

A supplement to Quirk's Marketing Research Review

THE QREPORT

CORPORATE RESEARCHER REPORT 2017

An independent study, written for and developed with the help of client-side marketing research and insights professionals

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DEEPER CONNECTIONS. DEEPER INSIGHTS.

Welcome to the fourth annual Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report!

The purpose of the report is to give corporate researchers (those whose job it is to gather, analyze and disseminate insights about their organizations' customers, products and services) an in-depth look into their world, helping them learn more about what their peers and colleagues are doing and also benchmark themselves and their departments.

Based on an online survey conducted from June 5 to June 23 among pre-qualified corporate marketing research (client-side) subscribers of Quirk's, the report covers two main areas – work life and compensation. In total we received 861 usable qualified responses. An interval (margin of error) of 3.3 at the 95 percent confidence level was achieved. (Not all respondents answered all questions.)

With quality – of methods, processes and outcomes – as one of its main themes, the work life survey covered: budgets; MR-related changes planned for the coming year; the effectiveness of newer and traditional tools; how respondents view their adoption of new methods; how they choose new methods; how they define poor-quality data; and which areas of MR they find most frustrating.

The compensation survey covered: job satisfaction; compensation packages; the hiring outlook for 2017; and their level of experience.

In our view, what makes this publication stand out from other trend studies in the research industry is that it is completely independent and focused on corporate researchers. It's not about research suppliers or even Quirk's – it's about you, the corporate researcher!

We want to thank all of our client-side readers who took the time to complete the survey and share their candid thoughts.

We also want to thank our content partners for sharing their industry insights. W5 created a two-page infographic of Corporate Researcher Report highlights and eight other organizations – Research Now, SSI, iModerate, Digsite, Full Circle Research, L&E Research, Gutcheck and ESOMAR – have offered their takes on specific aspects of the study and its findings.

We hope you find this report useful. Please let us know how we can make next year's edition more informative and valuable to you.

Sincerely,

Joseph Rydholm
Editor | joe@quirks.com



P.S. For a complete breakdown of compensation (for both corporate researchers and suppliers) by job title, region, years of experience, etc., visit www.quirks.com/tools/salary-survey.

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QUIRK'S MEDIA

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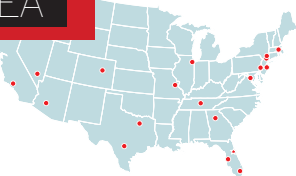
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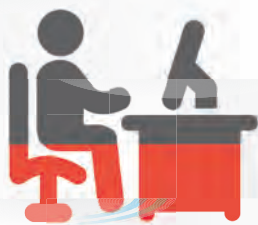
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SOMETHING OLD SOMETHING NEW

As research departments grow in personnel and budget, teams look for opportunities to innovate.

While traditional methodologies are perceived as highly effective, many are seeking new methodologies to gain richer insights to suit specific needs.



35%

have hired additional market research employees in 2017



32%

have increased their budgets in 2017

Top 5

Most Important Factors in Choosing a New Methodology

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| 1) Quality data | 95% |
| 2) Audience specificity | 75% |
| 3) Cost | 74% |
| 4) Question flexibility | 74% |
| 5) Speed of deliverables | 68% |

Produced by

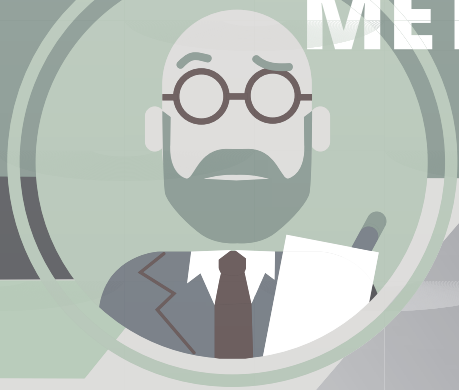


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TRADITIONAL METHODS



*"If it's 'new' that's great.
If not, that's great too."*

43%

consider their company's adoption of research methodologies and technologies to be among the late majority

Perceived Effectiveness



NEW METHODS



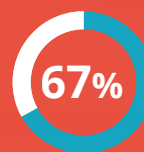
*"Innovation is encouraged
at our organization."*

28%

currently utilize an automated research platform

Perceived Effectiveness

ONLINE
QUALITATIVE/
FOCUS GROUPS



MOBILE-
SPECIFIC
SURVEYS



TEXT
ANALYTICS



MOBILE
QUALITATIVE



SOCIAL MEDIA
RESEARCH



MOBILE
ETHNOGRAPHY



RESEARCHERS holding steady

WHILE ADAPTING TO CHANGE

For insights pros, the more things don't change, the more they stay the same. The wording is tortured but you get the point: As reflected in this iteration of our Corporate Researcher Report work life survey, status quo pretty much sums things up. Whether it's salary and compensation (see accompanying article) or MR budgets, the responses have been very consistent since we began fielding the annual survey in 2014. For example, nearly 45 percent said their MR budget stayed the same as in 2016 (23 percent reported a decrease and 32 percent reported an increase).

But while budgets and many other aspects of the job stay the same, there is ever-present pressure to change, whether it's calls to add

some innovation to the methods and processes used to gather and analyze data (or risk obsolescence, in the view of some) or alter the way the insights function is perceived internally or the types of projects MR input is sought for.

To find out more about change's role in the lives of our readers, we posed a number of questions in this year's survey that centered around changes planned for the coming year, the adoption of new methods and assessments of and reactions to new and traditional methods. We also delved into data-quality issues, trying to define what poor-quality data looks like to them and learn more about what they do when research results are less-than-optimal. We tried to end

with a bang with an open-end that asked them to vent about the areas of marketing research that most frustrate them.

More outsourcing, less outsourcing

To our query about the biggest change their organizations will make regarding marketing research over the next year, a number of factors received multiple mentions, including: corporate and departmental restructuring; more outsourcing; less outsourcing (aka bringing processes in-house); and increased automation.

No doubt reorganization is a constant across the insights function, as companies go through mergers and acquisitions, leaders cycle in and out or mandates come

down from on high, but among our survey respondents, there were good aspects of reorganizing and some not-so-good ones.

The good:

“[The plan is to] bring in innovative research methods that are not currently being used or even being talked about in the organization.”

“There’s certainly more of a focus on research and insights development. It seems like we’re finally breaking through and decisions are being made based on research.”

“We will likely expand to provide research services to additional parts of the company as the work we do is very high-quality and we are well thought-of within the company.”

“As an insights professional, the biggest barrier in general at my company is that **everyone thinks they can do market research** and it is infuriating.”

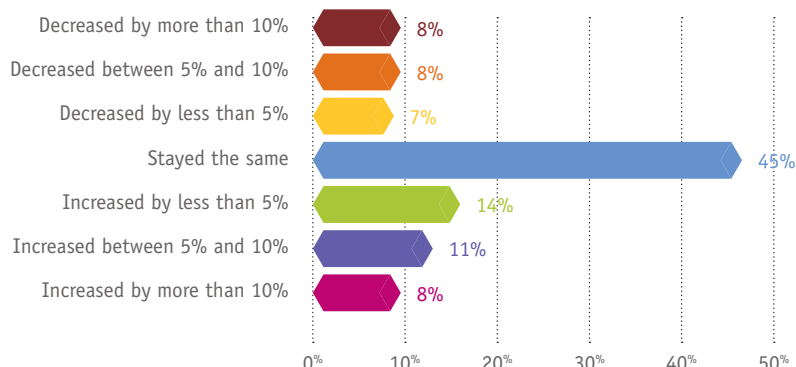
“Merge knowledge department with the communications department in order to optimize resources regarding marketing research and data analytics.”

“We are told that we will finally have a research agenda versus ‘do what you want’ or ‘do what people ask you to do.’”

The not-so-good:

“Team is not being led by marketing research professional. Instead it’s being led by a person with a consulting background. I am concerned that the organization has devalued the expertise and experience our team brings because

How has your company’s overall budget or spend on marketing research changed in 2017 compared to 2016?



they do not understand it. I see this happening across the company.”

“Our company is moving several studies away from traditional research firms to [a third-party customer experience management system] as execs think

“Maybe actually conduct some [research]?”

“Hiring me! ;)”

“Replacing me.”

“We have a new CEO starting in late summer, so your guess is as good as mine.”

“The cheapening of qualitative research by untrained stooges.”

Restructuring is also changing researchers’ roles:

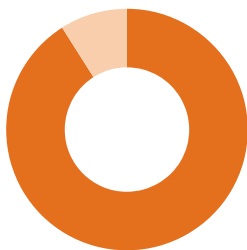
“[We are] moving away from overreliance on secondary market research and beginning to do more primary market research now that people, budget, resources are in place.”

“We have a new CEO and a new CMO who are very focused on innovation and understanding the company. This has put an emphasis on market research. Having said that, we are still very conservative in our spending and don’t ever really push the boundaries when it comes to new techniques or new ideas.”

“Starting to move towards a more integrated insights function. Looking at how traditional research can do more

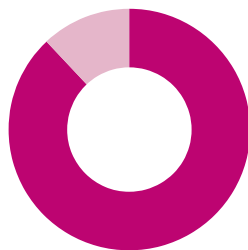
CAUSE AN EFFECT

Readers rated these traditional techniques EFFECTIVE or VERY EFFECTIVE in high numbers:



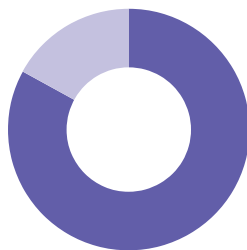
92%

Online Surveys



88%

In-Person
Interviewing



83%

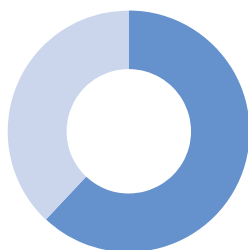
Focus Groups

The new techniques most likely to be rated EFFECTIVE or VERY EFFECTIVE by our readers were:



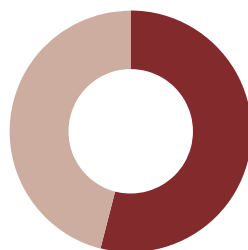
67%

Online
Qualitative



63%

Mobile-Specific
Surveys



54%

Text Analytics

with big data/data science/analytics as well as listening research.”

“Trying to maintain existing budget and staffing in a corporate environment that has radically shifted to value and rewards slashing expenses, yet its demands of the in-house marketing research function exponentially increase.”

“Heavy use of outside strategic consultants this year who helped direct several market research studies that we then developed and helped deploy but they reported on. Could have done it all in-house but top mgmt not aware of internal capabilities or just wanted to hear consultant’s views.”

“I simply do not know. We are currently being driven more by management’s opinions and less by research/data.”

Outsourcing on the rise?

Outsourcing was a popular topic several years ago, largely as India came to the fore as a source of cheap, tech-enabled labor and brainpower, but it seemed to fade from the larger conversations across the industry. It may be on the rise again. Many respondents mentioned outsourcing as one of their changes of note, either in the form of work being moved overseas or of projects that were previously conducted in-house being outsourced to vendors:

“Offshoring. Hiring a team in India to be an in-house market research firm. Our company has laid off colleagues and is moving more work offshore. We are working with fewer research suppliers and have to cut our marketing budget. One way we are cutting the \$ is to have our India colleagues do the research from beginning to end using software. Because this team works for our company we have to take calls at 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. to interact with the India team. More headcount cuts are expected in August. It appears that skilled researchers are no longer valued.”

“Eliminating the internal market research position and hiring an outside agency to conduct all research.”

“Losing headcount, moving more work to vendors.”

“I don’t know if it’ll be within the next year but eventually they will do away with our internal research group and just outsource directly to other research vendors.”

At the same time, while all the outsourcing might be a hopeful sign for vendors, an almost equal number of readers mentioned taking MR processes in-house:

“Eliminate additional third-party market research vendors and bring essentially all research in-house.”

“Take more work in-house (a LOT more), much to my chagrin.”

Automation was also mentioned often as a change, largely as a way to preserve already-stretched budgets and work schedules by using computers to handle some of the mundane, time-intensive tasks.

“Automating and streamlining processes and production to free analyst time for analyses.”

“Working toward automating the sampling process to make in-house sample pulls easier for tracking studies.”

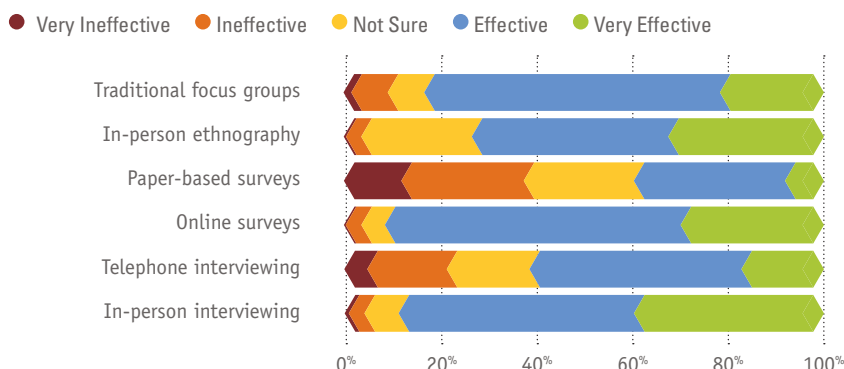
“Automate as much as possible to avoid resources strain.”

Twenty-eight percent of respondents said their organizations currently use an automation platform. When asked to choose from a list of automation platform capabilities that they feel have the most impact on gathering and producing insights, time-related factors such as rapid survey deployment and real-time reporting were seen as contributing the most.

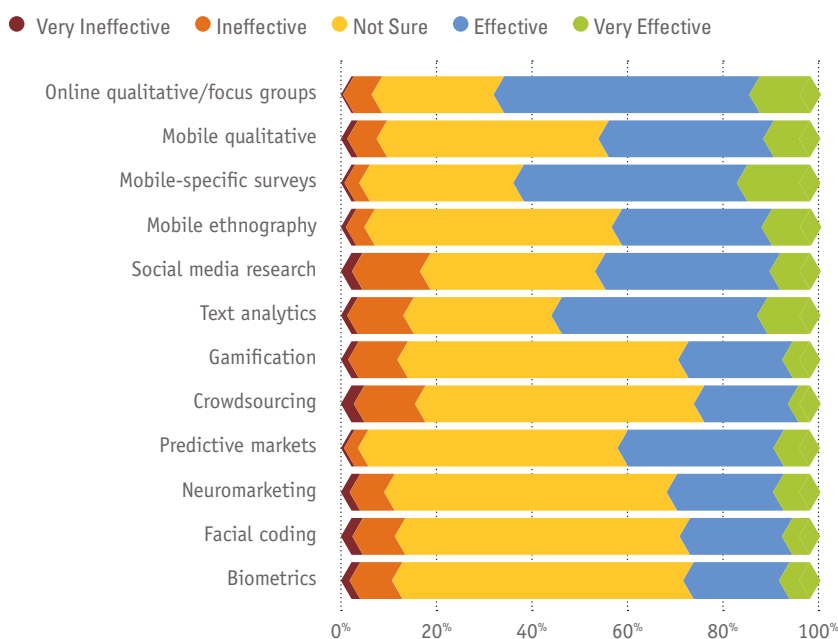
Traditional vs. newer techniques

We asked about the perceived effectiveness of a group of traditional techniques in one question and a group of newer approaches in another. Quallies,

How effective do you think the following traditional techniques are at providing quality data and insight?



How effective do you think the following newer techniques are at providing quality data and insight?



you'll be happy, as the in-person techniques earned high marks.

The good-old focus group, that much-maligned and oft-declared-dead stalwart, was said by a combined 83 percent to be effective or very effective, with the focus group earning a tie (at 65 percent) with online surveys for the highest percentage of “effective” nods.

Despite grumbles about sampling elsewhere in their responses, readers gave online

surveys the highest combined percentages of effective/very effective, at 92 percent. In-person interviewing (a combined 88 percent effective/very effective) and in-person ethnography (72 percent combined) also did well.

The strong showing of qual feels like a confirmation of the viewpoint that has been expressed many times at industry events and elsewhere that qualitative approaches serve a crucial role in

this era of data proliferation as context-providers, giving depth and nuance to the stories being told by data from disparate sources such as sales, social media or tracking studies.

