ONLINE MARKET INTELLIGENCE

ONLINE PANELS
RUSSIA, UKRAINE, KAZAKHSTAN, BELARUS, THE BALTIC STATES

Consumers | Automotive | Physicians | Patients

B2B IT | Mobile | Online behavior | Ad tracking

OMI ANSWERS TO ESOMAR 28 questions TO HELP RESEARCH BUYERS OF ONLINE SAMPLES

ESOMAR
WORLD RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of these 28 Questions is to increase transparency and raise awareness of the key issues for researchers to consider when deciding whether an online sampling approach is fit for their purpose. Put another way, the aim is to help researchers to ensure that what they receive meets their expectations. The questions are also designed to introduce consistent terminology for providers to state how they maintain quality, to enable buyers to compare the services of different sample suppliers. Notes on the context of the questions explain why the questions should be asked and which issues researchers should expect to be covered in the answer.

These new questions replace ESOMAR's "26 Questions to help Research Buyers of Online Samples". ESOMAR has updated the text to recognize the ongoing development of techniques. While some of the questions remain constant, new questions have been added to incorporate new techniques and new technology in this area. In particular, this revision recognises the broad trend within the industry to build online samples from multiple sources rather than relying on a single panel.

It should be noted that these 28 Questions focus on the questions that need to be asked by those buying online samples. If the sample provider is also hosting the data collection you will need to ask additional questions to ensure that your project is carried out in a way that satisfies your quality requirements.

The 28 Questions complement ESOMAR's Guideline to Online Research which was revised in 2011 to add updated legal and ethical guidance and new sections on privacy notices, cookies, downloadable technology and interactive mobile.

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COMPANY PROFILE

1. What experience does your company have with providing online samples for market research?

Context. This answer might help you to form an opinion about the relevant experience of the sample provider. How long has the sample provider been providing this service and do they have, for example, a market research, direct marketing or more technological background? Are the samples solely provided for third party research, or does the company also conduct proprietary work using their panels?

The key specialization of Online Market Intelligence (OMI) is providing online samples for market research. OMI was founded in 2007 and became a leading company in Russia and former Soviet countries. The total size of our panels (B2C[1], B2B IT, Automotive, Physicians, Patients) currently exceeds one million respondents in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and the Baltic states. Our regular customers are the top Russian and international research and consulting companies and advertising agencies. OMI conducts over one million interviews per year, each of them carefully organized and checked, which ensures reliability and credibility of the data collected. OMI is the only company in Eastern Europe that holds Gold Mktg, Inc Certificate for data quality and consistency in tracking studies. Mktg, Inc. is an independent panel auditor based in the United States.

1 B2C panel is a general consumer panel, B2B IT panel is a business panel of IT directors and specialists.

SAMPLE SOURCE AND RECRUITMENT

2. Please describe and explain the type(s) of online sample sources from which you get respondents. Are these databases? Actively managed research panels? Direct marketing lists? Social networks? Web intercept (also known as river) samples?

Context: The description of the types of sources a provider uses for delivering an online sample will provide insight into the quality of the sample.

OMI owns online access panels with the double opt-in registration used solely for market research purposes. OMI recruits panelists from several th ousand sources, including partnerships with panelists on recruiting. The main requirement to the key sources of consumer panels is their mass scope, which allows gaining representation of regular Internet users with a panel. OMI's sources for consumer panels include popular web sites: e-mail providers, search engines, social networks, banner networks, dating and partners' databases (for example, databases of online store buyers). Representativeness is also achieved owing to partnerships with panelists for recruiting by snowball sampling. At present the number of partner panelists has already exceeded 10,000 people. While recruiting professional panels (IT specialists, physicians), on the contrary, only strictly specialized and reliable resources (professional forums and blogs, databases of professional publication subscribers, conference participants, etc.) are used, and the panels undergo the procedure of additional telephone verification. Members of all panels identify themselves by providing their name, e-mail and postal addresses, as well as the cell phone number. All OMI panels are managed and maintained by a professional panel management team.

