



Top Ten Tips Series: Online Surveys...

Definition of a 'good' online survey:

A good quality online survey is well structured, provides representative, actionable, clear and concise information that will guide your professional membership organisation or association offering.

The response rate will be typically high and so will the quality of data generated.

Advice Sheet Content:

- Introduction
- Online Surveys – Our Top Ten Tips...
- Which online provider should my organisation use?
- MemberWise Online Survey Service
- Outsourcing online surveys to independent research companies

Introduction

The format and delivery of membership surveys has changed dramatically over recent years.

Let's go back in time for a moment...

Less than ten years ago professional membership organisations and associations sent out hardcopy surveys to their members/stakeholders.

The process included:

- Drafting and (sometimes professionally) printing the survey
- Posting to members (sometimes with a pre-paid envelope to increase the response rate)
- A sometimes lengthy wait for members to respond
- Scanning of completed surveys with often 'clunky' software
- Interrogating the data manually
- Compiling the results and drawing up of graphs
- Publishing a formal survey results document

The activity included at least seven separate processes that were often costly in terms of time and money. This resulted in many organisations only administering surveys once every year or two.

Impact:

- Results sometimes redundant before being published
- Level of engagement limited by logistics
- Sample size limited due to financial cost of delivery
- Quality of results sometimes dependent on allocated budget

Survey software came next and for a number years this made the process easier, however included expensive and 'clunky' software that required consultancy and was sometimes not that dependable.

Times have changed thank goodness!