Even in the face of opinions that behavioral data is much more accurate or dependable for making marketing decisions because it's based on what people actually did rather than what they say they might do, the act of talking with, listening to and observing customers or potential customers via qual methods still has value. It lets you see faces, hear the language and watch the packaging being fumbled with, etc.

Many of the less-established techniques, such as mobile ethnography, gamification, crowdsourcing, predictive markets, neuromarketing and other non-conscious methods, earned "not sure" percentages of over 50 percent when respondents were asked about their respective levels of effectiveness.

Online qualitative/focus groups earned an effectiveness of 56 percent, with 11 percent saying online qual is very effective. Mobile approaches such as mobile qual (combined 44 percent effective/very effective), mobile-specific (combined 63 percent) and mobile ethnography (combined 41 percent) all acquitted themselves well, as did the non-mobile-based methods of text analytics (combined 54 percent) and social media research (combined 44 percent).

These numbers, coupled with responses to the survey's various open-ends, show that most of these approaches are widely seen (and used) as complementary tools to the more-established data-gathering methods, rather than as the replacements some of their proponents have long touted them as.

Level of adoption

On the topic of newer methods, we asked readers to assess their level of adoption of new techniques and

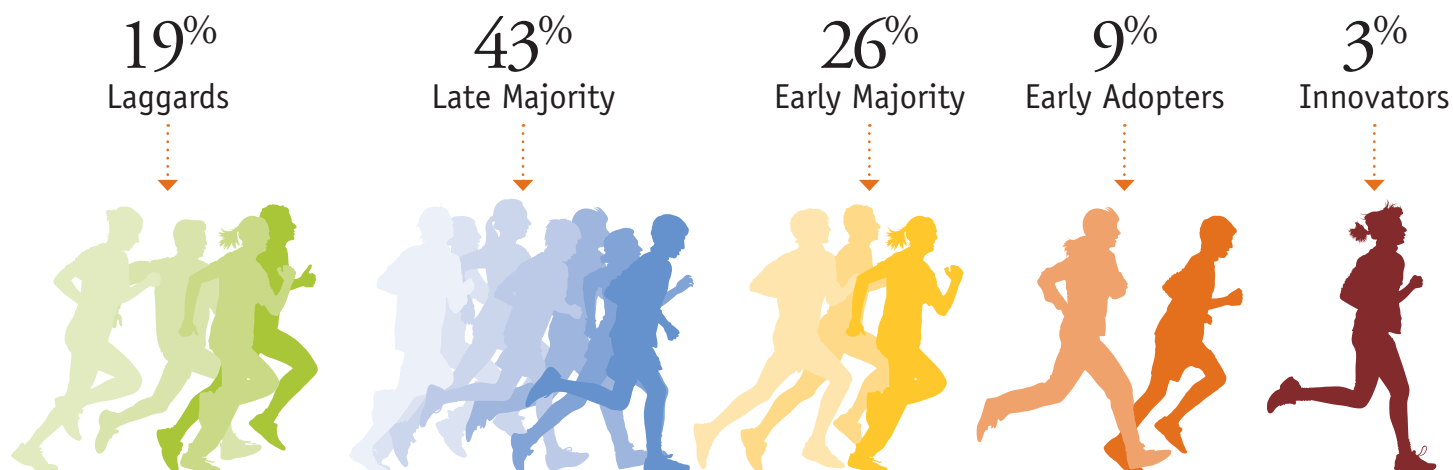
also tell us more about how they choose new methods to pilot-test.

Putting a timeline around the pace of adoption of new tools is rather difficult but we settled on a scale that went from "innovator" on the early side to "slow to adopt (laggard)" on the other end, with the points of "early adopter," "among the early majority" and "among the late majority" sandwiched in between. Not surprisingly, the bleeding edge is not familiar territory for researchers, with only a combined 12 percent putting themselves in the innovator and early-adopter camps. Instead, "among the late majority" is a more comfortable realm, with 43 percent using that descriptor for their speed of adoption, with "among the early majority" at 26 percent on one side and "slow to adopt (laggard)" on the other.

Happily, data quality was the runaway winner as the factor that is most important when choosing a new methodology, with 70 percent

RUNNING THE RACE

How would you describe the timing of your company's **ADOPTION OF NEW MR TECHNOLOGIES** in relation to other companies?



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citing it as extremely important, followed by audience specificity, cost and question flexibility.

We asked an open-end to probe on how those and other factors interrelate during the choice process. Oft-mentioned factors were budget (of course), seeing presentations at conferences, reading Quirk's (thank YOU!), case studies from other organizations and vendor recommendations. Two of the more interesting influences were word-of-mouth and the ever-popular gut-feel.

Though there were many, many wonderful responses, this one perhaps sums things up best:

"ANY methodology needs to be appropriate for the objectives and needs of a project. We don't run out to try stuff just because it's new (or because someone SAYS it will change the world in a blog post). We do projects because we have a business need for certain information. We look for the RIGHT methodology to get us the data we need. If it's 'new' that's great; if not, that's great too. I don't have the luxury of being able to test a methodology before applying it. If I pay for a project it has to work; I have people waiting for these answers. My job is to do what's right for my company, not to spend money on and try out every 'new' company/methodology that comes around."

When quality is lacking

With quality as one of the stated focuses of this year's report, we wanted to find out what researchers do when the results of their research are not the quality they had hoped for.

Some answers took a lighthearted (if rueful) tone:

"We call it qualitative research!!!"

"Scramble!"

95%

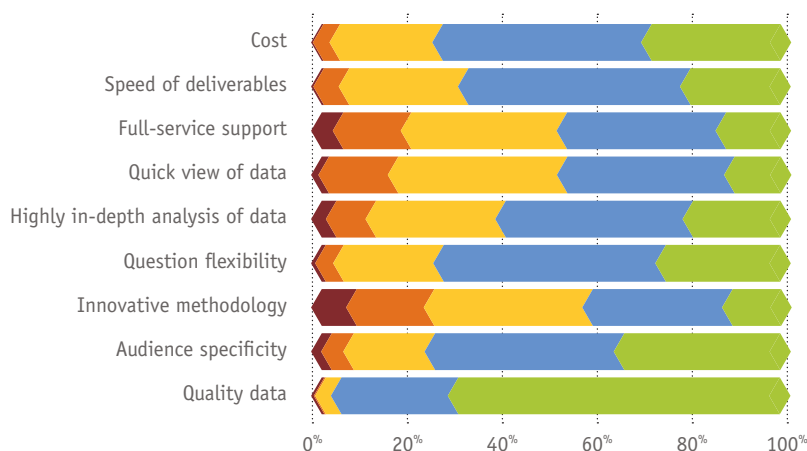
of respondents said **Quality Data** is a **VERY IMPORTANT** or **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** factor when choosing a new methodology.



"If the quality isn't good, I won't report it. Bad data is worse than no data. And I will not compromise my credibility."

When choosing a new methodology, which of the following factors are important to your choice?

● Not at all Important ● Slightly Important ● Moderately Important
● Very Important ● Extremely Important



"I would pack my boxes and get another job."

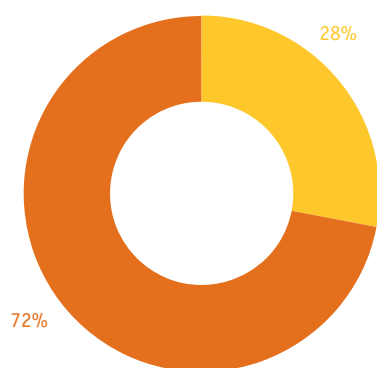
"Cry."

"I panic, cry, cower in a corner and pray for God's mercy. Really? I communicate the insights so we can make the best business decisions possible and then I move on."

The more practical responses tended to span the spectrum from scrapping the data and determining who or what to blame to, as the commenter above expressed, making the best of the bad situation. A commonly-cited approach was to label the questionable data as "directional" and not use it as the final basis for

Is your company using an automated research platform?

● Yes ● No



decision-making, while still trying to extract some value from what's there:

"Figure out a way to salvage what is there and move on. Bank the knowledge so that things will go better the next time."

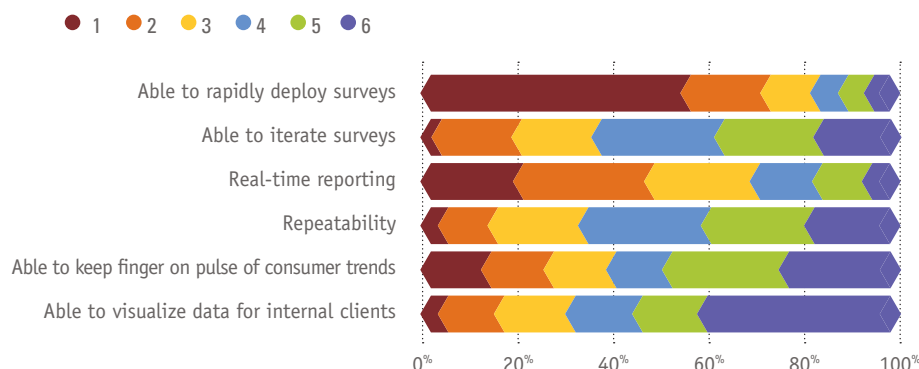
"This particular situation arose recently and we chose to go back into the field to expand the number of respondents."

"You adapt. You realize that the lack of quality means that your inferences are on a weaker foundation but I believe that there is always something worthwhile one can get out of research results."

"Make the best of what you DID receive. There are always aha moments in all data."

"[The questionable data is] often from trying something new. For example, we might be looking for a way to predict customer behavior in a specific category. We try something new but see that the survey questions were interpreted incorrectly or the results don't make sense with what we already know. We

Thinking about automated research platforms, rank the following six factors in terms of their impact on helping you gather and produce high-quality data and insights for your organization. [1 having the most impact; 6 the least]



tried but in those cases, we have to cut our losses. Doesn't mean it wasn't worth a try, though."

"Spend more time with the supplier on the report. Data quality is rarely the issue; poor-quality results to me means poor-quality analysis and reporting. If results are contrary to what someone was hoping to hear, that does not make them poor."

And sometimes it's only the researchers who care about quality:

"Unfortunately, oftentimes executives in the company just want the number and don't care about our explanation of why the quality isn't there. Thus the numbers get used and reused while the research team winces every time we see it."

Some though, said that the dangers of bad data were too great to trifle with:

"Depends on the situation. Sometimes field additional research but if the quality isn't good, I won't report it. Bad data

is worse than no data. And I will not compromise my credibility."

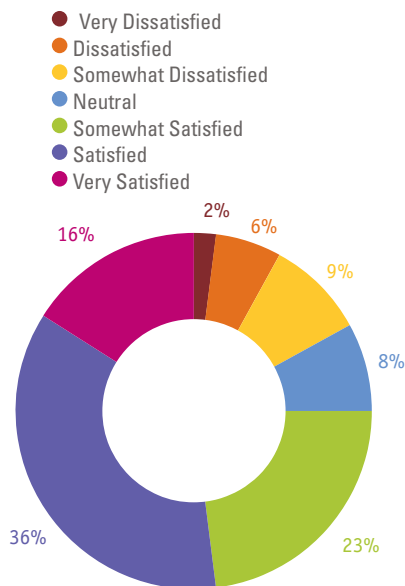
A chance to vent

We ended the survey by giving readers a chance to vent on the areas of marketing research that they find most frustrating. Readers delivered a rich lode of commentary that we don't have space to fully explore here but will certainly be mined for articles in the coming months.

Vendors, have your ears been burning? Quirk's readers had a lot to say about the suppliers they work with. Many mentions, as in years past, of the problem of vendors wooing clients with the promise of executive expertise and involvement, only to end up having projects completed by lesser-experienced workers.

"I'm frustrated that every research company says 'We will have senior-level people working on this throughout the project' but it always ends up low man on the chain who writes your questionnaires

How satisfied are you with your current employment



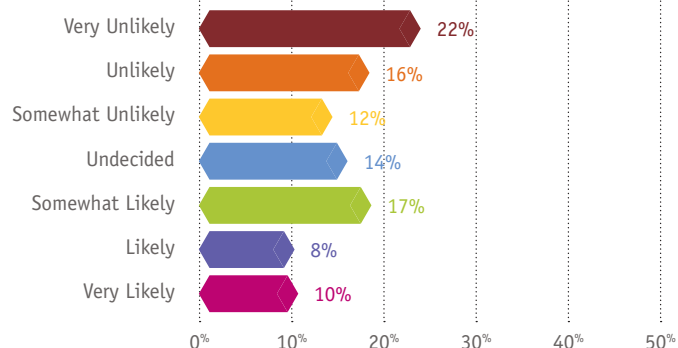
and reports – that analyst who hasn't been included in any of the project development, strategy or clarification calls/meetings we have been having along the way but is expected to understand all the needs and nuances of the project through second- or third-hand feedback. How does this make any sense when everyone in the industry is pushing the idea we need to be better at providing 'consultative' engagements?"

"Sample providers. These companies used to hire knowledgeable researchers who understood the ins and outs of conducting research. Currently, they are hiring salespeople who don't understand data quality, sampling or weighting. The push is to sell you more, with worse quality."

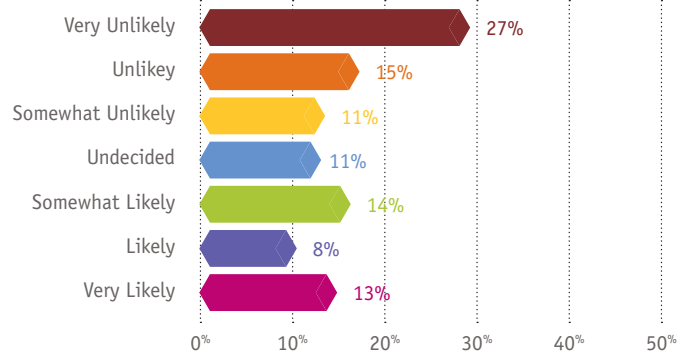
The quality of vendor analysis and reporting was also a source of frustration for readers:

"Very rarely does a research company actually connect the dots. I had a vendor last year that created a 100+ slide deck of data charts. But I had to keep asking them to put it all together – what does

How likely are you to seek employment at a different company this year?



How likely is it that your company will hire additional market research employees in 2017?



it say about this segment of customers buying Product X via Channel Y? Nobody looks at that analysis unless I specifically ask, yet everybody claims to be selling insight and not data."

"We're pretty frustrated with research vendors nowadays. It seems like most struggle with the basics, which forces us to spend time fulfilling their role (checking data, reworking presentations, etc.). In turn, it makes it difficult for us to see the forest when we're dealing with the trees all the time."

"I find working with research vendors to be very frustrating. Most promise they

can do just about everything; work is often poor-quality; they don't understand our industry. And most of the time I'll spend more time managing them and their work than it would have taken to do the work myself. Research vendors are great for corporate clients with big budgets who don't know what bad research looks like."

Away from vendors, familiar thorns such as DIY research, the demand to innovate for innovation's sake, budget problems, procurement and a lack of respect for the process and value of marketing research were commonly-sounded themes:

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“More interest in what’s new and different (the shiny new toy) – and less in the tried-and-true. Continuing divide between qualitative and quantitative researchers – I’m good at both and appreciate both but many see their role as either one or the other. (Not) being respected and valued within the organization – lots of talk about wanting ‘insights’ but not valuing the research function with budget, staffing, resources. Non-researchers/generalists as managers of the research function – ridiculous! Not enough research-based decision-making after all these years. Vendors scrambling to stay in business and make money – business development taking precedence over client relationships and quality research.”

“I’m most frustrated with the lack of support (especially funding) of research. In a lot of areas, it’s still viewed as a luxury compared to something you need to do. It’s better than when I first started in the industry but it has a ways to go.”

“Frustration is primarily within my own organization. Impossible hoops to go through to onboard vendors. A change of address by a supplier requires a mountain of forms. Almost impossible to get vendors approved to do patient research because of HIPAA concerns.”

“The procurement process tends to slow down our ability to conduct research quickly and with a myriad of vendors and capabilities.”

“Learning new methods. I hear all this talk about predictive analytics but can’t find education on how to do it. All I see is software that can do it for us. But I want to learn the ‘how’ first, especially since we don’t have a budget to buy the new software.”