We employ specific techniques to maintain panelists' engagement and foster a sense of community among our panel members such as:

- Constantly improving the design and appearance of questionnaires, panel portals, and survey invitations
- Monitoring panelist satisfaction by conducting quarterly feedback surveys
- Providing 24/7 panelist support
- Asking members to update their profiling data every 6 months
- Sending regular newsletters, holiday and birthday greetings to panelists
- Conducting various contests and prize draws to build panelists' loyalty and minimize negative effect of the preliminary sampling conducted prior to every survey – the screening[2]. For example, OMI regularly conducts lotteries among screened out respondents
- Monitoring survey satisfaction among respondents after each survey
- Sharing proprietary survey results with panelists in newsletters
- Sending published articles written on the basis of survey findings to panelist

Access panels with double opt-in registration still remain the main source of our online samples. However, for some research projects we use web intercept and river sampling techniques. Client databases are often used as a sample source for an online research.

2 Screening is a preliminary sampling of panellists for compliance with the selection criteria specified in the research. Only those panellists whose profile data meet the selection criteria for a certain research (for example, social and demographic characteristics, frequency of using a certain category of products, etc.) are chosen for the screening.

3. If you provide samples from more than one source: How are the different sample sources blended together to ensure validity? How can this be replicated over time to provide reliability? How do you deal with the possibility of duplication of respondents across sources?

Context: The variation in data coming from different sources has been well documented. Overlap between different panel providers can be significant in some cases and de-duplication removes this source of error, and frustration for respondents.

Normally we do not use sample from other sources rather than our own panel. Our experience has shown that blending can produce unpredictable results and data inconsistency. Though in case of incidence drop down we may use trusted and preliminary tested external providers for top-ups. In this case we use cookie-control to prevent people from entering our surveys twice from different panel sources.

4. Are your sample source (s) used solely for market research? If not, what other purposes are they used for?

Context: Combining respondents from sources set up primarily for different purposes (like direct marketing for example) may cause undesirable survey effects.

OMI online panels are used solely for market research. We never send any marketing or advertising e-mails to our panelists.

5. How do you source groups that may be hard to reach on the internet?

Context: Ensuring the inclusion of hard-to-reach groups on the internet (like ethnic minority groups, young people, seniors etc.) may increase population coverage and improve the quality of the sample provided.

We separate hard-to-reach groups with low Internet penetration from those who are actively using the Internet. In the countries that we cover the former are people over 65 years old, manual workers, some ethnic minorities. Usually we do not recommend our clients to conduct online studies with such groups till the Internet penetration is sufficient to do so.

For the latter OMI has the specialty panels covering most common hard-to-reach audiences such as owners of certain car models, IT directors and specialists, physicians and medical workers. Participants of these panels are recruited with the use of special interest web portals and motivated by custom incentive programms. OMI can use these capabilities for the recruitment of hard-to-reach groups in specific regions.

6. If, on a particular project, you need to supplement your sample (s) with sample (s) from other providers, how do you select those partners? Is it your policy to notify a client in advance when using a third party provider?

Context: Many providers work with third parties. This means that the quality of the sample is also dependent on the quality of sample providers that the buyer did not select. Transparency is essential in this situation. Overlap between different providers can be significant in some cases and de-duplication removes this source of error, and frustration for respondents. Providers who observe process standards like the ISO standards are required to give you this information.

In some cases OMI uses help of its partners to get the necessary number of interviews to complete the project. We carefully select our panel partners and work only with the most reliable of them. An obligatory requirement is their compliance with the industry quality standards of market research and respondent recruitment; ability to deliver the requested sample; purchase process and pricing transparency. OMI always notifies clients in advance when we are using panels from other providers. We use cookie based approach to de-duplicate the sample and guarantee its high quality when external suppliers are used.

7. What steps do you take to achieve a representative sample of the target population?

Context: The sampling processes (i. e. how individuals are selected or allocated from the sample sources) used are the main factor in sample provision. A systematic approach based on market research fundamentals may increase sample quality.

OMI panels are mainly recruited online. Over 1,000 unique online sources are used for recruiting purposes to eliminate possible bias and make the panel representative of online population in the countries that we cover. It is important to understand that our panels represent active Internet users (those who use the Internet every day or several times a week).

8. Do you employ a survey router?

Context: A survey router is a software system that allocates willing respondents to surveys for which they are likely to qualify. Respondents will have been directed to the router for different reasons, perhaps after not qualifying for another survey in which they had been directly invited to participate, or maybe as a result of a general invitation from the router itself. There is no consensus at present about whether and how the use of a router affects the responses that individuals give to survey questions.

OMI Company does not employ survey router now, but we are considering this technology.

9. If you use a router: Please describe the allocation process within your router. How do you decide which surveys might be considered for a respondent? On what priority basis are respondents allocated to surveys?

