



Addressing Cultural Differences in Research

Among U.S. consumers in 2006, over 10% were born outside of the U.S. Not only do these consumers tend to speak different languages, many have different perspectives and behaviors than U.S. born consumers. As the U.S. population becomes more culturally diverse, marketers face increasing challenges in effectively communicating to this varied marketplace and fulfilling a wide range of requirements.

Foreign Born U.S. Population
% From Each Region of The World



*Source: US Census Bureau Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2003

WHAT IS MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH?

- Multicultural Research is conducted among ethnic or racial groups that are not highly represented within a general population sample.
 - ✓ In most cases Multicultural Research is conducted among first and second generation U.S. residents, many of whom have non-English requirements and don't use English as their 'dominant' or preferred language.
- Many of these groups, although small, are concentrated in terms of where they live, work and shop.
 - ✓ This allows us the opportunity to learn of their needs as related to specific markets. Targeting different cultural groups in our research helps us account for their nuances even when they represent a small portion of the market. These groups include, but are not limited to ...
 - ◆ Hispanics, acculturated and non-acculturated
 - ◆ Asian-Americans (including Southeast Asians, Chinese, and Japanese)
 - ◆ African-Americans

WHY SHOULD I CONDUCT MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH?

On a very surface level we know that all U.S. consumers are not the same. This is the case regardless of the target market. However, when it comes to conducting research there are always trades-offs to consider in terms of whether the benefits of exploring these differences justify the costs. When we approach any project a key question is whether the anticipated differences are large enough to warrant more targeted and precise sub-groups in our study.

While in many cases we may not pursue specific sub-groups in our research, when it comes to multicultural issues it is almost imperative that we take a more precise look at the market. An emerging cultural group, such as Non-Acculturated Hispanics, may have different needs and behaviors and our research needs to be able to identify these for marketing. This information is often instrumental in helping our clients expand and explore new opportunities.

WHY DDW FOR MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH?

Data Development Worldwide is a full service custom market research firm with a history of conducting Multicultural Research. Over the past 45 years, DDW has built a network of specialized field services across the country and around the world to effectively capture and interview different cultural groups. Our resources can account for the geographic breadth of your customer base. As a recent example, we just helped a client optimize product lines geared towards specific outlets, while accounting for cultural differences and diversity within their markets.

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH?

As with any group of interest, a wide range of research can be conducted to identify Purchase Influencers, Market Opportunities and Barriers, Concept Acceptance and Advertising Effectiveness, to name a few. While we know intuitively that many cultural groups have different preferences and tendencies, in terms of taking action it is critical that we extract these nuances from our research.

HOW DO I CONDUCT MULTICULTURAL RESEARCH?

While Online Panels have ubiquitous use for researching the U.S. general population, it may not be the mode of choice for multicultural groups. In many cases, due to low incidence of online participation or localized geographies, it makes more sense to use other modes of data collection such as telephone (using targeted samples) and in-person interviewing at centralized locations (such as a facility or mall) where there is a higher concentration of the desired target audience.

Can Multicultural Research help in your research and marketing efforts? Feel free to contact us to discuss the possibilities and to see how it can work for you.

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