“Well, this survey deserves honorable mention. Our industry’s reliance on surveys to solve all issues [is frustrating].”

And pretty much every technique out there earned at least one expression of disdain or tried patience:

“Qual practitioners peddling their methodology as cure-all instead of educating clients when quantitative methodologies are the best approach.”

“Analysis of social media ... a lot of hype, a lot of promises. Five years ago people were predicting survey research would die because of analysis of social [media]. But to be honest, I see very little coming out of social media analysis other than ‘neat to know,’ very little that is actionable.”

“The quality and health of panels/sample sources. We know there are issues, we just don’t know how bad it is.”

“Some of the newer methodologies are simply too complex or out of reach to be done internally (e.g., biometrics, neuro-cognitive, etc.). They need to be made more affordable for client researchers.”

And there were multiple mentions of B2B research-related problems, most specifically with sampling:

“Being able to reach our target audiences via e-mail for online surveys. We are B2B and we have extremely strict regulations on who we will e-mail. Additionally, our target respondent has an extremely low incidence. All this makes it very hard to conduct online research.”

“B2B online sample quality! If I sold a product that dodgy, I’d be out of business.”

“New methodologies tend to be targeted toward consumer (B2C) research. We need real innovation designed specifically for the B2B space taking into account unique industry vertical characteristics.”

“Online survey – it’s so hard to tell if your data is quality or not. And it’s extremely difficult to reach B2B audiences (which is all we do). If we can find B2B it’s often crazy expensive for blind studies or we use all of our existing customers, which biases the results.”

Open to growing

Despite researchers typing out a collective 12,000 or so words in response to our question on frustration, the mood of those who completed the 2017 survey seems similar to that of previous years. (One person said, “I’m not frustrated about any areas of marketing research.” At least someone out there is happy!) There are worries and hurdles aplenty – from sample quality and declining response rates to the ever-present encroachment by non-researchers – but on balance these Quirk’s readers are confident in their abilities, still committed to fighting for quality and open to growing as the demands placed upon them change. **Q**

METHODOLOGY

The Corporate Researcher Report work life survey was conducted online from June 5 to June 23 among pre-qualified corporate marketing research (client-side) subscribers of Quirk’s. In total we received 861 usable qualified responses. An interval (margin of error) of 3.3 at the 95 percent confidence level was achieved. (Not all respondents answered all questions.)

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Automation in research: THE SECOND WAVE

By Mayer Danzig
Senior Vice President of Product Management
Research Now



Automation has been one of the hot topics in research for the last several years. Publications routinely include articles about its promise; industry conferences have sessions and even whole tracks to help researchers and companies understand what it means.

To date, however, most of this interest has been focused on what can be considered the first wave of automation, in which individual elements of the research process are automated. I've seen surveys that break out more than a dozen different facets of the process.

This piecemeal approach to automation has been met with widely mixed acceptance. In one study, the percentage of respondents who were either using or considering automation for a

specific task varied from 21 percent to 71 percent, depending on the task.

Not surprisingly, this first wave of piecemeal automation has focused almost exclusively on efficiency as an end in itself. Automation is applied to 'this or that' facet of research to save time, save money, or both.

A coherent, planned approach

Now we're seeing a new approach to the use of automation in research. Instead of automating this or that individual task, automated research platforms represent a coherent, planned approach that incorporates automation throughout the research process, creating an end-to-end solution designed to achieve

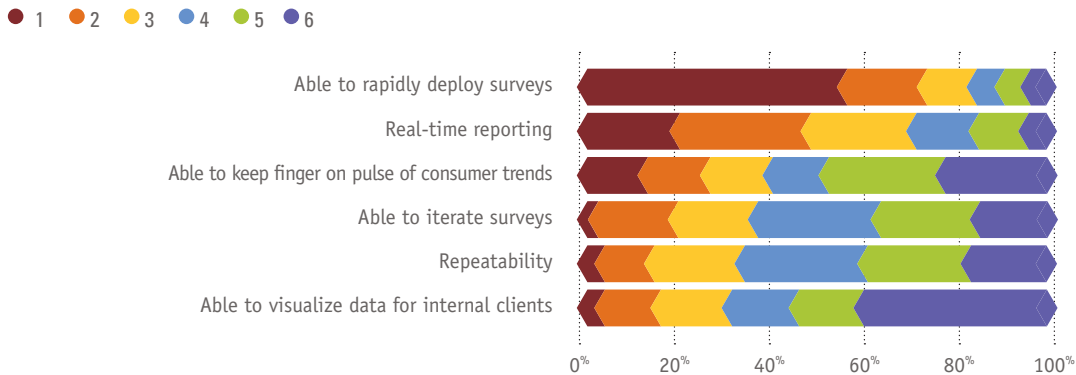
specific goals in simplifying or accelerating research.

For example, an automated research platform might enable studies to be initiated online, using standardized, custom or semi-custom survey templates. The platform could automatically collect and aggregate responses in real time and automate the reporting of results through a dashboard or Web portal. Such a platform would address surveys of some complexity and scope, while also meeting quick-and-easy research needs that go beyond the scope of simple, brief gen-pop survey tools, to encompass more complex, as well as repeatable, research projects.

With an automated research platform, efficiency is not an end

figure 1

Thinking about automated research platforms, rank the following six factors in terms of their impact on helping you gather and produce high-quality data and insights for your organization. [1 having the most impact; 6 the least]



in itself. Instead, automation is used to achieve a specific goal – in this example, the ability to conduct repeatable studies more easily, frequently and consistently, and obtain business insights faster.

For this reason, this new approach should prove far more influential in transforming the way research is conducted and consumed than piece-by-piece automation. It also enables the consumers of research to adopt new and more productive approaches to the ways they use and process it.

Still quite new

To explore the use of and attitudes toward automated research platforms, Research Now drew on responses to questions on automated research in this year's Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report.

The relatively low percentage of respondents who are using this unified approach to automation is not surprising, given that it is still quite new. At 28 percent, just over a quarter of survey respondents said

that their company was using an automated research platform.

Several factors contribute to this cautious approach – starting with caution itself. An automated platform represents a significant change in how a company uncovers and processes important business insights. It's natural for companies to take time to evaluate it.

In fact, in the same industry survey, 43 percent of respondents described their company as “among the later majority,” while another 19 percent reported their companies were “slow to adopt” new marketing research methodologies and technologies. Of course, in a business environment where competitive challenges are accelerating and consumers are drawn to innovation, it's worth questioning if caution is actually the riskier approach.

For other companies, the prospect of losing some of the services that research firms traditionally provide, such as guidance in creating the survey itself or analysis of the results, may be a barrier.

Efficiency and speed to insights

Next, respondents who used an automated research platform were asked to rank by importance six factors that contribute to gathering and producing high-quality data and insights. (figure 1)

Not surprisingly, the top two factors are related to efficiency and speed to insights – the traditional benefits of automation. These are familiar goals for any company conducting research and indisputable benefits.

The **ability to rapidly deploy surveys** is an obvious choice for the most important benefit. We have yet to encounter a company that, having reached the decision to conduct research, doesn't want to get into the field as soon as possible. With the speed of business continually accelerating, pressure to reach decisions more quickly is unrelenting.

Much the same applies to the ranking for **real-time reporting**. A conventional research process typically requires three or four weeks after the research itself has been completed to manually

review and analyze data, reach recommendations and create a presentation to communicate them.

By graphically displaying research results on a dashboard or Web portal, an automated research platform can eliminate that multi-week delay. That, in turn, can have a significant impact in many common research scenarios, especially involving fast-moving or seasonal markets.

See new possibilities

With the third-most valued factor – being able to **keep a finger on the pulse of consumer trends** – users can begin to see genuinely new possibilities in consumer research, thanks to the capabilities of this new wave of automated solutions.

Yes, this factor is a direct result of efficiency in fielding surveys and viewing results much more quickly. However, the real benefit is not the efficiency itself but the timeliness and agility it enables – allowing companies to track consumer trends more closely and respond more quickly.

This is a significant capability. Yet consumers of research are less likely to rate it as being highly important. In fact, while this factor scored third in “most important” responses, it also tallied second in “least important” responses.

This ambivalence among researchers reflects unfamiliarity with and uncertainty about a new capability – and the same unfamiliarity affects the remaining capabilities covered in the survey.

The relatively low importance of the **ability to iterate surveys** may be a product of confusion as well as unfamiliarity. Researchers may think they have to give up the ability of iteration to use automated, templated surveys.

*The ability to visualize data internally represents an opportunity for research managers to spend more time focusing on the **real value they alone can bring to their organization.***

However, in reality, some of the new platforms offer considerable flexibility and others allow users to make minor modifications to templates.

Other researchers may be more interested in maintaining consistency across their surveys and therefore not be interested in iteration.

There is likely less confusion about **repeatability**, which is a straightforward capability. There may, however, be uncertainty about its value – which is a product of the combination of cost, efficiency and faster time to insights enabled by automated platforms. As a result, researchers can conduct more individual studies quicker, using roughly the same or even fewer resources – and with greater consistency across studies.

This is another new capability that may be just starting to receive serious consideration from the industry in terms of how it can help organizations – by accelerating product development, for example, or more regularly tracking consumer attitudes.

Finally, the last element cited by respondents – the **ability to visualize data for internal clients** – may have earned its last-place ranking by representing too much of a change in the established research work flow.

Insights managers have handled research data in more or less the same way for years. They get the raw data; they parse it and analyze it; and they wrangle it into a coherent presentation for their stakeholders. They may view the idea of providing a visualization of real-time results as diminishing their value and importance or even bypassing their expertise by feeding data directly to their colleagues.

However, the ability to visualize data internally represents an opportunity for research managers to spend less time on nuts and bolts and more time focusing on the real value they alone can bring to their organization: leveraging their deep understanding of their company’s historical use of research; interpreting results as they apply to their business; drawing insights, including those that may not be obvious; and pointing the way toward appropriate actions.

Achieve specific goals

In considering the research process holistically – and strategically applying automation throughout to achieve specific goals in deploying surveys and gathering and presenting results – automated research platforms will fundamentally change the way companies use research and the

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kinds of insights researchers can pursue.

Achieving that potential, however, requires more from all parties in the research process:

Research providers must do a better job of educating research

consumers about automated platforms. This second wave of automation enables companies to obtain insights in new ways and gain competitive advantages they once could not.

It's incumbent on providers to help researchers better understand

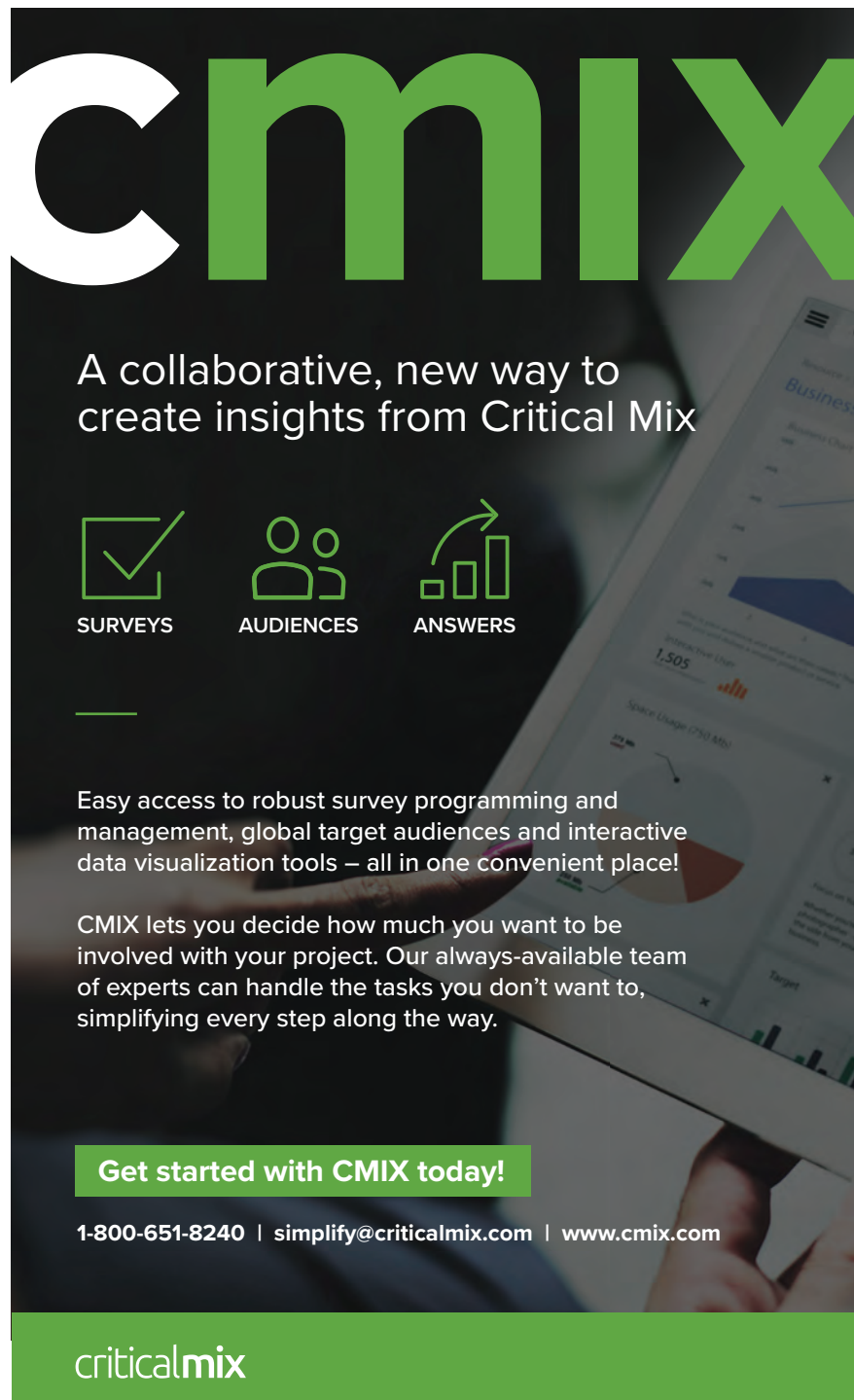
these new capabilities and envision the value they can provide. Yes, that means more articles in the trade press and more sessions at industry conferences – ideally focused on the transformational capabilities of automation and how they can drive insights in new and better ways.

*Research has never been an end in itself **but a means to achieve better business decisions.***

Research consumers should explore the opportunities these platforms can provide. Automated platforms and the capabilities they offer are here to stay.

Conducting pilot studies or small, focused tests can build familiarity with these capabilities and the processes that enable them and uncover meaningful, relevant and actionable benefits that translate to a competitive advantage for your organization.

Achieve better business decisions
Research has never been an end in itself but a means to achieve better business decisions. The current trend in automation is not an end in itself, either, or simply a way to conduct the same research more efficiently. Automated research platforms are a means to achieve new capabilities in research that will, in turn, bring new insights that enable better business decisions. As an industry, we need to embrace the change for the value it can deliver. **Q**

The advertisement features a large, stylized 'cmix' logo in white and green at the top. Below it, the text 'A collaborative, new way to create insights from Critical Mix' is displayed. Three icons represent 'SURVEYS' (a checkmark), 'AUDIENCES' (two people), and 'ANSWERS' (a bar chart with an upward arrow). The background shows a person's hand holding a tablet displaying various data visualizations like line graphs and bar charts. At the bottom, there is a green call-to-action button and contact information.

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Reinvention (and uncertainty) dominant themes as researchers look ahead

By Jackie Lorch
Vice President, Global Knowledge Management
SSI



When respondents to the Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report survey were asked the question "What is the biggest change your company will make regarding marketing research over the next year?" we might have guessed that budget challenges, the need to do more with less and work faster or trying new techniques would be dominant themes.

Instead, answer after answer to this question (which was asked as an open-end) speaks about internal reorganization, reinvention and redefinition of the role of research as the biggest change on the horizon.

It is almost as if all those other trends – the need to deliver research faster and more economically, to be

more agile – are now resulting in organizational change on the ground to make the other changes possible.

Only 5 percent of people answering the question said they didn't expect any change and a further 4 percent expected change but said they didn't know what that change would be.

Of the remainder, nearly half (44 percent) mentioned some type of organizational change. When combining answers that talked about changing the type of research being done at their company or the type of products being offered, 85 percent of responses related to the overall theme of reinvention and redefinition.