Context: Biases of varying severity may arise from the prioritisation in choices of surveys to present to respondents and the method of allocation.

Not applicable

10. If you use a router: What measures do you take to guard against, or mitigate, any bias arising from employing a router? How do you measure and report any bias?

Context: If Person A is allocated to Survey X on the basis of some characteristic then they may not be allowed to also do Survey Y. The sample for Survey Y is potentially biased by the absence of people like Person A.

Not applicable

11. If you use a router: Who in your company sets the parameters of the router? Is it a dedicated team or individual project managers?

Context: It may be necessary to try to replicate your project in the future with as many of the parameters as possible set to the same values. How difficult or easy will this be?

Not applicable

12. What profiling data is held on respondents? How is it done? How does this differ across sample sources? How is it kept up-to-date? If no relevant profiling data is held, how are low incidence projects dealt with?

Context: The usefulness to your project of pre-profiled information will depend on the precise question asked and may also depend on when it was asked. If real time profiling is used, what control do you have over what question is actually asked?

OMI collects and stores a broad range of profiling information from panel members so that we have an opportunity to accurately target survey invitations.

There are three basic ways of how the profiling information is collected: at the registration, while completing surveys, and based on the results of their participation in instant polls.

1) At the registration we ask panelists to fill out a survey, which includes the following question blocks:

- **Basic Social Demographics:** age, gender, geography, level of education, marital status.
- **Household:** number of children in the household, age categories of the children, children planning, monthly household income, ownership of consumer electronics and home appliances.
- **Employment:** employment status, position, industry sector.
- **Financial Position and Real Estate:** types of financial services used, type of ownership of primary residence (rent/lease/own), real estate ownership, ownership of investment properties, plans to purchase any properties.
- **Vehicle:** number of vehicles owned in household, vehicle (s) country of production (domestic/foreign), vehicle year of production, vehicle brand, vehicle category/class (economy, compact, full-size, etc.)
- **Services:** insurance, healthcare services, sports and wellness, type of home Internet connection.
- **Traveling:** frequency of flights within the country and abroad for having a rest or work purposes; use of hotel services and car rent services; countries visited; the level of proficiency in English.
- **Health:** any health problems; personal assessment of the state of one's health; drug and alcohol abuse, smoking; frequency of visits to a physician; trust in the sources of healthcare information; any chronic diseases; use of medical devices, procedures and drugs of various types; childhood diseases and diseases of one's relatives and family members.

In our specialized Automotive panel we also collect specific information about panelists' vehicles, including:

- **Vehicle ownership:** frequency of usage, country of production, year of production, year of purchase, category/class (assigned automatically according to the international classification, where it is not possible class is self-defined by the owner).
- **Vehicle specifications:** engine, transmission, body, current mileage.
- **Vehicle purchase:** decision makers, decision making process, new/used, bank loan/full cost, plans to sell, ways of selling, plans to purchase a vehicle in the next 12 months, plans to purchase new/used vehicle, plans to purchase a vehicle: category/class.

In our IT panel we additionally ask members to fill in the information about their company, as well as about the hardware and software they currently use:

- **Company:** sector, area of specialty, decision making authority, number of employees, number of computers, annual revenue.
- **Company hardware:** server equipment brands; telecommunication equipment brands; desktop, laptop, and tablet PC brands; printer, copier, scanner, all-in-one and other office equipment brands.
- **Company software:** server software, database server software, antivirus software, security and data protection systems, CRM software.

In our Medical panel we ask members to provide the following information:

- **Practice:** specialty, position, principal medical specialty, work experience (practice) in this specialty, additional specialty
- **Patients:** patient number and structure
- **Decision making authority** as regards purchasing drugs and equipment for a medical institution.

We ask our members to update their profile data every 6 months of their membership and offer extra incentives for doing this. Panelists are also able to edit and update their profile information any time when they enter the panel portals. We conduct educational activities using our monthly newsletters and tell people about the importance of having fresh profiling information.

2) Selected variables from the any study that we conduct can be added to the profiles of study participants.

3) Ad Hoc profiling is available using Instant Polls at our panel portals. The results of our polls are linked to the panelists' profiles, which allow inviting respondents who meets the selection criteria to the particular survey.

To keep panelist profiles up-to-date OMI consistently underlines the importance of keeping fresh profile in panelist profiles, newsletters, and on the end-pages of the questionnaires.

