The Brand's Pocket Guide to DIY Market Research

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DIY Research
The cutdown version

TIMELINE

01 Question time
Why, what, how, when?

02 Hammer time
What tools do you have? What do you need? See our LIST for help.

03 Your time to shine
Time to define, design and shine!

04 Get set go!
With defined needs & goals, the right team & tools and a plan - go ahead.

05 Thinking time
Allow time to explore and ponder the data, analysis and meaning versus the business needs.

06 If you don't have time
If time, tools or team are tight - get help.

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Question time

Always start with your objectives and desired outcomes, then work back.

Why are we doing this (customer/user) research?
What are we hoping to find out, know,
do, achieve?
What does our brand really need to know?

Then move on to the how.

How much time and money do we have for
this study?
How within the time and budget shall we do this?

With constraints on time and money, and with self-serve tools ever more available, doing research yourself can nowadays be viable.

If you trust yourself, your team and your own tools, go ahead!

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Hammer time

Time to open your toolbox...

What do you have in there?

Existing Data Streams
Previous research
Customer Data
Social Media Data

Can we find the answers here?
Can we analyse this data for insight?
Do we have tools/teams for this?
If yes, go ahead. If not, get help.

Build-your-own data sources using:
Interviews
Survey Software
Analysis Software

Do we know how to do/use these?
Have we the time to implement?
If yes, go ahead. If not, get help.

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Your time to shine

Based on the objectives and desired outcomes,
it's time to design the study .

Ask yourself...
Will some open-ended small-scale Qual by the team suffice?
Or is a larger-scale quant survey needed?
Can we do this ourselves online using (free) software?
Or do we need to make phone calls/mail out question-
naires?
What questions shall we ask? That reflect on our brand well?
How shall we capture data so it's truthful, meaningful and
easy to analyse?
And easy to derive insights from?
And how many responses do we need to feel confident
with results?
Does any aspect have to be 'scientific'?
Where do we find the appropriate people to respond?
And how do we invite & motivate them to take part?

If you don't have relevant customer/user databases,
consider intercepts where these guys are found,
or use research "panels". See the LIST later.

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Get set go!

So, you've precisely designed the study and know if this will be qual, quant (or a mix); you know if it's online or delivered by phone/post/person; and you know the topics and key question set; and you know where to find a good stream of relevant respondents.

And you've ordered the questions into a logical flow, and built a questionnaire that will neither bore the respondent nor confuse nor irritate them; whilst capturing the data you need for answers and insights.

Now it's time to commence the research and enter the field. Go! Launch your study, send out your invites to take part; ensuring these are appropriate and motivating, and ultimately that the research experience rewarding for all parties. Then start collating responses, collecting data, and start thinking the analysis and insight-generation stage to follow.

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Thinking time

No doubt you will have carefully scheduled the study and it's very important to allow sufficient time, once you have all the responses, to both systematically analyse the data (whether existing or new, open or closed, structured or unstructured, qual or quant) …and to ponder the meaning of the new facts and insights you generate in the context of your brand and business (and the circumstances and situations it finds itself in).

Later we provide a list of market research analysis software, that helps with the synthesis and systemisation of the data analysis, and importantly more easily allows for multi-dimensional views. This is very important, as without it you may be left with the option of simple counts or analysing the data one-dimensionally in tricky Excel.

Don't forget to have done your homework around the needs, goals and required outcomes of the study, so your analysis and considered insight-generation is focussed on these (and not just the nice to knows).

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Ask, is it really necessary?

Often research can be a "nice to know", or has already been done.

If it is necessary, and you lack time (or maybe resources) get help.

Internally, perhaps research is already being done or has already been done.

Perhaps it could be re-analysed to help find the answers and insights you require?

Externally, are there experts, suppliers and agencies who could help? Some suggested sources of help follow.

Skopos London has been providing expert market research advice and projects since 2001 and would be very pleased to chat and advise, with no obligation. References and testimonials are of course available from our extensive and enviable client list.

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Where to get more help (i)

Survey and analysis software
Here's a list of the best and best known FREE
online survey tools with links:

SurveyMonkey www.surveymonkey.com
SmartSurvey www.smartsurvey.co.uk
SurveyGizmo www.surveygizmo.com
FluidSurveys www.FluidSurveys.com
QuestionPro www.questionpro.com
KwikSurvey www.kwiksurveys.com
Zoomerang www.zoomerang.com
Zoho www.zoho.com
And a FREE online qual tool BlogNog:
www.blognog.com

And some of the best and best known
Data Analysis Packages:

SPSS www.ibm.com/software/uk/analytics/spss
Q-Research q-researchsoftware.com
MarketSight marketsight.com
Snap www.snapsurveys.com
QPS MR www.qpsmr.org.uk

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Where to get more help (ii)

Sources of Study Respondents

If your own lists/databases do not provide the type of customer or user you need for your research, there are plentiful sources of help. If you have web/phone customer contact points, then you can intercept them there. One newly emerging source is Google, with survey and respondents available at ww.google.com/consumersurveys. You may also find the following list of online (research) panel companies helpful:

ToLuna www.toluna.com
SSI www.surveysampling.com
ResearchNow www.researchnow.com
Cint (technically an aggregator) www.cint.com
NorStat (operates Opinion-Panel for Skopos)
www.norstatgroup.com

NB: these panel companies can often help program surveys for a fee.

The Pocket Guide to DIY Market Research is part of a set created by Skopos London: MR Company founded in London in 2001 as 'bricks met clicks'. Client-first imaginative research calculated to meet the needs of the world's major brands. Helpful & insightful.

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