = 60 participants)

Each condition varied according to the tasks required of participants to receive their initial reward choice, as follows:

- *Control condition*: Participants in this condition automatically received their initial reward choice (\$1 + chance to win \$25).
- *Cooling off condition*: Participants were given a 48 hour window in which to contact the online survey panel provider should they wish to revert to the alternative reward choice (receive \$2 immediately). If participants had made no contact with the online survey panel provider by the end of this period, they received their initial reward choice (\$1 + chance to win \$25).
- *Double opt-in, provider contacts*: After making their initial reward choice, participants were contacted via email by the online survey panel provider and asked to confirm this choice. Participants who confirmed their choice within 48 hours received their initial reward choice (\$1 + chance to win \$25), while those who did not confirm their initial choice or did not respond received the alternative reward choice (receive \$2 immediately).
- *Double opt-in, consumer contacts*: After making their initial reward choice, participants were asked to send an email to the online survey panel provider confirming their initial reward choice. Participants who confirmed their choice within 48 hours received their initial reward choice (\$1 + chance to win \$25), while those who did not confirm their initial choice or did not respond received the alternative reward choice (receive \$2 immediately).

A pictorial representation of the confirmation flows associated with each condition is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Confirmation flows associated with each condition.



## Participants

This report will present findings associated with three of the study conditions:

- Cooling off condition
- Double opt-in, provider contacts condition
- Double opt-in, consumer contacts condition

The rationale for restricting the focus to these conditions is that participants in each of these conditions were given the option to either maintain their initial reward choice (\$1 immediately + chance to win \$25) or switch to the alternative reward option (receive \$2 immediately). For the sake of clarity, these conditions will henceforth be referred to as:

- [cooling off]
- [double opt-in, provider contacts]
- [double opt-in, consumer contacts]

A summary of the sociodemographic profile of participants allocated to [cooling off], [double opt-in, provider contacts], and [double opt-in, consumer contacts] can be found in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

Sociodemographic profile of the study participants.

	<i>n</i>	%
Age		
18-24	15	8.3
25-34	51	28.3
35-44	42	23.3
45-54	20	11.1
55-64	26	14.4
65+	26	14.4
Gender		
Female	115	63.9
Male	65	36.1
Employment status		
Working full-time	56	31.1
Working part-time	31	17.2
Working casually	13	7.2
Studying	9	5.0
Stay at home parent	28	15.6
Unemployed	7	3.9
Disabled	8	4.4
Retired	28	15.6
Estimated annual pre-tax household income		
\$0 - \$19,999	14	7.8
\$20,000 - \$39,999	40	22.2
\$40,000 - \$59,999	34	18.9
\$60,000 - \$79,999	30	16.7
\$80,000 - \$99,999	22	12.2
\$100,000 - \$199,999	38	21.1
\$200,000+	2	1.1

## RESULTS

An overview of the final reward options that participants received can be found in Table 3. As can be seen, these reward options differed substantially across the three focal study conditions. A chi-square test of independence confirmed that these differences were significant ( $\chi^2 = 128.69$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Specifically, participants in [cooling off] were significantly more likely to receive their initial reward choice (\$1 + chance to win \$25), while those in [double opt-in, provider contacts] and [double opt-in, consumer contacts] were significantly more likely to receive the alternative reward choice (receive \$2 immediately)<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 3.**

Final reward options received by participants across the three focal study conditions.

Final reward option	Cooling off		Double opt-in, provider contacts		Double opt-in, consumer contacts	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
\$2	0	0	42	70	60	100
\$1 + chance to win \$25	60	100	18	30	0	0

Table 4 provides an alternative way of representing these results. In this alternative representation, emphasis is placed on whether participants were passive (did not contact the online survey panel provider) or active (contacted the online survey panel provider) in confirming their initial reward choices. Presented in this light, 100% of participants in [cooling off] and [double opt-in, consumer contacts] were passive in their reward choice confirmation, which resulted in 100% of participants in [double opt-in, consumer contacts] receiving a reward contrary to that which they had originally selected. Only in [double opt-in, provider contacts] was any active confirmation behaviour observed.

**Table 4.**

Final reward options received by participants across the three focal study conditions.

Final reward option	Cooling off		Double opt-in, provider contacts		Double opt-in, consumer contacts	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Passive	60	100	42	70	60	100
Active	0	0	18	30	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Group differences were determined by examining adjusted standardised residuals  $> \pm 1.96$ .