13. Please describe your survey invitation process. What is the proposition that people are offered to take part in individual surveys? What information about the project itself is given in the process? Apart from direct invitations to specific surveys (or to a router), what other means of invitation to surveys are respondents exposed to? You should note that not all invitations to participate take the form of emails.

Context: The type of proposition (and associated rewards) could influence the type of people who agree to take part in specific projects and can therefore influence sample quality. The level of detail given about the project may also influence response.

Invitations to the surveys comply with ISO 20252/26362 standards and are usually sent by e-mail (in case of mobile research – by SMS). The survey invitation contains the following information:

1. Note on the opportunity to take part in the project
2. The URL for starting the survey
3. The project number. OMI does not provide the name of the project not to give the respondents a clue how to answer the screening questions.
4. The time range that the filling in the questionnaire may take.

5. Detailed information about the incentives for taking part in the survey
6. If necessary, information about specific features of the project (eg if it is a diary or a longitude).
7. Links to the Privacy Policy and User Agreement

14. Please describe the incentives that respondents are offered for taking part in your surveys. How does this differ by sample source, by interview length, by respondent characteristics?

Context: The reward or incentive system may impact on the reasons why people participate in a specific project and these effects can cause bias to the sample.

All OMI panelists have agreed to participate in market research studies consciously and voluntarily. Panelists are motivated primarily by interest in filling in questionnaires and a desire to share their opinion. People are told that by filling in questionnaires and taking part in surveys they have a real opportunity to influence the decisions made by the largest local and international companies.

OMI does continuous research to find out what incentives better suit respondents in different panels. We found out that 'points-for-cash' works well for consumer panels. Thus for each fully completed survey the member of our consumer panel gets at least 50 Russian Rubles (approx. $2) in the form of points. The reward depends on the Incidence Rate of the target group and time needed to complete the questionnaire. Panelists can redeem points for cash after they reach the equivalent of 1000 RUR (approx. $40). After Photo ID verification panelists are able to receive cash in various ways (like e-currency, adding to the mobile phone balance, etc.), but the most common way is a postal wire by which cash can be received at over 40 thousand post offices all over Russia. Alternatively panelists can send cash to one of six charities we work with.

Our specialized panels (physicians, B2B IT) are based on a different motivation system: panelists are offered to subscribe to professional magazines, take training courses or visit trade conferences all over the globe depending on the number of surveys they have completed. Thus members of these panels are motivated by the opportunities for professional development.

As recognized in our internal research, being screened out is the most negative panelists' experience. Thus we always pay a small incentive to people who were screened out for their willingness to participate. We also organize prize draws and sweepstakes for those who were screened out multiple times in a row.

15. What information about a project do you need in order to give an accurate estimate of feasibility using your own resources?

Context: The "size" of any panel or source may not necessarily be an accurate indicator that your specific project can be completed or completed within your desired time frame.

OMI consumer panel consists of over 700,000 panelists in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus and the Baltic states. Our Automotive panel now exceeds 130,000 participants, the specialized B2B IT panel has over 16,000 members in Russia and our Medical panel numbers over 85,000 participants. Also OMI has a Mobile Panel with over 35 000 participants

We define active panel members as respondents who have participated in at least one study, or updated their profile data, or registered to join the panel in the last 12 months. Regular removal of inactive panel members is a part of our Panel Health program. The Average Completion Rate in our panels is 88%.

For the accurate feasibility estimation OMI specialists need the following information:

1. The number of completed interviews needed
2. The description of the target audience (and the incidence rate if available)
3. Quotas and other factors, that may influence the incidence rate
4. The length of the questionnaire

16. Do you measure respondent satisfaction? Is this information made available to clients?

Context: Respondent satisfaction may be an indicator of willingness to take future surveys. Respondent reactions to your survey from self-reported feedback or from an analysis of suspend points might be very valuable to help understand survey results.

OMI measures respondent satisfaction in at least two different ways:

1. By conducting quarterly surveys to understand how we can improve our services and increase panelists' engagement. Panelists are asked to fill in the questionnaire about their experience in the panel and attitudes towards it. According to our surveys panelists' loyalty is growing: according to the last survey, about 75% of respondents answered that they had recommended the panel site to their friends1.
2. By offering the opportunity to fill in a short survey satisfaction questionnaire after completing each questionnaire.

Besides panelists' satisfaction we regularly measure Completion Rates and Attrition Rates as the most important indicators of panelists' engagement.

