

ISLAND ANALYSIS - SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Background

Island Analysis has been carrying out market research in the Channel Islands and Isle of Man for over seven years. During this time, there has been a fundamental changes in the way market research needs to be carried out.

From practical experience, face-to-face interviews in the 'High Street' are no longer appreciated by the public. Added to that,

- the sampling is very hit and miss,
- the public tend to deliberately avoid the interviewer,
- qualitative responses (if any) are very difficult to record and, generally,
- respondents are tempted just to say anything in order that the survey is finished as quickly as possible.

This is the same with telephone interviews. Indeed as a matter of policy, IA has never carried out telephone interviews as feedback has always been quite hostile to this methodology particularly if the researchers are not based in the island.

Notwithstanding the level of accuracy of face-to-face surveys, clients are now increasingly reluctant to pay for the cost of such surveys. They are very labour intensive to achieve an adequate sample and they take a long time to carry out. Also off-the-peg online survey systems are being seen by marketing departments as a cheap option. However, unless managed properly, sampling can be very skewed and recruitment very hard to achieve.

Primary methodology

Quantitative

Access to the internet over the seven years has increased substantially from around 67% to over 90%.

Therefore, the primary quantitative survey technique developed by IA over the last five years is to use online survey methodology. Due to the consistency and awareness of IA research, the IA respondent reach in the Channel Islands is now a minimum of over 82,000 adults aged 16+ and potentially covers all those over 16 with internet access.

Unlike face-to-face and telephone survey methodology, IA online surveys also allow respondents to provide immensely valuable qualitative feedback which can be very detailed indeed. Such feedback is invaluable to gauge the overall opinion of the respondents.

The effectiveness of the methodology is now also covering the very important over 65 age group and indeed the over 80 age group. The issue of over 65s not accessing the internet is a thing of the past. The oldest respondent to date was aged 93.

Sample management during the actual survey is very closely monitored.

The degree of accuracy of the quantitative surveys is +/-3% for a survey comprising 1,000 respondents, +/-3.5% for a survey of 750 respondents and +/-4% for a survey of comprising a 500 sample.

Qualitative

In addition, over 2,500 CI residents now form the IA online panel from which e-focus group participants are drawn for qualitative research. This panel number is increasing in size all the time.

Other

IA is now extending its online research methodology into other island communities around the world and has recently successfully undertaken research in Mauritius, Bermuda and Guam.