Many people described how the way they work or the structure of

their organizations is in flux. Often no longer working in traditional research teams, researchers may be working with multiple groups across multiple departments, functions, geographies and with teams outside their own company. While reorganization is on the horizon, there is little consensus about what it will look like. Some companies are outsourcing, others bringing projects in-house, some using fewer vendors, others looking to use vendors more often, some doing fewer studies, some more, some decentralizing to leverage regional knowledge, others centralizing for efficiency – and some looking for new tools to help them become more efficient within their new organizations.

Becoming less isolated

Many of the structural changes mentioned do have one common theme: they suggest that research teams are becoming less isolated and siloed within organizations. One researcher reported that their “market research department was restructured ... to be part of the larger marketing communications organization. Within the department, we are also now structured very differently to better align to the business.”

It makes sense that departments are becoming integrated since there is a growing recognition that data sources themselves need to become integrated to increase the value delivered to clients. One said, “We plan to integrate [research] more into strategy development and business decision-making. The voice of consumers is important and their experience is what drives our business.” Others expected “more thorough integration of market research in company-wide decision-making” and “more rigor ... driving action from research findings.” Another noted they were bringing intelligence-gathering from field-related organizations into the corporate MR group which delivers research to stakeholder groups (“business units, marketing, sr. leadership, etc.”). This grassroots marketing intelligence gathering will “inform business decisions, strategy, solutions, etc., together with formal research input and published info about our market.” Another noted that they expected to be “integrating internal data with research projects.”

When research data is integrated with CRM data and data from big data sources, it becomes an integral part of a broader stream of information available to inform

When combining answers that talked about changing the type of research being done at their company or the type of products being offered

85%

of responses related
to the overall
theme of
REINVENTION
and **REDEFINITION**



decisions. As McKinsey put it in a 2014 article “Winning the research revolution – take two,” “Most companies separate the researchers responsible for gaining consumer insights from those charged with maintaining the customer behavioral database or developing insights from other big data sources. The best marketing organizations, however, integrate understandings from both.”

Combining data from research studies with myriad streams of other data now available to humanize and more deeply connect with our customers is the new frontier for market research.

These are fundamental changes, so not surprisingly there is some fear expressed that the value of research may not be recognized in the new structure; research could be sidelined, its value misunderstood and unappreciated. One said, “I am concerned that the organization has devalued the expertise and experience our team brings because they do not understand it.” Another no-holds-barred comment mentions

“the cheapening of qualitative research by untrained stooges.” Another sees “less emphasis on research techniques but far more emphasis on stakeholder and change management.” This last comment is a positive one but the danger is that management may not appreciate the foundations of research that allow researchers to deliver reliable data.

‘First hog to the trough’

Although budget constraints were only mentioned by 12 percent of researchers, at least some of the reorganization mentioned is clearly driven by the need to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Interestingly, elsewhere in this Quirk’s study we see that research budgets don’t appear to be under serious threat, with 33 percent having seen budget growth this year compared to last and 23 percent having seen a drop. One person expected “more budget controlled centrally,” others expected “research budget controlled by the Analytics team, not by the marketing director” or the company to move from a

“first hog to the trough” approach to funding research to something more organized. Another reported a “complete elimination of a budget owned/managed by the research team and looking to client groups for funding.”

A fifth of those who are worried about budgets coupled their comments with having to do more research with less. Solutions to this dilemma included:

- “more in-house reporting and programming of surveys”
- instead of multiple suppliers, “have our India colleagues do the research from beginning to end”
- “extracting more insights from the custom work we have done previously and from secondary sources”
- enhancing staff skills by “training researchers in DIY data science techniques like Python and SQL.”

The right tools

In this environment of increased complexity and in some cases constrained resources, the search is on for the right tools to increase efficiency. Only 8 percent mentioned automation specifically but many researchers are focusing more on tasks which deliver most value, avoiding time wasted on details of project management and control. Researchers are looking for “more emphasis on data analysis tools and software,” “a new online survey tool,” “cutting-edge tools” and, in general, “more agile market research tools.”

When effective, easy-to-use tools for survey design, project management, DIY sampling, quality control and simple reporting handle many of the mundane details of a research project, researchers can focus on

“I think there is a culture change in acceptance and execution of market research to drive decisions. It’s becoming a primary thought for the business.”

tasks where their experience and expertise have most value: the analysis, drawing out insights from the data, telling the story and making sure decision makers understand the implications of what the story means for the business.

Diverse and opinionated

The voices of the almost 500 researchers who answered this question are diverse and opinionated but some themes emerge. Researchers expect:

- more reorganization and redefinition of their role and value to the organization – and with it an environment of uncertainty;
- the search for efficiency and more valuable deliverables – and a diversity of solutions to make that happen;
- research being seen in the wider context of the insights, marketing and data landscape;
- a risk of research not being respected – and the need to explain and promote the unique skills researchers bring to the organization; and
- automation and the right tools to help us focus on our unique strengths and deliver more value.

Six years ago, Cambiar Consulting’s Simon Chadwick and Ian Lewis spoke on the “winds of change” in research, looking

ahead to what the next five to 10 years would hold. “We are facing several winds of change that have huge impact on our profession – to borrow from Andy Grove’s *Only the Paranoid Survive*, market research is approaching a strategic inflection point,” they said.

We’re now in the middle of the future they envisioned and many of their predictions have come true, including more demands from the C-suite, the challenge of integrating new modalities, the coming river of information with thousands of tributaries and the growing role of DIY tools. Results from this Quirk’s study suggest that many organizations are still grappling with this change and the specific implications for them of research’s new role and expectations from the wider business.

The variations of approach we see in these responses are linked by the idea of reinvention. And finally, there are signs that all this experimentation and reinvention is bringing us where we want to be – at the point where business decisions are made. As one researcher put it, “I think there is a culture change in acceptance and execution of market research to drive decisions. It’s becoming a primary thought for the business.” **Q**



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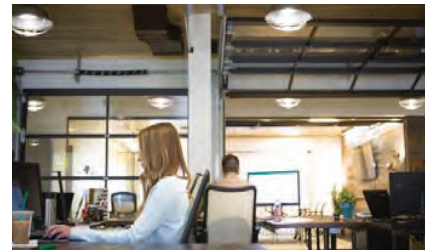
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No: ONE SIMPLE WORD FOR YOUR BEST RESEARCH RESULTS

By Julia Eisenberg
Vice President, Insights
iModerate, a Division of 20|20 Research



Do you ever grocery shop without a list? A list-free trip often seems easy and even liberating. It can feel like a waste of time and brainpower to write down everything you need. That was my point of view until recently. It wasn't until a fed-up family member demanded I start making grocery lists that I realized how much more I was spending and how futile my unplanned aspirational purchases were. Dragon fruit, really? Two pounds of chia seeds? Nice try! Not only was I swimming in unused kumquats but I was so excited about my exotic purchases that I was forgetting many of the staples I truly needed. I was complicating my own life. Why? Because I wasn't taking time to plan.

Whether it's grocery shopping or designing consumer research, more can feel like more. But I've found that more is usually the enemy of efficiency and clarity. The research we design has higher stakes and a bigger budget than a weekly shopping trip, so we must prioritize intentional purchases fueled by clearly articulated objectives. Without planning and forethought, we're left with overripe piles of unused and unnecessary data. We can do better – we must. It all starts with understanding the value of saying no.

As an industry, where do we typically make the wrong turns that lead us into the trap of saying yes to too much? In the past, fielding a study was a manual, time-consuming process with milestones

measured in weeks or even months. A study 20 years ago felt more like a long journey than a quick trip, so researchers wisely packed these studies full of objectives because we had the luxury of time on our side. However, the world of research has changed, largely due to innovations in digital methods and approaches, opening a new paradigm of fast, iterative studies.

Trouble breaking habits

We're still having trouble breaking the habits of the past and learning to adapt to this new, leaner research world. We analyzed 495 responses to the question in the Quirk's survey of what defines poor-quality results. Using a combination of text analytics and human smarts to make sense of the data, we identified a few key

themes. First and foremost, we heard loud and clear that issues with respondents and sample quality are constant offenders. It's no secret these two topics can be touchy and we could write volumes on them alone. But since this article requires brevity, I'll put these offending topics to the side. Beyond sample and respondent quality, we saw some compelling concepts dominate the conversation. Saying yes too much tends to deliver bloated studies that fall short in three common areas: poorly-defined objectives; obvious errors; and meaningless results. (figure 1)

Poorly-defined objectives. Bad data has some obvious origins – poorly-written surveys, biased (or unclear) questions and incorrect survey logic or probes. While we may question methodologies in hindsight, overwhelmingly we heard that poorly-defined objectives are to blame for substandard results and the worthless conclusions to which they lead. To correct this, it's critical to get to the root of how and why objectives are poorly-defined. The list is long but three research sins tend to be the main culprits.

- Trying to fit 10 pounds of objectives into a 5-pound sack. Cramming many goals into one study overcrowds it and dilutes its meaning and purpose. While there is no such thing as an absolute right number of objectives, a good rule of thumb is to pay attention to prime numbers. Two or three objectives usually translate to a nicely-focused approach. Five should throw a red flag – is each objective truly necessary? Anything beyond five should

be evaluated and split up into separate endeavors.

- Apathy. Feeling overworked and overwhelmed with a boring study (we've all had them!) can lead to design apathy. It seems good enough, so we approve the objectives and move on. We say yes when we should say, "No, it's not there yet." It can be painful to dedicate energy to the design phase but it is critical in making the exercise worth your time and money. To combat this, consider reverse-engineering the design. Start by defining what a successful outcome will look like, then craft your objectives to produce that outcome.
- Tagalong objectives. These additions can really throw a study into a tailspin. They seem harmless and small – just one or two extra initiatives slipped in at the last minute to please a random outside request. Again, this is the time to say no. Tagalong objectives draw focus and end up getting more air time than the main objectives the study was meant to focus on in the first place.

Obvious errors. There is no worse feeling than spotting an error within minutes of receiving a final report or clean data. It instantly zaps confidence in all the results. Sadly, there is an often missed yet critical step that reduces the risk of errors in end results: quality control. Many don't take the time to inquire about and pressure-test the quality-control process. This is as important as verifying that study objectives are universally understood. Clients should feel as comfortable in their partners' quality-control process as they do with every other aspect of the research methodology.

figure 1

How do you define poor-quality data?

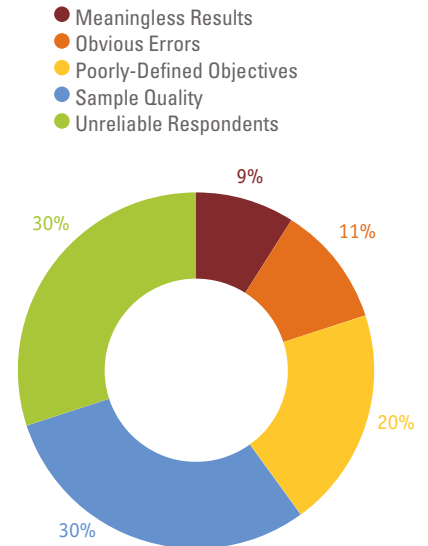
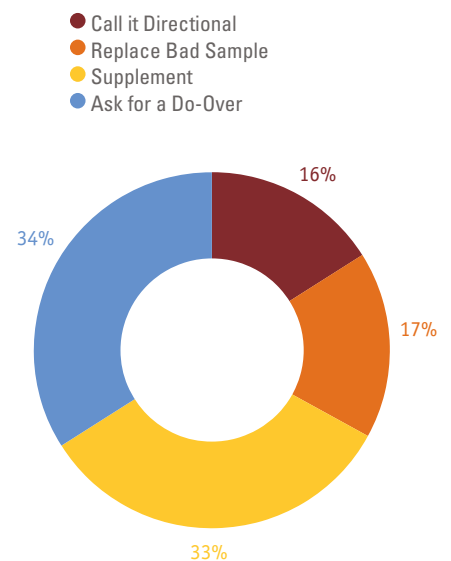


figure 2

What do you do when the results of your research are not the quality you'd hoped for?



Meaningless results. For anyone who depends on research to drive growth inside their business, meaningless results add insult to injury. There is nothing more frustrating than a study that provides nothing new, makes no logical sense and doesn't answer any questions. Expecting correct results that add value to a brand's direction and bottom line seems like a simple wish. What often goes wrong is clients and vendors engage in a courtesy showdown in the sunny, early stages of research. With all the promise of a new study stretching out ahead of us, we may neglect to ask the tough but necessary questions. What happens if the results are worthless? What if our results are too good to be true? We must be respectful and direct – and conscientious and clear about our expectations.

Not the quality you'd hoped for

What do you do when the results of your research are not the quality you'd hoped for? (figure 2) The Quirk's survey provided 475 detailed, animated responses to this question and it's clear most have experience with this tough situation. It happens. It's awful but we've all found ourselves wishing we'd been firmer and said no sooner. We looked at the responses using a combination of machine analytics and human analysis and found that when faced with this challenge, there are a few key things we fall back on in order to move forward:

- **Ask for a do-over.** Ask the vendor/supplier to rework the issues, to fix mistakes and blatant problems. Many will give partners a shot at this but few plan to do business with them again in the future.

- **Supplement.** When out of time and additional budget, respondents say they will use secondary or past research to augment the bad research. Some may add qualitative research to help the situation or just vow to not use the same methodology again.
- **Replace bad sample.** Rather than start from scratch, many will first ask providers to clean or eliminate inappropriate sample and/or send out a new (and more representative) sample, replacing poor respondents with quality ones.
- **Call it directional and salvage what you can.** Without time to re-run a study, researchers will often try to turn lemons into lemonade to avoid a total loss. They will take whatever insights are appropriate and try to glean something from the research. Many will add caveats to their findings, treating the research as directional instead of quantitative, statistically significant or representative.

As with setting objectives and planning a project, open, direct communication and a dialogue focused on solutions gives the best chance of salvaging poor-quality results.

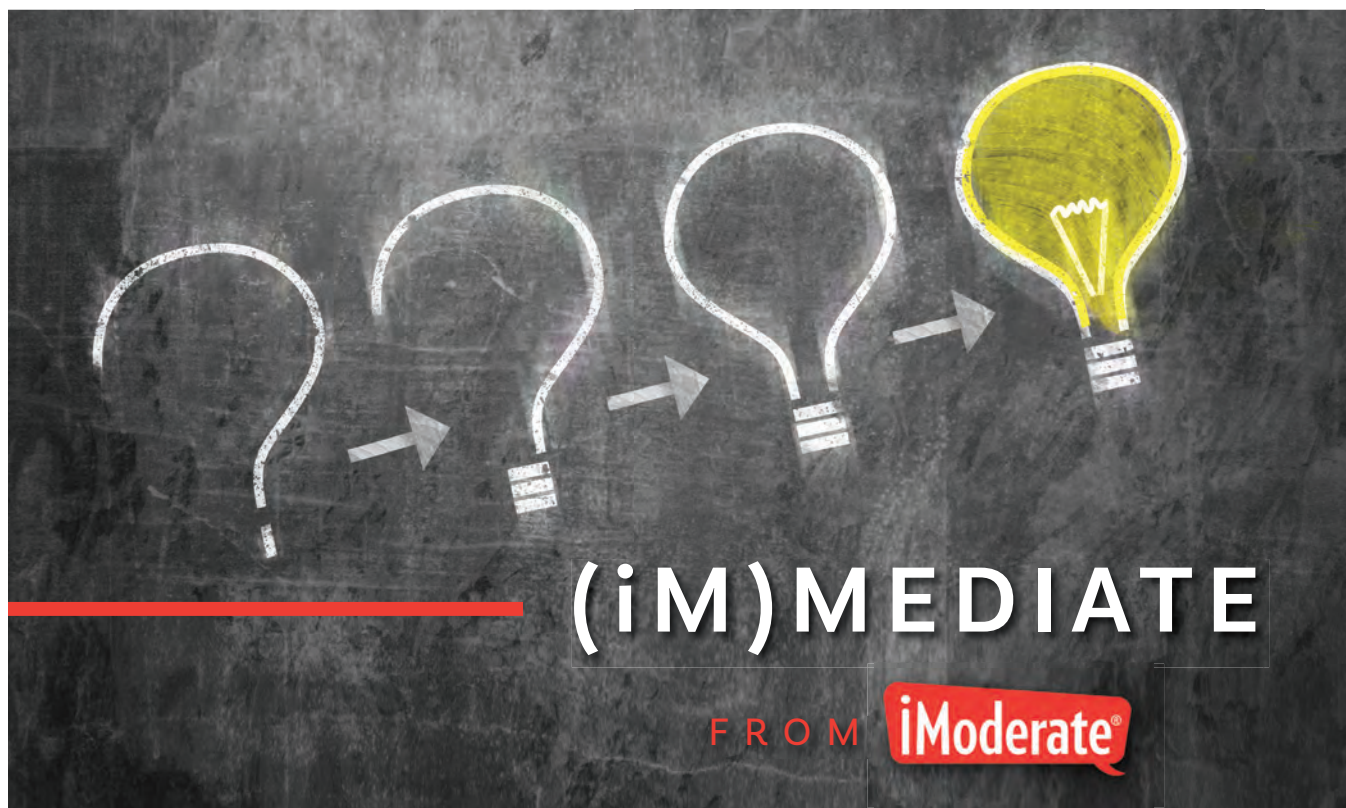
Clearer, simpler and more actionable

When we as researchers are disciplined in our project design and don't throw everything and the kitchen sink into a study, the results we receive are clearer, simpler and more actionable. We should never have to waste energy on disappointing results. Adding even a dash of rigor and discipline to one's process and infusing it into how we hold vendors and suppliers

accountable can make a world of difference. To summarize:

- **Reduce.** Take a red pen to excessive objectives. Two to three should always be the goal – be critical of anything more.
- **Care.** Hold yourself, your team and your partners accountable to giving a hoot about the purpose of your research. Great work never comes from apathetic design.
- **Protect.** Guard the integrity of your work and don't let others add unrelated objectives that could draw focus from your main purpose.
- **Quality-control.** Value the quality-control process as much as the objectives and methodology. Vet it early and often.
- **Be honest.** Never be shy to ask the tough questions up front – better to proactively discuss issues (and plan to avoid them) than to be so courteous you're left with a big pile of useless results.