All this information may be provided upon client's request.

17. What information do you provide to debrief your client after the project has finished?

Context: One should expect a full sample provider debrief report, including gross sample, start rate, participation rate, drop-out rate, the invitation/contact text, a description of the field work process, and so on. Sample providers should be able to list the standard reports and metrics that they make available.

OMI provides its clients with a fieldwork report on every project in real-time mode. Such a report includes the number of invites, starts, drop-outs, completes, quota report and other features. Any additional information can be provided upon client's request. We also inform our clients about the respondent feedback on each conducted survey. OMI regularly conducts client satisfaction studies, which helps us to improve our performance.

18. Who is responsible for data quality checks? If it is you, do you have in place procedures to reduce or eliminate undesired within survey behaviours, such as (a) random responding, (b) Illogical or inconsistent responding, (c) overuse of item non-response (e. g. "Don't Know") or (d) speeding (too rapid survey completion)? Please describe these procedures.

Context: The use of such procedures may increase the reliability and validity of the survey data.

OMI recognizes that data quality is a cornerstone of the whole market research industry. Based on best practices we established data quality analysis and validation techniques that we apply to all of our projects. Here are the basic procedures we use to ensure high quality and credibility of the data collected:

- Automatic check for duplicate members who are then removed from our panels.
- Regular check and removal of inactive respondents performed every 6 months.
- Payment of incentives to panelists are made via the postal wires. It is convenient to panelists and yet allows us to perform panelists' verification by using their photo IDs. Other payment methods can also be used upon panelists' request after photo ID verification.
- Evaluating panelists' responses for data consistency, time it took to answer every question of the survey compared to the average for the study, answers to open-ended questions.
- Using system that allows catching and eliminating respondents who complete questionnaires stereotypically (for example, by choosing answers located diagonally or in one straight line for tabular questions).
- Special attention to completes with too many 'Don't know/Hard to say' answers as well as standard and 'flat' responses.
- Techniques for checking logical consistency of panelists' responses and respondents' attentiveness at different stages of questionnaire.
- Comparison of data in panelists' initial profile information and ongoing surveys (age, gender and city)

Inattentive and fraudulent panelists are at first warned via e-mails that their answers seem inconsistent. If they continue cheating after the second warning, they are blacklisted. We also notify people by e-mail about the types of misbehavior they have shown. We are doing this as we believe that everybody makes mistakes and there is a possibility to correct the panelists' conduct rather than simply label and exclude them. It is important to note that the share of fraudulent panelists appears to be very low and does not exceed 2–3% in each survey.

19. How often can the same individual be contacted to take part in a survey within a specified period whether they respond to the contact or not? How does this vary across your sample sources?

Context: Over solicitation may have an impact on respondent engagement or on self-selection and non-response bias.

We do not limit contacts as such but have strict rules on the number of completes per month as well as the category exclusion.

20. How often can the same individual take part in a survey within a specified period? How does this vary across your sample sources? How do you manage this within categories and/or time periods?

Context: Frequency of survey participation may increase the risk of undesirable conditioning effects or other potential biases.

According to the industry standards we limit the number of studies completed by one panelist in a month to four (no more than one per week). We also maintain 3 month category exclusion, which means that the respondent does not receive invitations to the surveys on the topics similar to those he/she has already completed during the last three month.

It is important, that on average the panelists participate in less than one survey per month. We also have a limit for reminders: the panelist can receive one reminder for each three days in the field.

OMI keeps full history for every panel member including communication history, completed studies, screen-outs/quota fulls, survey topics, and incentive history (given/redeemed). To eliminate conditioning effect each survey or study topic could be used as a selection filter for the subsequent projects.

21. Do you maintain individual level data such as recent participation history, date of entry, source, etc., on your survey respondents? Are you able to supply your client with a project analysis of such individual level data?

Context: This type of data per respondent including how the total population is defined and how the sample was selected and drawn, may increase the possibilities for analysis of data quality.

OMI keeps the full 'panelist history', including date of entry into the panel, the recruitment source, all projects that a person took part in and his/her statuses in them. We can provide client with per-job analysis of individual-level data upon request.

22. Do you have a confirmation of respondent identity procedure? Do you have procedures to detect fraudulent respondents? Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at sample source registration and/or at the point of entry to a survey or router. If you offer B2B samples what are the procedures there, if any?

Context: Confirmation of identity can increase quality by decreasing multiple entries, fraudulent panellists etc.

