



# International Research – 10 TIPS FOR Doing it Right

**No stress international research?** Yes, it can be possible if the following tips are carefully considered as you plan. Whether you use Mobile Digital Insights (MDI) or someone else you trust this handy sheet can help make sure you avoid problems, and your insights stand out.

- 1. Selecting a supplier** – Has your supplier been there and done that with International Research? Has your team lived and worked in several international countries? Your odds of success are much better when your team knows international research through deep experience.
- 2. The value of consistency** – If you've ever done research in 5, 10 or 40 countries, you quickly learn the headaches of receiving data from multiple providers who use different formats. Even if your international research supplier taps into local experts for fieldwork support, they can simplify your life if they ensure that all data is in a consistent format for easy analysis and reporting.
- 3. Foreign language support** – Consider your supplier's ability to handle multiple languages; including translating questionnaires and materials. Ensure respondents can easily choose their language when taking a survey and that the supplier can handle language support when analyzing the results—especially open-ends. If your supplier can't handle multiple languages, find a translation company and make sure they are experienced in the research industry. MDI can help you find reputable sources.
- 4. Mobile phones vs PCs/laptops** – International research invariably works better when questionnaires are designed for mobile phones. In many countries, smartphones are common and PCs are rare. Design it for the phone and it will work beautifully on the laptop or PC.
- 5. Sampling approaches and solutions** – Where will you get your sample? A major sample provider or a strong local partner (we'll be glad to suggest good partners)? What about Facebook sample, face-to-face recruiting or perhaps the client's sample database? There are advantages to each depending on the country and situation. Be sure your provider understands them all and can help you do it right.



**6. Invites using email, SMS, Social Media** – Across the world, most people can be reached through their email address. Yet, in some countries, people are far more connected using SMS and social media and rarely check their email. Cover all your bases by using a supplier who is experienced in delivering surveys through text messaging and social media in addition to email. That way you know you are reaching the right people in the right way.

**7. The value of reminders** – In a large 50-country research study we found that 25 percent of people opened their initial email or text invite. Of that group, 20 percent started the questionnaire. Some companies may stop there or request additional sample, which is a very poor practice. We sent a second reminder three days later and a third reminder after that. The reminders helped us get to 50 percent opening their email and 55 percent of them completing the questionnaire. We were able to double the response rate. This is typical for international work. Don't waste sample. Use reminders to get a stronger and more representative response. Be sure your supplier can do it right.



**8. The ins and outs of incentives** – Incentives are vital when doing research, but international incentives can be tricky, especially when many countries are involved. Make sure you use a supplier that allows you to choose more than one reward option. It will make your life easier and your respondent happier! Amazon.com or VISA offer solutions that work well in certain countries (we can suggest other good partners). Adding minutes to phones may be best in other countries, and it can cover the cost of using their minutes to do the research. Explore the options listed above and call us if you need any help.

**9. Pulling it together: dashboards** – Executing international research can be challenging, but don't neglect the importance of making the final output easy to digest and present. For longitudinal studies, like brand trackers and consumption diaries, use a dashboard. They can be designed to clearly show the big picture and then provide the flexibility to dig into the data at a country level or deeper when desired. The right dashboard solutions can be quick to set up and very cost effective.

**10. Pulling it together: the analysis** – Let's talk about the final report. Assuming your supplier has properly executed all of the above, they should be able to create a succinct analysis with a sharp, high-level overview and then dig in where the data leads. Some give you massive and lengthy tables of reports which are a waste of trees and your valuable time, suggesting the supplier doesn't know how to analyze properly. Be sure to ask for examples of both high-level reporting and detailed analysis upfront to ensure you get the strong insights that a good international study deserves.

**We hope** this expands your thinking as you prepare for your next international study. It's an area many firms struggle to do well. But, armed with this tip sheet, you will be prepared to ask the right questions and benefit from insightful results that educate your business decisions.

Let's talk!

Contact us today to see how MDI can help you make the most of your international research.

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