COVID-19
Open Community Support Circle

3rd session | Switching to purely online research methodologies

Follow up – Tips and Findings
For the last two decades, we have all been part of an increasing digitised and globalised society. Our ability to work from home, to remain virtually connected through digital means, to collect data passively from devices like smartphones and wearables, and to pool essential data about movements are now helping all of us to (monitor?) stem the practical impact of the required and essential government measures to slow the spread of this virus.

The data, research and insights sector has been a part of this digitisation and globalisation trend; it has been impacted by it, it has been enriched by it and has long advocated our responsibilities to it.

Now more than ever, the wealth of data which is produced by our increasingly digitised societies means that we can overcome the practical restrictions and continue to effectively research people for their opinions and their behaviours. Through the responsible use of technology and the application of our analytical skills and capacities, we are still able to provide a real understanding of people’s lives in the current confinement stage of the crisis in many countries, and what will have to be a managed de-confinement stage in the coming weeks and months.

Our sector is well equipped and well prepared to deal with the required shift to a nearly all-online model and is confident in its ability to produce the required knowledge and guidance that decision-makers should and must rely on.
• Check whether your project is feasible for online data collection:
  - Consider the internet and mobile penetration of your target audience.
  - Consider the planned survey frequency and run parallel tests wherever possible.
  - For fieldwork, specific quotas and criteria may be useful.
  - Adapt your questionnaire and keep its look and feel attractive to keep the responder motivated.
  - Check the result and responder profiles with intermediate data files and with the final result to better interpret evolution trends.

• If switching to CATI at home, ensure to adapt the supervision and live control.

• Be mindful that research results can be very specific to this particular time period, due to dynamic changes caused by the pandemic.

• There is not one single way to conduct research in the current climate, but we must be mindful of the country we are working in, the cultural environment and the context.
Your Duty of Care

☐ When trying to reach people, just because they are at home more does not mean they want to receive unsolicited calls – stick with pre-recruited responders.

☐ Explain clearly the purpose of the research and what will be done with the results.

☐ Steer clear of questions that we think may upset or offend consumers – for example, asking people if they have underlying health conditions is currently inappropriate.

☐ When using online platforms for virtual meetings, you may be collecting Online IDs and may need to collect explicit and informed consent. You may also consider NDAs and confidentiality forms for regular participants and collect signatures digitally.
Prepare for a Fluctuating World

• Whilst we have entered a world where nothing will be the same, it's an important time to conduct research and we are well-placed as an industry to do this because we have a scientific base, are a trustworthy industry, and respect privacy.

• Even after social distancing and isolation, we must embrace other skills, collaborate with data scientists, sociologists and people with different skillsets in order to better analyse the data we collect.

• This is the moment for us to find out the key elements and changes once the world emerges from this crisis; if we stop research for the next few months, we risk finding ourselves behind the curve on understanding how consumer behaviour has changed in the meantime.
Useful ESOMAR resources

Check our library with Codes and Guidelines:
https://www.esomar.org/what-we-do/code-guidelines

Join the conversation in the ESOMAR LinkedIn Group:
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2755/

Find relevant papers and presentations in ANA:
https://ana.esomar.org/