According to ISO 26362 OMI uses different procedures for confirmation of respondents identity.

On the level of registration our software doesn't let the same person to register several times (on the basis of e-mail de-duplication).

In the process of invitation and survey sampling one respondent has an opportunity to fill-in the questionnaire only once, because the link is unique.

OMI employs passport verification of participants when they are receiving incentives for the surveys. We use postal wires for incentives' payments; to receive cash in the post office panelists need to show their passport to verify their identity. Other payment methods are also possible, but the requirement to show an ID with a photo remains invariable (a scan or a photo of the first page of a panelist's passport is sent to us by e-mail). Our software does not allow respondents to change such profile data as gender, age, name, patronymic – they remain the same during the whole course of their panel membership. It allows us to reveal double registrations by checking the uniqueness of combinations of mail, name, date of birth, postal address, IP address and password. Duplicates are regularly removed to guarantee 'one respondent – one questionnaire' rule. We also check the profiling data for inconsistencies and remove panelists who, for example, have low income but own luxury cars.

OMI Physician and B2B IT panels are verified via the telephone calls.

POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE

23. Please describe the 'opt-in for market research' processes for all your online sample sources.

Context: The opt-in process indicates the respondents' relationship with the sample source provider. The market generally makes a distinction between single and double opt-in. Double opt-in refers to the process by which a check is made to confirm that the person joining a panel or database wishes to be a member and understands what to expect (in advance of participating in an actual survey for a paying client).

Every OMI panelist undergoes a double opt-in process. Panelists fill out an online registration form: name, e-mail, postal address and profiling survey. Immediately after that panelists receive confirmation e-mail containing a link to confirm their registration and activate their membership.

24. Please provide a link to your Privacy Policy. How is your Privacy Policy provided to your respondents?

Context: Not complying with local and international privacy laws might mean the sample provider is operating illegally. An example privacy policy is given in the ESOMAR Guideline for Online Research.

OMI's Privacy Policy is available online at http://www.anketka.ru/default.php?text=policy (The Privacy Policies for our automotive, IT and medical panels are available at their respective web portals). This document can be easily accessed by every panel member as the link is placed at every page of panel portal and is included into all e-mail invitations and reminders. The Privacy Policy describes what kind of personal information is collected and what are the purposes of this process; informs about the usage of cookies; reminds of the security measures that panelists are to take to protect themselves from the loss or abuse of their personal information; shows how personal information can be updated or deleted; states that OMI does not rent or sell any personal information about its panel members to any third parties without prior notice and permission.

OMI panels are in full compliance with ESOMAR, CASRO, FTC EU Safe Harbor, and FTC Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the standards adopted by these organizations for online research and privacy. As an independent Russian company, we comply with all regulations set out by Federal Law of the RF No. 152-FZ About Personal Data and other laws regarding privacy and data collection adopted in the countries where we operate. OMI also acts in compliance with ISO 20252/26362.

25. Please describe the measures you take to ensure data protection and data security.

Context: The sample provider usually stores sensitive and confidential information on panelists and clients in databases. These data need to be properly secured and backed-up, as does any confidential information provided by the client. The sample provider should be able to provide you with the latest date at which their security has been evaluated by a credible third-party

According to ISO 20252/26362 requirements OMI takes strict measures to ensure that every aspect of panelists' and clients' information is kept secure and protected. Personal information of panel members is strictly confidential and is used only by the OMI key personnel through encrypted passwords. All sessions of access to the database containing confidential information are monitored and recorded. Our servers are equipped with a firewall and antivirus, and the data backup is made on a daily basis. All the staff, who has an access to panel and project information are obliged to sign the Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Our panel websites comply with all requirements related to the confidentiality of personal information. Personal data given by our members is used solely for the purposes of market research. We do not pass, rent or sell personal data to the third parties. All surveys are evaluated anonymously; all of the data contain generalized information only. OMI panelists do not receive any commercial e-mails or spam (unauthorized mailing).

Panelists' access to their personal data is possible only after logging in with a password and is CAPTCHA protected. Certain personal information cannot be changed after the registration; if the personal information is changed, the panelist receives a notification e-mail. Domains and IPs of fraudulent panelists are blocked.

26. What practices do you follow to decide whether online research should be used to present commercially sensitive client data or materials to survey respondents?

