

Formative Research

Carol Bryant, PhD

Typical Research Objectives

- Distinct segments
- Benefits
- Costs and other factors
- Places consumers practice the behavior
- Intermediaries
- Spokespersons
- Information channels
- Communication guidelines

Resistance Points

- Do not want to invest time
- Do not want to invest money
- Already conduct a great deal of research
- Already know what consumers think or should do

Overcoming Resistance

- Use existing data and expertise
- Make marketing useful
- Tie data to decisions that the program manager must make
- Avoid
- Unnecessary data
- Fishing expeditions
- Unnecessary costs

Appropriate Uses of Qualitative Research

- Discover or identify hypotheses
- Describe
- Create vivid picture
- Prepare survey instruments
- Interpret quantitative findings

Appropriate Uses of Quantitative Research

- Estimate or measure
- Confirm hypotheses
- Identify determinants statistically

When it is appropriate to rely only on qualitative research

- Budget and/or time is very limited
- No previous research on topic
- Unable to prepare valid survey questions

When it is appropriate to rely only on quantitative research

- Previous findings available
- Able to develop valid survey questions
- Have sufficient time to pilot test and administer survey

Mixed Methods

- Qualitative then quantitative
- Qualitative findings inform survey development and interpretation
- Quantitative then qualitative
- Qualitative helps explain survey findings
- Qualitative, quantitative, qualitative

Data Collection

- Systematic observation
- Individual in-depth interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys

Participant Observation

- Start discovery process
- Generate understanding of cultural context
- Identify behavioral patterns

In-depth Interviews

- Use open-ended questions
- Dig deep into feelings and attitudes
- Adjust questions to fit situation
- Explore complex subjects or decisions
- Combine with semi-structured questions

Focus Groups

- Watch group interaction
- Generate breadth of ideas quickly
- Encourage self revelation
- Identify suppressed themes

Photovoice

- Process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through photography
- People given cameras to record their “world”
- Developed by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris
- www.photovoice.com

Photovoice Objectives

- Document needs and assets
- Promote critical dialogue
- Discuss issues on photographs
- Reach policy makers
- Provide window into other worlds
- Serve as catalyst for social change
 - Mobilize community members
 - Provide evidence
 - Create powerful images

Surveys

- Segment audience
- Identify determinants
- Collect baseline data

Types of Surveys

- Central location intercept
- Telephone
- Mail
- Door to door

Survey Methods

- Access to participants
- Time and personnel needed
- Geographic dispersion
- Complexity of questions
- Interviewer assistance
- Other factors

Low Cost Experiments

- Naturalistic opportunities
- Pilot tests
- Collect pre-measures
- Case and control
- Intervene
- Collect post-measures
- Use results to make decision

Sample Sizes

- Strategy of theoretical saturation
- Sufficient redundancy
- Estimates
 - Individual – 15 per subgroup; total of 60 often enough
 - Group – 2-3 per subgroup; 8 often enough
 - Surveys
 - Depends on analysis plan

Sampling Frames

- Selecting respondents
 - Randomly
 - Everyone given a number so can be selected using table of random numbers or computer program
 - Systematically
 - Select every X name
 - Extreme cases
 - Understanding and living with bias

Budget Estimates

- Personnel
- Travel
- Equipment
- Subject incentives
- Reports
- Printing and copying
- Distribution costs

Focus group costs

- Refreshments
- Facility fees
- Child care
- Transportation

Survey Costs

- Printing
- Long distance charges

Ways to Cut Costs

- Use existing data
- Program data
- State, regional or national datasets
- Published literature
- CDC audience research
- Ask list serve members for study results
- Use local resources