

## Knowledge is Power

### How Successful Organizations Use Online Surveys

There is a common misconception that market research initiatives are reserved only for marketing departments or product development teams. Many business professionals incorrectly assume that research is too cost-prohibitive or that they lack the expertise to conduct an effective survey effort on their own.

In actuality, there are many ways to gather feedback and information to make your business or organization more successful. Perhaps the easiest, yet most powerful way, is using online surveys. Online surveys are easy to design and implement with minimal resources. When you utilize a full featured online survey application, you can conduct exhaustive research efforts without the expense and hassle of a third party. Using online surveys to gather business intelligence is a proven and cost efficient way to help your organization thrive.

Here are some examples of how online surveys will help your organization:

- Customer Satisfaction & Retention
- Employee Feedback
- Product Development
- Pre & Post Event Evaluations
- Training & Education Evaluations
- Business Intelligence & Market Research
- Sales Leads
- Message Testing

#### Customer Satisfaction & Retention

Online surveys get to the heart of your customer and illustrate how to better serve them. Understanding what your customers want and responding to their needs increases customer satisfaction, loyalty and attracts new customers. Improve the product user experience for your customers by consistently collecting their feedback. Use online surveys to ask customers about their experience with your customer service department. Ask specific questions to learn which customer service representatives are performing well and adding value to your organization. Since your customer service representatives are ambassadors for your organization so it is important to make sure that you are well represented. With online surveys, the feedback is instantaneous which allows you to make decisions quickly and effectively.

#### Employee Feedback

Satisfied employees are more productive and deliver better results, products and services for your organization. Satisfied employees are loyal to your organization and make for a positive company culture. Employees who are on the front lines want to share insight and information with management to make processes more efficient, and ultimately make the organization more successful. Online surveys are the tool to help you obtain valuable feedback from your employees. The feedback can be anonymous - so you are guaranteed honest answers when you ask sensitive questions. Find out how to improve their working environment, what benefits would be most valuable or even when to have the next company happy hour. Online feedback gives human resource managers the information to increase employee morale, reduce employee turnover and maintain a positive work environment.

#### Product Development

Let your customers express their needs and give you their wish list. Allow them to help you innovate. Let them tell you what pain points need to be addressed. An online survey gives customers the opportunity to voice their ideas and enables organizations to turn suggestions into revenue generators. Customers will appreciate your organization's desire to deliver what they want. Your outreach efforts for new products will also pave the way for an easy upsell opportunity. Think of your customer as an extension of your product development team and ask them what they need.

#### Pre & Post Event Evaluations

Surveying the attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, and volunteers is an essential tool event planners use to gauge event success. Their feedback provides a clear roadmap to improve future events. Through these surveys, you can find out what would encourage attendees and exhibitors to attend future events, what they didn't like about past events, and what they expect at future events. Why guess at what your attendees want and need when you can simply ask them before the event even starts?

## Training & Education Evaluations

Most organizations get feedback from their audience by distributing evaluation forms and pens. Evaluation forms typically ask the audience member if they thought the presenter was effective, if the training topic was valuable or if the material was challenging. Unfortunately, completed paper surveys are often given to an already time-starved administrative assistant, who then must manually enter all the responses into a spreadsheet and calculate the data. Processing these paper surveys is a painful process and many times the qualitative feedback is illegible due to the participant's handwriting style. With online surveys, the feedback is automated and the results are instantaneous. The data can be accurately analyzed in a variety of ways. Online survey tools can even store results so they can be compared to past and future evaluations. With this visibility, organizations can design and improve on training and education programs to consistently challenge participants.

## Business Intelligence & Market Research

Online surveys are powerful tools used to gather information on industry trends, market segments, and used to analyze market developments. Through online surveys, you can determine who your real competitors and prospective customers are while obtaining supporting data for your next strategic move. Survey results are central to the development of company goals and business models. A solid business plan should always include extensive market research.

## Sales Leads

An online survey is an innovative way for your organization to cultivate more sales leads. When surveying prospects, make the survey perform as a research and marketing tool. At the end of the survey, capitalize on the marketing opportunity by asking your respondents if they would like to receive more information about a product or simply redirect them to your web site. Capture as much contact information as possible while you have the attention of prospective clients and guide them into your sales funnel. You can use surveys to qualify prospects to ensure you and go after the best prospects first.

## Message Testing

For both qualitative and quantitative research, online surveys are the best way to handle a large group of respondents. It is no secret that telephone, mail, and focus group research methods are very expensive to launch. In addition, it takes most organizations over two months with dedicated resources to implement, input, and read results from a typical telephone or a mail research initiative. By the time the results are consolidated and processed from traditional research methods, you missed a marketing opportunity. Online surveys are easy to design and quick to execute - and results are immediate. Organizations can rapidly test marketing campaigns to see how they resonate with customers and eliminate the risk of rolling out an unsuccessful campaign.

For a multitude of reasons, successful organizations leverage online surveys to develop their business and gather employee feedback. When you select the right online survey solution, conducting surveys is quick, easy and economical. There is no need to hire a research company to conduct an online survey. You can do it yourself even if you don't have a research background. As you shop for online survey software, make sure the system is capable of handling the range of survey needs for your organization, including customer satisfaction surveys, new product development research, employee feedback, and message testing.

Cvent Web Surveys provides an advanced, yet easy to use solution to gather and analyze business intelligence. For more information, please visit the Web Surveys page.