Context: There are no foolproof methods for protecting audio, video, still images or concept descriptions in online surveys. In today's social media world, clients should be aware that the combination of technology solutions and respondent confidentiality agreements are "speed bumps" that mitigate but cannot guarantee that a client's stimuli will not be shared or described in social media.

It is evident that in online-surveys no company can provide the 100% reliable method of protecting commercially sensitive information. But there are different measures, that OMI applies for this.

Confidential information provided by our clients (such as images, videos, audio files, etc.) is protected using the following means:

- 'Back' button in the survey is disabled;
- Protection from 'Save picture as…';
- Protection from 'Copy/Paste';
- Screenshots (screen photos) protection;
- 'Print Screen' disabled;
- Web-streaming of video files (not saved in cache).

27. Are you certified to any specific quality system? If so, which one (s)?

Context: Being certified may require the supplier to perform tasks in a pre-determined manner and document procedures that should be followed.

OMI acts in compliance with ISO 20252/26362 and has a working quality system in place. As concerning the various stages of the research process the system includes the following procedures:

Feasibility checking

- We always check projects' feasibility to guarantee that the required number of completed interviews will be collected;
- If the project has unknown Incidence Rate, we usually launch an Instant Poll to estimate it.

Survey programming:

- The questionnaire is carefully checked and shown to the client prior to programming;
- We always advise clients on better questionnaire design options suitable for online data collection;
- Questionnaire translation is checked by the chief company specialist, the client is informed about any changes in the wording;
- Logic and media in the questionnaire is tested by Quality Assurance Team before the survey is launched;
- All questionnaire changes are documented in the same file to track its history;
- Random data generation is performed to check if the data is recorded correctly for complex logic;
- A questionnaire goes in the field only after the client's testing and written approval.

Fieldwork:

- Samples are prepared specially for a client's objectives, according to specifications and quotas provided;
- Express Polls are created for better targeting if applicable;
- Invitations are always sent in batches to assure the highest IR and minimize the number of screened-out panelists;
- We usually start with a soft launch of 10% of required sample. The data acquired is checked thoroughly. Actual Incidence Rate and projected Response Rate are taken into account when we prepare sample for the full launch;
- Quotas are controlled automatically but can be adjusted manually according to the client's needs;
- Password protected client portal is provided to monitor the fieldwork progress and real-time data analysis;
- We focus on delivery, so if the actual Incidence Rate is getting much lower than the projected one and our own panel capacities are exhausted, after receiving an approval of our client we add our approved local panel partners (with prior notice and client's confirmation) to close the project. Adding a partner never costs extra to the client and never leads to a considerable field time extension.

Data processing:

- The data quality is carefully checked before delivery in compliance with the adopted procedures of data quality control;
- We normally over-recruit by 10% to be able to safely remove the bad data (for example, responses of people who fill in questionnaires unreasonably fast, those who give meaningless responses to the open-ended questions; completes with inconsistent responses, etc.);
- Data can be exported into different conventional formats. Open-ends can be coded upon client's request.

OMI continuously conducts client satisfaction surveys. We also believe that the data quality depends on respondents' satisfaction. Panelists' satisfaction surveys are conducted on a regular basis. In addition, after each survey we ask our respondents to evaluate how much they liked participating in it. The results of the panelists' satisfaction surveys are always available to our clients giving them an opportunity to improve the online toolset.

28. Do you conduct online surveys with children and young people? If so, do you adhere to the standards that ESOMAR provides? What other rules or standards, for example COPPA in the United States, do you comply with?

Context: The ICC/ESOMAR International Code requires special permissions for interviewing children. These are described in the ESOMAR Online Research Guideline. In the USA researchers must adhere to the requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Act (COPPA). Further information on legislation and codes of practice can be found in Section 6 of ESOMAR's Guideline for Online Research.

OMI follows the existing standards ISO 20252/26362 while conducting surveys with children. If a client plans to interview children under 16 years old, we send an e-mail to their parents or guardians with an explanation of the study subject and a request to give their permission for the interview. After the active consent is received from the parents or guardians, their child can participate in the survey. The same concerns the panel registration – action parent consent is needed for the child to register in the panel. The process of obtaining such consent is automated: we ask children below 16 years old to provide their parents' e-mail address during the registration. Parents are notified immediately and are asked to confirm participation of their children by clicking the link.

Do you still have questions about our panels or want to leave a comment?

Please contact us at info@omirussia.ru

ONLINE MARKET INTELLIGENCE

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