

ESOMAR 28 Questions To Help Online Research Buyers



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Company Profile



What experience does your company have with providing online samples for market research?

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Netscribes is a global market research company in India catering to both B2B and B2C verticals. Its ever-growing online panel has more than 6 million respondents, spread over 47 geographies. The company has superior expertise and experience when it comes to offering online samples to multiple companies in the market research domain. It also has the capability to survey a larger bracket of general population and low-frequency target groups through intensive screening and categorization. Although online sample surveys remain its core competency, Netscribes is also adept at survey programming, OE coding, tabulation and data processing services.

In a changing business ecosystem, local market research is the key to obtain strategic solutions when it comes to tapping into a particular market. Netscribes brings in comprehensive local knowledge coupled with innate local research proficiency to help companies gain a competitive edge.



Sample Source



Please describe and explain the types of source(s) for the online sample that you provide (Are these databases, actively managed panels, direct marketing lists, Web intercept sampling, river sampling, or other)?



An effective telephone-recruited panel, dedicated to market research, has been constituted. It is professionally managed by a panel management team. The panelists have been brought on board from various local websites, search engines, email providers, and customer Web portals. As greater access to consumer opinion is the business order of the day, significant effort has been made to engage world-class panels and help clients with top-quality market research. At Netscribes, we aggressively bring opinions from people whose feedback counts, when it comes to your business or brands especially in unknown territories.

Specific techniques employed to retain the panelists and foster strong relationships with them include:

- Refreshing the profile information once in six months. The panel management team runs periodic checks to ensure that information is up-to-date.
- Monitoring panelist satisfaction level through quarterly feedback surveys to avoid over-survey. Furthermore, on-demand segmentation ensures that only individuals with relevant background are eligible.
- Sending regular newsletters and select survey results and holiday and birthday greetings to our panelists.
- Conducting contests and draws to increase loyalty and eliminate negative experiences. Extra honorarium is paid to panelists screened for more than 5 times.

Sample Source



What do you consider to be the primary advantage of your sample over other sample sources in the marketplace?



Utmost care is taken to recruit relevant respondents to the panel for sample surveys. This panel is professionally managed by a dedicated team that follows global quality assurance best practices to maintain response and data integrity. Netscribes' in-depth knowledge of the local market is also a big advantage.



If the sample source is a panel or database, is the panel or database used solely for market research? If not, please explain.



The panels are set up exclusively for market research. Furthermore, the panelists are barred from being involved in direct marketing or unsolicited email campaigns.



Sample Source



How do you source groups that may be hard to reach on the internet?



As telephonic recruitment has been adopted, reaching out to relevant people has never been a problem so far. Assistance is also sought from local partners, when it comes to offline recruitment. In addition, we source our panel from portals that are not biased towards any specific demographic and is, therefore, reflective of the general market opinion. We regularly review our partnership with these sources to maintain our high-quality standards.



What are people told when they are recruited?



During recruitment, it is made very clear to the panelists that they are getting empanelled for market research activities and they will be periodically requested to participate in research studies. Once the phone screening has been completed, each respondent receives a link containing the terms and conditions and the privacy policy. The membership is completed once they agree to the terms.



Panel Recruitment

Q

If the sample comes from a panel, what is your annual panel turnover/attrition/retention rate and how is it calculated?