Adding these layers of clarity and accountability to your research will help avoid and eliminate the pitfalls of poor-quality design. “No” can be empowering and transformational when used to plan with intention. If you need me, you'll find me at the grocery store trying to say no to a bushel of quince. **Q**



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Online qualitative: INNOVATIVE AND MAINSTREAM?

By Monika Wingate
Co-Founder and CEO
Digsite



Online qualitative has solidified its value among the majority of today's researchers.

In fact, more than two-thirds of researchers believe that online qualitative is effective, according to the 2017 Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report survey. And, while usage has increased, many believe that online qualitative research has the potential to play a bigger role in their overall research plans, particularly with the rapid pace of business today.

To learn more about when and how online qualitative is most effective, Digsite partnered with the A.C. Nielsen Center for Marketing Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to build a one-week insight community among 27 market research decision makers. The supplementary research that follows explores how online

qualitative fits into the daily lives of market researchers and which technologies are seen as most relevant to their current needs.

Vital to filling the gaps

Researchers started by discussing how qualitative research was being used in their organizations and where they saw it going. They then voted on each other's comments to see which perspectives best reflected the group's beliefs overall. Researchers universally agreed that qualitative research is vital to filling the gaps left by surveys and big data. The movement to faster, nimbler and more economical online qualitative methods also emerged as important to the majority of participants. (see sidebar p. 35 for more comments)

To get a better understanding of when and how researchers choose a qualitative research

method, researchers described their experiences with their favorite method and shared a new or different approach they had recently tried.

We found that researchers used online approaches for both quick-turnaround projects and more longitudinal or iterative engagement. They also used online qualitative to help connect with a broader audience as well as very specific, hard-to-find audiences. In-person research played a valuable role for some specific audiences, types of observation and highly confidential stimulus. (see sidebar p. 36)

More economical approaches

What could be done to increase the usage of qualitative research? Researchers were most interested in having more confidence in the accuracy of qualitative research

as well as having more economical (often online) approaches, according to the study.

To address these issues, some researchers indicated they tried new hybrid approaches that incorporate qualitative with surveys. However, these researchers still felt they were trading off quality of engagement for broader sample representation.

Other researchers mentioned achieving greater accuracy by collecting deeper insights from a targeted group of individuals. They rejected the notion that larger sample sizes improve the accuracy of qualitative research, focusing more on the quality of participants and level of engagement.

Integration of new technologies

Many researchers mentioned that artificial intelligence and machine learning will influence and improve qualitative research. Several also mentioned believing that the integration of big data with qualitative data, particularly as it related to the personalization of advertising/messaging, will help organizations become more effective. They also saw promise around the integration of new technologies that can measure emotion. (see box below)

Is the rate of technology adoption a factor in online qualitative adoption? According to the Quirk's survey, more than 60 percent of the respondents said their organizations are among the

How do you see qualitative research changing in the next few years?

"I think in-the-moment qual/quant research will continue to increase and become easier to conduct and analyze better on better tools/phone apps, etc. Capturing consumers as they make decisions to truly understand what impacts their choices."

"I think extracting sentiment and emotion will continue to grow in popularity in terms of what qualitative research provides."



"I also think we'll see a pushback on big data. I'm already starting to hear people advise companies that more data does not equal more insight."

"Online communities that encourage participants to present their own opinions and then also acknowledge the opinions of others (agreement or disagreement) is an extremely effective way to get the most result for your effort."



"I have heard quite a bit about artificial intelligence and machine learning and wonder how that might change the process of developing insights."

"Smaller, faster-to-set-up communities will also continue to grow. I do think the greatest changes/improvements will be behind the scene for clients (tools to make video capture, data analysis, reporting easier)."



The following comments garnered the most agreement among participants:

 22 vs  0



Qualitative research is helping us to gather deeper information about the customers that quantitative data cannot provide. We are learning about priorities, perspectives, opinions, experiences and changing attitudes of our customers and we can see how these factors influence behavior.

 19 vs  0

The team certainly cites all of the numbers from the quant study to justify key decisions being made, but it is the qual that has generated the stories, situations and lives of our consumers that are often discussed in meetings.

 15 vs  3

During the past years, qualitative research has started to change: smaller projects, shorter timelines.

 14 vs  5

The entire research industry is changing primarily because of three things, I'd say - agile, big data, and mobile.

 14 vs  7

We are beginning to use online tools for qualitative more than offline given the ability to have more geographic dispersion, speed and cost.

late majority or laggards to adopt new research technology. (figure 1)

This hesitancy creates additional challenges for researchers. Without access to the most advanced tools, their jobs become much harder and their research becomes less impactful.

Researchers in companies that fell into the late majority and laggard categories had a

When does your favorite or new approach work best?

Online qualitative is best for...

- Audiences who have less time to give and are harder to schedule
- Super quick turnaround projects at a low cost
- Collecting a larger number of responses, dispersed across a wider geography
- Having participants spend more time with some media or content
- Exploring broader questions/multiple topics
- Capturing in-context learning across several days/weeks

In-person qualitative is best for...

- Observing or sharing stimuli that need more hands-on evaluation
- Making observations in their environment that aren't easily captured via photo/video
- Certain audiences where online engagement is low
- Sharing confidential materials where the image file needed to be destroyed

much broader list of challenges than those in more forward-thinking companies. They tended to have difficulty reacting to their organization's need for speed. At the same time, the lack of interest in the fundamental tools they have relied on to conduct research along with the shift to more self-service survey platforms was a key source of frustration. (figure 1)

On the other hand, researchers whose companies were innovators, early adopters or were in the early majority said they've shifted their focus to getting vendors and internal teams to move faster and become more agile. They are also looking to broaden their team's perspective on qualitative and mixed method research.

Improve accuracy, drive costs down

A majority of today's researchers understand the importance of qualitative research and how new digital solutions can help improve

the accuracy of data while driving research costs down.

There's just one problem. Not all of their organizations are on board with that sentiment just yet. At the same time, more nimble companies are experiencing explosive growth through rapid iteration, testing and development – stealing market share by anticipating a torrent of issues and challenges that can be identified through more iterative insights.

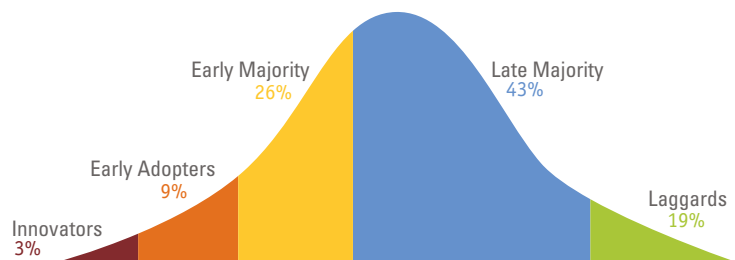
The right approach seems obvious but adoption is still lagging.

If businesses want to better service their customers and increase their bottom lines, they need to evolve their qualitative research approaches to better synch up with today's increasingly digital consumer. It is really that simple.

Otherwise, they'll fall behind their competitors who understand the importance of leveraging online qualitative tools to better inform their decisions. **Q**

figure 1

Adoption of research technology among corporate research companies

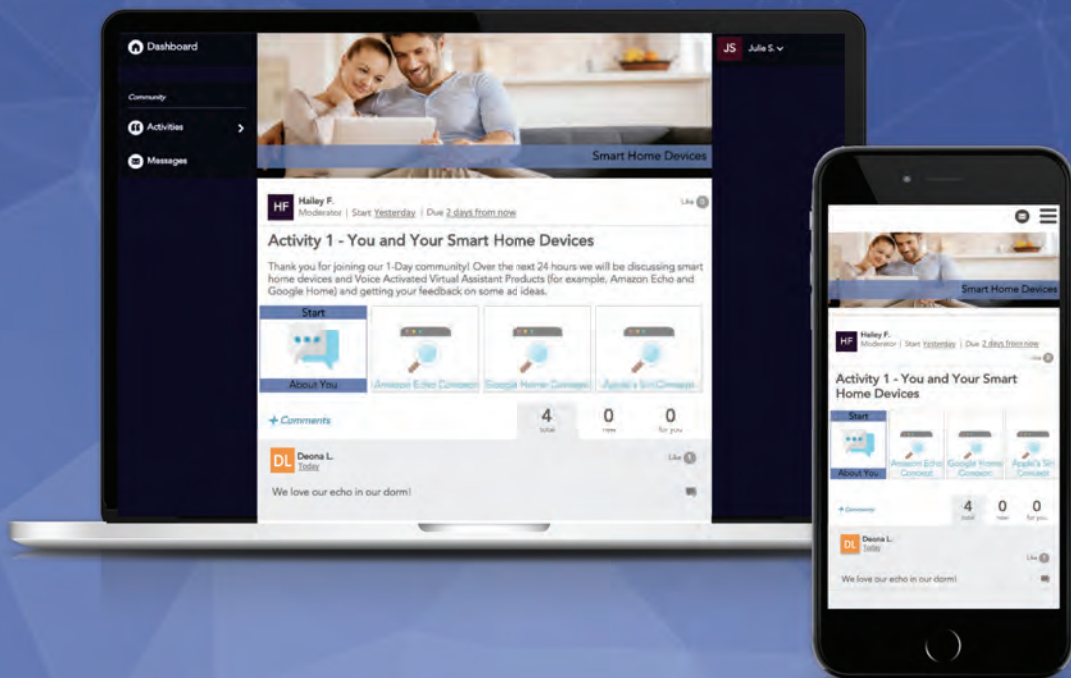


Common frustrations among innovators

Vendors refusing to grow with us – in terms of capabilities and reports. Doing what worked five years ago is not what is needed today. Agility and change are key.

Common frustrations among laggards

The expansion of DIY research where people do not understand the intricacies of research; the lack of appreciation for the rigor and thought that research professionals bring.



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Maintaining quality in online data

By Adam Weinstein
Co-CEO
Full Circle Research



With Collaborator John Woelfel, Ph.D.
President
Woelfel Research

A cornerstone component of marketing research is high-quality data. When asked what factors were important to choosing a new research methodology, 95 percent of those surveyed in the 2017 Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report said quality data was "extremely important" (70 percent) or "very important" (25 percent). According to this same study, online research is meeting this expectation. In fact, more than nine out of 10 respondents (92 percent) said that online surveys are "very effective" (27 percent) or "effective" (65 percent) in "providing quality data and insights."

This is good news for our entire industry but it does not mean that we can rest on our laurels. Understanding the components of quality data, as well as strategies

to ensure it, help us continue this positive trajectory.

Identify the main components

Respondents to Quirk's survey were asked, "How do you define poor-quality data?" The results can be used to identify some of the main components of high-quality data. In looking through the comments, three areas stood out as impacting survey quality: sample composition, survey responses and questionnaire content.

Sample composition. When describing contributors to bad quality, respondents said things such as, "small number of actual target market responses;" "sample is highly skewed toward one end of the demographic spectrum;" and "unrepresentative sample, lack of adequate sample size." Eliminating these issues boils down to selecting

a large enough sample of the study's target audience. Another challenge raised was duplicate respondents. One simple answer here is employing the right verification tool.

Survey responses. The respondents consistently pointed out five aspects of survey responses that compromise data quality:

- inconsistent responses;
- speeding through the survey;
- poor-quality open-end responses;
- high levels of missing data; and
- straightline responses.

The reality is that the responsibility to deliver quality data falls on more than one role. Programming houses, validation/verification providers, data collectors and research clients are active participants in the pursuit of quality responses and must work together to achieve positive

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outcomes. This holistic approach covers everything from advanced digital fingerprinting to limiting a survey's length and more.

Questionnaire. Poorly-crafted questionnaires will yield lower-quality data. Similarly, poorly-programmed questionnaires may impact data quality. We recommend reading articles by reputable full-service agencies and programming houses that address this subject to learn more.

Differentiate between quality and fraud

Before outlining a variety of proven strategies to increase and protect data quality, we feel it is pertinent to discern how we differentiate between quality and fraud regarding online research.

Quality refers to the overall throw-out rate (ideally a low percentage), while fraud refers to the suspect data within that group which is thrown out (a low percentage is also ideal). Respondents responsible for suspect data often speed through surveys, straightline, deliver poor open-end answers and more.

As sample providers, we can employ a variety of proven strategies to lower the incidence of fraud, even below accepted levels, thereby increasing quality. Here are four strategies worth considering:

1. Evolved sampling strategy

A provider's sampling technique is as vital as fraud checks when it comes to collecting consistent, balanced data. Our recommendation is to employ stratification across your sample to mimic census percentages. This can be done regardless of a respondents' platform, device, browser or even pixel size and should be

implemented prior to the start of the survey.

Stratification ensures that if, for example, the U.S. is comprised of 51 percent females, the data set won't reflect 70 percent. Note that proper sample management techniques require consistency in sampling. The result is data that is not skewed, a true aggregate view of the market or audience being targeted.

2. Data-quality scoring system

Engagement levels greatly affect the percentage of suspect data collected. Respondents who have mentally checked out or are providing dummy answers only to earn incentives can cost companies on the back end. Scoring respondents prior to the start of a survey can help lessen the likelihood of fraud.

This type of engagement check can remove potentially low-quality respondents in real time, which ensures that they are attentive and providing quality opinions. It can also verify that each respondent's profile and demographic information is up-to-date, which protects the census-balancing mentioned above.

3. Holistic security

Today's technology is advancing even as it is being implemented. Concurrently, even as solutions are being employed, security is being challenged by those wanting to break in. To successfully maintain data quality, a shared strategy is a worthwhile investment. Marketing researchers should invest in high-quality IT defenses, consistently testing and updating their systems. Clients should review data results in real time to catch suspect activity. Validation/verification

companies should adjust their platforms to protect against any obvious breaches. Staying in front of security concerns is the only way to ensure that researchers stay in control of the data being collected.

4. Consultative relationships

A consultative business model (vs. a traditional customer service model) can be a quality asset. These partnerships allow sample providers to function as extensions of their clients' teams. Data collectors intimate with their clients' internal processes, pitfalls, RFP win/loss rates and budgetary needs offer concrete value. Providers able to anticipate challenges and understand feasibility help everyone win more business.

