Beach signage survey
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• 501 surveys at 5 Oahu beaches:
  • Ala Moana, Waikiki, Hanauma, Sandy, and Makapuu
    • 42% residents, 58% non-residents

  - Four sign types: strong current, high surf, dangerous shorebreak, waves breaking on ledge
Sample demographics

- **Residence:** 42% local, 58% non-residents
  - 33% mainland, 10% Japan, 15% other countries
  - Majority local at Ala Moana (88%)
    - Non-residents 83% of Hanauma, 77% of Waikiki
      - Sandy and Makapuu more equally distributed
    - Japanese only at Hanauma and Waikiki

- **Gender:** males 56%, females 44%
  - 63% male for locals, to 40% for Japanese

- **Average age = 36y (range: 15 - 79)**
  - Locals 34y on average, to 40y for Japanese
  - Sandy & Makapuu 26y on average, 40+ other beaches
Awareness of signage

• About half (53%) saw signs posted
  – Highest for "high surf" (67%), and "shorebreak" (60%)
  – Lowest for "waves breaking on ledge" (34%)
Awareness of signage

• Residence
  – Not different for locals, mainland and foreign countries
  – None of the 32 Japanese noticed signs posted: 0-for-74!
    • At Waikiki only--limitations?

• Age
  – 40+ year-olds less aware (e.g. ~60% to ~30%)

• Distance
  – No differences up to 50'+ (e.g. from ~70% to ~40%)

• other
  – No differences between genders, swimming ability
Interpretation of signage

• Signs were interpreted correctly about 54% of the time
  – Highest for "high surf" (80%)
  – Lowest for "dangerous shorebreak" (37%)
Interpretation of signage

• Residence
  – Locals significantly more likely to be correct (~20%)
  – Japanese less likely to be correct for "strong current" (4%), "shorebreak" (0%), and "ledge" (2%)
    • More likely to know "high surf", however (92%)

• Age
  – Strong associations: younger = more likely to be correct
    • Shorebreak ex: 58% of 15-24 y correct vs. 17% for 40+y

• Swimming ability (self-rated)
  – Clear associations: "expert" = more likely to be correct
    • Strong current ex: 66% of experts correct vs. 36% for novice
Effectiveness of signage

• About two-thirds (64%-68%) said signs would influence their behavior "a lot"
  – 20%-24% said "somewhat" influence,
  – 10%-12% said "not at all"
Effectiveness of signage

• Residence
  – Tourists significantly more likely to be influenced "a lot": 76%-81%, vs. 49%-51% for locals
  • Not much difference among tourists

• Age
  – Younger respondents less likely to be influenced "a lot": 50%-57%, vs. 69%-73% for older respondents

• Swimming ability (self-rated)
  – Strong associations: "expert" = least likely to be influenced "a lot"
  • High surf ex: 43% of experts correct vs. 84% for novice/beginner