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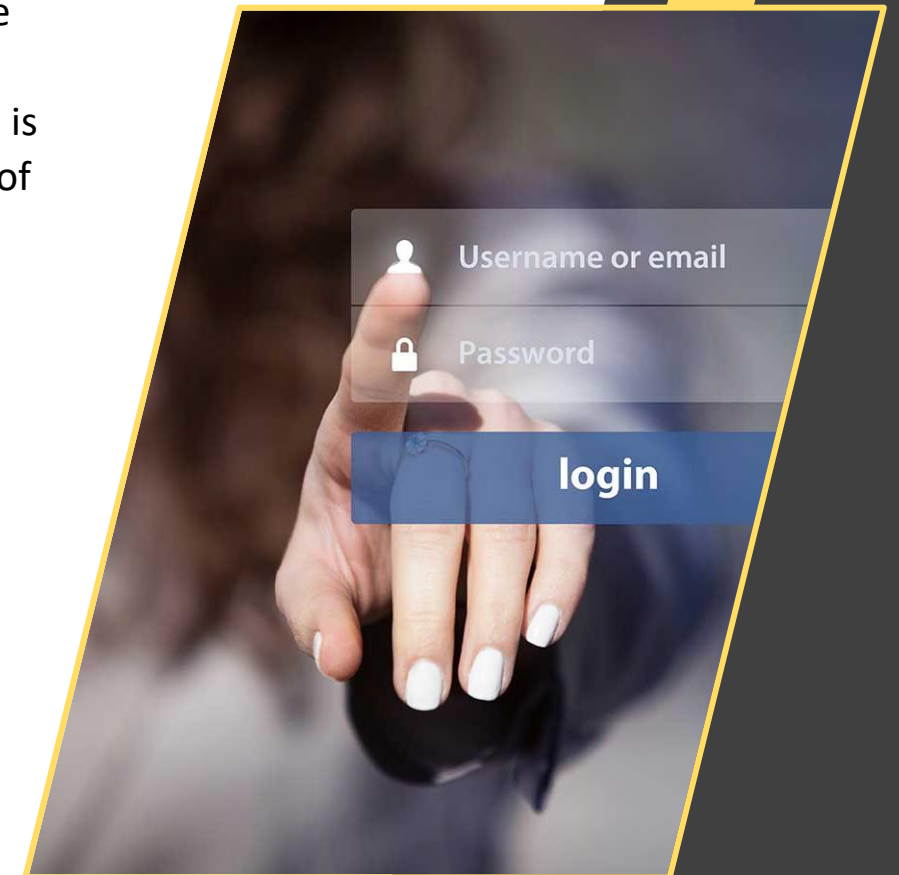
The panel attrition rate varies between 7–9% every year depending on the country. Although the panelists can voluntarily cancel membership, the voluntary attrition rate stands at less than 3%. The attrition/retention rate is calculated by dividing the total number of active panelists by the number of terminated ones over the last one year.

Q

Please describe the opt-in process.

A

The panelists are called so that there is a double opt-in process. After screening the respondents, a link is sent describing all the terms and conditions. They are required to accept them in order to participate in the research.



Panel Recruitment



Do you have a confirmation of identity procedure? Do you have procedures to detect fraudulent respondents at the time of registration with the panel? If so, please describe.



Various techniques have been put in place for respondent identity validation. The email and postal addresses of the panelist are used to ensure that only a single person from a household can become a panel member. Sophisticated de-duplication techniques are engaged to verify identical emails, names, date of birth, and zip codes. Duplication is removed on priority. Regular checking of inconsistencies in profile data is done, followed by the removal of panelists who furnish incorrect data about their profile.



What profile data is kept on panel members? For how many members is this data collected and how often is this data updated?



Netscribes has access to a wide range of personal information about the panelists. This ensures that survey invitations are sent to the right panel of respondents. Verification of key demographics is done after each survey. This is the kind of information about panel members that is stored.

Panel Recruitment

A



- Basic Attributes: Age, gender, education



- Household: Number of children; monthly household income; ownership of pets, home appliances, and consumer electronics



- Employment: Employment status, position, industry/sector



- Finance and Real Estate: Ownership of residence, plans to purchase any property, type of financial service used



- Automotive: Number of vehicles owned, brand, country, and year of production; vehicle category (economy, compact, full size, etc.)



- Services: Insurance, healthcare services, type of home internet connection, mobile phone operator

Panel and Sample Management



What is the size and/or the capacity of the panel, based on active panel members on a given date? Can you provide an overview of active panelists by type of source?

A

Netscribes has access to a panel strength of above 6 million in both B2B and B2C categories. The company has access to panels spanning 47 geographies with membership mainly concentrated in the US, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. Our active panelists are recruited via telephone and they have participated in at least one study or updated their profile data in the last six months. Feasibility checks are carried out only on active panelists.



Panel and Sample Management

Q

Please describe your sampling process including your exclusion procedures, if applicable. Can samples be deployed as batches/replicates, by time zone, geography, etc.? If so, how is this controlled?

A

Initially, the sample is framed based on the screening criteria, quotas, filters, and predicted response rate. Random invitations are then sent to the panelists. A software is used to determine the exact time and location of sending the invitations. Sometimes, the sample is launched in batches. The best practice is to soft launch, targeting 10% of the required sample size. Programming errors are then eliminated, followed by fine-tuning of the next phase of sample deployment. Invitations and reminders are sent via email and text messages to increase participation rates for difficult-to-reach target groups.

Q

Explain how people are invited to take part in a survey. What does a typical invitation look like?

A

1. People are invited to participate in a survey mainly through email invites. The invitations incorporate survey information such as survey topic, interview length, rewards (depending on the LOI and target audience), reminder of the panel membership, survey link, and contact details of the 24/7 support center. Survey invitations never allow respondents to pass the screener.



Panel and Sample Management



Please describe the nature of your incentive system(s). How does this vary by length of interview, respondent characteristics, or other factors you may consider?



The incentive plans are different for B2B and B2C panelists. After each survey, the consumer panel earns some points that can be redeemed for gift vouchers, cash, sweepstakes, etc. after a certain limit. B2B panelists get reward points as well as periodicals of their interest, free software, etc. A small incentive is given to panelists who were screened out to honor their time, goodwill, and participation.