That said, a consultative business approach hinges upon the business acumen of the providers involved. Responses to Quirk's survey question, "Which areas of marketing research are you most frustrated with and why?" include:

- "... market researchers usually lack business acumen to make meaningful recommendations,"
- "(vendors) hiring salespeople who don't understand data quality, sampling or weighting,"
- "vendors who are not ... able to translate results to address business questions."

Partnering with experienced researchers who also possess business intelligence makes all the difference.

The points listed above were meant to incite more dialogue about quality in the online space. To continue the conversation, please contact Adam Weinstein at adamw@ilovefullcircle.com or 301-762-1972. **Q**



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What are the drivers of MR technique choice?

By Brett Watkins
President/CEO
L&E Research



We all want to make effective use of our resources to answer our business questions. To that end, the Quirk's Corporate Researcher Report survey asked about the effectiveness of a number of different traditional and newer techniques (you can see the list in the tables provided) widely available in the marketplace. We will see that as an industry, we have good tools – but our understanding of many tools is lacking. Also lacking is a thorough way to evaluate all the tools.

And the winner of most effective technique is ... online surveys. Several other traditional techniques are also viewed as highly effective – in-person interviewing, focus groups and in-person ethnography all scored 80 percent or higher based on top two-box effectiveness (which bodes well for this survey in and of itself). (figure 1) However, paper surveys didn't fare very well in this competition (37 percent top two-box) and telephone interviewing

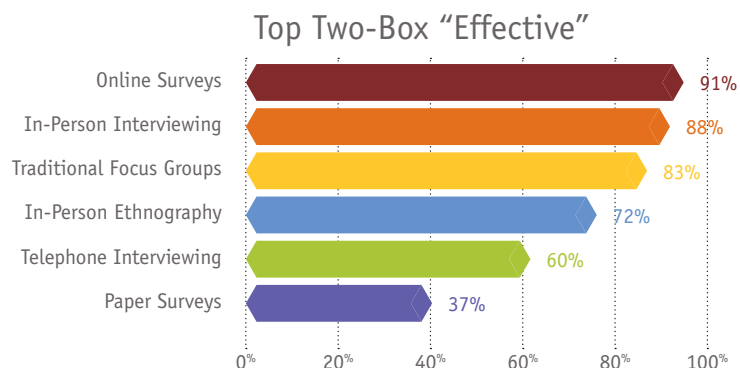
did a bit better (60 percent top two-box).

While much of the focus of industry publications and blogs has been on newer techniques, the methods that have served our industry well for many years continue to do so. Most all of us are comfortable in what these methods do and what they don't do – making the application of these tools appropriate to the task and the outcome easy to interpret and apply.

So now let's turn our attention to the newer techniques. Generally, these were not seen as effective as the traditional techniques – but not really seen as ineffective either (more on that in a minute). The newer techniques deemed more effective can be described as a new channel for our traditional methodologies. Online qualitative/focus groups, mobile-specific surveys, mobile qualitative and mobile ethnography all were rated relatively high among the

figure 1

Effectiveness of traditional methods at providing quality data and insight



newer techniques. (figure 2) These new channels help expand the applications by providing the ability to address a wider set of use cases and sometimes more efficient application of the traditional methods.

Also seen as effective by at least a plurality were social media research and text analytics. We have seen relatively wide adoption of both of these closely-related techniques. The use cases are broadening as the tools continue improving their ability to understand the nuances of language and data-quality issues are resolved. Not long ago, these tools were basically the purview of sentiment and crisis management. Today the applications include brand tracking, product development, customer experience and many others.

While the traditional methods are seen as more effective than the newer techniques, the newer techniques are not seen as more ineffective. With the exception of paper surveys, most all of the techniques, either traditional or newer, had a similar number of people (1-2 percent) rating them very ineffective. The difference really lies in the number of people who are unsure of how effective the newer methodologies really are.

Biometrics, neuromarketing, facial coding, gamification, crowdsourcing, predictive markets and mobile ethnography all had at least half of the researchers saying that they weren't sure whether the methods were effective or not. (figure 3) We do know that these techniques have great applications for certain use cases and all are proven to a meaningful degree. But the comfort level, knowledge of the technique and/or understanding of

figure 2

Effectiveness of newer methods at providing quality data and insight

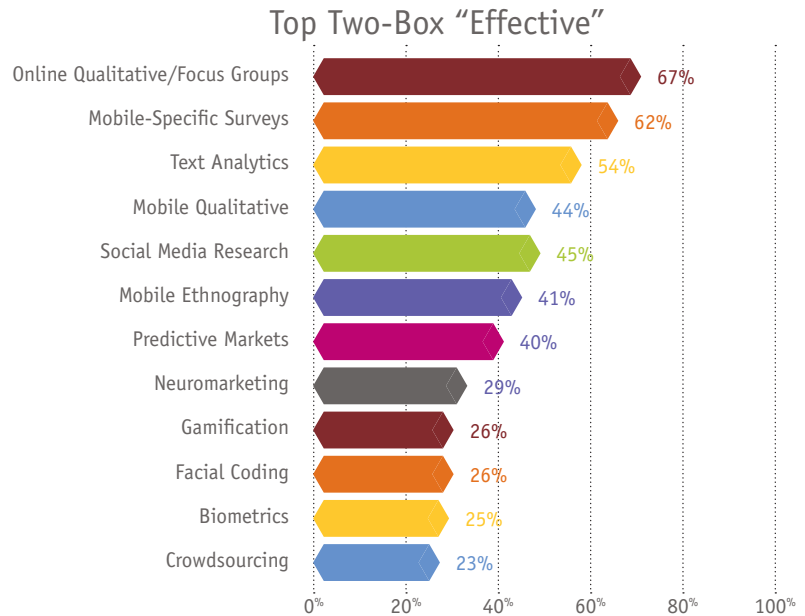
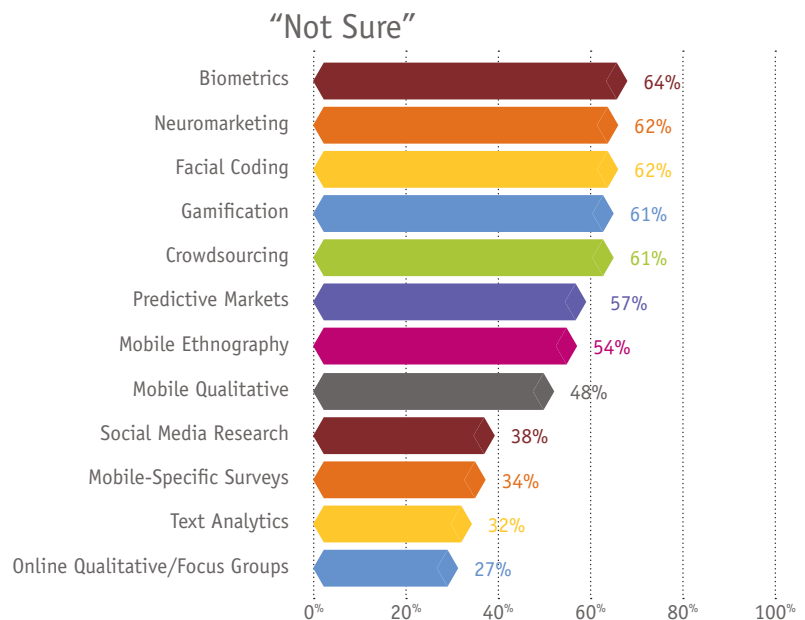


figure 3

Effectiveness of newer methods at providing quality data and insight



the appropriate use cases is lacking among many corporate researchers and many supplier-side researchers. The sheer volume of researchers who are unsure of the effectiveness makes this an important issue as both technology and our industry move forward.

To get a better understanding of researchers evaluating and piloting new methodologies, an open-ended question probed further. The reasons new methods are piloted are exactly what you might think – researchers are looking for better knowledge to solve the business problem and for cost savings and time savings. In a nutshell: better, faster, cheaper.

Ideally, we would all have 100-percent awareness of the tools and their applications but that

is a difficult, if not impossible, hurdle to overcome. If you don't have the budget or manpower to focus on the best applications of the current tools, there are still ways to improve your ability to evaluate for the use cases you are facing. There are firms out there that are agnostic as to the tools or techniques and have a good understanding of many of them – the “trusted advisor” model. At L&E Research, we invested in this philosophy, offering trusted advisors at the start of every project, with technology partners offering the latest technology in qualitative research to support any need. Why? Well, we believe in marketing research and asking our clients what they want – don't you?

Knowing the right applications

Certainly, there are barriers, as there is with anything new: risk, procurement and compliance all are perceived to be impediments to trial – especially in regulated industries. But it's not just this – our internal clients may also be risk-averse and simply want to do what they have always done to answer a particular question. If we are able to either be better at understanding all the tools or knowing the right applications for them, hopefully the “unsure” will change. And maybe the effectiveness of all these tools – and consequently, our impact on our companies and our customers – will be like “online surveys” and not “paper surveys.” **Q**



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Incorporating big data for a more complete view of consumers

By Keith Johnson
Chief Product Officer
GutCheck



Our world has been quickly changing and is only going to continue to as technology evolves. By 2021 we'll have as many as 46 billion connected devices thanks to the Internet of Things. With more interconnected devices comes more data.

In 2010 the influx of information as a result of the Internet came to be known as big data. Big data plays a key role in many technologies. Take artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation for example. Each of these tools exploits big data in some form or another. And while these tools have been in existence in various forms for some time, big data provides the means for them to reach their full potential. We can now incorporate the large amounts of information necessary to truly learn and act in meaningful ways. While big data influences several

industries and technologies, it has a significant impact on one industry in particular – marketing research.

Big data encompasses extremely large data sets that may be analyzed computationally to reveal patterns, trends and associations often relating to human behavior. Therefore, by definition, big data is a part of marketing research – which is the action or activity of gathering information about consumers' needs and preferences. Besides this, why should marketing researchers care? Some of the most common frustrations with research today center around the fact that it's too slow, too expensive and can take too many iterations to get to the right depth of information to truly understand consumer behavior and take action. When big data is part of a researcher's toolkit, it provides a unique opportunity for researchers to reduce costs,

timelines and complexity when it comes to conducting research. The more data we have, the better we understand consumer behavior. This means we can ask fewer questions to get to the answer. Further, it provides the means to gain deeper consumer understanding and develop richer consumer profiles. If you're in the business of marketing research, my advice is to get on board with utilizing big data or risk getting left behind.

Making big data actionable

There are several complexities when it comes to making big data actionable. Let's start by defining the four V's of big data: volume, variety, velocity and veracity. Volume is the amount of data currently available. Variety is the different types of data or sources, such as point-of-sale data, browser

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feedback & actionable answers

Stay Connected
to your consumers globally

Find the Expertise
you want & the support you need

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history and purchase data. Velocity is the speed at which the data is collected and then accessible. And finally, veracity is the quality or accuracy of it. If we analyze the four V's based on which ones are the most vetted, volume and variety score the highest. We have more data than we even know what to do with coming from a wide variety of sources. Velocity scores in the middle as our access to real-time consumer data becomes more commonplace. But scoring the lowest, and requiring the most effort when it comes to using big data, is veracity.

The biggest challenge with big data is having too much data, making it difficult to establish veracity. For many of our clients, the data is coming at them from too many sources, too quickly for them to understand what data is accurate and relevant to their business. The risk of making a strategic decision on bad data is high. In fact, in a survey of 300 enterprise organizations conducted by IDG Connect, 42 percent of them stated that their biggest challenge with using big data was the difficulty in extracting insights due to the amount of data. In a separate study put out by IBM and the Econsultancy, they found that just 3 percent of marketers would label their ability to act on insights as excellent, with 54 percent labeling it as poor or very poor. Simply put, data without insight is meaningless, and insights without action are useless. As a result, the research industry is faced with creating a means to discern the signal from the noise within data sets to create actionable insights.

While we understand that there are challenges with using big data, we also recognize there are

invaluable opportunities, especially given the frustrations with marketing research. The beauty of big data and marketing research is in the synthesis between the what and the why. Big data will be able to define the who, what, when, where and how, while marketing research will be able to answer the why and ultimately build an entire view of the consumer.

Focus on behaviors

Generating a more holistic view of consumers through big data also increases the quality of information gathered. For example, marketing researchers no longer have to rely on self-reported data from consumers and instead can focus on actual behaviors. Additionally, researchers won't have to ask as many questions and can reduce the impact of bias from both respondents and the questions themselves.

By pairing agile marketing research with big data, brands can gain a more unified view into the behaviors of consumers when it comes to a particular product or situation. This allows teams to identify consumer sentiment toward products before they launch and get a better understanding of what types of consumers are likely to be interested in the products, how they will feel about them and how to better connect with these consumers.

While it's still something new, incorporating big data into marketing research – particularly for products early in the product development life cycle – can have a huge impact on understanding new opportunities and optimizations. It will help marketing researchers, as well as product and marketing managers, differentiate between

what is and isn't important as they take on new initiatives and plan business objectives. Couple that with an agile research approach – which allows for faster and more focused movement throughout development – and you'll have supercharged marketing research.

Time and effort

Still, some feel big data is promising but not worth the time and effort to understand. To those critics, I recommend working with a partner you can trust to act as a guide on this journey. Interrogating and assessing the accuracy and validity of data isn't easy. That's why having a research partner with the tools to analyze and pull insights for you can be invaluable.

In addition to hearing this from our own clients, respondents shared similar frustrations in the 2017 Quirk's Corporate Researcher survey:

"Big data – very promising, managers don't understand it."

"Too much data not enough insights."

"Data without actionable insights."

"Data quality. Not reliable enough to make sound business decisions."

"Cost and turnaround time."

That's why we've pioneered agile market research to provide clients with actionable answers and confidence at the speed of their business; and we are continuing to craft new ways for our clients to think smarter and act faster. **Q**



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In a tech-driven world, quality and rigor still essential for insights industry

By Finn Raben
Director General
ESOMAR



An old business adage states, “Faster, better, cheaper – you can have any two of the three!”

Recently, speed has become an increasingly important determinant of business success, but we often forget about its impact on the other two elements.

This is true within the data, research and insights profession, where quality and rigor are core to the service or product delivery, which popular belief now considers antithetical to the modern-day demand of speed. This lies in the misconception that rigor and quality can only add time and cost to the process, not value.

Let’s look at a popular, simple arithmetic question: A bat and ball

cost \$1.10. The bat costs a dollar more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?

Many people respond quickly and confidently, insisting the ball costs 10 cents. This answer is both obvious and wrong. (The correct answer is 5 cents for the ball and \$1.05 for the bat.)

While philosophers, economists and social scientists have assumed for centuries that human beings are rational agents, people such as Daniel Kahneman, Amos Tversky and Shane Frederick (who developed the bat-and-ball quiz) demonstrated that we’re not nearly as rational as we like to believe.

When people face an uncertain situation, they don’t carefully

evaluate the information or look up relevant statistics (quality and rigor). Instead, their decisions depend on a long list of mental shortcuts, which lead them to make snap decisions. These shortcuts aren’t a faster way of doing the math but rather a way of avoiding the math altogether! Asked about the bat and the ball, we completely ignore our arithmetic lessons and instead default to the answer that requires the least mental effort.

Quality and rigor

The bat-and-ball quiz nicely encapsulates the clear need for quality and rigor in any assessment process. Two definitions that I like are:

- Quality is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution.
- Rigor is the quality of being thorough and careful.

These two fundamentals have been at the heart of research and insight industry codes, ISO standards and professional guidelines for over 70 years, providing the yardstick against which members of the research and insights profession voluntarily subject themselves to be measured (and in a worst case, disciplined).

As our environment – data, business, legal and ecological – evolves, so too must our paradigms. “Fit-for-purpose” must now be added as a core requirement – perhaps even the overarching requirement – which in our profession has resulted in dramatic changes to fundamental concepts such as consent to codes such as the ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Data Research and Insights and to the professional guidelines co-authored by associations all over the world.

