



Consumer Panel Research In The UK

Be it a product concept or a brand awareness survey, possibly the most effective and efficient way to gather this information is through consumer panel research. Consumer panels express the opinions of the people who matter most to your marketing strategy, the consumers. Rather than chasing every last person who bought the product to ask what they thought of it, you can also ask a cross section of your target market and get a feeling for what your target market is thinking overall.

Why use consumer panel research

- Insight
- Accuracy
- Immediacy

Reaching out to your audience adds multiple insight to your project. You hear real-life reactions from the people who have bought, or may buy your product or service. Consumer opinions are invaluable and can add tremendous value during project development, strategy planning and the formation of marketing campaigns.

By conducting your own consumer panel research the information you gather relates specifically to your product or service. You don't have to estimate how vague figures might apply and you are able to be completely certain about your place in the market.

What's more, the information is current and up to date. No need for seasonal adjustments. You have a snapshot of the market as it stands at that moment.

Legal requirements on conducting consumer research in the UK/EU

When conducting any type of research that gathers information about individuals, issues of privacy and data protection are going to present themselves. EU and UK regulations in the area of data protection and privacy outline, impose very strict codes of conduct that are worth being aware of before you set out on a project.

ePrivacy

- Consent
- Information
- Cookies

ePrivacy legislation, namely the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003, ensures that customer information is not used without their permission for services they did not sign up for. In terms of consumer research this relates to forwarding their information or using the information for commercial purposes. It is also very clear about the individual's right to have their information removed from databases upon request or being able to opt-out of having their information stored.

This legislation underwent a number of revisions; one of which refers to the use of 'cookies' and other tracking devices online. For online panels, the terms and conditions of the website may need to be amended and users also need to be informed that the website uses cookies.

Data protection

- Identification
- Retention
- Location

The Data Protection Act 1998 was enacted in all member states in the EU. Particularly in relation to consumer research, the legislation has strict guidelines about the storage of information considered to be "personal data". What the act does specify, however, is that if once any identifiers linking data to an individual are removed, e.g. anonymous surveys, it is not longer considered to be "personal data" and is not subject to the same regulations. The Act states personal data must not be kept for longer than it is necessary and must only be used for the purpose it was collected for, for example the compiling of a consumer research report. While it is being held, the appropriate technical and organisational measures must be taken to protect the data from unlawful access, destruction, loss or damage.

Below you will find a selection of the brands we have worked with.
We take pride in knowing that these high profile clients trusted us with their projects.





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Data protection

It is important that data collected within the EU remain under the protection of the Act. For this reason information may not be transferred to a region outside of the EU unless the adequate level of protection can be assured. This is of major concern for organisations that choose host their data in cloud-based services as the relative data centers may be outside of the EU.

Process for conducting consumer panel research: step by step

- Outline the aim of the research – learning goals, set targets
- Define your target audience – age, occupation, income, behaviour
- Approach a consumer panel research provider
- Choose survey format – ranking system, written answers, multiple choice
- Build survey
- Set response targets
- Distribute survey to sample
- Monitor the initial responses to ensure compatibility with targets
- Make any necessary adjustments – survey questions, sample demographics
- Collate your data
- Identify trends and patterns within data
- Refer to initial research targets and estimates
- Build final report – statistics, comparisons to existing data, findings

In conclusion

Your consumer panel research is unique to your project, your own personal insight into the consumer psyche. As a highly targeted form of research, it provides data that is relevant, current and gives a clear indication of how the wider market will receive your product or service.

It is always important to be aware of the regulations involved in collecting data from individuals. These guidelines can also serve as best practice advice for processing and handling your data,

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and also as reassurance for your respondents that they can trust you when they take part in your survey.

So why use consumer panel research? Perhaps a better question is why not use it? Direct contact with your target market; a look at what your customers are thinking; the latest data on spending, opinions and more, what more could you want?

Advantages of using SurveyShack

SurveyShack recognised the potential in consumer panel research long ago and have built a solution that makes it possible to conduct effective research in a straightforward and efficient manner. With a comprehensive panel of pre-approved, quality respondents, you can select your ideal sample to represent any target market. Operating within, and hosting all client data in the EU, SurveyShack can ensure your data is secure and complies with all the relevant regulations, while providing you with complete access to your results; from as soon as they are received, until you build your final report.

At SurveyShack we pride ourselves in delivering a quality service at the most competitive rates. Our solutions are completely customisable to suit your needs and we work with you every step of the way to ensure you achieve the most possible insight from your consumer panel research.