

A survey translation tool to easily migrate from Qualtrics to LimeSurvey

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Résumé

A lot of labs in various fields such as Social Sciences, Cognitive Sciences, Humanities have been using the proprietary survey tool Qualtrics for years to run online experiments. Despite the high price of the Qualtrics license and the equally high efficiency of other software such as popular open-source LimeSurvey, they have a huge amount of survey templates stored on their account and manually migrating from a platform to another is time-consuming.

To tackle this issue, I developed an easy-to-use R package that allows to automatically translate Qualtrics surveys into LimeSurvey. The translated survey retains the structure, question types and contents such as subquestions, choices and language versions of the former Qualtrics survey. Importantly, this solution also has the advantage to save the data locally when a LimeSurvey instance is installed in a local server that helps comply with French and UE data protection regulations.

Mots-clefs : package – open-source – Qualtrics - survey - online experiment - LimeSurvey

Development

Qualtrics is an online survey platform widely used in various fields of academia⁽¹⁾ such as in medical research⁽²⁾, cognitive studies⁽³⁾ or psychology⁽⁴⁾. It is a proprietary tool owned and sold by Silver Lake Technology Management that allows to create surveys online and record data. The R package I developed automatizes the migration of surveys from a Proprietary to an Open-Source Solution, in this case LimeSurvey. LimeSurvey is a software with even more complex surveys than Qualtrics by making use of custom Javascript. LimeSurvey can be installed on a local server that allows to save the collected data locally and comply with French and UE data protection regulations.

This package builds on other packages⁽⁵⁾, ⁽⁶⁾ to translate Qualtrics surveys to LimeSurvey retaining its structure, languages versions, questions (types, subquestions, answers, choices).

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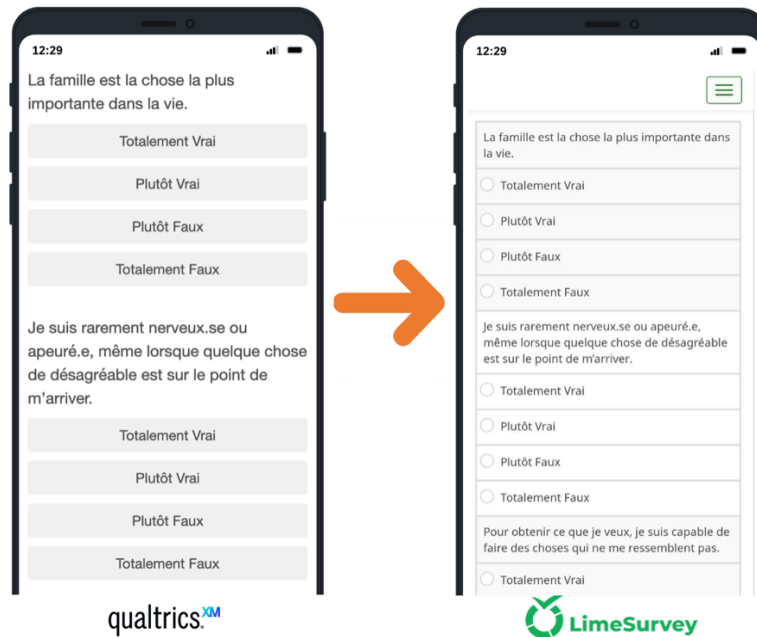


Figure 1 : Render a survey in Qualtrics (left) and LimeSurvey (left) are very similar

Although the renders in Qualtrics and LimeSurvey are very similar (Figure 1), multi-choice questions with the same answer choices can appear redundant in LimeSurvey after translation (figure 2a). In order to improve the design of the migrated surveys, options have been implemented in the package so that questions with redundant choice answers (figure 2a) can be merged into a table (figure 2b).

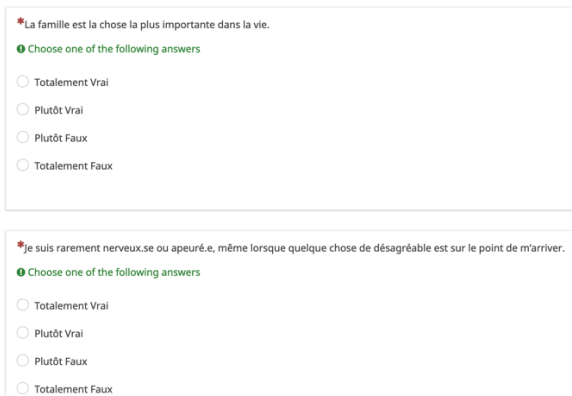


Figure 2a : After translation from Qualtrics to LimeSurvey, two different questions with the same redundant 4 choices (Totalement Vrai, Plutôt Vrai, Plutôt Faux, Totalement Faux)

	Totalement Vrai	Plutôt Vrai	Plutôt Faux	Totalement Faux
La famille est la chose la plus importante dans la vie.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Je suis rarement nerveux.se ou apeuré.e, même lorsque quelque chose de désagréable est sur le point de m'arriver.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pour obtenir ce que je veux, je suis capable de faire des choses qui ne me ressemblent pas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
J'aime faire quelque chose pour laquelle je suis performant.e.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 2b : Questions with previously redundant choice answers are merged into a single table with answer choices as column headers and questions as rows

In conclusion, this R package that automates the translation of Qualtrics surveys into LimeSurvey, makes it easy to use LimeSurvey, an inexpensive open-source software package, and will have a significant impact for researchers and survey developers looking to streamline their workflow.

Références

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