In my opinion, one of the reasons that the popular definitions of quality and rigor have become somewhat devalued lies in the (seductive) belief that technology advances can absorb or replace the demands of quality and rigor, while simultaneously improving speed of response and results. However, I would argue that this is fool’s gold for four main reasons:

1. Technology, automation and machine learning will only work within pre-defined parameters.

How do you determine the parameters for data quality when you don’t know which data set is going to be most

When people face an uncertain situation, they don’t carefully evaluate the information or look up relevant statistics (quality and rigor). Instead, their decisions depend on a long list of mental shortcuts, which lead them to make snap decisions.

relevant? How do you determine representativeness to the business challenge when samples are no longer representative? How do you determine the relevance of question wording as language and communication channels change over time? Is a question used five years ago still relevant today?

A knowledge and understanding of these variables is the skill of the researcher. Reaching a definition of these parameters is the informed debate that must be held between the commissioning client and the provider: defining the business need, defining the most appropriate solution (and costs), conducting it to agreed standards and presenting it in a timely fashion. No amount of technology can provide this knowledge-based debate in an off-the-shelf solution. Google isn’t even that good! Remember that while Google took great credit in predicting Obama’s re-election in 2012, subsequent congressional elections were not accurately predicted, nor was the recent U.S. election in which Trump won.

Where does this leave DIY survey tools? Tools are ineffective unless you know how to use them! If you don’t know how to ride a

bicycle, it may still get you from A to B, but you will fall off repeatedly and be quite sore by the time you reach your destination.

An understanding of sampling, questionnaire-wording, target audience and the ultimate users of the data will allow you to use a DIY tool effectively. Without it, you may well be bloody and bowed before achieving the insights you require!

A cautionary tale: One company recently believed it could remove its entire research and insights function and replace it by giving the marketing team DIY research tool. Ten months later, the company was rehiring an insights team.

2. Technology cannot force change – only humans can.

Here, our profession must do better in recognizing and adopting the overarching principle of fit-for-purpose. For example, technology has now produced the most amazing handheld computers: mobile phones. Noting that mobile phones are now practically ubiquitous (and in many regions, the sole form of communication) why isn’t the default contact mechanism for citizens, consumers and participants the mobile phone? Why do we continually insist upon

*Just as a vet is not the same as a surgeon,
a marketer is not the same as a researcher.*

using increasingly outdated forms of contact?

Quality and rigor (not to mention engagement) will be substantially improved by using current and popular forms of contact and communication, rather than forcing people to utilize more outdated – and possibly less accessible – methods.

3. Projects are no longer singular.

Due to the multiplicity and complexity of modern day communications, single-source or single-method surveys are finding it increasingly challenging to achieve comprehensive coverage of the target audience, or indeed the topic under review. Most projects these days combine several sources of data and use multiple communication channels. Quality and rigor demands vary across these sources and channels and need to be agreed upon in advance to meet the business requirements.

Perhaps the most interesting case here would be the U.K. election of 2015. While most measures indicated a very close Conservative vs. Labour contest, the result was an overwhelming victory for the Conservatives. Many observers of the research techniques deployed believed that there should have been much more of a brand measure included, as any work which looked at brand Conservative vs. brand Labour showed a significant preference

for Conservative – as the election proved.

4. We still need researcher interpretation.

Finally, the translation of research findings or insights into actionable business opportunities requires a comprehensive understanding of the mechanics of the business and the financial drivers. A business that is more dependent on just-in-time stock levels will have a very different marketing and consumer strategy than a business that heavily loads its delivery pipeline.

Such understanding can be better applied by humans than by machines, as humans can again make discretionary or counterintuitive decisions. This point may provoke some level of disagreement from dashboard suppliers, for example, but the fact of the matter is that those dashboards are usually templated and used by insights or marketing professionals to assist in their decision-making, not to replace it.

Not replaceable by technology

So where does this leave us, in the context of research? Marketing research is comprised of a set of skills and a body of knowledge that is not completely replaceable by technology. This is communicated, proven and upheld by an adherence to quality standards, rigor demands and legal obligations. These criteria

are constantly evolving to fit in our changing world.

Said in another way: Surgeons and veterinarians follow the same basic medical education but if you needed an open-heart operation, would you want a surgeon or a vet to do it? Just as a vet is not the same as a surgeon, a marketer is not the same as a researcher.

Enviably track record

The marketing research and insights profession has one of the most enviable self-regulation track records, supported by constantly evolving, peer-reviewed standards (both users and providers), and has never been responsible for an industry collapse as the financial sector has, despite its apparently strict regulation.

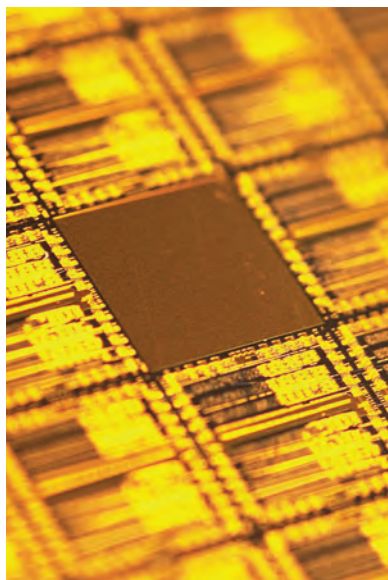
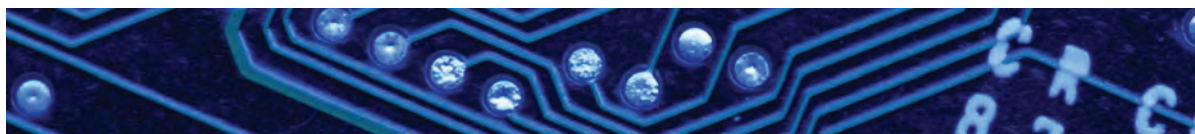
Good, fit-for-purpose research makes a difference for people, businesses and governments – none of which are planning to replace themselves with technology, so why should research?

It is very attractive to believe that a technology solution can replace a complex knowledge, value and quality profession. But if that seems too good to be true, then it probably is. **Q**



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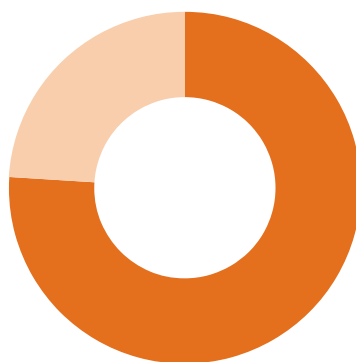


esomar.org/bigdataworld

RESEARCHERS STILL FINDING fair compensation, job satisfaction

The 2017 edition of the annual Quirk's corporate researcher salary survey received responses from a total of 861 full-time client-side insights professionals. Debuted at the height of the Great Recession, the ongoing study allows us to see the evolution of the client-side researchers' environment. In the past four years, we have seen a consistent trend in responses regarding overall job satisfaction, salary and compensation.

This year, instead of writing our traditional salary survey



article, we're letting the data speak for itself, with a few tidbits and respondent comments sprinkled throughout. If you'd like a more detailed look at the salary survey data (as well as supplier salary data), it is available online and is

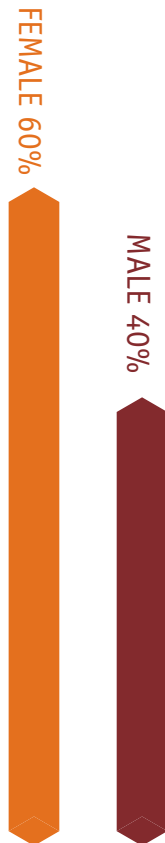
Our respondents overwhelmingly rated themselves **SOMEWHAT SATISFIED, SATISFIED or VERY SATISFIED** with their jobs:

76%

searchable by job title, location and more: www.quirks.com/tools/salary-survey

So where is the research industry today?

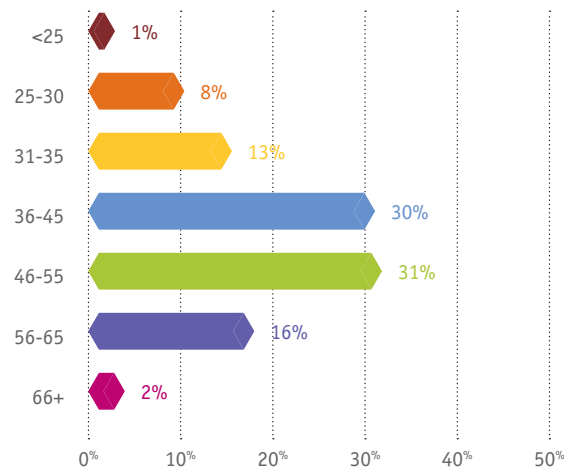
What is your gender?



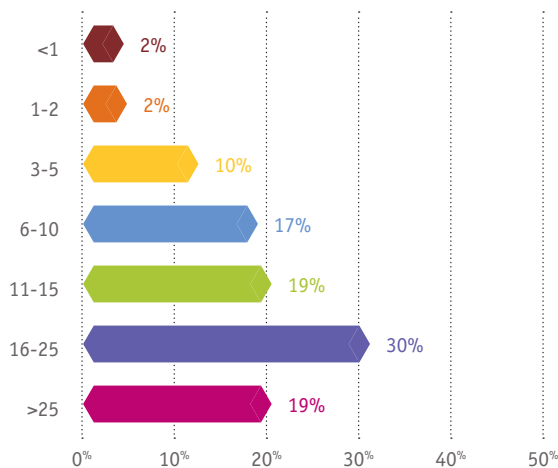
DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2016, we found a larger percentage of employed client-side respondents were women as compared to men, and made note to watch this trend. The 2017 survey showed a very similar breakdown. In both the 2016 and 2017 surveys, for those over age 66, men exceeded women, and for those under the age of 35, women exceeded men by more than 30 percent.

What is your age?

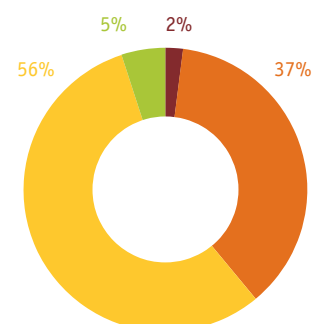


How many years of experience do you have in marketing research?



What is the highest level of education you have completed?

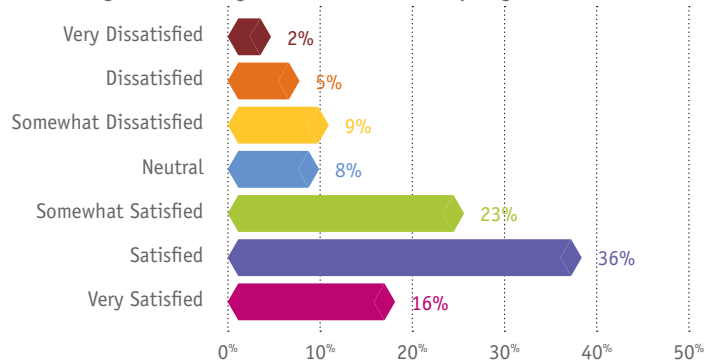
- High School Graduate
- College Graduate
- Masters Program Graduate
- Ph.D. Graduate



JOB SATISFACTION

While past surveys show that the research industry went through bouts of dissatisfaction in the workplace (2011, specifically), job satisfaction continues to be on par with our recent surveys. The 2017 data shows that about 76 percent reported that they are somewhat satisfied, satisfied or very satisfied with their current employment. As in previous years, we received several comments that highlighted the importance of non-monetary or non-traditional benefits on job satisfaction:

How satisfied are you with your current employment?



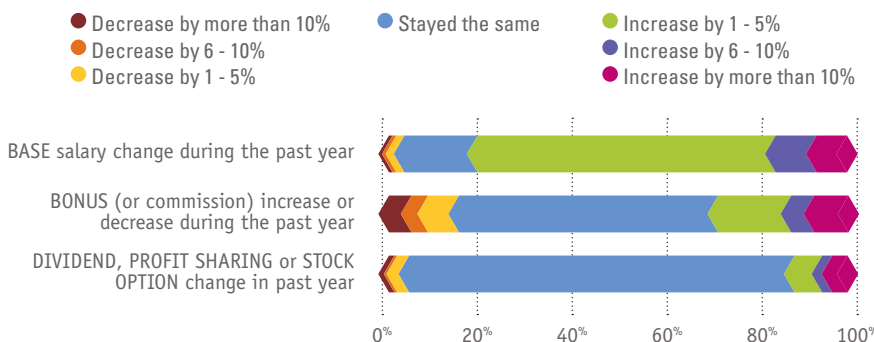
"We get a \$25 gift card to a local restaurant on our work anniversary and our birthday each year ... I have been with my company for 28 years."

"On-site gym, separate work phone, health care services, etc."

"Included free parking, as well as in-house fitness center and discount mobile service."

COMPENSATION

By what percent did your total compensation change in the following categories in the past year?



"I'm underpaid and I know it."

"I do feel the market has been very stagnant here in Australia. Pay raises esp. in the media industry have been scarce to none."

"I successfully made the case last year for a promotion and pay raise. Received a bump of \$10K. You have to ask!"

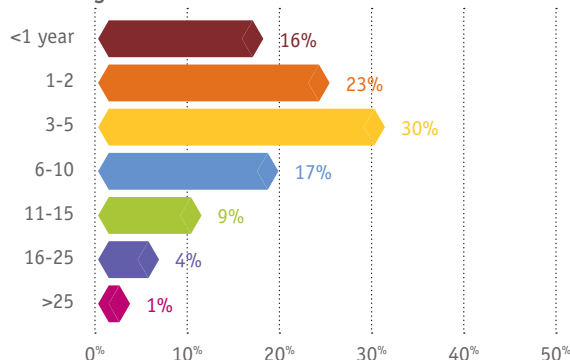
"My company finally came through on the promise to better level my base (salary) with (similar) roles in other companies."

"My salary is as much about my longevity as it is the organization valuing the position."

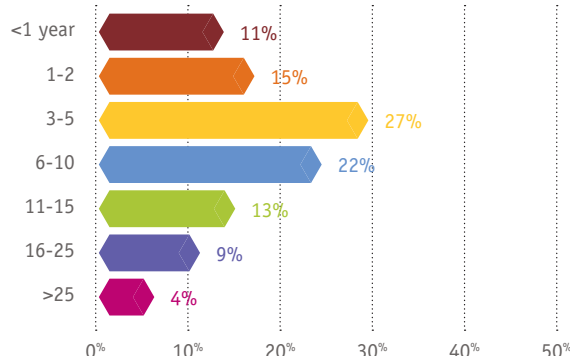
Less than 4 percent of respondents reported a decrease in base salary during the past year and approximately 81 percent saw an increase. As in previous years, we dug into the comments in the

compensation section. While some reported the disappointment of stagnant compensation, others shared their excitement of finally obtaining the rewards of years of hard work:

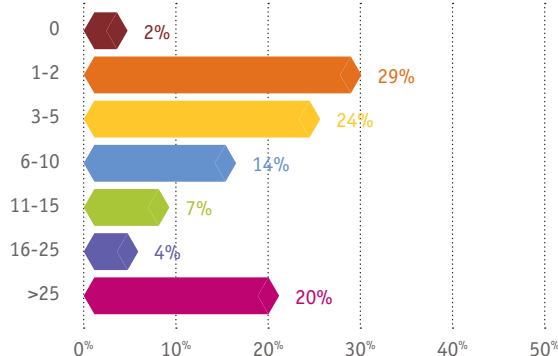
How many years have you been in your current job?



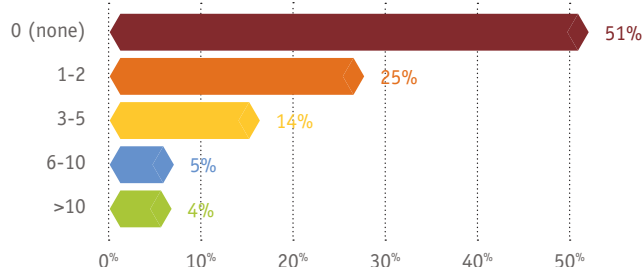
How many years have you been employed at your current company?



