

Transcript of: Brief Overview

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Audio is in normal text below. Timestamps are in bold to assist in finding specific topics.

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REDCap is a tool for building online surveys and databases. No technical knowledge or prior experience is needed. Instructional text and prompts provide guidance at every step.

REDCap projects are webpages used to enter data. They can be used from anywhere, at any time, and on any device having internet access. REDCap is designed to be neutral. It can capture almost any type of data, and for any purpose. A REDCap project is simply a webpage, used for data entry. This is the typical layout. Data entry happens through the project menu's data collection section.

Data entry can be either while logged into REDCap or not. Here, we're using REDCap as a database, meaning we are entering data while logged in as a project user. In contrast, using REDCap for a survey allows people to see the webpages and enter data without logging in. Surveys are explored in separate videos.

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No matter how data is entered, built-in prompts provide guidance. Intuitive data entry ensures that people without much computer experience can quickly learn REDCap. The software is most frequently used for clinical and research purposes. But it's designed to support any type of work - from quality control studies to animal studies, administrative tracking projects, event registrations, or feedback surveys. Customizing the questions on these webpages to match your needs is part of project development. That development process can involve advanced features to improve your data collection strategy, such as data validation, branching logic, calculated fields, matrix ranking, and slider scales.

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Users can quickly and easily build their data collection instruments, the webpages used to collect data. Instruments can be built online in real-time through the Online Designer or built offline through a spreadsheet

called the Data Dictionary. Both project modification methods can be used interchangeably throughout the life of a project. These tools and the project development process are explored in separate videos.

Here, we used the Online Designer to add a new field, for a phone number. Let's revisit the data entry process, to see our new field and continue entering some practice data.

Some projects use only one data collection instrument to enter all their data. Others, like this example, use multiple instruments. This approach creates more flexibility because you can more tightly control access to separate pages. The Online Designer is a great tool for making changes to these data entry webpages.

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REDCap's other built-in tools help you control how people interact with the project. These tools, also called applications, help manage the project and your data. More than a dozen applications are available. The most basic applications are displayed here. You have complete control over your project. Nobody knows your work as well as you do, so explore and test all the features to determine which ones best meet your needs.

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Running reports is one of the most important features to test. Reports are searches; they are repeatable, real-time queries of your dataset. Reports can be run at any time. Basic analysis and statistics are available. For more robust analysis, data can be downloaded, or exported, in multiple formats. REDCap creates all the files you'll need for analysis in statistical packages.

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Project development focuses on testing which tools and questions match your needs. That development process is streamlined by the project setup checklist. This page guides building and testing a project. Once a project is fully tested and ready to begin collecting real data, it is moved to production mode. Additional data protections are put in place to help prevent accidental data loss. So users have a safety net to protect their data, even if their projects continue to change and grow.

Created in 2004 at Vanderbilt University, the software is now supported by a global consortium of non-profit organizations. But each REDCap system is independent. Every consortium partner site personalizes their system. So always consult your organization's REDCap administrator for guidance about your system.