How often are individual members contacted for online surveys within a given time period? Do you keep data on panelist participation history and are limits placed on the frequency that members are contacted and asked to participate in a survey?



Panelists are contacted at least thrice a month on average. The number of surveys per panelist is limited to one per week and not more than four per month. The reminder process also comes with a limit, which should not exceed one in three days. The entire history such as study completion, elimination, and incentive of the panel members is stored.

Policies and Compliance

Q

Is there a privacy policy in place? If so, what does it state? Is the panel compliant with all regional, national, and local laws with respect to privacy, data protection, and children (e.g., EU Safe Harbour and COPPA in the US)? What other research industry standards do you comply with (e.g., ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social Research, CASRO guidelines, etc.)?

A

Netscribes has a stringent privacy policy in place describing the kind of personal information collected, purpose, list of cookies, and security measures protecting panelists from loss or abuse of personal information. This policy provides guidance on how to update or delete personal information. User information is not rented or sold to third parties without prior notice and permission. Netscribes adheres to the rules and regulations and local laws regarding privacy and data collection in the countries that the company operates in and ensures absolute compliance.



Policies and Compliance



What data protection/security measures do you have in place?

A

Netscribes follows strict measures to protect panelist information. Members' profile information is dealt with absolute confidentiality and it is used only for market research purposes. The company has well-equipped servers with firewalls, and data backups are a daily phenomenon. Data is never shared, rented, or sold to third parties. Survey evaluation is conducted anonymously, and the panelists never receive any commercial emails or spam. Once a panelist ceases to be a member, the relevant information gets automatically removed from the database. Panelists can access their personal information through a protected password and a section of the information cannot be altered post registration. Confidential information (such as images, videos, graphics, etc.) is protected by disabling the back button, copy/paste, save, as well as print screen.



Policies and Compliance



Do you apply a quality management system? Please describe it.

A

A standard quality management mechanism has been adopted, encompassing the entire life cycle of a project. It consists of the following procedures:

Feasibility Checking

- The feasibility of a project is checked to ensure complete delivery of survey responses.



Survey Programming

- Quality of questionnaire is monitored, and clarifications are regularly sought.
- Quality Assurance team tests logic and media before delivering the test link to the client. All changes are documented in the same file to track history.
- Random data generation is conducted to check data accuracy for complex logic. Fielding starts after the client's testing and approval.

Policies and Compliance



Do you apply a quality management system? Please describe it.

A

Fieldwork

- Sample preparation as per the client's specifications and quotas.
- Initial soft launch to collect 10% of the total sample size. This is followed by fine-tuning of sample deployment. Automatic quota control can be adjusted manually in line with client requirements.
- Express polls are launched for specific in-depth measuring.

Data Processing

- Data accuracy is measured before delivery.
- There is always an over-recruitment of 10% to ensure safe removal of bad data such as speedsters, straight-line/pattern responses, meaningless, or inconsistent responses.
- Data can be exported into different formats. Open-end coding is done on client's request.