How many marketing research employees are there at your organization? (full-time equivalent)

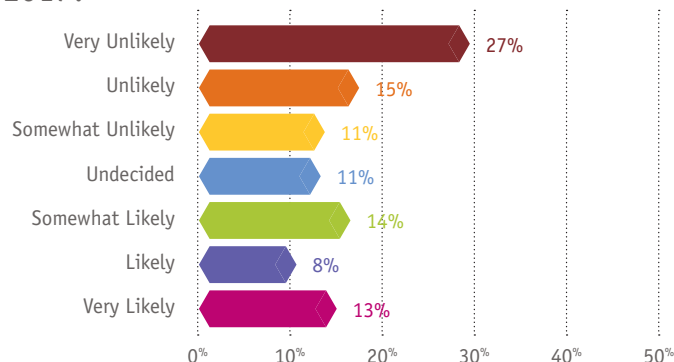


How many employees do you supervise?

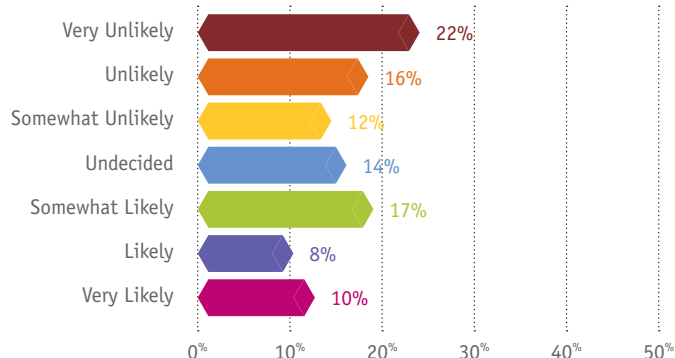


CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT

How likely is it that your company will hire additional market research employees in 2017?



How likely are you to seek employment at a different company this year?



While members of the research industry have gone through rashes of wanting to change jobs, they reminded us again this year that as the grass isn't always greener on the other side. Only 35 percent of respondents said they are somewhat likely, likely or very likely to look for work at another company this year. This should be good news to job seekers and employees alike, as 35 percent of respondents said it was somewhat likely, likely or very likely that their company would hire additional marketing research employees in 2017.

After nine years of collecting data, it's clear that corporate researchers are still finding employment options that provide fair compensation and job satisfaction.

The survey has so much more to offer than we can include in this report and we encourage you to dig deeper on your own.

Don't miss the opportunity to review a complete breakdown of compensation for all job titles, including crosstabs by age, gender, location and more.

Simply visit www.quirks.com/tools/salary-survey and start digging!

The following pages contain a few samples of the information you can pull up. **Q**

METHODOLOGY

The Corporate Researcher Report work life and salary survey was conducted online from June 5 to June 23 among pre-qualified corporate marketing research (client-side) subscribers of Quirk's. In total we received 861 usable qualified responses. An interval (margin of error) of 3.3 at the 95 percent confidence level was achieved. (Not all respondents answered all questions.)

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Compensation by Industry

Industry	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
Advertising/Public Relations	41	\$97,098	\$4,244	\$5,854	\$5,756	\$112,951
Agriculture	7	\$116,286	\$16,714	\$2,143	\$143	\$135,286
Automotive	14	\$121,857	\$18,286	\$10,714	\$4,500	\$155,357
Banking/Financial	69	\$115,072	\$19,449	\$6,841	\$2,014	\$143,377
Building Materials/Products	5	\$81,000	\$5,200	\$2,000	\$0	\$88,200
Computer Hardware/Software	10	\$107,800	\$9,600	\$7,800	\$400	\$125,600
Construction/Housing	7	\$91,857	\$8,429	\$6,143	\$286	\$106,714
Consulting	23	\$126,391	\$15,870	\$9,783	\$17,696	\$169,739
Consumer Goods	90	\$126,111	\$21,400	\$11,111	\$2,167	\$160,789
Education	26	\$81,000	\$3,923	\$1,462	\$4,385	\$90,769
Entertainment	18	\$161,444	\$50,556	\$41,500	\$3,389	\$256,889
Food/Beverage	36	\$104,639	\$15,000	\$2,083	\$1,278	\$123,000
Government	12	\$82,333	\$500	\$667	\$0	\$83,500
Health Care/Pharmaceuticals	101	\$122,644	\$15,851	\$11,178	\$950	\$150,624
Hospitality (hotels, restaurants, etc.)	11	\$95,000	\$5,727	\$1,545	\$0	\$102,273
Insurance	51	\$100,667	\$15,353	\$2,608	\$1,176	\$119,804
Manufacturing	52	\$115,288	\$17,173	\$4,385	\$5,308	\$142,154
Media/Publishing/Information	51	\$102,490	\$9,784	\$2,725	\$1,059	\$116,059
Non-Profits	35	\$99,629	\$4,886	\$143	\$943	\$105,600
Retail	31	\$103,710	\$5,968	\$6,871	\$7,935	\$124,484
Technology/IT/Web	62	\$134,097	\$14,774	\$21,871	\$2,984	\$173,726
Telecommunications	21	\$95,667	\$15,381	\$1,571	\$10,857	\$123,476
Transportation	8	\$92,125	\$5,500	\$3,875	\$1,375	\$102,875
Travel	8	\$96,250	\$3,250	\$9,250	\$1,375	\$110,125
Utilities/Energy	32	\$103,313	\$9,844	\$1,531	\$188	\$114,875
Other	37	\$104,189	\$9,973	\$12,459	\$7,243	\$133,865
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

Compensation by Annual Revenue

Annual revenue/sales of organization	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
< \$1 Million US dollars	20	\$96,650	\$6,100	\$17,350	\$19,400	\$139,500
\$1M - \$3M	26	\$98,192	\$9,462	\$5,385	\$3,731	\$116,769
\$3M - \$6M	18	\$104,389	\$13,000	\$7,722	\$1,000	\$126,111
\$6M - \$10M	18	\$96,111	\$8,111	\$3,444	\$2,167	\$109,833
\$10M - \$50M	86	\$95,395	\$9,174	\$6,012	\$1,244	\$111,826
\$50M - \$100M	37	\$84,784	\$5,027	\$568	\$2,811	\$93,189
\$100M - \$300M	66	\$98,697	\$7,015	\$3,803	\$439	\$109,955
\$300M - \$500M	49	\$118,633	\$10,694	\$4,469	\$4,408	\$138,204
\$500M - \$1 Billion	88	\$107,989	\$12,432	\$3,011	\$2,943	\$126,375
>\$1 Billion US dollars	406	\$126,278	\$19,608	\$11,672	\$3,539	\$161,099
Mean	814	\$113,679	\$14,453	\$8,231	\$3,310	\$139,673

*Bonus was defined as bonus or commission for 2016 in U.S. dollars.

*Dividends were defined as compensation in the form of dividends, stock options or profit sharing in U.S. dollars for 2016.

*Other was defined as annual value of other compensation (company car, health club membership, mobile phone etc.) in U.S. dollars.

Compensation by Job Title

Corporate Research Job Title	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
Owner/Partner	18	\$110,222	\$12,222	\$18,889	\$24,833	\$166,167
President/CEO/COO	6	\$117,833	\$26,833	\$71,833	\$12,000	\$228,500
Senior VP or Vice President	41	\$193,902	\$45,463	\$41,098	\$1,512	\$281,976
Market Research Director / Senior Dir.	194	\$139,711	\$20,536	\$9,124	\$4,943	\$174,314
Market Research Manager	231	\$110,143	\$11,407	\$5,762	\$2,385	\$129,697
Account Executive / Manager	2	\$62,000	\$38,000	\$5,500	\$6,000	\$111,500
Customer Insights Manager	89	\$108,213	\$10,056	\$3,528	\$1,180	\$122,978
Director of Marketing	6	\$111,000	\$21,833	\$10,000	\$2,667	\$145,500
Marketing Manager	16	\$86,125	\$2,500	\$8,875	\$125	\$97,625
Brand Manager or Product Manager	9	\$96,667	\$3,778	\$2,889	\$0	\$103,333
Communications Director / Manager	3	\$93,333	\$2,667	\$0	\$1,667	\$97,667
Project Manager	17	\$88,353	\$5,882	\$235	\$1,588	\$96,059
Business Development	6	\$69,833	\$28,333	\$167	\$333	\$98,667
Senior Research Analyst	91	\$84,143	\$6,055	\$1,835	\$956	\$92,989
Research Analyst	45	\$57,733	\$2,956	\$1,911	\$467	\$63,067
Business / Market Analyst	18	\$66,556	\$2,167	\$167	\$3,778	\$72,667
Statistician	5	\$121,200	\$9,400	\$36,200	\$3,200	\$170,000
Research Assistant	2	\$57,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$57,500
Sales / Account Representative	4	\$144,250	\$126,250	\$2,500	\$6,250	\$279,250
Administrator / Coordinator	3	\$53,333	\$1,333	\$0	\$0	\$54,667
Consultant	10	\$97,300	\$5,900	\$700	\$1,200	\$105,100
Other	42	\$98,333	\$10,738	\$9,524	\$6,024	\$124,619
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

Compensation by Region

Region in which located	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
North East (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	71	\$136,310	\$23,549	\$13,901	\$1,380	\$175,141
Mid Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)	119	\$125,092	\$13,874	\$5,395	\$5,571	\$149,933
East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	145	\$111,841	\$15,655	\$6,676	\$3,559	\$137,731
West North Central (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)	81	\$106,296	\$13,642	\$5,185	\$1,481	\$126,605
So. Atlantic (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)	145	\$104,800	\$11,007	\$6,490	\$1,779	\$124,076
East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)	10	\$115,000	\$11,200	\$0	\$0	\$126,200
West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)	36	\$108,667	\$19,083	\$15,472	\$889	\$144,111
Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY)	43	\$98,791	\$7,930	\$3,814	\$1,209	\$111,744
Pacific Coast (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)	124	\$131,492	\$15,234	\$11,210	\$5,411	\$163,347
Canada	25	\$71,320	\$9,280	\$13,320	\$1,920	\$95,840
Mexico	3	\$49,333	\$31,333	\$3,333	\$11,667	\$95,667
Central and South America	4	\$49,000	\$2,000	\$0	\$250	\$51,250
Eastern Europe	11	\$27,364	\$2,455	\$273	\$2,273	\$32,364
Western Europe	21	\$86,714	\$11,619	\$15,762	\$8,238	\$122,333
Asia	6	\$99,833	\$19,000	\$35,333	\$3,667	\$157,833
Middle East	3	\$85,667	\$7,000	\$3,333	\$8,333	\$104,333
Africa	3	\$39,667	\$5,667	\$0	\$0	\$45,333
Australia/New Zealand	8	\$80,750	\$3,375	\$125	\$375	\$84,625
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

*Bonus was defined as bonus or commission for 2016 in U.S. dollars.

*Dividends were defined as compensation in the form of dividends, stock options or profit sharing in U.S. dollars for 2016.

*Other was defined as annual value of other compensation (company car, health club membership, mobile phone etc.) in U.S. dollars.

Compensation by Gender

Gender	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
Male	346	\$118,702	\$18,046	\$10,370	\$3,055	\$150,173
Female	512	\$107,424	\$11,451	\$6,604	\$3,291	\$128,770
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

Compensation by Age

Age	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
< 25	5	\$54,600	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$55,200
25 - 30	70	\$66,971	\$3,857	\$1,271	\$400	\$72,500
31 - 35	115	\$91,609	\$8,983	\$4,487	\$3,348	\$108,426
36 - 45	258	\$111,709	\$13,078	\$8,764	\$2,589	\$136,140
46 - 55	262	\$125,011	\$17,187	\$10,893	\$4,328	\$157,420
56 - 65	134	\$128,888	\$19,843	\$8,537	\$3,246	\$160,515
66+	14	\$123,643	\$18,929	\$7,500	\$6,571	\$156,643
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

Compensation by Education Level

Highest degree achieved	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
High-school graduate	12	\$96,000	\$11,750	\$2,583	\$2,750	\$113,083
College graduate	323	\$100,588	\$10,721	\$6,882	\$2,786	\$120,978
Masters program graduate	479	\$118,148	\$15,992	\$8,589	\$3,344	\$146,073
Ph.D. graduate	44	\$132,659	\$19,159	\$13,659	\$4,705	\$170,182
Mean	858	\$111,972	\$14,111	\$8,122	\$3,196	\$137,401

Compensation by Experience Level

Number of years of experience in marketing research	Count	Base	Bonus*	Dividends*	Other*	Total
< 1 year	18	\$64,611	\$3,444	\$1,722	\$778	\$70,556
1 - 2	21	\$63,048	\$5,000	\$143	\$619	\$68,810
3 - 5	88	\$84,091	\$4,648	\$3,602	\$1,602	\$93,943
6 - 10	150	\$92,913	\$12,507	\$4,940	\$2,607	\$112,967
11 - 15	160	\$114,081	\$14,956	\$8,588	\$3,869	\$141,494
16 - 25	254	\$126,819	\$18,008	\$11,996	\$2,736	\$159,559
>25	166	\$130,777	\$16,133	\$8,771	\$5,235	\$160,916
Mean	857	\$112,016	\$14,116	\$8,132	\$3,200	\$137,463

Compensation by Years at Current Job

Years at current job	Count	Base	Bonus	Dividends*	Other*	Total
< 1 year	135	\$109,215	\$9,393	\$4,089	\$2,333	\$125,030
1 - 2	197	\$114,289	\$16,340	\$8,883	\$3,599	\$143,112
3 - 5	253	\$111,221	\$12,960	\$6,806	\$2,103	\$133,091
6 - 10	148	\$109,061	\$16,500	\$13,128	\$3,959	\$142,649
11 - 15	77	\$113,026	\$13,623	\$11,260	\$3,234	\$141,143
16 - 25	36	\$126,972	\$20,000	\$2,389	\$9,139	\$158,500
>25	10	\$105,900	\$11,300	\$4,500	\$2,200	\$123,900
Mean	856	\$112,000	\$14,124	\$8,137	\$3,203	\$137,464

*Bonus was defined as bonus or commission for 2016 in U.S. dollars.

*Dividends were defined as compensation in the form of dividends, stock options or profit sharing in U.S. dollars for 2016.

*Other was defined as annual value of other compensation (company car, health club membership, mobile phone etc.) in U.S. dollars.

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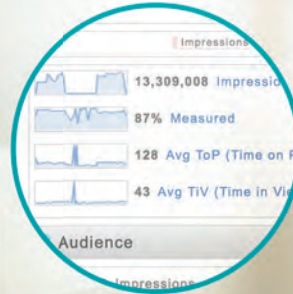
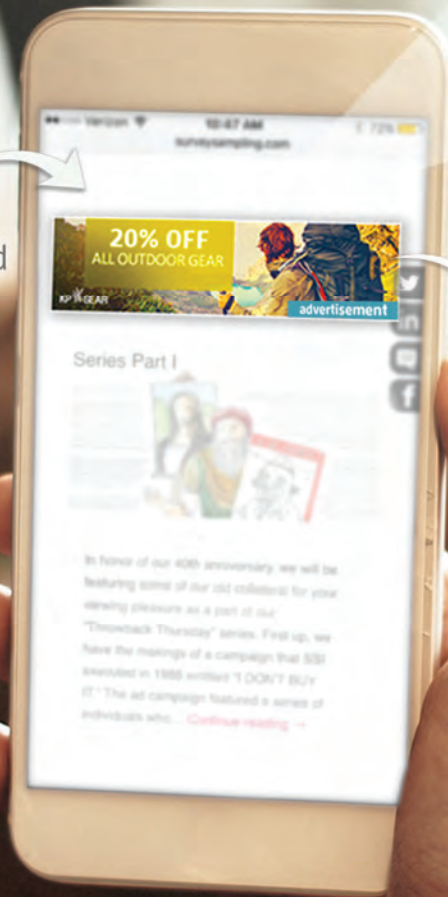
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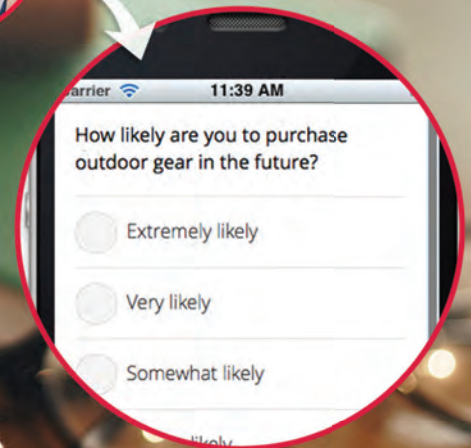


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