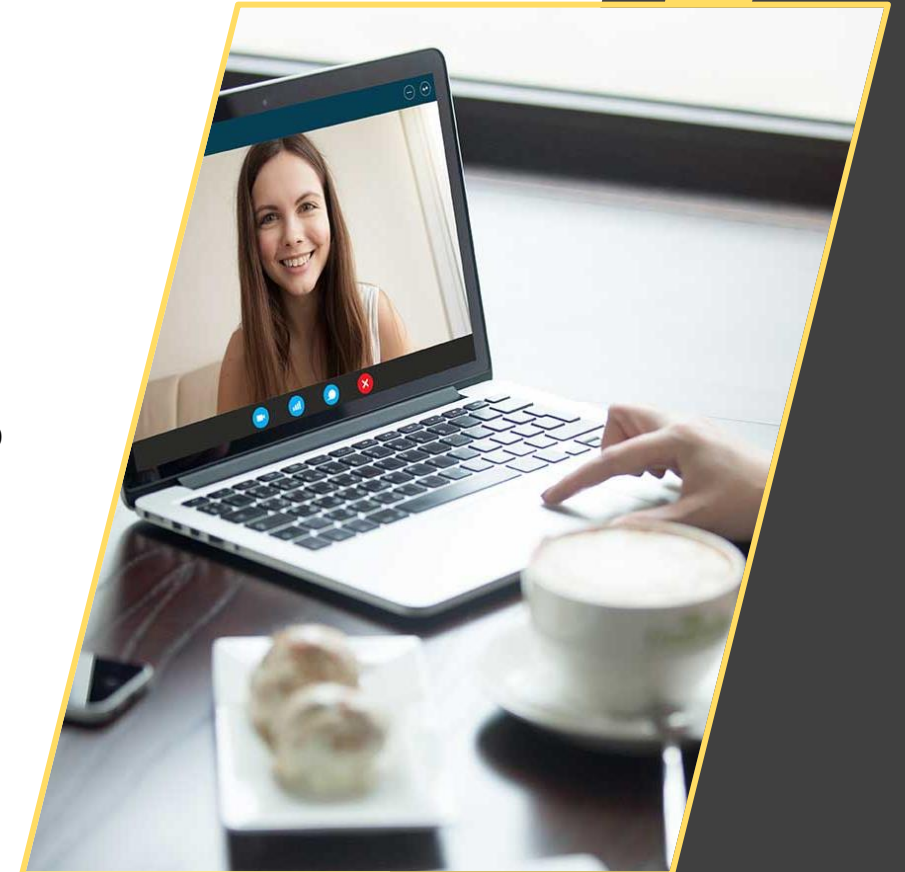
Policies and Compliance



Do you conduct online surveys with children and young people? If so, please describe the process for obtaining permission.



Research is conducted with children and teens. The policies on interviewing children and teens are applicable to all surveys ensuring absolute compliance to local standards when it comes to interviewing children. Instead of contacting children or teens below the age of 16 years directly, emails are sent to their parents carrying an explanation of the study to help them make an informed decision. A child can take the survey only after the parent grants permission. Children below 16 years are required to provide their parent's email address during registration. The parent is notified immediately and can even cancel the child's membership if found unsuitable.



Partnership and Multi-panel Membership

Q

Do you supplement your samples with samples from other providers? How do you select these partners? Is it your policy to notify a client in advance when using a third-party provider? Do you de-duplicate the sample when using multiple sample providers?

A

Surveys are complemented with similar samples from other providers, as it reaffirms the feasibility and may include more geographies. Partners for such samples are carefully selected with strict adherence to industry research standards and quality requirements. Netscribes informs clients prior to using third-party samples.

Q

Do you have a policy regarding multi-panel membership? What efforts do you undertake to ensure that survey results are unbiased given that some individuals belong to multiple panels?

A

Stringent de-duplication techniques are in place to ensure that the sample is of superior quality and meets the requirements of clients. For instance, a person is not allowed to take several surveys, as it would entail duplication of effort. Such a panelist fails to clear the data-controlling procedures and stands a higher chance of being removed from the panel altogether.



Data Quality and Validation



What are the likely survey start rates, dropout, and participation rates in connection with a provided sample? How are these computed?



The usual response rate is above 50% and can go up to 75% depending on the geography and target profile. The response rate is calculated by the number of invitations divided by the number of completes, incompletes, and screened-out interviewers. The average dropout rate is about 5%.



Do you maintain individual-level data such as recent participation history, date of entry, source, etc., on your panelists? Are you able to supply your client with a per job analysis of such individual-level data?



Netscribes maintains historical data of every panelist that it has engaged with right from the date of entry into the panel. Per job analysis of individual-level data can be provided upon request.



Data Quality and Validation



Do you use data quality analysis and validation techniques to identify inattentive and fraudulent respondents? If yes, what techniques are used and at what point in the process are they applied?



Data quality analysis and validation techniques are applicable to every project that is conducted. Some of the basic procedures that are followed to maintain top-notch data quality include:

- Automatic check for duplicate panel members who are removed from the panel.
- Payment of incentives to panelists.
- Evaluation of panelist responses for data consistency, time taken to complete the survey, and answers to open-ended questions.
- A software system to catch and eliminate speedsters, straight liners, zig-zaggers, and other type of fraudulent panelists.
- Special attention to responses with too many “Don’t Know” answers or typically flat responses.
- Checking logical consistencies.



Data Quality and Validation



Do you measure respondent satisfaction?

A

A quarterly satisfaction survey of panelists is conducted to understand if there is any room for improvement when it comes to engaging with panelists. A short satisfaction questionnaire is sent to all the panelists on completing a study. Completion and attrition rates are measured, as they are good indicators of actual engagement.



Policies and Compliance



What information do you provide to debrief your client after the project has finished?



Netscribes usually shares the following details after the completion of each study:

- Incidence rate as per country or target group.
- Number of invites sent for the study.
- Data in various formats as per the client's request (e.g., Excel, SPSS, Quantum, etc.).
- Bad data details such as speeder, straight liners or junk open questions. Such interviews are discarded from the data file and more interviews are conducted to fill the quotas.
- Quota status along with tabulation for all the questions in the survey. Charges for tabulation work are not included, as this work is a value-added service for the client.
- Small brief for the client's reference on the challenges Netscribes faced during the survey.





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